4 Research Design and Methods: How policy travels from the centre to the periphery

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This research was earlier described as a comparative study. As a qualitative study, the research plan was based on three broad strategies of data collection i.e., semi-structured interviews, site observations and questionnaires (limited to the schools only). *Firstly*, I used a stream of semi-structured interviews conducted in a step-by-step format at four levels of the education system: national, provincial, regional (district) and school levels. The semi-structured interview has been used as the main instrument for collecting data because its use usually allows open-ended questions and it is flexible enough to permit the noting of unexpected information. In addition, the interview is able to probe further in order to get rich data.

Furthermore, the semi-structured interview helped set out to determine how the NNSSF Policy was implemented at the five identified levels of the education system, with the possibility of capturing the policy breakdown. In addition, the semi-structured interviews sought to determine the policy effects on equity at school level. Based on the experiences of officials and practitioners at each level of the education system estimations were made to give responses to the research questions.

Secondly, I used semi-structured interviews to collect the expert views of the external stakeholders on the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy in South Africa. The inclusion of the stakeholders and experts in the sampling was due to the perceived neutrality and objectivity of these experts since their views might not be clouded by the day-to-day operations of the policy in question.

Thirdly and mostly importantly, I generated five comparative case studies at the fourth level of the (schools as the main unit of analysis) education system, where detailed data was collected using multiple strategies (such as document analysis and face to face interviews and school profile, in order to understand the complex ways in which the NNSSF policy was understood and how it impacted on equity in each of the five cases selected.

Although this inquiry used backward mapping[19] as a research strategy or methodology for data collection, the actual data collection was done by examining the understanding and effects of the NNSSF policy at school level and then inquiring upwards about why the effects are so experienced. The actual organization and presentation of the research data have been done in descending order i.e., National, Provincial, Regional School levels policy experts.

In this regard the fifth level, i.e., education stakeholders/policy experts can be seen as part of the education system since education as a practice is not confined to the formal environment only. The external factors also have direct influence on the internal system. The details now follow:

SECTION ONE

4.2 NATIONAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

I started firstly by identifying information with respondents at the national departmental level, since this is where the National Norms and Standard for School Funding policy was both conceived and launched for implementation in the nine provinces. Two officials (respondents) who were involved in the conceptualization, formulation and the over-sight of the implementation of the policy were selected (see Figure 4.1). In fact they were the only respondents willing to take part in the inquiry. Furthermore the two respondents involved in the policy had a direct working relationship with the Consortium led by Education Foundation, which was given the task of training provincial officials in the policy. The two respondents have rich experience in education, policy development and legislative policy framework. Both were part of the committee that developed the NNSSF policy. One is an Advocate in law who was charged with the legal aspects of both SASA 1996 and the NNSSF policy of 1998. The

[19] Backward mapping has been successfully used by scholars such as Elmore (1998) and Dyer (1999) in determining both the policy legislative intentions and policy effects by investigating the manipulation of the following variables: communication, commitment, implementation attitudes and contextual factors.

other key respondent had a Doctorate in Education and had served at various levels of the management echelon over the last 20 years (see Annexure E). As part of the process of collecting data, I therefore designed an interview instrument and schedule for the first research questions guiding the inquiry. The set of questions which constitute part of the semi-structured interview protocol were posed to the respondents in order to elicit appropriate information on the meaning and understanding of the School Finance Policy (SFP) as well as the set goals. The questions below serve as illustrations:

- What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
- In your view, what was the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

4.2.1 PROVINCIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

At the provincial level (North West), I identified those key respondents who were directly involved in the actual implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy. Of the six members of the Project Management Committee established for the policy only three were available for selection and interview (see Figure 4.1). The other three had resigned from the Department to take up appointments elsewhere.

The three respondents who took part in this inquiry had vast educational and managerial experience at various levels. The first one (with BCom Hons) came from the directorate of policy management and co-ordination and had a total experience of 21 years in education. The said experience included seven years as a teacher, 11 as a school principal and three years as a deputy director at head office level.

The second respondent (with B.A. degree qualification) had a total education experience of 26 years, which can be broken down as follows: 11 years as a teacher, two years as deputy principal, seven years as a principal and six years as district manager of 351 schools.

The third one (with Public Administration degree and Certificates in Financial Management) had a total of 30 years experience in the administration of education, in particular financial management, and had worked both in the Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Cape Education Department (CED) as a financial accountant (see Annexure E).

As part of the data collection process, I designed the following set of questions with the view to eliciting appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy as well as the set goals.

- What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy?
- In your view, what was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding policy?

4.2.2 REGIONAL EDUCATION LEVEL

At this level I employed purposeful sampling by selecting three respondents who were assigned the tasks of implementing policies, in particular the NNSSF Policy, in the Central Region (Mafikeng). The selected respondents, called circuit managers, now called institutional support co-ordinators of education policies, have as part of their main responsibility the effective management of education policies (see Figure 4.1). But before getting to grips with the individual profiles of the selected groups, it is appropriate for me to justify the selection of Mafikeng as a site for this inquiry. The choice of the Central Education Region (i.e., Mafikeng) for this inquiry was based on the following criteria:

- It is the region in which I work and where access to schools for purposes of the study was easily obtainable.
- It is one of the biggest educational regions in terms of the number of schools and educator-learner ratios (see chapter three).
- It is comprised of various types of schools from erstwhile education departments like House of Delegates (HED), Bophuthatswana (BOP) Education and Training ((DET) and Cape Education Department (CED).
- It is close to the Head Office of the Education Ministry where the Norms and Standards policy was launched in 1999.
- The 1996 School Register of Needs singled out Mafikeng as a region with schools which have diverse socio-economic needs (1996:14).
- Mafikeng and the surrounding areas have been hard hit by serious unemployment as a result of the downsizing of the public service administration and the closure of some key industries which have reduced the capacity of many parents to afford school fees (NWED, 2000a:3).

Bop TV, Radio Mmabatho, Sebowana Employee Benefits Organisation, the Chicken Industry and Sefalana Corporate Centre for maize meal production are some of the industries affected by the closure.

The three respondents selected for this inquiry were all male with almost similar educational background and experience. Besides the difference in actual age, they all have B.A.Ed and B.Ed degrees as their qualifications. Before they became circuit managers for almost seven years, all of them were principals of schools for an average of eleven years. However, only one of them had served as the Co-ordinator of the Primary Education Upgrading Programme in the erstwhile Bophuthatswana for a period of five years. Quite appropriate for this inquiry is the fact that since 1996 all the selected officials or respondents were exposed to various training programmes sponsored by developed countries such as the United States of America (USAID), Denmark (DANIDA) and the Quality Learning Project (QLP) sponsored by Business Trust and Co-ordinated by the Joint Education Trust (JET) (see Annexure E).

As part of the data collection process for this inquiry, I designed an interview instrument and schedule with the view of eliciting appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy as well as the set goals. In this connection, the following illustrative questions are provided:

- What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
- In your view, what were the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

FIGURE 4.1 FICTITIOUS (PSEUDONYMS) NAMES EMPLOYED TO HIDE THE TRUE IDENTITY OF SCHOOLS

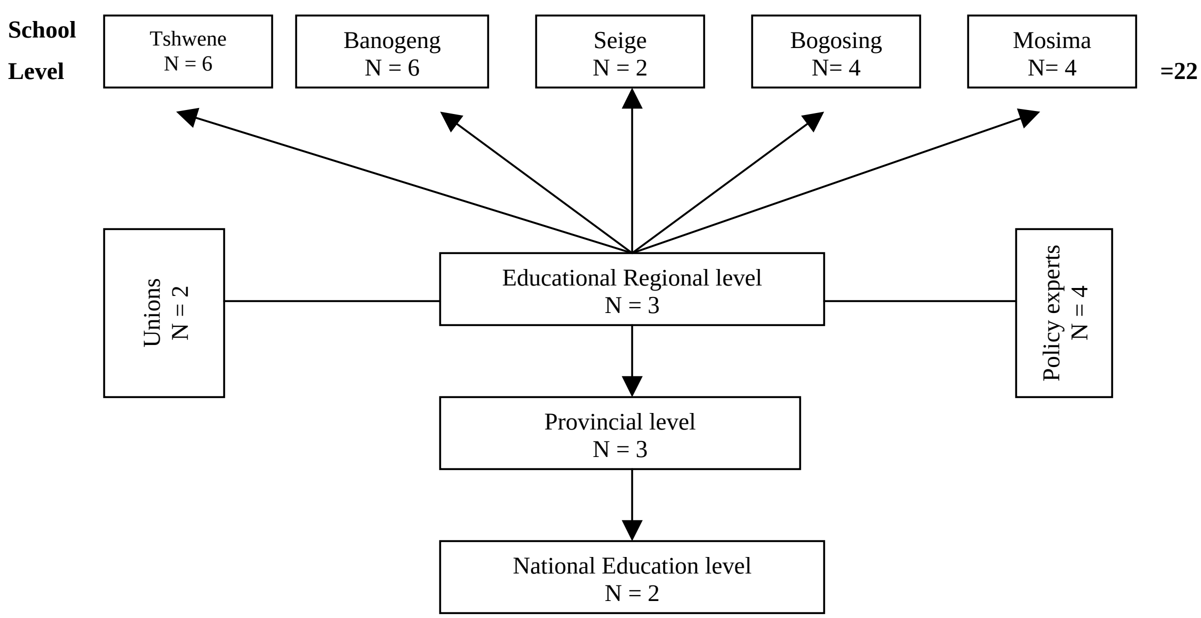

Figure 4.1: Showing a schematic illustration of the research's participants at various levels of the education system i.e., schools, districts, provincial, national and stakeholders. A total of 46 respondents were interviewed for this research.

4.2.3 THE SCHOOL LEVELS

At this level, I selected five schools based on their socio-economic profiles as determined by the Resource Targeting List (RTL), which gives recognition to both the conditions of the school buildings and the poverty level of the communities surrounding the school. In addition to this, the purposeful sampling was based on the following sampling criteria:

- All the five schools are located within the Central Education Region.
- All the five schools qualified for and were granted Section 21 status by the department in the year 2001, i.e., after their applications were subjected to an evaluation.
- All of them started with the implementation of the NNSSF policy in 2000.
- They all had been exposed to a capacity building programme before obtaining the Section 21 status.
- All the five schools had legally constituted School Governing Bodies (SGBs)
- All the five schools are cost centres after the opening of a current account/cheque account.
- Finally, all the five schools have learner enrollment that exceeds four hundred (400). For more details of the profiles, see Annexure B1 to B5.

Besides the selection of the five schools for this inquiry, I went further and did further sampling per case study school. As already indicated the five selected schools were assigned fictitious names for the purpose of confidentiality. For recap purposes, the names employed for the selected schools are: Banogeng, Tshwene, Siege (all primary schools) and Bogosing and Mosima Secondary Schools (see Fig 4.1). In each and every school where the case study was conducted, the following key respondents formed part of the purposeful sampling: The school principal, deputy principal (if there was one), departmental head (H.O.D.) and teacher treasurer. This means that only the members of the Senior Management Team (SMT) were exposed to the semi-structured interview process.

PHOTOGRAPH #1: TSHWENE PRIMARY SCHOOL: DEEP RURAL SCHOOL ABOUT 40 KM. FROM THE CITY (FOUNDED IN 1961)

Self produced photograph (28/11/2002) 3 a: shows the front-view of Tshwene Primary School with Grade 4 learners writing tests outside due to the shortage of accommodation.

Case Study 1:

Tshwene Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Tshwene Primary is a former Bophuthatswana school situated in a deep rural and impoverished village called Disaneng about 60 kilometers from the capital city of the province and 67 from the Central Education Region. The school was established in 1960 with funds from the tribal authority, and began operating from 1961 with an enrollment of 150 learners in Grade A.

Tshwene primary school is not only experiencing over-crowding, but the buildings also need some major renovations (see photograph). The school has a total number of twenty-three classrooms which serve 850 learners. Despite the importance of structures like staff-rooms, laboratory, library, school hall, special rooms and separate office for the principal, the only thing available is the principal's office. This dilapidated office (i.e., principal`s) is not only small but also over-crowded with all sorts of materials and pieces of equipment. This is because the office also accommodates both library books and laboratory equipment since there is neither a laboratory nor a library. Furthermore, the school does not have any of the following: fax machine, computers, television and tape recording device. But both water and electricity have been recently connected.

In the year 2001 the school was granted Section 21 status, i.e., authority to be self-managing. Such status allowed the school to control its budget and the curriculum of the school.

As far as staffing is concerned, the school has a total number of 23 educators. Included in this number are the principal, deputy principal and senior teachers, (see the profile of all the educators at school level, which gives both the qualifications and experience of the educators in Annexure

Tshwene Primary School charged parents school fees to the tune of R80-00 per child per year. The percentage of parents who paid the said amount for 2002 stood at 45-50 while the 2003 paying percentage stood at 56-60. Despite the provision of the school to press lawsuit against parents for non-payment, the school showed the reluctance to use this mechanism. Firstly, the school cited the inability to pay legal cost as a factor. Secondly, the inability of parents to pay school fee because they happened to be poor was cited as another factors.

PHOTOGRAPH #2: SIEGE PRIMARY SCHOOL: FORMER MODEL C SCHOOL ENDOWED WITH RESOURCES (FOUNDED IN 1895)

Self produced photograph (30/10/2001) 3b: shows magnificent building of a former model c school. More money is needed to maintain this building. But less was given.

Case Study School 2:

Siege Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Siege Primary School is a former Model C school situated in the centre of the town, about eight kilometers from the Central Education Region. The school was established in 1895 by the Afrikaans speaking community originally meant for the Afrikaners. The catchment area of Siege Primary School is largely residential, high-cost housing where most of government civil servants and down-town employees live.

The school is located within a big yard, with a very impressive and attractive landscape which is ever-green. The physical infrastructure is also impressive which, among other things, has the following: 14 classrooms, staff-room, special rooms (sick-room), workshops, library, school hall, separate office for the principal, and a laboratory. In addition essential amenities such as water, electricity, a computer for administration and a fax-machine are available (see photograph 4.2 which shows the school building).

Siege Primary School used to admit only white learners, but has opened its doors to learners of different races or ethnic groups. It has a total of sixteen teachers (for 2003) which includes two privately paid ones (by SGB), while the 2003 learners enrollment stood at 443. Comparison between the 2002 learners' enrollment (which was 445) and the 2003 one reflects a decrease of only two learners.

The school became Section 21 controlled from 2001 and the minimum school fee per child per year is R2 500. The total percentage of parents paying school fees for 2002 stood at 85-98, while the 2003 paying percentage stood at 85-95.

The average age of the 16 teachers at Siege Primary stood at thirty-five years with an average teaching experience of ten years. Finally, most of the teachers at this school have a three-year Diploma and above as qualifications. Annexure gives a summary of the biographical data of the teaching staff at Siege Primary School.

PHOTOGRAPH #3: BANOGENG PRIMARY SCHOOL FOUNDED IN 1990

Self-produced photograph (31/10/2001) 3c: shows moderate building set-up by the tribal authority. The role of the NWED was not significant here.

Case Study School 3:

Banogeng Primary: Implementing the funding policy

Banogeng Primary is a former Bophuthatswana (Bop) school situated in a rural village called Majemantsho just about 10 kilometers from the capital city of the North West Province, i.e., Mafikeng. It was established in 1990 mostly with the building funds from the Paramount Chief (Kgosi) of the Barolong Tribal Authority.

The school has a total number of 20 classrooms and 23 teachers and 855 learners. This refers to the 2003 statistical figures, while the 2001 and 2002 learner enrollment figures stood at 810 and 870 respectively. Despite the shortage of staff, the said school had not been able to employ teachers from the SGB funds. Out of the 23 teachers, six of them are in management positions. This refers to the principal, deputy-principal and four departmental heads who are in charge of the different phases. These teachers are fairly qualified with the average qualifications of REQV 12 and above.

The buildings of Banogeng Primary need urgent renovation given their deteriorating conditions. Besides the presence of both the staff-room and separate office of the principal, essential structures such as library, computer room, school hall, laboratory and special rooms (e.g., Sick rooms) are not available. However, other essential services and amenities such as water, electricity, duplicating machine, fax machine, telephone and computer for administration are available. Some of these were acquired through financial assistance from donors.

Banogeng Primary, which is a quintile three, charge parents average school fees of R100-00 to R200-00 per child per year. But the school records indicate the percentage of parents paying school fees for both 2002 and 2003 as 55-62 and 45-52 respectively, while the 2001 figure stood at 50% for the 1998 academic year the percentage of parents who paid school fees stood at 80%.

PHOTOGRAPH #4: BOGOSING SECONDARY SCHOOL: SEMI-URBAN (FOUNDED IN 1983)

Self produced photograph (31/10/2001) 3d: shows the physical building without key structures like laboratory and library

Case Study School 4:

Bogosing Secondary: Implementing the funding policy

The school was established in 1983 by the Paramount Chief of the Barolong tribe and is situated just about 15 kilometers from the Central Region office in Mafikeng. The village in which the school is situated is comprised of poverty stricken families where the majority of them are either pensioners or unemployed.

Bogosing Secondary has 20 classrooms with the learner enrollment of 1 122 to 32 teachers. This means that the learner-classroom ratio of 2003 academic year stood at 1:53, while the learner-classroom ratio of both 2001 and 2002 stood at 1:49 and 1:52 respectively. Despite the importance of key structures such as library, laboratory, school hall, staff-room and separate offices for both the principal and the senior management teachers, these essentials are conspicuous, by their absence. As a result of this, two classrooms had been turned into both the staff-room and the principal's office. Most importantly, despite the absence of these key structures, the school is grouped in quintile 4 of the Resource Targeting Table (RTL). This suggests that the school is well endowed with resources.

Despite being a rural secondary school, the school has ensured the availability (mostly from donations) of the following: water, electricity, duplicating machine, fax machine, computer for administration (accommodated in a classroom) and some laboratory equipment. Furthermore, as a secondary school, Bogosing happened to fall in the category of schools financially sponsored by the Joint Education Trust (JET) through a training programme called Quality Learning Project (QLP) coordinated by Mazibuko & Associate (MA) as well as the Master of School Training Programme (MSTP). This programme offered training modules in school development planning, financial management and change management.

Bogosing Secondary School, despite experiencing financial constraints, charged parents school fees to the amount of R100-00 per child per year. Despite the charge of this little amount, the 2001, 2002 and 2003 trend indicated a poor response from parents, where paying percentage ranged from 41-46, 40-55 and 35-47 respectively.

Bogosing has a total of 32 educators who are fairly well qualified with average qualifications of REQV[20] 13 and above. Furthermore, the average age of teachers ranged between 35 and 45 years with an average teaching experience of 15 years.

[20] RQEV: Relevant Qualification Equivalent value used for grading teachers

Mosima Secondary School is grouped under quintile 5 of the Resource Targeting Table as compiled by the North West Education Department. This means that the school is regarded as least poor or fairly well resourced by the Department of Education. As far as private contribution is concerned, the school fees set for parents stood at R120-00 per child, per year. This implies that the school is having a meager income given the state allocation which stood at the following figures: R24 600, R26 168 and R28 900 for 2001, 2002 and 2003 respectively. Despite the charge of small fees, the percentage of parents paying school fees is very low. For example, in 2003 only 46% of the parents paid the school fees.

Mosima Secondary School has fairly well qualified educators since the majority of them are REQV 12 and above. But they are more qualified in languages and humanities. The school has a fairly balanced staff with an average age of 10 years teaching experience.

4.2.4 STAKEHOLDERS AND EXPERTS

A total of six key respondents were selected from a variety of stakeholder organizations and independent organizations. Including Institute of Democracy of South Africa (IDASA), Education Policy Unit of the University of Witwatersrand (EPU-WITS) Education Foundation (EDUS); South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), National Association of Professional Teachers Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) and Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie (SAOU) and the Education Right Project (ERP).

The selected individuals as part of the sample of this investigation had vast experience in education and were fairly well qualified. They had certain elements in common:

- All the key respondents have had exposure to the NNSSF policy through their organizations.
- All of them were male with experience of more than ten (10) years in education.
- All of them had Masters Degree in Education or above (e.g., Doctorate).
- All of them (with the exception of SAOU) had experience in research.
- All of them (with the exception of SAOU) had made public commentary on the efficacy of the implementation of the NNSSF policy in South Africa. For biographical details see Annexure E.

As part of the data collection process, I designed the following set of questions with the view to elicit appropriate information on the understanding and meaning of the School Finance Policy, as well as the set goals.

- Could you explain your role in the development of the government policy on the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in South Africa?
    - How did you first come to be involved in the National Education Department?
    - What was your brief (terms of reference) from the Department of Education with regard to the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy?
    - In carrying out your brief, how did you go about implementing it?
    - What timeframe did the Department of Education give you for the formulation of policy document (NNSSF)?
- What do you understand to have been the key objectives of the policy? (i.e., looking at the policy broadly, what is the main target of the policy?
- What do you think the major challenges are in the implementation of policy, in particular the National Norms and Standard for School Funding in developing countries like South Africa?
- What do you believe are the emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding Policy on school development with respect to?
- What is your understanding of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy?
- In your view, what were the National Norms and Standards for School Funding Policy responding to (i.e., broadly speaking)?
- How has the National Education Department shared the understanding of the policy with the provinces, districts, and schools?
- What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the National Norms and Standards for School Funding policy?

SECTION TWO

4.3 BASIC APPROACH TO DATA COLLECTION

Although the intention of this research study is not to prove any theory or develop new ones, it is essential to point out that I engaged myself in the process of collecting essential data for the purpose of informing the design of the main instrument i.e. the semi-structured interview. After the selection of the sampled schools and other key respondents across the education system, I decided to visit the identified schools (and after approval of the request to conduct the study (see Annexure A1 – A2) for the following reasons:

Firstly, to introduce myself to the school principal and to explain my position as a research student. This was important because my position as a senior manager in the department needed to be clarified so as to avoid confusion and the distortion of the information. *Secondly*, the purpose of the visit was intended to study the actual location of the schools so as to appreciate the various contexts. At the schools, issues like the physical appearance of the schools, the size of the schools, the actual location of the schools and the surrounding communities (demographics) captured my attention. I then took photos of the buildings. *Thirdly*, to leave the profile forms with the school principals (for filing in) to be collected at a later stage.

My first visits to the selected schools took place during the first week of November 2001, where the profile forms were left and contact established. In the second week of the same month I revisited the said schools for the purpose of collecting the completed school profiles see Annexure B1-B5. The information contained in the school profiles included issues such as staff establishments, biographical details of the staff and information on financial outcomes and expenditures.

On the basis of the key research questions, literature review, logical models illustrating the conceptual framework, i.e., Figure 3.1 and 3.2 in Chapter three, information from the school profiles and content analysis of the NNSSF policy, I developed an average of 16 questions to constitute the semi-structured interview schedule, see Annexure

Since this is a trajectory study tracing how policy ‘travels’ from national to school level, it became necessary to use open-ended questions which are almost the same across all the levels of the education system. I employed a five-level semi-structured interview strategy to collect data. The approach meant that data generated from practitioners at the same level, e.g., schools, was to be compared and contrasted across the system in order to develop a coherent implementation story. Part of the reason for contrast and comparison across the levels of the education system was to determine the continuities and discontinuities in the flow of the NNSSF policy through various levels of the education system.

As far as the actual contents of the semi-structured interview instruments are concerned, a few questions (see illustrative questions below) have been selected for brief commentary to explain why they were included.

- What is your understanding of the NNSSF policy?
- What was the NNSSF policy responding to?
- What do you think are the major challenges in the implementation of the NNSSF policy?

The *first* three questions of Part A (Annexure C1) which remained consistent throughout sought to probe the deep understanding of the NNSSF policy from the key respondents. For example, question one of the schedule singled out the understanding of the policy across various levels as critical. The rationale to seek deep meaning of policies among policy-makers and implementers appears to be the key to the success of any policy. In addition, question two sought to determine what actually triggered the policy and the broad goal of the policy’s constitutional principle.

The other set of questions in the instrument sought to determine the effects of the new school funding policy on equity at school level. This was meant to determine the discrepancy between the policy legislative intention and the actual outcomes of the policy i.e., the school level effects.

In seeking to identify the emerging effects of the SFP on equity, I posed broad-based questions, which mainly focused on key *effect* indicators such as:

- Does the school have an effective maintenance plan in place?
- Are the allocated resources effectively utilized?
- Are the allocated resources directed at improving teaching among teachers?

In the course of the development of the semi-structured interview schedule, I sought for links between the school level performance indicators (school development plan) and aspects of the department's strategic planning. This, among other things, refers to aspects such as strategic goal, vision, mission and the stated performance indicators. This stance was informed by the view that the new departments' performance indicators slanted towards the principles of equity, redress, quality, efficiency and effectiveness. In this regard, the indicators are used because of their centrality and usefulness in measuring the performance of the education system or sub-system (see section 2.3.3 of chapter two on performance indicators). But concentration is restricted to process and effect indicators at school level.

Before the semi-structured interview schedule was used, I involved myself in certain critical processes. *Firstly,* I submitted the initial draft instrument to my promoter in January 2002. He made several critical comments and recommendations, which I accommodated to refine and adjust the instrument; I then validated the contents and the format of the protocol. *Secondly,* I piloted the semi-structured interview instrument by interviewing the few individuals at various levels, i.e., school, regional, provincial and national. I asked the respondents to pay particular attention to the following: complexity or simplicity of the questions and the length of the whole instrument. After this process I felt confident to use the instrument for the actual collection of data. This refers to the five levels of data collection namely: national, provincial, regional levels and the five case study schools plus the external stakeholders. I spent considerable time compiling the interview timetable. In this regard, after telephonic discussion with the principals', the schools' composite timetable and the estimated time for the semi-structured interview plus the number of days to be spent per school were given first attention.

4.3.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

It is essential to state that throughout the interview process at all the identified levels with key respondents, I adopted three types of interview styles namely, the Free Attitude Interview (FAI) techniques, the Depth Interview (DI) and the Participatory Interview (PI).

The interview types are all non-directive controlled interviews and the respondent and not the interviewer defines the direction of the exchange process – Roberto Assagidi (1982:41) used them successfully.

From the beginning of the inquiry, I planned to visit each school three times over a period of 20 months. However, in real terms, some schools were visited more than three times. From February 2002 to May 2003 I spent 17 months on data collection. At the school levels I spent an average of 52.5 hours on the interviews. This means that a total of 3.5 hours were spent per school per visit for the purpose of the interviews, document analysis, follow ups, close observation and attendance to a parents' meeting.

I started at Tshwene Primary School armed with a tape recorder, extra-batteries, a semi-structured interview instrument and a note pad. The actual commencement of the formal interview at the five schools marked my second visit. The first ones were the administration of the school profiles, which took place in November 2001.

At school level, I started the semi-structured interview with the school principal. Before the commencement of each interview, which lasted for almost 45 minutes, I found it appropriate and ethical to ask permission for the use of the recording device. I also made a commitment to remain confidential and transparent during the course of the data collection at each school. This principle was extended to other interviewees in the whole target population, i.e., key respondents at regional, provincial, national and education stakeholder levels. Related to this aspect and, given the sensitivity of this research study and the fact that I was conducting it within the workstation, it became extremely critical to be honest with the key respondents, i.e., interviewees. This necessitated the importance of getting what is called *informed consent* before the actual interview process. Annexure A3 shows the consent of the key respondents. As a result of the informed consent letter, I have the privilege and the right to publish parts of the thesis.

In the course of data collection through the semi-structured interview, I managed to note down interesting developments of relevance to the inquiry. Of significant importance, is that by the end of the visits to the third school, I noticed a discrepancy between what the principals said and what other members of the senior management teams, in particular heads of department, were saying. This was particularly striking on the strategies of communicating the policy to the staff and parents. For example, principals spoke about workshops and sufficient explanations in the said workshops. However, other members of the senior management team made regular reference to staff meetings and the telling method of communication.

At the beginning of data collection in the six schools (the 61 was later dropped), i.e., immediately after I had interviewed the school principal, I encountered serious problems, which led to the removal of the sixth school from the purposeful sampling. The principal went away on promotion to another level and the deputy-principal who was chosen to act as a principal indicated to me she had a limited knowledge of the NNSSF policy. Other members of the senior management team indicated the same. On the strength of these factors, I became convinced that it would be pointless to insist on continuing with the interview process. Given the fact that I occupied a senior position in the department of education was another consideration for being sensitive to the participants. This means that I concluded the interview processes at school sites with a reduced number of five schools, after dropping the sixth one, which was a secondary school, located in the township of Mafikeng.

In carrying out the exercise of data collection at school level, (through the recording device, note-taking pad and flexible interview schedule) a serious effort was made not to disrupt learning and teaching. In this regard, only teachers who were directly serving in the various committees (curriculum, finance, school developmental planning), which have a relation with the NNSSF policy, took part in the interview exercises. In each school therefore, the school timetable was never disrupted.

The final sample of the five schools (two secondary and three primary) resulted in a total number of 22 participants for the semi-structured interview, 12 for the primary and 10 for the two secondary schools (see Figure 4.1 which shows the number and names of schools selected). I made reference to almost 22 as a figure because there were instances where some participants were not available for follow-ups.

However, before I continued with the interview process at another level, I decided to transcribe the recorded interview into textual data. I then took a conscious decision of asking someone to do the transcript for me with the proviso that I could later proof-read and insert key remarks or observations on the actual transcript. In this regard Table 4.1 below shows an example of the completed transcript with the addition of the observation remarks or comments (OC). This I did, and the usefulness of this task was to ensure that I did not lose the context under which the semi-structured interview took place. Table 4.1 shows the transcript with the observation remarks.

This step was necessary because the audio-tape could easily give a decontextualized version of the transaction. Most importantly the recorded transcript does not include the visual aspects of the situation or the bodily expressions of the respondents. Of material importance to the semi-structured interview was my conduct as a researcher to each interviewee. Throughout the face-to-face interview I attempted to be emotionally intelligent through a fine balance between emotions and thinking capacity. I then decided to move to the next level of data collection, namely the district.

As part of the overall planning, it was originally planned to include members of the school governing bodies in the sampling. However, due to the difficulty of tracing the members of

the school governing bodies, their level of understanding of the policy and the few I tried to interview (only two) plus poor literacy, especially in rural schools, the idea was abandoned.
The difficulty of getting SADTU: In spite of all my efforts I was not able to get either the leadership or representative of SADTU for the purpose of the interview. The representative I managed to reach first wanted a mandate from the leadership which appeared difficult to get. At the same time, the leadership cited their tight schedule as a factor for not availing themselves for an interview process.

4.3.2 DATA PROCESSING, ANALYSIS AND CODING

In this study, I decided to employ mainly grounded theory for data generation and analysis. This was informed by the importance of answering the research questions. In pursuit of this, data collected through the field notes, recording device and access to school records needed to be put in a particular order for the purpose of data analysis.

In view of my understanding of data analysis as the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, field-notes, and other materials that one accumulates to increase his or her understanding of them and to enable him to present what he has discovered to others in a more meaningful manner. I developed five major steps to tackle data processing and analysis. These steps were sequentially applied so as to reach the logical end of the inquiry, i.e., data reduction.

Firstly, a starting point and the most important step was the task of transcribing the recorded interview into written words and making meaning out of the collected documents which included minutes, financial records, communication strategies and departmental circulars. As pointed out I tasked someone to do the transcript for me. Furthermore informed by the quest for objectivity, I decided to compare the write-up with the recorded conversation. This I did and the reason for this step was to guard against the discrepancy between the transcript and the recorded interview.

The reason for producing a typed write-up was based on the understanding that a write-up can be "an intelligible" product for anyone, not just for the fieldworker. It can be easily read, edited for accuracy, commented on, coded and analysed using any methods. Indeed, I experienced the usefulness of this strategy (typed write-ups) after I had done the write-up from the recorded device.

Throughout the proofreading of the transcripts and the listening of the recorded interview, my alertness and attention were directed at getting the message correct, i.e., both in words and meaning. This was done with the intention of not misinterpresenting the **voices** of the participants and the meanings attached to the words. Since this is a qualitative research depending to a greater extent on the 'words', i.e., textual data rather than numbers, it occurred to me to place special emphasis on the words and sentences in the transcripts.

Once the transcripts were completed, I had the opportunity of finally integrating the transcript with key observations I picked up from the field. This means that I created a column next to the inputs of the respondents and called that observation comments (see Table 4.1 below). The idea of doing this was an attempt to recapture the possible loss of the contextual factors during the transcribing of data from the tape-recorder. This is of fundamental importance to qualitative research since context often informs the participant's views.

TABLE 4.1: THE INTERVIEWS TRANSCRIPT WITH OBSERVER'S COMMENT

Mosima Secondary School
♦ It is still with auditors
♦ No response
♦ So far, we are not doing it but we intend doing it this year
♦ Science and technology

O.C [21] Despite the importance of the curriculum and teacher development, financial allocation was not done.

[21] O.C stands for the researcher's observation remarks

TABLE 4.2: THE TRANSCRIPT WITH THE INFERENTIAL CODES

PERI-URBAN SCHOOL SCHOOL A (BANOGENG) #1	DEEP RURAL SCHOOL SCHOOL B (TSHWENE) #2	URBAN SCHOOL SCHOOL C (SIEGE) #3
QUESTION 1 **#1**	**#2**	**#3**
✓ School Improvement: PC – SI **(lift the standard)** ✓ Context – School Profile: C.S – Sc **(disadvantaged schools)**	✓ School Effectiveness: P.C. – SE **(to assist schools to run themselves effectively)** ✓ Redress Resource Redistribution: P.C. R/RE **(previous imbalances) better resourcing)**	✓ Quality Education: P.C Q/EDU **(good education)** ✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R/IM **(redress)**
QUESTION 2 **#1**	**#2**	**#3**
✓ Resource Provision: P.C. R.P #1 **(distribution of resources)** ✓ Disadvantaged. Con TI **(disadvantaged schools)**	✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R.IM **(the imbalances of the schools)**	✓ Redress Imbalances: P.C. – R/IM 3 **(inequalities which existed in the past)**

PLEASE NOTE:

The following segments/themes in bold are the actual texts (voices) of the respondents i.e., the one in brackets:

: The unbolded one refers to the coding categorization (sub-themes)

: Abbreviations refer to the coding system

Secondly, after the short break, the challenge of confronting the data analysis process presented itself. As a novice researcher, I must honestly confess that I was initially overwhelmed by how to tackle the data analysis (i.e., the chunk of transcript) because everything in front of me seemed to matter most. However, going back to the research questions, systems theory, and the devised logical model in the form of a conceptual framework, I saw a way of tackling the data, i.e., coding data into major categories (themes) and sub-themes. To this end I ended up developing what I called a coding systems which was meant for data retrieval (see Table 4.3). This was further assisted by the realization that I could not do everything due to time constraints.

In pursuit of themes building, I firstly put the transcript in a computer database, i.e., word-processing. This helped visibility a lot. I engaged myself in the inductive analysis of the collected data mechanically; i.e., without using software like ATLAST-I so as to allow the emergence of categories, themes and sub-themes. This means that I paid attention to the whole text, i.e., reading and re-reading. This was done several times to get the holistic view of the embedded messages while key words, phrases or sentences were underlined so as to obtain the descriptive voices (words) of the respondents. Then meanings and interpretations were assigned to words and phrases in a more *inferential* manner, this can be referred to as pattern codes.

In brief, as part of the data processing, initially I developed 18 general coding categories with the associated sub-themes which were assigned retrieval codes. Because data analysis had not yet reached a point of saturation I called this an interim coding system. This was necessitated by the importance of going back to the additional data to check the possibility of the further development of themes.

Finally in order to deal efficiently and effectively with the question of internal reliability it became necessary and advisable to involve persons not directly connected to the inquiry. This was also done to enhance objectivity. The collected data, i.e., transcripts, conceptual framework and the research questions were given to two colleagues in the department of education the division of Quality Assurance with the task of developing initial coding/categorization system independently.

The two colleagues managed to produce their coding system with the difference in the total number of the general categories developed. One had twelve categories and the other fifteen coding categories, while I had already developed eighteen categories. To produce a single coding system, the three of us sat down to compare and reduce the coding system to only ten as indicated in Table 4.4. In this regard, almost 90% of internal reliability was reached among all of us.

TABLE 4.3: EXAMPLE OF THE CODING SYSTEM FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONS,

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLATION
Tshwene Primary	Tsh. Pri 1.1	The first three letters represent the schools assumed name, the middle letters Pri represent the principal of case study 1 while 1 represents the question number
	Tsh. DPri.1	Tsh – name of the school, DPRI – Deputy-Principal (rank) and 1 refers to the question number
	Tsh.HOD1.1	Tsh represent the school's name, HOD 1 represents the departmental head no. one while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.HOD2.1	Tsh – name of the school, HOD 2 represents the departmental head no.two while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.HOD3.1	Tsh – name of the school, HOD 3 represents the departmental head no.two while one (1) represents question one
	Tsh.ED/TR.2.	Tsh – name of the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer and digit 2 represents question two
Siege Primary	Sie.Pri.2.1	Sie stands for Siege Primary and the abbreviation Pri2 is for the principal of case study #2 school while 1 is for the number of the question
	Sie.HOD1.3	Sie represents the school name, HOD for the Heads of Department, while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Sie.HOD2.4	Sie represents the school name, HOD for the Heads of Department no. two, while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
Banogeng Primary	Ban.Pri3.3	Ban stands for Banogeng Prim stands for the principal of the school, and three stands for the question number.
	Ban.D.Pri3.4	Ban stands for the name of the school, D.Pri for the deputy principal of case study 3
	Ban.HOD1.3	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number one while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.HOD2.4	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number two while 4 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLATION
	Ban.HOD3.5	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number three while 5 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.HOD4.6	Ban stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number four while 6 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Ban.ED/TR.2	Ban – name of the school's assumed name, ED/TR stands for educator treasurer and digit 2 represent question two
Bogosing Secondary	Bog.Pri1.4	Bog stands for Bogosing Pri stands for the principal of the school, and four stands for the question number.
	Bog.D.Pri.3	Bog stands for the name of the school, D.Pri for the deputy principal of case study 3
	Bog.HOD1.2	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number one while 2 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.HOD2.3	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number two while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
	Bog.HOD3.6	Bog stands for the name of school, HOD for the Departmental Head number three while 6 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule.
Central Region	CR.CM.1	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 1 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
	CR.CM.3	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 3 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
	CR.CM.2	CR – Central Region, CM refers to the Circuit Manager and 2 to question no. 2 of the interview schedule
Provincial level: Head Office	Prov.Mr Men	Pro stands for Provincial Dir for Director while 2 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
	Prov.Mr Modi	Pro stands for Provincial D.Dir for Deputy Director while 1 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
	Prov.Mr Radie	Pro stands for Provincial D.Dir for Deputy Director while 3 stands for the number of the question in the interview schedule
National Level	Bosman	Nat represents the National department, Hof assigned name for respondent at director level and 2 for the question number.
National Department of Educatopm	Fish	Nat represents the National department, Dr V a director at national level and 4 question number.

SCHOOL LEVEL	ASSIGNED NUMBER	EXPLATION
Education Right Programme	ERP.Mr Vavi	ERP represents the organization, MR SV represents the name of the policy expert interviewed and 4 represents the question number
EPU.WITS University	EPU.WITS.DR.CM.3	EPU-WITS, Education Policy Unit of Wits University, DR CM stands for the policy experts and 3 the question
IDASA	IDASA.MR W.3	Institute of Democracy Association of South Africa while MR W stands for the policy experts
Education Foundation	EDU.MR P:4	EDU.refers to the name of the policy experts and 4 for the question number.
NAPTOSA	Napt: Dr Bush 15	Napt for NAPTOSA, Dr Bos for the name of the policy experts interviewed
SAOU SADTU	SAOU. Mr PT.4	Mr PT refers to the union representative interviewed while 4 stands for the question
	The keys to the coding system. the middle tag i.e., the abbreviation with three letters which represent the last digit on the right hand side	

Finally, Table 4.5 below plus Annexure C7 at the end give examples of the final coding system with sub-themes and codes under the major themes or categorization. In this regard, nine major categorizations had been developed with 115 sub-themes.

TABLE 4.4: EXAMPLE OF A CODING SYSTEM WITH MAJOR AND MINOR THEMES

1. Policy Conceptualization/Understanding[22]

P.C. School Improvement[23]	P.C. – S I
P.C. Financial Assistance	P.C. – F A
P.C. Resource Redistribution	P.C. R R E
P.C. Resource Provision	P.C. – R P
P.C. Redress Imbalances	P.C. – R I M
P.C. Resourcing Equity	P.C. – R-EQ
P.C. Disadvantaged Schools	P.C. DI-Sch

[22] The data analysis indicated above was informed by the principles of grounded theory (or done inductively). According to Whetten (1989:492) three elements of grounded theory are: Concepts, Categories, and propositions. The generation of these in an interactive process, Policy conceptualization is a major category.

[23] School improvement is a minor theme derived from raw data (descriptive).

P.C. Quality Education	P.C. – Q/EDU
P.C. Alleviation of Poverty	P.C. – A/Po
P.C. School Development	P.C. – Sch/Dev
P.C. Policy-Misunderstanding	P.C.-P/MIS
P.C Policy coherence	P.C.P/CO
P.C Policy Integration	P.C.P - Integration

2. Implementation Process

I.P: Clear – guidelines	I.P. - Cl/GUI
I.P: Prescribed Conditions	I.P. - P/CON
I.P: Implementation Procedures	I.P. - IM/Pro
I.P: Implementation Structure	I.P. – IM/STR
I.P: Management Plans	I.P. – M/PL
I.P: Implementation Strategies	I.P. – IM/ST
I.P: Qualification Criteria	I.P. – Qu/cri
I.P: Advocacy Campaign	I.P. – AD/CA
I.P: Training/Workshop	I.P. – TRA
I.P: Budget Provision	I.P. – BU/PRO
I.P: Provincial Regulations	I.P. – Pro/RE
I.P: Tracking – System	I.P. – Tra/Sy
I.P: Cost-Saving	I.P.- Cost/S
I.P: Fee-Collection	I.P.- FE/Coll
I.P: Legal-Suit	I.P.- LEG/Sui
I.P: Functional approach	I.P. F-A

Fourthly, before completing the data analysis it became essential to take a final trip to the learning sites in order to make some follow-ups like administering the questionnaire. This was prompted by the realization of getting contradictory views among participants namely: principals, senior management teams (i.e., deputy principals and departmental heads) interviewed, and district officials. The contradictions were particularly noticeable in the following set of question items from the semi-structured interview instruments:

- How was the policy communicated to you?
- Why was the National Norms and Standard for School Funding introduced in schools?
- What are the main challenges being experienced in attempting to implement the NNSSF policy in Section 21 schools?
- What do you believe are emerging effects of the National Norms and Standard for School Funding on school development?

4.4 QUESTIONNAIRE DEVELOPMENT

The above-indicated questions were regarded as very central to the inquiry on school finance policy and its subsequent effects on equity. Furthermore, the realization of the policy intentions depends to a certain extent on how the policy is communicated, understood and implemented. On the basis of this development, it became imperative to seek further views. To pursue this I developed a questionnaire for the participants already stated. The decision to conduct this survey also allowed me an opportunity for a big quantitative sample that can serve as a signpost for further study.

Since initial data collected and analysed appeared to point to a discrepancy to what participants at senior level said and what actually happened. It became important to search further for the truth by administering the questionnaire to all the participants at school level, i.e., from the school principal down to the teachers. The questionnaire was administered to a total number of 83 teachers at the five case study schools with a response rate of 90% (see Annexure D). The decision to use the whole population (not the sampling methodology) was based on the (i) size of the population i.e., very small and (ii) easy access to the learning sites. Annexure D shows an example of a questionnaire.

Before getting to grips with the actual development of the questionnaire, **justification** for the use of the questionnaire became appropriate. The following key factors served as justification for the limited employment of the questionnaire in this research study.

In fact, it is critical to state that there is nothing inherently wrong to combine qualitative and quantitative approaches in the research design. The combination of the two can enhance the research studies. For the purpose of this inquiry, the following key factors served as justification for the limited employment of the quantitative approach in this qualitative study:

- The questionnaire was developed as a means of making follow-ups on the discrepancies observed between what school principals said and what the senior management team (especially departmental head) said about how the NNSSF policy was communicated at schools, e.g., Principal talked about workshops while other members of the team talked about meeting. In this regard, it became essential to include other members of the staff either to confirm the principal's position or that of the senior management team.

- The development and use of the questionnaire was also intended to do triangulation through obtaining multiple perspectives. Therefore the inclusion of the whole staff at school levels in the sample should be seen within the arena of triangulation and going deeper.

- The employment of the questionnaire in the late stage of the inquiry is a result of the strength of the quantitative approach, namely an emphasis on objectivity and the analysis of statistical breakdown of variables. In this inquiry, the development of the frequency tables on key variables such as communication and meetings can assist in strengthening the findings reached. The same thing can be said in confirming the propositions/constructs guiding the study.

- Since qualitative approach involves in-depth study, the additional use of the quantitative approach added a lot of breadth to the whole study especially at school level. This factor can enable the researcher to decide to generalize the findings or recommend further inquiry.

- Time constraints did not allow me to extend the process of the semi-structured interview to the additional sample.

- Finally, the usefulness of the quantitative approach in amassing a lot of data in a short space of time also served as the main reason for employing the questionnaires for specific follow-ups.

- **Analysis of the quantitative data**

Fifthly, after getting the responses from the field, i.e., the return of the questionnaires, I did further analysis which had more than 77% return rate where initial data was ordered into a spreadsheet. The results were then taken to the statistician for further computerization. Here, a highly sophisticated computer software called statistical package was used (University of North West). This resulted in the production of various graphs, frequency tables and condensed data that became very essential in the development of the research findings in both Chapters five and six.

4.5 ENSURING VALIDITY

In this qualitative study the issues of validity and reliability concerned me most. In order to ensure that the key findings of the inquiry are not only believable but also trustworthy, I employed several approaches and strategies as follows:

Firstly, my position as a student and an employee within the department that was attempting to implement the NNSSF policy created ethical dilemmas. The fundamental question was to declare or not? But after due consideration of all factors I felt compelled to declare my position as a doctoral student to my employer (see Annexure A.1) throughout the whole research process. The decision to declare my position upfront was not only based on ethical grounds but also on practical factors. For instance, due to this open declaration it became easy to obtain special leave for study purposes plus unrestricted access to information. This means that almost everybody at senior management level was aware of my academic study.

Secondly, for the main purpose of testing evidence and claims collected it became critical for me to engage in what is called “member checking”. In this regard, I subjected the data collected from one group of respondents to the other groups with the view to pick-up gaps or discrepancy. Furthermore, I became fortunate to have a coterie of colleagues (one, a fellow doctoral student) who were willing to interrogate the type of data I collected. This ensured that personal opinions and subjectivities did not creep in to contaminate the emerged findings.

Thirdly, I employed triangulation as a strategy for dealing with data which was not only confusing, but also at variance with each other, since data collection and analysis within the qualitative design are closely related to each other. In the process of comparing and contrasting the collected data I was able to detect some discrepancy from the data collected. At school level, the information given to me by both the principals and other SMT members, for example, Departmental Heads appeared contradictory. I dealt with this contradiction through the use of triangulation by developing a questionnaire for all teachers at the five selected schools. The results of this qualitative survey managed to deal with the identified contradiction since data was collected from multiple sources. Further discrepancies identified were handled through document analysis, which, among other things, include circulars, minutes of the following meetings: Departmental Management Meetings (DMC), Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM) and Council of Education Ministers (CEM)

Fourthly, my prolonged engagement (17 months) or stay in the five identified case study schools contributed immensely to the question of trustworthiness of the key findings as a whole.

Finally, I employed thick description throughout the data collection process by allowing key respondents the freedom to express their emotions and frustrations in context. In the course of this process, I made sure to distance myself emotionally so as to collect data that did not have any “noise” in it. The process of thick description was concluded by going back to the respondents interviewed with the drafts of the reports made with the view to verify key statements collected.

4.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Flyberg (2001:66) states that a case study details examination of a single example of a class of phenomena; a case study cannot provide reliable information about the broader class. Implicit in this statement is the doubt on the generalizability of the findings of the case study in general. While I agree with the lack of the generalizability of the findings of the case study report, I do think that there are ways and means of addressing the challenge of lack of generalizibility depending on the nature of the inquiry. The main aim is to confirm or not confirm the truth as carried out by the developed propositions or hypothesis.

In particular, the size of the probability sampling can be regarded as the limitation of this inquiry which has only five case study schools. But in qualitative design 'size' does not matter much what matters most is the depth of the study (not the breadth). And I do believe that the employment of a multi-site case study dealt with the limitations of the study to a certain extent. The said limitation was further addressed by closely and systematically studying the implementation of the funding policy in real life situations, i.e., the schools. This approach allowed me to be deeply aware of the context of reality at school level. This means that the interaction between the subjects and the lone researcher (myself) led to the sharing of concrete experience.

The context experience gained in the real-situation managed to a certain degree to cancel out the identified limitation of the case study methodology. Bias towards verification or falsification is regarded as one of the limitations of the qualitative study. It is assumed that a case study method maintains a bias toward verification, with the view to confirm the researcher's pre-conceived notion. Thus the study is of a doubtful scientific value. In dealing with this apparent limitation of a case study, one has to accept that perfect truth seldom exists, and that subjectivity may cut across all types of research methods because people as human beings are involved. However, for the purpose of this inquiry subjectivity has been minimized through the use of grounded theory which allowed the emerging factual data to talk to the theory or propositions. This means that there was no imposition of the data on the propositions. Furthermore, subjectivity was dealt with by establishing the authenticity of the data collected with colleagues within the department of education. In this regard, I selected three knowledgeable colleagues at senior management level and tested the data I received with them. This was further enhanced through the involvement of district managers of NNSSF at the regional level.

Another dimension which can be regarded as a limiting factor is "putting up a show" which I call window dressing by the key respondents. Indeed this possibility of window dressing may be more pronounced in qualitative survey than qualitative ones. Being mindful of this possibility as a researcher and employee of the department of education I dealt with window dressing at the level of the interview process by always looking for records or examples as hard evidence. Furthermore, the interview of many participants on the same issue assisted me to minimize the limiting effect of being given the distorted or inflated information.

Given the fact that my purposeful sampling for the semi-structured interview mostly included senior management team, i.e., principal, deputy-principal and departmental heads at school level, not ordinary teachers, the absence of interrogated perspectives (educators) through a face to face interview can be cited as the limiting factor of this qualitative study.

4.7 CHAPTER SYNTHESIS

Chapter four is basically about how both qualitative and quantitative data was generated. In this regard a total of forty-six key respondents constitute the main sample for this research study. Such a sample is spread across the five levels of data collection platform. This means that at each and every level of the education system i.e., national, provincial, regional, five case study school and policy experts purposeful sampling was done. Beyond the identification of the sample, data collection strategies such as semi-structured interview, profiles, and questionnaire were developed and piloted and later used to collect raw data. This was done. The accumulated raw data was later transcribed and subjected to further coding, themes-development and analysis.

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PHOTOGRAPH #5: MOSIMA SECONDARY SCHOOL: DEEP RURAL, 42 KM FROM CITY (FOUNDED IN 1982)

Self produced photograph (28/03/2003) 3 (e): shows the new additional administration block built from the infrastructure capital project.

Case Study School 5:

Mosima Secondary: Implementing the funding policy

Mosima Secondary School was established in 1982 firstly as a middle school serving learners mainly between the age of 12 and 15. The school became a secondary in 1992. The school is situated about 42 kilometres from Mafikeng, the capital city of the North West Province, in a village called Mantsa. This is a very impoverished village where the majority of the residents are either cattle stock farmers or unemployed. The school serves as the catchment area of the surrounding primary schools which act as feeder schools.

In addition to the old-buildings which were built by the parent-community, the school has recently been refurbished with some additional structures such as the laboratory, library, staff-room and administration block for senior management (see photograph 4.5 (e) which indicates the newly built physical infrastructure. The additional structure was funded by the Department of Education from the capital projects fund and built by the Department of Public Works. In addition, water and electricity are available at school level.

Mosima has a total enrollment of 710 learners to 22 educators within the classroom accommodation of 16 rooms, i.e., for 2003 academic year. In 2001 2002 academic years both learner-educator ratio stood at 1.32 and 1.31 respectively.