CHAPTER THREE

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

1. INTRODUCTION

There are various forms of contemporary public administration. Some institutions and organisations are partly autonomous but all deliver public services and respond to social issues. These organisations are not mutually exclusive because they have to depend on each other, and must work together to tackle complex situations in order to cope with varying levels of uncertainty, brought about by changing needs of the communities in which they operate. The biggest challenge that is constantly faced by these organisations is to ensure high quality public administration.

Public Administration in broad terms can be described as the development, implementation and study of government policy, Public Administration Review, (1996:247). It is concerned with the pursuit of the public good and the enhancement of civil society by ensuring that the public service is well-run, fair, and that the services are effective in meeting the goals of the state. As a discipline, Public Administration is linked to the pursuit of public good through the enhancement of civil society and social justice in order to make life more acceptable for citizens through the work done by officials within government institutions and to enable these institutions to achieve their objectives at all three levels. Du Toit and Van der Waldt (1999:93) indicate

that for any government to govern the majority of society's needs must be met wherever possible and by so doing public administration will take place.

Public administration as an academic field is relatively new in comparison with related fields such as political science. However, it is a multi-disciplinary field which only emerged in the 19th century. Concepts and theories from economics, political science, sociology, administrative law, management and a range of related fields are used to enrich this field of study. The goals of the field of public administration are related to the democratic values of improving equality, justice, efficiency and effectiveness of public services.

In this chapter the evolution of public administration as it refers to translating out of time, focuses on administrative phenomena by means of looking into the past in order to learn about the present. Caldwell, (1955:458); Raadschelders (1998:7) and Hood, (2000:16) argue that there are many examples of the use of historical research in studying public administration that could further our understanding of contemporary administration. The ongoing debates on the nature and legitimacy of public administration shall be elaborated upon as well as how public management relate to educational management. The environment in which public administration takes place as well as principles that govern the conduct of public functionaries shall be highlighted.

2. Definition of public administration

There is not yet general consensus about the definition of public administration, Fesler (1980:2); Bayat and Meyer (1994:3); Coetzee (1988:16); Fox, Schwella and Wissink (1991:2) indicate that it was difficult to define and describe public administration. Several examples are given about what public administrations are, and Coetzee (1988:16) says that "examples cannot be equated to definitions". However, a number of definitions exist, such as the wide meaning that could be ascribed to public administration based on an open system approach (Fox, Schwella and Wissink, 1991:16) where public administration is said to be:

- that system of structures and processes
- operating within a particular society as environment
- with the objective of facilitating the formulation of appropriate governmental policy
- the efficient execution of the formulated policy.

Coetzee (1988:18-20) provide some of the definitions of public administration as:

1. "The executive branch of government; civil service; bureaucracy; the formulation, implementation, evaluation and modification of public policy. The term represents a broad ranging, amorphous combination of theory and practice whose objectives are to promote understanding of government and its relationships with society, to encourage public policies that are more responsive to social needs,

and to institute managerial practices in public bureaucracies that are designed to achieve effectiveness and efficiency and, increasingly, to meet the deeper human needs of citizens. The term also refers to all employees of government except members of the legislature, the chief executive, and judicial officials, or high-level employees of government departments or agencies that make non-routine decisions that set standards to be carried by subordinates".

2.   "Public administration is decision making, planning the work to be done, formulating objectives and goals, working with the legislature and citizen organisations to gain public support and funds for government programs, establishing and revising organisation, directing and supervising employees, providing leadership, communicating and receiving communications, determining work methods and procedures, appraising performance, exercising controls, and other functions performed by government executives and supervisors. It is the action part of government, the means by which the purposes and goals of government are realised".

3.   "Public administration is a comprehensive and peculiar field of activity, consisting of numerous activities, processes or functions performed by public officials working in public institutions, and aimed at producing goods and rendering services for the benefits of the community. These activities or functions can be classified into three groups:

- The generic administrative activities or functions of policy- making, financing, organising, staffing, the determination of work procedures, and the devising of methods of control.

- Functional activities peculiar to specific services such as education, nursing, public works, or defence.

- The auxiliary functions such as decision making, data processing, planning, programming and communication, which are necessary to simplify or expedite the execution of the generic administrative functions and the functional activities" Coetzee (1988: 18-20).

The conclusion that could be drawn from summing up of the above-mentioned definitions could be that public administration consists of activities that form part of the executive, as opposed to the legislative and judicial powers of the administrative side of government. Its main objective should be to marshal human and material resources in order to achieve the objective of public policy. That is, the production of certain products and the rendering of services for the benefit of society in order to provide for an acceptable way of life for that society. The success or failure of these activities of the state depends upon how efficient public officials implement policies. Fox, Schwella and Wissink (1991:16) point out that the environment in which these officials perform their activities has a bearing on their ability to achieve goals and objectives of the government.

It should, however, be borne in mind that there are various definitions of what administration and management is and some authors indicate that there is no essential difference between administration and management, but that the difference lies only in their fields of application. Van der Westhuizen

(199:33) indicates that administration applies to civil service while management is a term used in industry, but both concepts refer to the same activity. The study of public administration could be approached from a historical perspective and by looking at the three categories that management/administration can be divided into i.e. functional, structural and administrative functions.

Among the few authors to define administrative history as a field of study, Caldwell (1955:455) defines it as "the study of the origins and evolution of administrative ideas, institutions and practices". While Raadschelders (1998:7) say administrative history is "the study of structures and processes in and ideas about government as they have existed or have been wanted in the past and the actual and ideal place of public functionaries therein".

One could argue, though, that the focus of administrative history should not be what it is; rather the primary questions should address what public administration is and how *that* should be researched. The text below attempts to put forward arguments that indicate that the study of public administration is intrinsically historical, aimed at grasping reality of the past.

There are various viewpoints on what public administration is and how it came to being as both a discipline and as a practice. Hanekom and Thornhill (1988:46) state that public administration developed historically within the framework of community services. This indicates that public administration as a practice could be traced to the historical epoch by looking at the literature that contributed to making public administration a science.

It was necessary to briefly look at the early writers on public administration in this study as some of their views could have had an influence on administration and policy development in South Africa and in education in particular.

3. Views on public administration

The historical development of public administration could be traced to the generations of writers on the subject. These generations of writers consist of (i) the pre-generation, (ii) the first generation, (iii) the second generation, and (iv) the third generation. Shafritz and Hyde 1997 listed these authors in a chronological order according to their contribution to the development of public administration as a field of study and classified them into five parts where (i) Part One is referred to as "Early Voices (1880 to 1920s)". These were authors like Von Stein and Woodrow Wilson, who argued that the object of administrative study to discover, first, what government can properly and successfully do, and secondly, how it can do these proper things with the utmost possible efficiency and at the least possible cost either of money or of energy.

 (ii) Part Two was referred to as "The New Deal to Mid-Century'' (1930 to 1950). The contributors were E. Pendleton Herring (1936); Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick (1937); Louis Brownlow, Charles E. Merriam (1937); Chester I. Barnard (1938); and Herbert A. Simon (1946) who advocated a rational approach to decision making, and Dwight Waldo (1953).

(iii) Part Three was the period between 1950 and 1960. Contributors during this period are grouped according to particular themes on which they wrote, for example, Frank J. Goodnow, Paul Appleby and Herbert Kaufman concentrated on 'The Political Context of Public Administration'. This theme has a profound influence on policy development because policies of government are in essence policies of the ruling party and the administration is formed by men and women who are voted into power by the electorates. A theme on "bureaucracy" received special attention from writers like Max Weber, Robert K. Merton, Downs, A, and Lipsky, M. (iv) Part Four commenced 1970 and ended in 1980. During this period authors wrote on a variety of themes. For example, H. G. Frederickson's work was on 'Toward a New Public Administration', while Naomi Caiden authored 'Public Budgeting Amidst Uncertainty and Instability'. Topics like 'The Possibility of Administrative Ethics' by Dennis F. Thompson and 'The Seven Deadly Sins of Policy Analysis' by Arnold J. Meltsner contributed to shaping public administration theory and practice in order to address the challenges of the 70s and 80s. Part Five is regarded as 'The Transition to the New Century'. During this period, authors such Camilla Strives; Patricia Wallace Ingraham; Michael Barzelay; and The National Performance Review, wrote on the following 'Towards a Feminist Perspective in Public Administration Theory'; 'Changing Work, Changing Workforce, Changing Expectations'; 'Breaking Through Bureaucracy'; and 'From Red Tape to Results: Creating a Government That Works Better and Costs Less', respectively.

When considering the 'Four Generations' as indicated in Wikipedia and the four parts detailing the chronological listing by Shafritz and Hyde, it is evident that those who contributed to the literature on public administration

when writing, were influenced by the problems they perceived as having an influence on how they were governed. The emphasis during the pre-generation was on the problems of morals and politics as well as on the organisation of public administration. The operation of the administration received very little attention at the time. After the birth of the national state, writers on public administration stressed the need for a model of the administrative organisation that would be able to (1) implement law and order, and (2) be able to set up defensive structures. This led to the birth of a modern science of public administration.

The works of Lorenz von Stein on public administration was considered as the first science of public administration because he integrated views from sociology, political science, administrative law and public finance and showed that public administration as a discipline was an interaction between theory and practice. These views are most relevant to this study because the success of any policy proposal is determined by how well it addresses the needs of those it was developed for, since policy implementation is the interface between the policy proposal and service delivery.

Woodrow Wilson who is also classified as one of the 'First-Generation' writers is considered to have influenced the science of public administration because of his arguments for:

1. the separation of politics and public administration
2. consideration of the government from commercial perspective
3. comparative analysis between political and private organisation and political schemes

4. indicating that effective management could be reached through training civil servants and assessing their quality.

Woodrow Wilson who wrote "The Study of administration" in 1887 was of the idea that civil servants should be knowledgeable on taxes, statistics and administration because policies of governments largely depended on revenue generated through tax and the spending was guided by the number of individuals that the policy is intended to address. His idea that there should be separation of politics and public administration influenced the writers who are classified as the Second Generation, such as Gulick and Urwick who believed that both private and public institutions could be improved through the application of Henri Fayol's scientific management theory.

The Third Generation writers questioned the idea of separation of politics and public administration. During this era there was a plea for bureaucracy, particularly in the United States after the Watergate scandal and the unsuccessful American intervention in Vietnam. Some authors argued that national bureaucrats might seek to increase their budgets while the pluralist maintained that officials are more public interest-oriented; that the spending might be more in areas of police and defence but not in areas like welfare state spending. This could be true in the case of public schools and the resources allocated to them.

The arguments brought up by these 'generation' authors as it were, were that the science of administration should focus primarily on governmental organisation and that public administration should be bureaucratic, raised a number of questions regarding public administration. However, the evolution

of public administration was discussed in this study to help classify literature on public administration into various schools of thought and also to understand what informed the different authors to write as they did. This classification provided an idea of the extent to which theoreticists started differing, Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux, (1992:280). Classifying literature into different schools of thought could assist in understanding the philosophy behind formulating the type of policies that are to be implemented and also the motivation behind redesigning policy during implementation. According to Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1992:280), new theories about administration can only be discovered through the study of administrative work. Therefore theories about the truth on policy implementation can be discovered and developed through studying policy implementation. Challenges that are faced by implementers could assist in understanding why certain policies are modified during the implementation phase or why they end up not seeing the light of day.

Authors like Golembiewski, R., Likert, R., Herzberd and Maslow, A., who form the School of Human behaviour, describe how administration takes place among people where informal characteristics of the organisation are included, are valuable as this indicated the root of street-level bureaucracy. While the views of M. Weber, H. Simon and others who introduced principles of bureaucratic models indicated that the control system should be based on rational rules in order to regulate the organisational structure and processes. The organisational structures are designed to ensure implementation of programs and to ensure accountability. The organisational structure should be in such a way that conflict is minimised. The conflict could be to wrong assumptions that informed the policy proposal or the

allocation of resources for implementing the policy or it could be due to capacity of the implementing agent. If, for instance, conflict relating to policy communication arises and the relevant organisational structures are in place, then the institution could address the conflict in time to allow implementation to proceed. When the formal organisational structure is not strong, in some instances the informal structures do assist provided the two have a common objective that should be achieved. Chester Barnard argues that any organisational units consist of both formal and informal structures because of its bureaucratic nature. Theories that should assist in decision making processes, such as using business techniques to public administration issues or using administrative processes should be clarified in order to reduce conflict.

Looking at the different schools and the contributors, one can conclude that public administration is universal and that it is performed by various people and taught by different universities. This raises a question of what should be acceptable Public Administration to be taught. The approach that should be followed as an acceptable curriculum will require that institutions justify why a particular approach was selected and regarded as acceptable. Methods used to arrive at such a decision should be explained to the students, Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1992:284). Practitioners are required to take decisions guided by logic and scientific methods.

Public administration is based on various theories and it could be viewed from (1) the all inclusive approach where all activities of an institution are regarded as part of administration. The exponents of this approach believe that administration is a planned approach to be used in solving different kinds of problems in different groups and individual activity. Botes, Brynard,

Fourie and Roux (1992.295) argue that this approach could not be used draw up generalisations and therefore a curriculum for Public Administration because the approach is illogical and not systematic, (2) the functional approach suggest that the administrative divisions are confined to white collar duties, (3) public management is basically a South African approach where basic principles of Public Administration are used as a point of departure. It is indicated by Botes, Brynard, Fourie and Roux (1992:297) that (i) even though government institutions functioned like a business enterprise and that they are managed, we cannot equate public management to public administration, (ii) public management is part of public administration, (iii) not all business management principles could be applied to Public Administration because in public institutions the norm is service, not profit; and (4) the generic approach that suggests that all activities of the organisation at various levels should be involved in varying degrees in the quest to achieve the goals of the organisation. The goal of institution should consist of (i) financing, (ii) organising, (iii) control, (iv) procedural analysis, (v) policy determination, (vi) decision-making, (vii) goal determination, and (viii) management. Management in this case is regarded as a link between functional administrative domain of public administration and the administrative domain.

4. Functional Definition

The search for a practical difference between politics and administration has been a central theoretical concern in traditional public administration. Scholars after Woodrow Wilson's writing on the study of administration have been preoccupied with establishing the possibility of distinction

between politics and administration. The Traditional Public Administration model by Palumbos (1988:95) highlights this view-point. According to this model, public administration should concern itself with the carrying-out of government policies that are developed by the politicians or established based on a political process. Allocations of funds in the form of grants are at administrative discretion of the legislature treasury, to facilitate the implementation of policy, Cloete (1994:68). The enforcement of policy rests with the political officials in the three spheres of government and by the judiciary. Public administrators are perceived to perform administrative activities that are aimed at the policy implementation function. However, public officials because of expertise gained by bureaucrats during implementation could advise their political superiors of the likely success of proposed policy changes. This role could also be enlisted during the formulation phase.

In practice, administrators through their interaction with the public are overtly influencing the policy process when they write regulations, establish work procedures and specific requirements of the regulation that assist in the implementation of the policy. This analog suggests that politicians and administrators share participation-making policy and in administering the policy.

5. Administration as a structure

Structural administration is a social process that is concerned with organising human and material resources in a unified system to accomplish a pre-

determined objective. This process will focus on the policy cycle processes including implementation, in particular of the government units such as Health, Finance, Security, Public Administration and Services, Education and other departments. The process relates to how activities form - what is referred to as department structures.

In Educational administration as one of the National Departments, the education system should be structured in such a way that departmental policies could be implemented. The government should provide the necessary legislation for the proper functioning of the system. Educational administration should provide the space and place, facilities and means to ensure that education takes place. The educational administration structure is divided into national, provincial, districts, circuits and school which is in line with the three tiers of government.

Within these administrative structures there are political structures which influence the type of policies that are developed and the processes that are followed during implementation. Its relevance to the administrative structure and policy implementation depends upon its instructive value. Its ultimate justification depends upon its success in getting the relevant role players to contribute to the solution of administrative structure and development of relevant policies to address the identified problems, Adams (1992:370). However, the relevance of the political structures within the administrative structure depends on its practical ability to control actions of politicians and to develop their capacity to create policies and programs that help the administration to deal with today's challenges and the shaping of society in the future.

6. The political and administrative system

Various methods have been used to explain where and how public administration fit in the administration of a state. The system approach could provide insight into the roles of organisational structure (in the case of this study, the role of school managers and educators in the assessment of learner performance), the political players and the electorates. The main objective of public administration in this context would be on the identification of decision-makers and determining the contributions of other role players.

Owens (1970:127) states that administration involves the process that helps the organisation to operate its mechanism in order to achieve its goals. This means that the central purpose of administration in any organisation should be to coordinate the activities of officials in accordance with certain policy, to coordinate the application of policies and to establish channels through which the policies could be improved by those who apply them.

Therefore those entrusted with carrying out the implementation at various levels and the corridor through which policy ought to travel, the implementation process including the boundaries that limit implementation should concern itself with coordinating, controlling and directing human energy in order to achieve educational objectives in the form of policies that have been formulated by the government. The administrative capacity of implementers to carry out the desired changes gives room for street level bureaucracies to function.

The challenges that these managers face are how to determine effectiveness, since there is no general criteria available. According to Van der Westhuizen (1994:364) parents, teachers and pupils could use a different evaluation criteria to the one that is used by the superiors and the department. It is generally accepted that school managers exert considerable amount of influence on the quality of education, Van der Westhuizen (1994:365); and the effectiveness of the school management has a direct bearing on how the school performs.

In schools, principals are managers who are also required to use human resources to achieve the goals that are stated in national, provincial and district policies. The National Curriculum Statement is one such policy where a school manager oversees its implementation. This policy is supposed to address the imbalances of the past education system.

Christopher, Jewell and Glaser (2006:335) indicate that "the way frontline workers in human service organisations implement policy is greatly influenced by how their jobs are structured within particular organisational settings. The effectiveness of the organisation is influenced by the environment and culture of that organisation. If the environment is favourable, educators will be able to carry out their functions efficiently. Assessment is also part of this function and it rests on sound and meticulous methods of recording learner achievement, Du Preez (2003:6). Assessment can succeed only when educators are committed, understand principles and processes and are willing to accept the underlying principles that are stated in National Assessment Guidelines, Kelly (1989:19). Assessment will

therefore require educators to constantly make decisions and judgments that are fair and reasonable.

The school manager should arrange work-related conditions that encourage success by utilizing the skills and abilities of their subordinates, Kroon, (1995:9). In order for the organisation to be effective in meeting its objective, the school manager should plan, organise, control, activate and communicate the activities of the school as a unit, Kroon (1995:13)) guided by the principles of reasonableness and fairness. As public officials they are expected to promote the welfare of society and should be fair to those affected by their decisions.

The environmental transformation model that consists of inputs – transformation process – outputs depicts the system that the school operates in. There are inputs such as broad governmental policies, human resources, vision and mission of the department, material available for teaching, methods used and other stakeholders' expectations of the school which put constraints on how the school should function, will have an influence on policies implemented.

The transformation processing model helps to explain how the needs, desires and wants of the school community and the community in which it operates are processed by the state. These inputs should be matched with the environmental constraints such as human capital, resources available and broad policies of the states. These inputs must be absorbed and processed by the political system power relations, structural systems that comprise of the bureaucratic expectations and the individual institutional system that has its

political and cultural dynamics in outputs. The outputs could be legislation, budget or a decision. The decisions at an institutional level could lead to job satisfaction and achievement of the overall quality of the intended beneficiary, or it could lead to the discrepancy between actual and expected performance.

Environment
Transformation Process

Inputs   **Outputs**

-environmental
constraints
-Human and
capital resources
-Mission and
broad policy
-Materials and
methods
- Equipment

Structural Systems
Bureaucratic Expectations

Cultural Systems   Political Systems
(Shared Orientations)   (Power Relations)

Individual Systems
(Cognition and Motivation)

Achievements
Job
Satisfaction
Absenteeism
Dropout rate
Overall
Quality

Discrepancy
Between
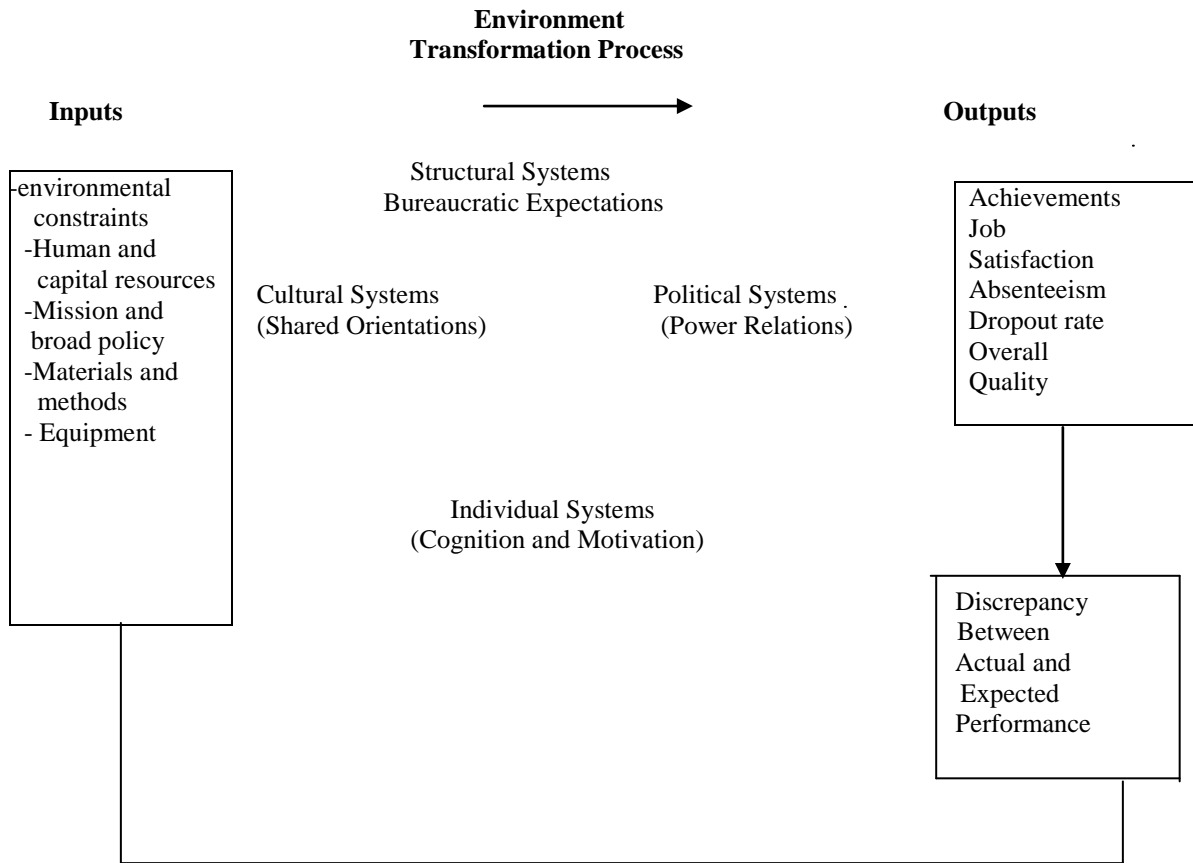Actual and
Expected
Performance

Figure 2

The model could shed light into the assessment processes followed by schools and the perceptions raised, Sayed and Jansen (2001:241) when they questioned:

- whether there was an audit on educators' preparedness in respect of the new curriculum

- what the culture of teaching and learning was

- whether the weakness of classroom practice, teacher management performance and the availability of materials were ever accounted for.

Jansen and Christie (1999:153) argue that the principle of introducing Outcomes Based Education (OBE) in schools was not grounded in curriculum change experiences of other countries with similar initiatives; that OBE will undermine the already weak culture of teaching and learning in South African Schools and escalate the administration burden of change, which is compounded by rationalization and restructuring and that OBE was an act of political symbolism of the state; an attempt to create policy credibility for a Ministry of Education that it is delivering on transformation, Jansen and Christie (1999:153).

Educational practices, according to Miller, Raynham and Schaffer (1991:277) is in fact one of the main determinants of the form and content of the struggle in the educational arena which is based on value systems. "What is happening, though, is that in line with overall government strategy, concessions are being made in order to accommodate the aspirations of sons and daughters of the middle class". This could be explained by comments by the Deputy Director-General for Further Education and Training as reported in the City Press dated 2006-12-17, that the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement and the new pass requirements for grades 10, 11 and 12 are aimed at improving the quality of education in general that the average child from a poor background would normally not have accessed.

In view of the above, it could be stated that the management of policy will be influenced by the administrative role of managers who have a responsibility

for authority over the implementation of educational programs and staff. They should establish systems of accountability of educators as well as ensuring that these educators are trained within the context of National Curriculum Statement.

The management teams should assist educators to continuously learn new ways improving their skills, knowledge and information that is work-related. Given the nature of schools as an organisation with cultural dynamics and belief systems, as well as a specific way of doing things in schools, these organisations by their nature are bureaucracies in themselves, because educators:

- Have a wide area of discretion when they perform their professional work.
- Goal expectations for the schools that they work in tend to be ambiguous, conflicting and vague.
- Performance orientation towards goal achievement is seen to be difficult and sometimes it tends to be difficult to assess.
- Have their activities distributed as official duties which are not changed easily.

Educators, according to Kwarteng (2008), use their creative skills, knowledge and educational systems to invent their own methods that would enable them to deal with their professional obligations. Since they are constantly in contact with the public (their customers who are learners) they use their discretion in implementing policies by determining how certain policies or part of certain policies could be implemented. The powers these

officials have, determine the effectiveness or ineffective implementation of policies. Lipsky (1980:5) refers to those who interact with the public and also having substantial discretion in the execution of their work as "street-level bureaucrats''. These street level bureaucrats should not be seen as only policy implementers but rather as crafters of policy, because they ought to respond to the individual needs or characteristics of the learners that they serve/teach. In the historically black schools educators have to deal with large classes where individualisation is not possible. The method of delivering content requires educators to employ mass production approach, when at best, these street level bureaucrats invert benign modes of mass processing that more or less permit them to deal with the public fairly, appropriately, and successfully and avoid giving in to favouritism, stereotyping and re-usable routine. This could create room where educators as service providers, ultimately become the policy makers.

7. Teachers and bureaucracy

Due to the nature of the education system and the large number of middle-men, the government had to make decisions which affect many people and the bureaucrats (teachers) had to implement those decisions. Lewis (1984) indicates that policy entrepreneurs are likely to be bureaucrats since they often are the ones who give life to administrative agencies, secure their power, and use them to get control of the policy process because of the nature of the knowledge that they possess. Administrators, according to O'Toole (1989:2) are involved in setting policy agenda and oversee the routine implementation of government programs. Therefore, they hold on to

their idea until an appropriate opportunity arises to influence or move it to the institutional agenda.

These administrators and educators had to keep records of learner performance, create reports and develop teaching programs as well as develop assessment tasks. The role of the government becomes an increasingly significant player in learners' daily lives including the fact that the government is in fact the dominant employer.

The assessment of learners requires many standardised routines and procedures to be performed. At the same time educators have power to control technical knowledge which could be classified as technocracy. In practice this arrangement could lead to informal influence to the interpretation and execution of policy. However, the regulatory structures that are in place to ensure that there is accountability, dictates the execution of most if not all processes within the hierarchical and formal division of power. Proper administrative structures should be in place. As indicated by Van der Westhuizen (1991:36) administration should mean support that is formal and regulative and is meant for the execution of a policy which already has been formulated by higher authorities, and would be accompanied by procedures. The implementation of as such policy is influenced by a number of factors such as political, socio-economic, global trends and modernity, communication, resources, ability of implementers, accountability and community values.

In the next section the factors and how they impact on the management of assessment policy is discussed.

8. 1. Political and socio-economic factors

The system of governance in South Africa is not completely free from political influence. Even the policy process reflects the politics of the day. What could be clearly seen are the parameters of political and administrative involvement in the functional stages of the policy cycle. Policy will be reflected in structural terms - as sets of recurring interactions among participants within arenas specialised by policy fields - as well as in functional terms. Essentially, these structural arenas are policy subsystems with are of varying density depending on the type of policy. The functional and structural terms of the policy poses challenges to implementation.

The introduction of assessment policy in the senior phase was influenced by systemic element and presented competing priorities for the government for allocating resources within the newly established Department such as the HIV programme and Early Childhood Development (ECD). The new approach to knowledge, content and pedagogy which incorporated in Outcomes-Based Assessment (OBA) was South Africa's new assessment framework which reflects the notions of learner-centeredness and the integration of knowledge.

This new approach was a radical breakaway from the traditional approaches to curriculum Jansen & Taylor (1993:44). Jansen (2000:8) indicates that some educators were stranded helplessly as they tried to come to grips with what they regard as a new mind and habit changing dogma. This approach

generated many unforeseen problems that resulted to the streamlining it into the New Curriculum Statements (NCS).

Challenges emanating from the Constitutional imperatives presented major organisational and procedural changes to reorganize almost every facet of civil society, including the transformation of education. These constitutional imperatives included access, equity, redress, quality, efficiency and democracy. These issues led to social expectations which forced schools to assess learners differently.

According to Carnoy (1999:37) and Waghid (2001:458) South Africa's politics and policies are intimately connected to and shaped by changes in the global political economy. The South Africa government had to be response to what happens elsewhere in the world. Reforms globally place pressure on the education system to respond effectively to the needs of the country, Carnoy (1999:37). Changes in the world economy have influenced the government to provide its citizens with a competitive; finance and equity driven education system reforms to enable them to compete on a global stage.

8.2. Global trends and modernity

The global trends in South Africa are evinced in several policy documents developed by the new government. The trends are reflected in policies throughout its education system. The Outcomes Based Assessment policy in particular clearly reflects trends towards an inclusive education approach, as practiced in European countries. The focus for education policy makers in South Africa after 1994 was to put policies in place that would transform the

education system and move it away from all influences of the apartheid regime. These policies were founded on the new Constitution.

8.3. Communication

The aim of the new reforms in education was to improve access and quality education and the way in which learners were assessed. These imperatives compelled the Department of Education to investigate fully the issues of assessment and support services in the country. In order to ensure that the many of the proposed policy changes are embraced by the community at large, South Africa relied on partnerships with teacher unions and organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), civil society and those who had vested interest in education. In order that the reforms could be understood and implemented as intended the following factors should be considered.

- Communications: that if the intended reforms are clearly and accurately communicated the likelihood of inconsistency in implementation could be minimised.
- Enforcement: Laws, regulations and by-laws should be developed to ensure compliance.
- The policy should be comprehensive enough in order to leave little room for discretion.

- The quality of staff, organisational structure and relationships within the units should be sound as they could promote or frustrate implementation.

- Availability of funds for training and development of resources has a direct bearing on the implementation process.

- The objectives of the policy should be clearly spelled out, including tasks to be performed in order to limit misrepresentation and misunderstanding.

- The needs of the community should be clearly defined in order to ensure that the policy addresses the identified needs.

- The political environment: If policy formulated does not address the general welfare of the citizens, political office bearers could be voted out of office. This forces office bearers to be accountable for their actions to the body politic.

This means that the successful implementation and management of assessment policies will require that those who are responsible for carrying out decisions must know what is expected of them, Edwards and Sharansky (1978:295). Glynn (1977:82) refers to this state of affairs as "policy standards that should be clearly articulated'' so that everybody knows what the aims of the policy are; what ought to be done and by whom. Communication is vital in this case and shall be influenced by how information in relation to policy is transmitted; whether timeliness were clearly indicated and whether the communiqué was simple enough and contained sufficient information without being too specific to hinder implementation.

8.4. Resources

To ensure that assessment is managed as intended in the policy guidelines needed to be drawn. These guidelines that are decided upon by a legislator and made known either in writing or verbally should help clarify which public goals should be pursued. They should ensure that the activities of all those concerned should be aimed at the realisation of those common goals. Hanekom, Rowland and Bain (1996:41) contend that effective implementation of a policy could be limited by lack of resources. Funds are a key for the implementation of any program, particularly so in the policy implementation phase because money is needed to:

- Finance staff recruitment and training needed for implementing the policy.
- Produce regulations and procedural manuals or codes.
- Finance organisational arrangements. For example, the policy implementation might require that some human resource be relocated and redeployed. This will necessitate changes in organisational structures.

In the context of the National Curriculum Statement, the administrative structures were meant to help the Department of Education to function at all levels. For instance, the Human Resources policy was to be developed to make provision for new and redeployed educators, and the financial policy that would assist the department in the acquisition required support material and remuneration of additional personnel.

Monitoring the implemented of the assessment policy and management thereof ensure continuity and to determine whether help was needed required funding. Monitoring of how the policy is managed would assist in determining whether policy as implemented assists in resolving the problem appropriately and whether the selected policy is being implemented properly. These concerns require that the program be maintained and monitored during implementation to assure that it does not change unintentionally, to measure the impact that the policy is having, to determine whether it is having the impact intended, and to decide whether it should be continued, modified or terminated.

The context in which the policy operates is important so that those in positions of power could be enabled to monitor and offer support and allocate the necessary resources.

8.5. Ability of implementers

The extent to which the assessment policy in the senior phase addressed the identified needs depended on the ability of educators and the management style of school principals and heads of department (HODs). The knowledge of policy content and context that the educators and school management teams posses and their capabilities to implement the specific policy have an influence on the implementation process. Hanekom, Rowland and Bain (1996:42) highlighted some of the factors emanating from implementers' dispositions that could influence implementation negatively, namely:

- Selective perception and acceptance of instructions in the case where policies are not in line with their own predisposition.

- Frustrating the implementation of a particular policy on which they disagree.

- Purposive opposition directed from the knowledge that they (implementers) are an important link and without whom public policy cannot be set in motion.

It is indicated that (i) Implementers of policies influence how policies are experienced and their impacts achieved. Some of the problems experienced in managing the implementation of assessment in the senior phase stem from the practice of their implementation. (ii) Although some theorists suggest that, if planned carefully, implementation can be managed through a top-down process of change controlled by central actors, the apparently powerless implementers at the interface between the bureaucracy and citizenry, are difficult to control because they have a high margin of discretion in their personal interactions with students, allowing them to re-interpret and reshape policy in unexpected ways. (iii) Educators as implementers of the assessment policy may react against efforts to impose policy change on them. As policy implementers they are likely to react negatively to new policies formulated by national-level policy makers without their involvement. Use of participatory approaches in the design and implementation of policy is necessary to engage them more actively in the management of programs such as the National Curriculum Statement.

Perceptions of leaders and managers could lead the implementers to see the policy as problematic or enforceable. For example, school managers who have a negative disposition towards Outcomes Based Education   and

Outcomes-Based -Assessment will indicate that this type of education failed in other countries, so why should it be implemented in SA schools; that nobody understands it; that it will produce learners who are certificated yet be illiterate as they cannot write or read. This type of disposition will frustrate the implementation of assessment practices that the new reform is proposing.

In order to counteract negative tendencies in the implementation process, it would require of policy makers to formulate policies after they have acquired a good understanding of the local needs, opportunities and constraints as well as the capacity and commitment of local stakeholders. There should also be a convincing attitude from the government to foster effective implementation and accountability.

Policy development should be seen as a means to foster synergy between educational financing; staffing; suppliers and school governance because they all need to complement each other in any policy program. It should be borne in mind that there is no universal solution to social needs. Every policy developed always creates new needs that should be addressed through development of other needs. It is important to know which conditions will make the policy possible, and also how that particular policy will change the existing environment so that an adaptable approach may be developed.

8.6. Accountability

An indispensable prerequisite for a democratic dispensation is for any government to be accountable, Cloete (1996). Institutions in the public sector are morally bound to be ethical and transparent in their administration and implementation of government programs. Accountability should be built into the policy process by placing ultimate responsibility for policy implementation squarely at the feet of a specific executive authority, agency or accounting officer**.** In terms of political responsibility, and notably the remote and exclusive manner in which education policy initiatives are originated within the governing elite of the ANC, government has struggled to demonstrate. Since policies are government programs and the implementing institutions are state owned, the organisation of these agencies and behaviours of people in those organisations should be based on ethical foundations of public administration, i.e. the respect of guidelines that governs their conduct in carrying out their work. These guidelines are derived from the body politic of the state and the prevailing values of society (Cloete 1994:62). The guidelines indicate that every public official, when carrying out an official duty, the legislature has final authority (political supremacy) and that (s)he is accountable to the public. "All the functionaries involved in the running of the state and public institutions should be bound by the same ethical and cultural guidelines" (Cloete 1994: 86).

The lack of accountability by government officials with respect to the achievement NCS targets and goals, particularly in managing assessment policy and implementing school based assessment, creates friction among party members and opponents of the program. The lack of clarity of who

should assume responsibility to enforce implementation and compliance could create defiance and varied interpretations of implementation.

In politics and particularly in representative democracies, accountability is an important factor in securing legitimacy of public power. Accountability differs from transparency in that it only enables negative feedback *after* a decision or action, while transparency enables negative feedback *before* or *during* a decision or action. Accountability constrains the extent to which elected representatives and other office-holders can willfully deviate from their theoretical responsibilities, thus reducing corruption. The concept of accountability as it applies to public officials in particular should be related to concepts like the rule of law or democracy and ethics.

Accountability is temporal. How administration in South Africa perceived accountability prior 1994 will differ from the post 1994 democratic election. The establishment of homelands and self-governing territories and the formulation of Group Areas Act as well as policies on separate education system was one form of public accountability of the then government to the voters. Although it appeared that public accountability took place; the institutions of government took actions that the citizens were uninformed about, Du Toit, Van der Waldt, Bayat and Cheminais (1998:81).

Public accountability in managing the implementation of assessment in the senior phase should mean that, (i) the responsibility of a government and its agents towards the public to realise previously set objectives publicly accounted for, (ii) commitment required from public officials to accept

public   responsibility for actions or inaction, and (iii) the obligation of a subordinate to keep his or her superior informed of execution of responsibility, Fox and Meyer (1996:1), Schwella, Burger, Fox and Muller (1997:94) indicate that accountability equals responsibility and obligation.

Banki (1981:97) refers to accountability as "A personal obligation, liability or answerability of an official or employee to give his superior a desired report of the quantity and quality of action and decision in the performance of responsibility specifically delegated''. This suggests that accountability and responsibility cannot be divorced from democracy. The subordinate has an obligation to render account for the responsibility given to him or her. In the case of assessment, the educator should be responsible to develop and administer assessment tasks in line with policy and Subject Assessment Guidelines (SAG). When educators conduct themselves in a manner that is above reproach, and are able to justify any alternative actions taken and own up their deeds, such officials are being accountable, according to Cloete (1994:6). The actions of these political office bearers and public officials should be based on community values. Their actions should, therefore, be aimed at addressing the needs and wants of the community and society they serve. Being accountable also means being respectful of the values held by society.

By being accountable to superiors for their official actions, junior officials should constantly inform their seniors about development in their line function. These will include that the official does not act outside the scope of his authority, Cloete (1994:73). Through organisation and proper division of

work, awareness of accountability will be created in officials, since they will always have a superior to whom they have to report.

Transparency is required in managing the implementation of assessment because values and facts used to decide why specific work should be done and why a specific line of action should be followed need to be clarified, Cloete (1994:73). This is done to ensure that officials do not misuse their offices, abuse their powers and to prevent waste and misappropriation of public property. Subordinates should continuously update their superiors on developments in their fields of specialisation. This means that supervisors need information to make decisions as much as the public has the right to information, which is one of the eight principles of "Batho-Pele".

Through the government *lekgotla* as well as public debates, the political office bearers as well as public officials are able to explain and justify why certain decisions were implemented. This will not always be possible as some of the public officials are not directly involved in implementation of assessment policy but had to speak for education.

Public institutions alone cannot ensure accountability. Because of a large number of people employed in the public service, there is a danger of bureaucratic tendencies because of expert decisions to be taken. To curb these tendencies, Parliament makes provision for the establishment of professional boards and bodies that help regulate their own professions. For example, all practising educators are expected to register with the South African Council of Educators. These bodies are supposed to exercise

discipline over their members and ensure that they adhere to their code of conduct.

Public institutions exist for and on behalf of the community. Schools as places of learning will survive only if and when communities take responsibility for them. This means that this responsibility, in the education system, should be based on the code of conduct relevant to the stake-holders in the system. Educators are responsible for learners during school hours and in turn they (educators) are accountable to school governing bodies and educational superiors. When educators do not implement policies the educational authorities should be held accountable for the actions of educators.

All participants within the education system should be subjected to the rule of law in the land as it is a guarantor of accountability. This law should hold all to a common code of conduct which is appropriate. The appropriate behaviour could also be influenced by the political structure within which the school system operates, which will be reflected by the system and structures of accountability. Educators are required to be accountable but remain autonomous in performing their functions. Marrow (1989:5) posits that to claim autonomy means claiming to be governed in a special kind of way. "An autonomous teacher does not ignore the wishes and interest of others - parents, pupils, governments, employers - such a teacher does reserve the right to consider such wishes and interest in the light of appropriate criteria. The wants and wishes cannot be simply taken as given starting points", Marrow (1989:5). The educator, when implementing assessment policy, has to consider what is good for the community in light of educational choices to

be made. The teacher has to use his professional judgment to make choices that are within the prescription of the educational policy so that when giving account for his choices, he is covered.

8.7. Community values

The assessment of learner performance as stated in the National Protocol on Recording and Reporting defines the course of action that needs to be followed and be accountable to. For this policy to be regarded effective, it should be seen to be fair, measurable, practically implementable and acceptable. The policy shall be acceptable when it endures a specific mode of conduct that is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence, Stenhouse (1987:4). Krectner and Kinicki (1995:97). Hanekom, Rowland and Bain (1996: 157) believe that these codes of conduct and end-state of existence can be ranked according to their importance to form belief systems which is referred to as value systems. In order to rank these modes of conduct the person has to use a personal subjective or objective point of view.

The personal value judgments that public officials display could sometimes lead to either dilemma if the official does not adhere to rendering unbiased service, guided by professional norms and within the content and spirit of the law, particularly in a country like South Africa that has many cultures. Since public officials are members of different communities, they will also be affected by value judgments and in most cases they will sympathise with the values held by individuals and groups in their society, Hanekom, Rowland and Bain (1996:157). Public officials should be guided by the principles of

fairness and reasonableness and act consistently without favouritism, acting above suspicion, performing official duties without ulterior motives and not colluding with anyone else for gain. This will ensure that public administrators and officials will develop policies that address the needs of communities and not because of personal gains to the policy entrepreneurs.

The principle of *Ubuntu* which if based on the Constitution of South Africa (1996) asserts that 'I am human because you are human', emphasise the dignity of man; Manifesto (2001:16) implies that it is the responsibility of each policy actor to develop policies that are feasible guided by a commonly identified problem that need a collective action. This suggests that the crafting of assessment policy was influenced by basic needs and guided democratic principles, where popular participation is encouraged. This principle of *Ubuntu* should be reflected in the manner in which educators manage the implementation of assessment in school.

9. Conclusion

For a public administration to offer quality service as efficiently as possible the country would need an improved administrative service. However, an improved public administration poses some challenges, particularly in policy development and implementation. The administration through governance should set targets for performance and set standards that should be monitored in order to hold public officials accountable for their public actions. Communities and citizens as consumers of public services expect policies

that are effective and feasible and judge service delivery based on their value judgment.

Administrative activities should be based on the principle of active involvement of the community and it should reflect the will of the majority. The strength of a public service lies in its values, which provide the foundation for services for the benefits of the community. These values should articulate clearly the principles of non-political alliance, impartiality, professionalism, responsiveness and accountability that should be held by all public officials. Public bureaucracies, being the repositories of a great deal of knowledge and information, are prominent participants in policy issue networks.

Public officials, particularly those in the highest posts should always be sensitive to the political implications of their actions, bearing in mind that administrative executive institutions in the public sector do, in fact, comprise integral parts of the political organisation of the community and the work of these officials is always performed in a political milieu.

The education system as a functional arrangement of public administration is influenced by the political decisions and policies of the ruling party. The policies developed, laws and regulations passed by the legislature, reflect the mandate that is given by the citizens by their vote. These regulations, laws and policies should be aimed at the promotion of the general welfare of society. Their success depends on the availability of resources and a clear understanding of societal problems and needs. The effectiveness of any

policy is dependent on whether its intentions were clear and whether sufficient resources were allocated.