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*School Self-review:
towards a theory for practice.*

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Educational Administration
at Massey University.

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Abstract

An on-going programme of school self-review has been a mandatory requirement for schools in New Zealand since 1993. This study takes the view that the nature of school self-review is not well understood by practitioners or policy makers, that the motives or purposes behind its promotion by those in authority are often mistrusted, that there is a need for a clarification of what is meant by the term, and that an improved theoretical understanding would aid practice.

Following a review of the literature in the field of educational evaluation and school improvement, the study sets out to survey the nature of school self-review currently being carried out by primary and intermediate schools in New Zealand and the reasons why schools have become involved in self-review. The approaches followed by schools vary in frequency, scope and focus, decision-making, and in methods of data gathering and analysis. School self-review is generally seen by practitioners as aimed at whole school improvement with public accountability as a somewhat reluctantly tolerated by-product of the process.

The findings of this survey are combined with conclusions from the literature, and with ideas from some current theoretical perspectives, in an effort to identify a number of theoretical conditions and considerations which may guide those interested in the design and implementation of programmes of school self-review.

The concepts of evaluation and review are examined, and the relationships between evaluation and review explored and discussed. A collaborative, reflective and critical approach to school self-review is suggested as a professional-contextualist alternative to the pervasive technocratic reductionalist approach.

School self-review is presented as a functionally integrated, strategically planned, but contextually responsive programme of collaborative self-reflective/self-evaluative activity operating within tight constraints of time, resource, and methodological imprecision, which is dependent upon the participation and knowledge-in-action of participants.

To successfully develop and implement such a notion of school self-review schools must develop conditions supportive of free, open and honest communication amongst all participants aimed at the uncovering, clarification and redefinition of values,

expectations and intentions. Systematic, on-going, functionally integrated but manageable data collection processes, operating within illuminative, progressive, participative, and responsive inquiry modes, which are dedicated to the discovery of truth and the interests of social justice, are seen as key conditions for successful school self-review. Collaborative analysis; reflective critique; democratic, culturally sensitive and morally just leadership; together with, commitment to personal learning and self-improvement action; the development and holding of a shared vision for improvement; and, the formulation of consensually determined plans of development action, are also suggested as necessary conditions.

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Chapter One

Introduction

The idea of school-self review as a means of improving both the accountability of schools and their effectiveness has been promoted in various education systems around the world over recent decades. In New Zealand the advent of "self-managing" schools as a result of extensive reforms to the administration of education in 1989 and by way of subsequent regulation has given an increased recognition to self-review. In particular the promulgation of the National Education Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1993b) and the attempts by the Education Review Office to promote the concept as a means of complementing external review (see for example: The Education Review Office, 1994), have seen schools move rather hesitantly and uncertainly towards implementing a range of review practices in order to comply. Uncertainty on the part of schools as to just what is meant by "school self-review", how to go about it, and *why* it should be done (other than simply to "comply") has resulted in a very uneven adoption of the concept across the country. An apparent unwillingness of the Ministry of Education to provide any analysis of what exactly was intended when the requirement for an "ongoing programme of self-review" was included in the 1993 National Administration Guidelines, together with a mistrust of anything actively promoted by the Education Review Office, and lack of acceptance by many schools of the need for public forms of accountability, have undoubtedly contributed to the current state of confusion and the seeming reluctance of many schools to adopt on-going, systematic and rigorous self-review programmes.

This study is an attempt to examine the concept of school self-review, to improve understanding of the forms in which it is currently being used in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools, and to identify the reasons why some schools have seen it as something worth doing. It is also hoped as a result of the study, to offer some guidelines for, and points for consideration by, those interested in designing and implementing school self-review programmes.

The study commences by overviewing the field of educational evaluation, looking briefly in Chapter Two at a number of influential approaches or "models" which have emerged over recent decades, and asks the question: "Where does 'school self-review' fit into this very broad and diverse area of educational theory and practice?" Section Two of this chapter reviews four key related areas: school effectiveness, school

development, school improvement, and, organisational learning; before investigating the implications of these fields for school self-review. Section Three reviews theory and practice with school self-review, or similar processes, in some other countries including: The United Kingdom, Australia, Belgium, The United States and Israel. The fourth section describes some New Zealand experiences with school self-review in the past and since the "Tomorrow's Schools" (Picot et al, 1988; Lange, 1988) reforms with their emphasis on self-management at the institutional level. A number of resource packages and guidebooks or manuals are also examined. The question, "Why self-review was introduced into New Zealand?" is explored. The Chapter concludes by identifying some common themes throughout the literature which seem to have theoretical and practical implications for policy development, implementation, and the practice of school self-review in New Zealand schools.

The methodology of the study as a whole and, in particular, of the survey of primary and intermediate school principals presented in Chapter 4 is outlined and discussed in Chapter 3. The method of this study follows three broad approaches: (1) a general overview of the literature associated with evaluation and school self-review from New Zealand and overseas; (2) a questionnaire survey of a sample of practising New Zealand primary and intermediate principals; and, (3) an attempt to analyse and clarify concepts and assumptions from the literature and to synthesise these into a prototype theoretical framework which may give a theoretical base for improved practice. In essence the study method attempts to combine theoretical ideas with the practical experiences and approaches described in the literature and resulting from the survey. It concludes by attempting to identify a number of conditions and considerations for practice.

Chapter Four reports on the findings of a survey carried out to investigate the nature of school self-review processes currently operating in New Zealand schools, and the reasons why schools have adopted self-review. A postal questionnaire survey of 34 New Zealand primary and intermediate schools was conducted to give an overview of the nature of self-reviewing in the sample. Some tentative propositions are suggested and possible focus points for further investigation are identified. The purposes of this survey were:

1. to obtain an indication of the forms of school self-review currently being used, or which have been used by schools in the past;
2. to identify the reasons given by schools for undertaking school self-review;
3. to gauge the perceptions schools have of the effectiveness of their self-review schemes in achieving their purposes;

4. to gain information on how schemes were implemented and the sorts of problems experienced;
5. to provide a base of information to be used in conjunction with theoretical perspectives to identify a number of conditions and considerations for the practice of school self-review.

The following definition of school self-review was adopted for the purposes of the survey:

"Any information-gathering and evaluative process conducted by all or some of the individuals or groups having a direct interest or involvement in the day-to-day work of the school. (Such as: students, teachers, administrators, board members, parents, other employees.)"

In Chapter Five an attempt is made to clarify definitions and concepts associated with school self-review, to explore the conceptual relationships between those concepts and to organise these concepts into a prototype framework which offers a structure for developing some theoretical perspectives. As well as looking conceptually at evaluation and school self-review, the chapter also attempts to relate school self-review to a number of ideas from the literature which seem to offer some theoretical dimensions within which school self-review may operate.

Chapter Six seeks to move some way towards suggesting some of the principles, assumptions and practical guidelines which are central to a successful approach to school self-review in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools given the conclusions drawn from the preceding chapters. A profile of what constitutes school self-review, and some conditions which appear necessary for successful self-review, is offered as a guide to assist those interested in the design and implementation of school self-review programmes. This chapter should not be regarded as a definitive statement. Rather it should be seen as an introduction to a number of theoretical propositions and practical guidelines which the study suggests need to be reflected upon by those involved in the development and implementation of school self-review.

Conclusion

The study aims at combining empirical and conceptual approaches in an attempt to gain understanding and to clarify meanings related to the theory and practice of school self-review in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. The review of the

literature in the field of educational evaluation, school improvement and effectiveness, and in the area of school self-review and self-evaluation, seeks to overview the theoretical and research context of the study and to provide a base of knowledge for the subsequent sections of the study.

This knowledge, together with additional insights into the nature of school self-review, its purpose and success which emerged from the survey of principals, will be used to formulate a number of propositions about school self-review as currently practiced in some New Zealand schools and to suggest areas for future research and study. From this knowledge base the nature of school self-review will be analysed in terms of its relationship to evaluation and some theoretical perspectives from the literature which seem to offer to the notion of school self-review the beginnings of a theoretical frame. From the theoretical and conceptual perspectives a number of guidelines and considerations for the design and practice of school self-reviewing will be suggested which it is hoped will be helpful for those interested in designing and implementing programmes of school self-review.

The study does not set out to be a text book on "how to do it", (other sources are available for this purpose, some of which are reviewed in Chapter 2) but rather the intention is to bring together and clarify ideas, understandings and propositions which will assist practitioners in the development of school self-review initiatives from within a prototype theoretical framework. It is also hoped to open the concept of school self-review for critical analysis and further research by others. In this way this study is a preliminary exploration of theory and practice in an area of educational management which currently is open to wide-ranging, contradictory and incoherent understanding and application.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

School self-review has emerged in varying forms, under a range of names, and for varying reasons in different education and school systems at different times. This chapter attempts to review the literature associated with school self-review and related concepts within the overall context of educational evaluation and school development. By reviewing the literature in this way it is hoped that the current attempts by school professionals to introduce and use school self-reviewing systems in their schools will be given a historical and theoretical context which will help to inform the development of a body of knowledge and theoretical basis for further research.

Beginning with an overview of the general field of Educational Evaluation, a number of analyses of approaches and forms, or models, of evaluation are presented, including: Stakes' (1976) *Prototypes of Curriculum Evaluation*; House's (1980) *Taxonomy of Major Evaluation Approaches*; Stake's (1981) analysis of evaluation as *Persuasions*; Norris's (1990) analysis of *Contrasting Pairs* of methodological or philosophical approaches; Scriven's (1967) "formative" and "summative" distinctions; MacDonald's (1976) *Political Classification*; Werner's (1978) *Critical Theory Analysis*; and, Coomer's (1986) three "traditions" of evaluation. It is suggested that school self-review, rather than being closely associated with any one such approach, has borrowed eclectically from the full range: that school self-review is not so much a methodological or philosophical "approach", "model", "type", "persuasion", or "form" of evaluation, but, rather, a type of evaluative programme which can utilize a range of approaches, methods, and forms from sometimes seemingly contradictory theoretical or philosophical perspectives.

Section 2 reviews some of the more significant literature in the fields of School Effectiveness, School Development, School Improvement, and Organisational

Learning, identifying a number of aspects from that body of literature which seem to have particular relevance to the effective and purposeful practice of school self-review.

The third section surveys the literature on school self-review and similar practices in some other parts of the world, including: The United Kingdom; Australia; Belgium; The United States; and, Israel. Some past New Zealand experiences related to school self-review are presented in Section 4, together with more recent political and bureaucratic influences. A number of currently available resource packages and guidebooks on school self-review are discussed. The chapter concludes by bringing together some of the common themes or "lessons" emerging from the literature presented in the previous sections, categorising them according to lessons to do with: culture; time and resources; implementation strategy; purpose; methodology; organisational learning; and some others.

SECTION 1

Educational Evaluation: An Overview

Throughout the development of educational evaluation theory numerous attempts have been made to analyse and classify distinctive kinds, types, forms, or models of evaluation.

Stake (cited in Jenkins (1976) identified six "prototypes" of curriculum evaluation: Tyler's Evaluation Model; Institutional self-study; Stake's Countenance Model; Stufflebeam's CIPP model; Taba's Social Studies Evaluation Model; and Scriven's Goal-Free Evaluation.

Figure 2.1

Stake's Prototypes of Curriculum Evaluation (After Jenkins, 1976)						
PROTOTYPE:	Tyler's Evaluation Model	Institutional Self-study	Stake's Countenance Model	Stuffle-beam's CIPP Model	Taba's Social Studies Evaluation Model	Scriven's Goal-free Evaluation
KEY EMPHASIS:	Instructional Objectives	Staff self-study	Description and judgement data	Decision-making	Cause and Effect Relationships	Evaluator's Goal-free checklist
PURPOSE:	To measure student progress towards objectives	To review content and procedures of instruction	To report the ways different people see the curriculum	To facilitate rational and continuing decision-making	To seek simple but enduring explanation of what works	To assess effects of program
KEY ACTIVITIES:	Specify objectives; measure student competence	Discuss program; make professional judgements	Discover what audience wants to know about; observe; gather opinions	Identify upcoming alternatives; study implications; set up quality control	Exercise experimental control and systematic variation	Ignore proponent claims; follow checklist
KEY VIEWPOINT USED TO DELIMIT STUDY	Curriculum supervisor; teacher	Classroom teacher; administrator	Audience of final report	Administrator; director	Theorist; researcher	Evaluator
OUTSIDE EXPERTS NEEDED:	Objectives specifiers; measurement specialists	None, but possible outside authentication or technical help.	Journalists; social psychologists	Operations analysts	Research designer; statistical analysts	Jurist; curriculum analyst
EXPECTED TEACHING STAFF INVOLVEMENT:	Conceptualize objectives; give tests	Committee discussions	Keep logs; give opinions	Anticipate decisions, contingencies	Tolerate experimental constraints	Make the program accessible
RISKS:	Oversimplify school aims; ignore processes	Exhaust staff; ignore values of outsiders	Stir up value conflicts; ignore causes	Overvalue efficiency; undervalue student aims	Artificially ignore personal values	Overvalue documents and record keeping
PAY-OFF:	Ascertain student progress	Increase staff leadership and responsibility	Broad picture of curriculum conflicting hopes	Curriculum sensitive to feedback	Get rules for developing new programs	Data on effect with little cooption

<i>The <u>connoisseurship</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to honour expert judgement;</i>
<i>The <u>democratic</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to grant protection against personal exposure;</i>
<i>The <u>discrepancy</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to emphasize formal objectives and their impact;</i>
<i>The <u>ethnographic</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to emphasize cultural relationships;</i>
<i>The <u>experimental</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to control the treatments so that a particular effect can be clearly assessed;</i>
<i>The <u>goal-free</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to reduce bias by having the evaluator avoid contact with program personnel and rhetoric;</i>
<i>The <u>illuminative</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to portray as readers themselves might see things;</i>
<i>The <u>judicial</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to optimize presentation of the cases for and against;</i>
<i>The <u>naturalistic</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to observe ordinary events in natural settings;</i>
<i>The <u>responsive</u> persuasion:</i>	<i>to fix on concerns and meanings held by key constituencies.</i>

Stake has differentiated the persuasions according to their particular functional emphasis or purpose, accepting that the categories are not distinct types, with both practical and theoretical overlap and merging.

More recent attempts at analysis have tended to base categorisation on the practitioner's and theorist's methodological or philosophical orientation. Norris (1990) lists several apparently contrasting pairs of such approaches:

"interpretive	versus	technical,
qualitative	versus	quantitative,
ideographic	versus	nomothetic,
agricultural-botany paradigm	versus	the social anthropological
		paradigm,
cases	versus	samples
naturalistic	versus	scientific"

Norris (1990, 102.)

Scriven (1967) differentiated between the "**formative**" and "**summative**" roles of evaluation. He did not see formative and summative evaluation as intrinsically different types of evaluation, but rather as labels to distinguish two fundamentally differing uses of evaluative information.

"...formative and summative evaluation are different in the functions they serve and (hence) the destination to which they go. *Formative evaluation* is evaluation designed, done, and intended to support the process of improvement, and normally commissioned or done by, and delivered to, someone who can make improvements. *Summative evaluation* is the rest of evaluation: in terms of intentions, it is evaluation done for, or by, any observers or decision makers (by contrast with developers) who need evaluative conclusions for any other reasons besides development."

Scriven (1991, 20)

"**Informal**" and "**formal**" evaluations were distinguished by Adelman and Alexander (1982, 5-6). Informal evaluation refers to the constant appraisals made to educators as part of their everyday work in response to the need for informed on-going decision making. Evaluation programmes set up for specific purposes as part of institutional policy, on the other hand, are regarded as formal evaluation. 'Formal' evaluation differs from 'informal' evaluation by: being public rather than private, resulting from deliberate institution-wide evaluative policy; and, by having processes and criteria which are open to public scrutiny. In practice the two are at opposite ends of a continuum, merging to varying degrees according to need and circumstance.

MacDonald's Political Classification:

MacDonald (1976) analysed evaluation from a political perspective. By examining roles, goals, audiences, issues and techniques he has proposed three political ideal types of evaluation: **bureaucratic**; **autocratic**; and, **democratic**. MacDonald saw traditional evaluation studies as typically tending to fall into the first two types, with democratic evaluation (in 1976) as an "emerging model, not yet substantially realized, but one which embodies some recent theoretical and practical trends"(op.cit. 132).

The political nature of evaluation is also recognised by House (1980) who contends that evaluations "...can be no more than acts of persuasion." (op cit. 72.) Evaluation depends upon the power of the communicator to convince an audience that it represents "truth": it "aims at persuading a particular audience of the worth of something or that something is the case by an appeal to the audiences reason and understanding." (op cit. 73).

Figure 2.3

Barry MacDonald's Political Classification of Evaluation Studies

	BUREAUCRATIC	AUTOCRATIC	DEMOCRATIC
Serves:	Government funding agencies	Government funding agencies	The whole community
Values:	Those of the office holders	Evaluator's perception of the bureaucracies legal and moral obligations	Evaluator recognises value pluralism and seeks to represent a range of interests
Evaluator's Role:	Management consultant	Expert adviser	Broker in exchanges of information between groups
Criterion of Success:	Client satisfaction	Client compliance with recommendations	The range of audiences served
Method-ology:	Must be credible to policy-makers and not lay them open to public criticism	Must yield scientific proofs to satisfy academic standards.	Data gathering and presentation must be accessible to non-specialist audiences
Contractual arrangement:	No independence, no control over use of information, no court of appeal	Non-interference by client; Evaluator retains ownership of study; if recommendations are rejected, policy is not validated.	Evaluator offers confidentiality to informants and gives them control over his use of information they provide.
Report:	Owned by bureaucracy and lodged in its files.	Lodged in the files of the bureaucracy, but also published in academic journals.	Non-recommendatory
Key Concepts:	service, utility, efficiency	principle and objectivity	confidentiality, negotiation, accessibility
Key Justificatory Concept:	"the reality of power"	"the responsibility of office"	"the right to know"

After MacDonald (1976, 132-34)

Critical Theory Approaches

Werner (1978), drawing on the social epistemology of Jurgen Habermas, sees evaluation as a sense-making activity and proposes three major paradigms: ends-means; situational; and, critical

Figure 2.4

A Critical Theory Analysis of Evaluation

Werner's "sense-making" paradigm:	Habermas' knowledge consitutive interest form:	Purpose:	Focus:	Orientation:	Reality:	Relationship of Evaluator and Evaluated:
means-end	empirical analytic (technical interests)	To disclose reality from the perspective of possible technical control over the objectified processes of nature	On the means (ie teaching methods and materials) to the ends (ie objectives or intended outcomes).	Technical or technological	scientific-objective	Evaluator as expert, and sole producer of knowledge; Evaluated as consumers or objects of knowledge
situational	historical-hermeneutic (practical interests)	To disclose reality from the perspective of the understanding of meaning	On uncovering the meanings of an educational program or event	Situational/interpretative	subjective-interpretive	Evaluator and evaluated in a relationship of balanced reciprocity
critical	critical/self-reflective (emancipatory interests)	To disclose reality from the perspective of making problematic that which is taken for granted	On self-reflection and awareness of beliefs that inform everyday practice	Critical/ self-reflective	social-political	Mutual self-reflection; Evaluator as therapist/ facilitator;

After Norris (1990, 103-104)

sense-making activities (or evaluation). Werner's paradigms are akin to Habermas' three forms of knowledge-constitutive interests: empirical analytic (or "technical interests"); historical-hermeneutic (or "practical interests"); and, the critical/ self-reflective (or "emancipatory interests") (Habermas, 1978 and Held, 1980):

Similarly, Coomer (1986, 172) suggests that the traditional forms of evaluation fall into **two basic "traditions"**: the *empirical-analytic*; and, the *interpretive* traditions. She proposes a third "**critical** alternative" to overcome what she sees as weaknesses of the more traditional approaches:

- inadequate understanding of human behaviour;
 - responsibility is relinquished;
 - underlying purposes of education are not clarified;
 - limited access to information;
 - the evaluator is expert;
 - emotive view of values;
 - political conservatism;
 - oversimplification of complex problems;
 - inadequate examination of structural conditions;
 - inadequate examination of causal connections;
 - inadequate theory of communication;
 - no way of understanding conflict
 - ahistorical understanding and weak transition from theory to practice.
- (op.cit., 179-188)

For Coomer, the critical alternative involves "nonexploitative relations between persons" and "the restoration of man as a conscious moral agent...". (op.cit., 188). Critical evaluation seeks knowledge to enlighten and inform the social and moral consciousness of individuals, freeing them to act beyond the unconscious restrictions of their own socialisation in intellectually and morally responsible ways.

Coomer identified four significant implications from critical theory for educational evaluation:

1. A critical approach offers a response to the credibility crisis which has emerged in the public mind as a result of traditional approaches to evaluation being seen as failing to deliver acceptable levels of public accountability. By providing an avenue for undistorted discussion and consensus based on rigorous moral and ethical standards, public confidence in the legitimacy of evaluative processes may be restored.
2. Critical social theory offers an analysis of knowledge which helps identify methodologies most suited to answering particular evaluative questions.

3. Multiple layers of interpretation of social reality are able to be considered through a critical theory approach which takes into account "false consciousness", "ideological beliefs", and "self-reflection".

4. A critical approach to evaluation offers a theory of communication which allows for a process of dialogue and consensus where all arguments are openly and freely examined for their justifiability and a decision is reached that is satisfactory to all participants. Although this is an ideal situation, and the practical realities of the evaluation context constrain the ideal, the possibility of reaching rational consensus, and the dialectic process itself, are powerful evaluative tools.

School Self-review

School self-review has borrowed from many of the above approaches and models and is best thought of as an application of educational evaluation, rather than a particular prototype, model, methodological approach or "persuasion" as described by Stake (1976, 1981), House (1980), or Norris (1990). Nor can school self-review be seen as being of any one political class in terms of Macdonald's (1976) classification, or as necessarily belonging to any one of Werner's (1978) "sense-making" paradigms. Rather school self-review is a contextual field within the wider field of educational evaluation. The methodology applied to a particular programme of self-review (or aspects of a programme) will be dependent upon purpose, audience, scope, socio-political context, and the philosophical or ideological persuasions of stakeholders.

SECTION 2

School Effectiveness, School Development, School Improvement and Organisational Learning

Although school self-review has been (and still is) expected to perform an accountability role, the majority of those promoting its use emphasise a "formative" or improvement focused role. For this reason school self-review must be considered in relation to a large and growing body of research, theory and practice centred around the primary purpose of improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools. Three "schools" of research and theory have emerged which have a particular relevance to school self-review: (i) "School Effectiveness" research; (ii) the School Development/Improvement literature; and (iii) the literature centred on Organisational Change and Organisational Learning. This section reviews some of the findings and ideas prevalent in these fields and concludes by identifying emergent themes which suggest implications for school self-review.

(i) The School Effectiveness Literature

A growing body of research and associated literature has emerged over recent decades which has collectively become known as the "School Effectiveness" research. Building on the pioneer works of such researchers as Coleman et al. (1966), Jencks et al. (1972), Edmonds (1979) and Brookover (1979) in the United States, and Rutter et al. (1979), Mortimore et al. (1988) in the United Kingdom, subsequent studies were keenly sought after by policy makers, and to a lesser extent by education practitioners, as a means of bringing about improvement in the productivity of schools and meeting the increasing accountability demands of bureaucratic and political paymasters. It was naively thought possible to duplicate effectiveness by simply introducing some of the characteristics of effective schools into poorly performing schools.

It was suggested by Harold Silver (1994) that "the most important role of the effective schools research from the 1970s was to refocus attention on the inner workings of the school." It helped to establish that too little was known about how schools worked, how and why they differed, why some succeeded by certain criteria in different circumstances more than others.

Others, such as Downer (1991, 324) highlighted major criticisms of the school effectiveness research :

- dependence on small samples;
- errors in the identification of effective schools;
- inappropriate comparisons or none at all; achievement data aggregated at the school level;
- the use of subjective criteria in determining school success; and,
- generally, an oversimplification of a very complex phenomenon.

Glickman (1987) drew attention to the possibility that there was a difference between a school being "effective" and being "good". The effective schools programmes were beginning to be seen to have resulted in: more teacher-centred and/or whole-group instruction; greater reliance on textbooks and published worksheets; fewer individual and small-group projects; fewer field trips and less free time; frequent testing; and a narrowing of the curriculum to that which is "measurable". As Silver (1994, 102) points out "The research on effective schools was being treated as 'laws of science that apply to *all* schools'. It was too often equated with what was desirable or good."

Two historical "periods" in the evolution of such theory and research were identified by Creemers (1994). During the "pessimistic" first period of the 1960s and early '70s, works such as those of Coleman et al. (1966) and Jencks et al. (1972) were taken as evidence that "schools do not make a difference" over such factors as socioeconomic status and innate ability. A second period emerged, principally during the late '70s and 1980s when a more optimistic view of the influence of school based factors on student functioning. Studies such as those of Brookover et al., Edmonds, Rutter et al., *op cit.*, and others identified characteristics of schools that could explain differences between schools. Typically such characteristics tended to focus on aspects of school organisation and management, especially educational leadership by the principal. In more recent years, following methodological and conceptual criticism of the earlier studies, the importance of the 'multidimensional' nature of school effectiveness has been recognised. (See for example: Cuttance, 1987; Scheerens & Creemer, 1989.)

In a very influential report of their study on behalf of the Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) into what makes some primary schools more effective than others, Mortimore et al (1988) found 12 key factors (covering a number of 'levels') to be instrumental in contributing towards effective primary schools:

1. Purposeful leadership of the staff by the principal who influences content of curriculum guidelines without taking complete control;

2. The involvement of the deputy principal in policy decision-making;
3. Involvement of teachers in decision-making on curriculum and policy;
4. Consistency in teacher approach in following agreed guidelines;
5. Structure sessions which allowed some degree of independence and choice;
6. Intellectually challenging teaching with high teacher expectation;
7. Work-centred classroom environments;
8. Limited focus within sessions geared to individual levels of work;
9. Maximum communication between teachers and students;
10. Keeping records of children's progress;
11. Parental involvement;
12. Positive climate.

Scheerens and Creemers (1989) identified three levels for such characteristics:

- school organisation and management level;
- teacher and/or classroom level; and,
- a level of individual student performance and background.

In a similar analysis Stringfield (1994) suggests a 'four plus' level model of elementary school effects:

1. student as learner;
2. the provision of schooling-relevant instruction to students;
3. the school (organisation and management); and,
4. various levels of groups beyond the school level.

At the level of the Student as Learner Stringfield draws on Carroll's 'A Model of School Learning' (1963, 1989) which views students' academic learning rate as a function of five elements:

aptitude - general ability (time) to learn;

ability to understand instruction - prerequisites;

perseverance - motivation (prior rate of success);

opportunity - time spent learning;

quality of instruction - quality of instruction high if students learn material as rapidly as their abilities and levels of prior knowledge allowed.

Stringfield's second level focuses on the selection and presentation of academic content to students. At this level Slavin's "theory of effective classroom organization" (1987) is used to provide a set of four conditions (QAIT) influencing learning:

1. **quality** of Instruction;

2. **appropriateness** of the difficulty of information to be learned;
3. level of **incentive** to learn; and,
4. the **time** invested in the learning.

At level three of Stringfield's model five broad, measurable categories of school ethos are recognised (MACRO):

1. **meaningful**, universally understood goals;
2. **attention** to daily academic functioning;
3. **co-ordination** among programs and between school and parents over time;
4. **recruitment**, development, and (when necessary), removal of staff;
5. the **organization** of the school to support universal student learning.

For Stringfield (1994, 167) the provision of the above five characteristics do not in themselves have a *direct* effect on student learning. Following Carroll (op cit.) students' learning is assumed to be a function of aptitude, ability to understand, perseverance, opportunity, and quality of instruction, with parents and teachers influencing these processes through the level of QAIT (Slavin, op cit.) provided. The level of QAIT provided is in turn influenced by the school level MACRO functions. "Schools do not directly 'cause' learning, schools facilitate QAIT and are, therefore, 'MACRO-instructional'." (Stringfield, op cit.)

Stringfield's model involves groups beyond the school level which may affect the MACRO functions and, consequentially, the QAIT provided to students. These Level 4-plus levels are education system specific but might include: the community; local education authorities (boards, district authorities); programmes controlled to some degree at levels beyond the school (eg Reading Recovery, Government funded teacher development, business sponsored programmes/resources); state (regional) and/or federal (national) government.

The school effectiveness research and models such as the above offer conceptual frameworks with implications for the evaluation of school effectiveness, and institutional self-evaluation in particular, which will be discussed in a later chapter.

(ii) The School Development/School Improvement Literature

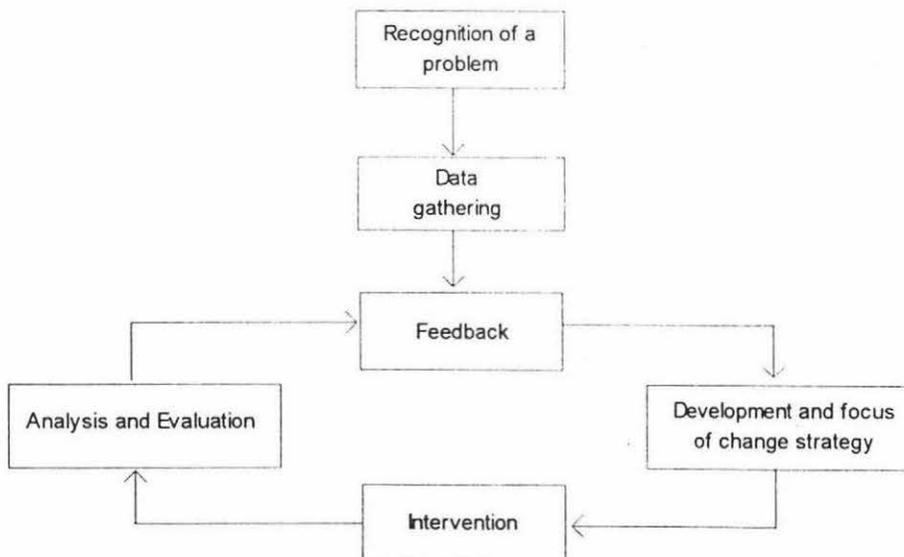
School development and school self-review

David Stewart and Tom Prebble, (1993, 76) describe school review as "one of the most thorough approaches available for data gathering and generating organisational self-reflection" involving intensive phases of data gathering, feedback, and discussion lasting from a few days to several weeks, with staff and other stakeholders examining the curriculum and its delivery, its objectives and effectiveness, with the possibility of including personnel, financial and resource management, and compliance of legal or statutory requirements. Stewart and Prebble warn that the process of school review is neither "simple or unproblematic" (op cit. 77), concurring with Adelman and Alexander (1982, 1) that the challenges in institutional self-evaluation are "interpersonal, political and organisational, rather than methodological."

Formal school review for Stewart and Prebble is one approach (of five they identify) for "data gathering at the whole-of-school level." (op cit. 76), with data-gathering (and feed-back) the first of four phases in their model of School Development (Prebble & Stewart, 1981; Prebble and Stewart, 1985; Stewart & Prebble, 1993). School Development aims at helping the school

Figure 2.5

The Six Step Problem Solving Process (Stewart & Prebble, 1993, 57.)



become more effective by learning about itself. This learning is essentially a collaborative process concerned with making explicit the collective implicit "theories-

of-action" (Argyris & Schon, 1978) of the school as an organisation, comparing these with collectively held espoused theories, collaboratively identifying structural changes needed for improvement, planning and implementing changes, analysing and evaluating resulting actions, and, providing more feedback to inform further improvement. Within this model of school development, school self-reviewing can be thought of as the way development action needs are identified or "learned" by the organisation, the development itself is subsequently planned and implemented, with further review.

School Improvement and School Self-review

While school 'development' and 'improvement' can be thought of synonymously, the term 'School Improvement' has in recent years come to be associated with the work of the OECD-sponsored International School Improvement Project (ISIP) with its particular philosophy and approach. (See for example: Hopkins et al. 1994, 68-69).

Hopkins et al. (1994, 70) differentiate between two broad categories of approaches to school improvement: those which provide the *ingredients* or essential elements of school improvement; and, those that give us the *recipes* or tell us how to go about it. Each of these basic forms can in turn be divided into two sub-forms. The *ingredients* form is usually either typified by: (a) characteristics that define school improvement; or, (b) strategies to bring about improvement. The *recipe* approach can be thought of as being more strategic but can be sub-divided into those approaches based on step by step procedures, and those which suggest principles within which schools are likely to flourish. These two sub-categories have been termed "mechanistic" and "organic" respectively by Hopkins et al. The "organic" approach is seen by Hopkins et al. as being more suitable for a changing environment while "mechanistic" approach, such as Caldwell and Spinks' (1988) "self managing school" approach, as it is in itself more responsive to change (and change is after all the business of improvement).

School *development planning* is, according to Hopkins et al. (op cit. 74) an example of such an organic approach to school improvement. Development planning is which is seen as a means of bringing about change to the culture of the school.

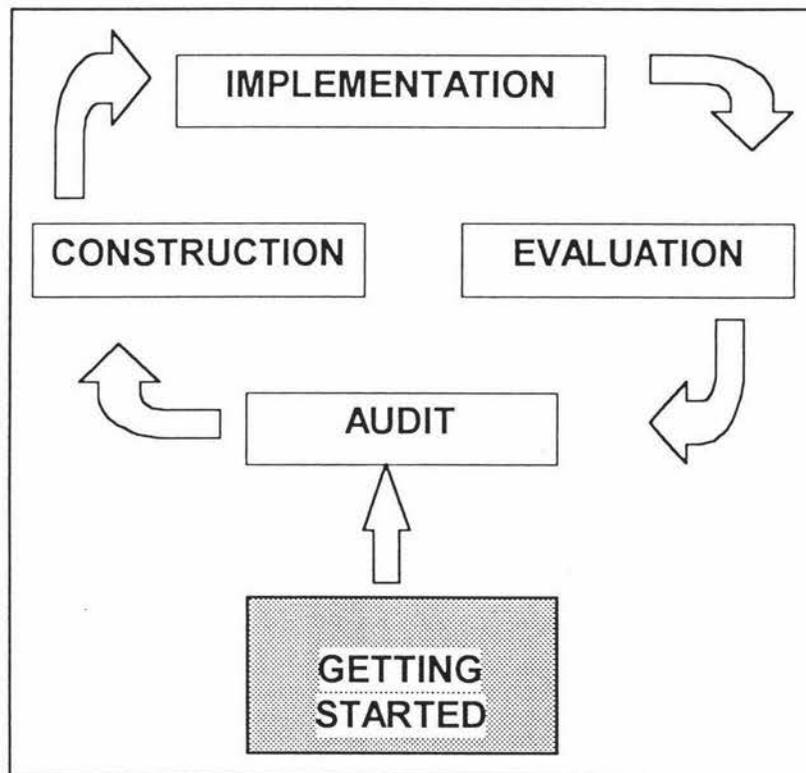
"Where a school lacks the appropriate culture, development planning is a means of achieving it. The recognition by schools of this fact is the real and important condition of development planning. This is the key insight. If the school does so recognize, it will understand that development planning is not just about implementing innovation and change, but about changing its culture - or in more concrete terms, its management arrangements - to improve its *capacity* to manage (other) changes." (Hargreaves & Hopkins, 1991, 123.)

As with other models of school improvement process, Hargreaves and Hopkins' 'development planning' model involves review and evaluation.

The four main processes are described as:

- **audit**: a school reviews its strengths and weaknesses;
- **construction**: priorities for development are selected and then turned into specific targets;
- **implementation**: the planned priorities and targets are implemented;
- **evaluation**: the success of implementation is checked.

Figure 2.6



(After Hargreaves & Hopkins (1991, 5): *The development planning cycle*)

The "audit" stage is seen as the starting point. The purposes of this stage are:

- to clarify the state of the school, and to identify strengths on which to build and weaknesses to be rectified;
- to provide a basis for selecting priorities for development.

A strategic approach to such an audit is seen by Hargreaves and Hopkins (op cit. 31) as involving:

- taking account of the context;
- deciding upon the content;
- deciding on strategies;
- clarifying roles;

- using the outcomes of specific audits.

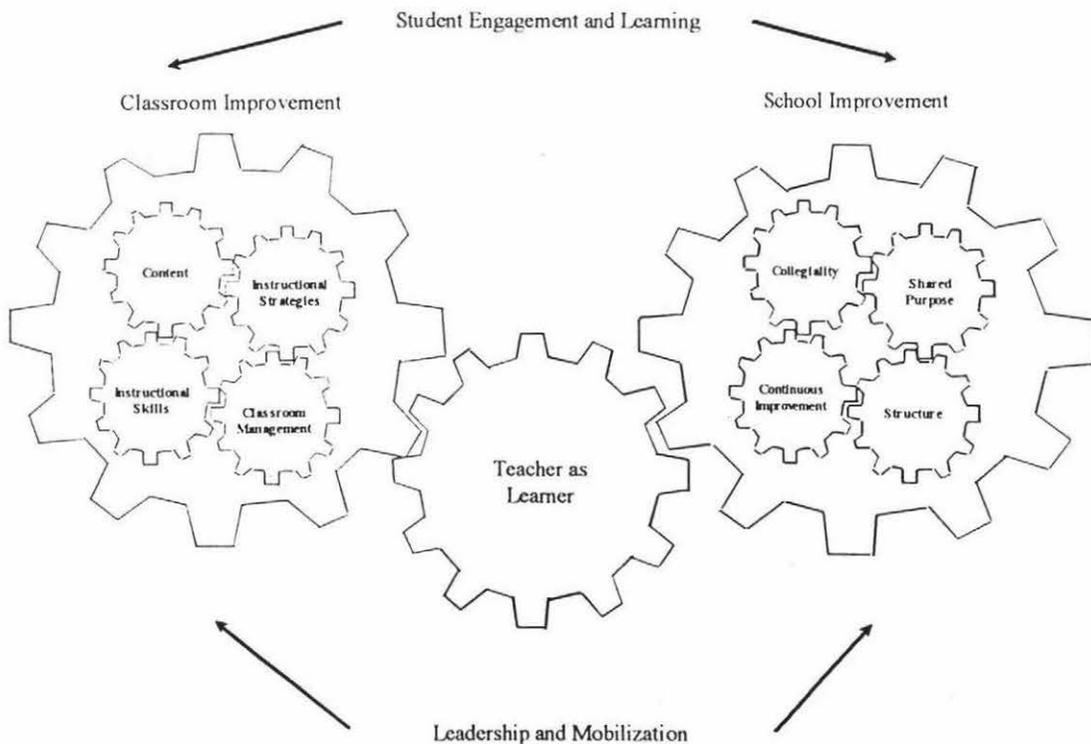
It is recommended scope and focus of the audit be focused rather than wide-ranging and comprehensive as had been the tendency with earlier school-based review schemes.

"Today the pressure for change makes (a comprehensive) approach less appropriate. It is now advisable to carry out a series of small-scale focused or *specific audits* in key areas and in implementing the action plans that may result from these. A planned series of specific audits creates a *rolling programme* which provides a picture of the school built up over successive years." (Op cit. 33)

The inter-related nature of innovation, school development and teacher learning and development is stressed by Michael Fullan (1992, 22). "Stated simply, implementation is learning to do and learning to understand something new. Change in other words is a process of learning new ideas and things." For Fullan teacher learning is central to the processes of classroom improvement and school improvement.

Figure 2.7

A comprehensive framework for classroom and school improvement. (After Fullan et al 1990, in Fullan, 1992, 108.)



As well as recognising the above "sub-cogs" within each of Classroom Improvement and School Improvement, Fullan identifies four aspects (or "sub-cogs") to the "Teacher as Learner" component:

- the mastery of technical teaching skills to increase instructional certainty;
- reflective practice to enhance clarity, meaning and coherence;
- inquiry to foster investigation and exploration;
- collaboration to receive and give ideas and assistance.

Teachers can come to develop a generic capacity to operate across all four of these aspects, eventually "internalizing these ways of being to the point where it becomes second nature to be a perpetual learner." (Fullan, 1992, 110.) The whole "cog" framework is "driven" by two further aspects: attention to student engagement and learning; and, leadership and mobilisation.

It could be argued that the sub-cogs of *Teacher as Learner* and of *School Improvement* also represent important aspects of school self-review where the purpose is school improvement through personal and institutional learning. The interconnectiveness and synchronisation of the "Cog Framework" illustrates the futility of attempting to treat aspects in isolation: the process is not linear, nor even cyclically lock-step; rather it is organic or as Huberman (1992) suggests: "liquid", or evolutionary and rolling.

"We have now learned that the resources, the training, the strategies, the timelines are all forms of liquidity, which we would be better to spend as we go, leaving as much slack as we can for monitoring where we have come from and anticipating what is around the next corner." (Huberman, op.cit. 9.)

(iii) Organisational Learning

While individual learning can be seen as a bridge between Classroom and School Improvement, the establishment of real change (for improvement or worsening of quality) depends upon cultural change which can be thought of as the product of organisational learning. Organisational learning is more than the sum of what is learnt by individual members of the organisation: it is the learning of new ways of doing things and is social and cultural rather than cognitive.

"...behaviour change that is more than a 'gimmick' requires changes in the theories that people use and the learning systems of the organization." (Argyris, 1992, 7.)

Argyris and Schon (1978) suggested that organisations learn when they are able to recognise and correct mismatches between "actual" and "intended" activities and

outcomes and that organisational learning can be thought of as being of three types: single loop, double loop, and deutero learning.

Single loop learning (*figure 2.8*) is the most simple of the three, focusing on the achievement of existing goals. Evaluation in single loop learning aims at monitoring activities and detecting aspects in need of correction to achieve the expected standards.

Double loop learning (*figure 2.9*) goes one step further: the organisation modifies the norms and assumptions guiding its activities. Evaluation seeks to identify contradictions between different goals as well as identifying necessary changes to organisational and functional strategies. Learning has taken place at two levels.

Figure 2.8 (after Calder, 1994, 41.)

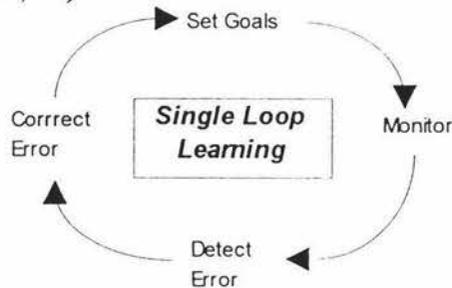
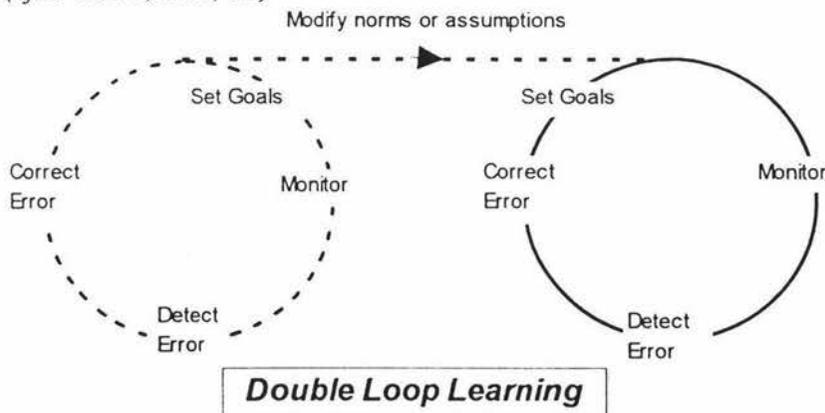


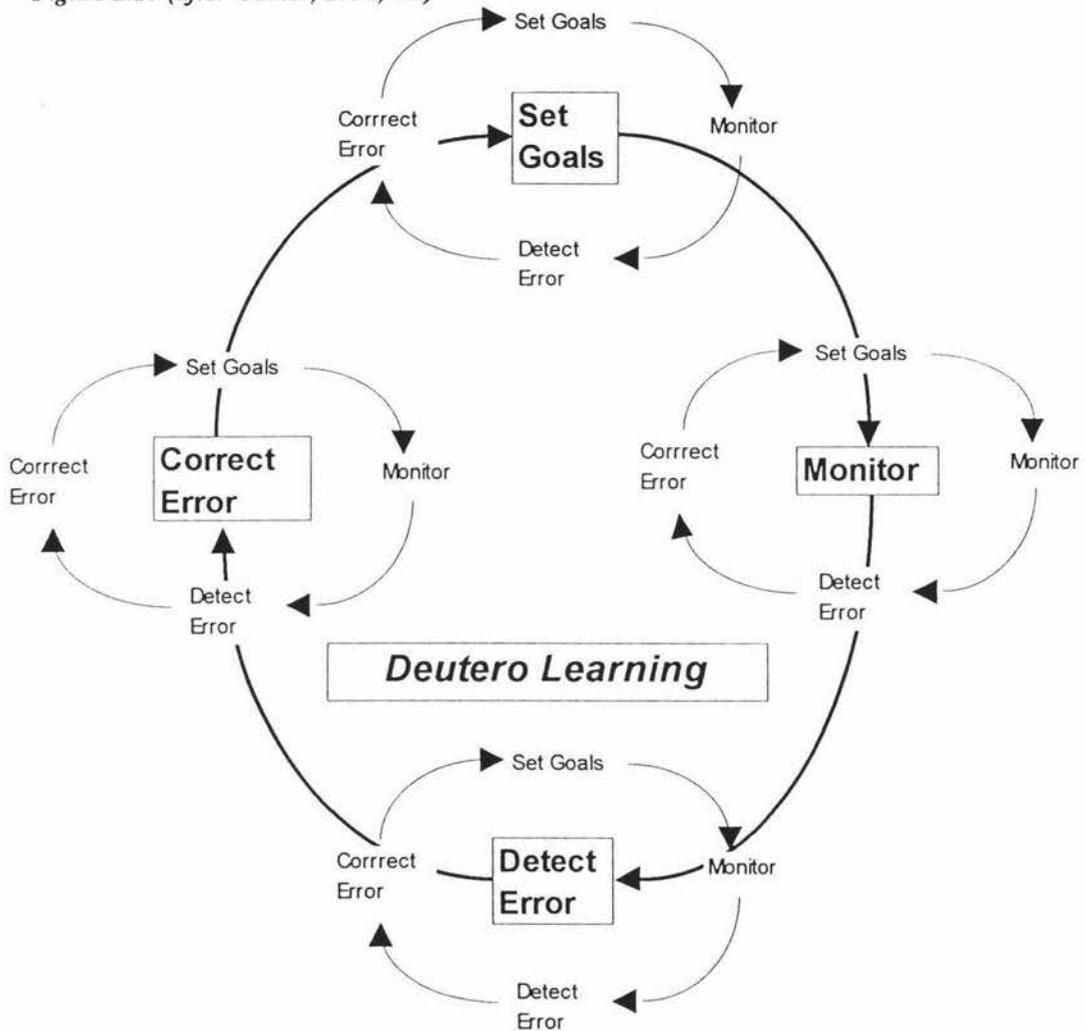
Figure 2.9 (after Calder, 1994, 42.)



Argyris and Schon's third type, Deutero learning, (*figure 2.10*) involves a higher level analysis of the processes themselves. The organisation learns about the strengths and weaknesses of its goal setting, evaluative processes (monitoring and detecting), and

the ways it has sought to correct error in the past, learning not only how to improve its delivery functions (single loop), and to adjust its assumptions and expectations, but also to improve its ability as an organisation to learn through reflection and self-evaluation.

Figure 2.10 (after Calder, 1994, 43.)



Frequency

The question of frequency of evaluation has particular implications for self-evaluation. Calder (1994, 153) has categorized the frequency and duration of self-evaluations as follows:

Frequency	Benefits	Costs
ongoing	routinized system	non-specific
occasional frequent	schedule ahead	vulnerable priority

occasional infrequent

commitment of special
effort

intrusive

Conclusion

The search for the ideal model of a highly "effective" school has become merged with the search for the ideal model of ongoing school improvement (or development). The assumption that schools could be improved simply by replicating the characteristics of "effective" schools has been discarded for the thesis that schools can be improved by implementing self-improvement processes. Such processes involve some element of evaluation, usually on-going self-evaluation, and from that: on-going self-learning. At the institutional level, and given that improvement involves learning and change, the literature on organisational learning and change also becomes integral to any school improvement process.

The following aspects emerging from this literature seem to have particular relevance for the effective and purposeful practice of school self-review:

- purposeful leadership without complete control;
- staff participation;
- clear communication;
- data gathering, record keeping and documentation are part of the culture;
- a multi-level conceptualisation of school effects;
- role of "organisational self-reflection";
- cyclical "problem-solving" approach;
- evaluation: leading to learning; leading to planning; leading to improvement;
- planning of next steps in development;
- evaluation seen as the starting point for improvement;
- interrelationships between school development and teacher learning;
- change as the product of organisational learning;
- improvement of organisational effectiveness rests upon improvement of organisational learning;

SECTION 3

Experiences from Some Other Countries

(I) The emergence of school self-review in the United Kingdom

During the 1970's and 1980's school self-review emerged as a popularly promoted (if not popularly adopted) form of institutional evaluation. A number of reasons have been suggested in the literature for this.

1. To empower teachers: Recognition that external evaluation (inspection) alone left "teachers little freedom to make decisions about their work; the greater degree of participation by teachers in evaluation the more freedom they have to decide appropriate goals for their pupils and experiences through which these can be achieved." (Harlen, 1978, cited in Holt, 1981, 113.) It was assumed that greater participation by teachers would lead to more appropriate instruction for students. The extent to which such a justification was driven by a desire for improved instruction and the interests of students on the one hand, and by a teacher political movement for the greater democratisation of schools through power sharing in the interests increasing teacher control of schools and the education system on the other, is open to question.

2. To encourage discourse: "...by encouraging schools to engage in self-evaluation, they will establish 'a forum for acknowledging and debating values on education' (Harlen opt cit.) and so, one might presume, go on to develop new and better styles of curriculum activity."(Holt, opt cit.)

3. As a response to perceived limitations of "output evaluation" . A shift in focus from examination and test results to "*process evaluation*" which looks not so much at 'What has happened?' as at 'How do things happen?' A move in this direction was seen as avoiding difficulties which were becoming increasingly associated with pure output evaluation: "...that any attempt to measure outputs or products of education distorts and interferes with what is measured, so the promise of objectivity is unfulfilled." (Holt, opt cit, 112.)

4. As a politically sensitive means of introducing process evaluation as a substitute for, or complement to, external or output evaluation. "...by emphasising the self-evaluative nature of the exercise it may be possible to tone down the political problems arising from a more explicit interference with how a school works." (Holt, op cit, 113) In other words: as a professionally palatable alternative response to calls for greater accountability and monitoring of school performance, given the academic criticism of output evaluation.

The movement towards institutional self-evaluation in schools was actively promoted by education authorities in an effort to demonstrate that their systems were able to accountable to their political masters.

Local education authorities (LEAs) devised checklists and guidelines for schools and encouraged their use. The Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) played a central and lead role in this through the publication in 1977 of its booklet *Keeping the School under Review: A method of self-assessment for schools devised by the ILEA inspectorate*. The approach suggested in this booklet was vigorously "sold" to the schools by the ILEA Inspectorate with some expectation that schools would "be prepared to discuss the outcomes with colleagues in the inspectorate" (O'Connor, 1979, quoted in Holt, 1981, 114.) The scheme had a clear formative base, aiming at improvement of future practice through self-scrutiny of the past and present and consequential planning of improved curriculum and method.

A classic example of the form of self-review to emerge in the United Kingdom following the early experiments of the late 70's was the *Guidelines for Review and Internal Development in Schools* (GRIDS) process, produced by McMahon et al (1984)

Typical of the form of self-review promoted by the LEAs, the GRIDS process was a palatable compromise towards meeting the accountability demands of the Government and community without offending the professional sensitivities of teachers and administrators. As Abbott et al point out in the revised 1988 edition of the *GRIDS Primary School Handbook*:

"Accountability factors were rightly played down..." (in the first edition) "and the internal nature of the process was emphasised. Most teachers were not at that time ready to recognise that there was a need to offer accountability to a wider public, or that society was pressing for a role in judging the quality of schools."(opt cit, 1988, 4.)

In responding to subsequent criticism that GRIDS did not cater for lay input or provide trustworthy accountability evidence, the revised version stressed the need to recognise that

"while schools may own the process, others may nowadays influence the agenda and share decisions on priorities... the initial review stage now ought deliberately to incorporate consideration of what parents, school governors and different levels of government would present as priority issues." (opt cit, 4.)

The revised version continued to focus primarily on "development for internal school improvement" (opt cit, 3) however, rather than accountability reporting. Early GRIDS initiatives were also criticised for being overly dominated by a few staff, or in the worst cases, solely by the headteacher. Reports were frequently kept confidential or written in such a way as to be non-critical of the status-quo.

Other education authorities in the United Kingdom developed similar schemes but most failed to survive the reforms of the late 1980's and the early 1990's. Cuttance (1994) attributes the failure of such schemes to meet the expectations of their protagonists partly to ideological change in the prevailing view of management of education. At the time these schemes were promoted accountability was "referenced by the standards and traditions of professional institutions" (opt cit., 52). Growing demands for "public" rather than "professional" accountability procedures demanded an openness in evaluation and reporting which the self-reviews were not seen to be providing.

A failure to construct analytically critical reviews and evaluations of the process of schooling has been cited by a number of writers as a central concern of the critics. (Clift, 1987; Hopkins, 1989; Hargreaves, 1988). In particular the reviews were seen:

- to be defensive and non-critical of learning and teaching practice;
- as not resulting in successful development and improvement;
- as focused on the professional providers rather than including "client" interests;
- to be too time-consuming;
- as attempting to cover an unmanageable scope;
- to be too far apart to make a significant impact;
- as inadequately resourced to meet the level of performance expected of them;
- as failing to provide adequate and appropriate training for those involved;
- to depend on external motivation resulting in lack of teacher commitment.

A lack of experience, understanding of and skill in the management of change in organisations such as schools, together with an unwillingness to commit adequate resources to the review and subsequent development processes are other reasons for failure. (Cuttance, 1994, 53.)

Other critics of school self-evaluation saw the approach

"as weak, ineffectual and 'wet', as a strategy for avoiding change or for avoiding threats to established power positions, and as a defence of professional autonomy (seen by some politicians as a cover for inefficiency, incompetence and indifference to public concern)." (Nisbet, 1991, 59)

Holt (1981, 115-116) outlined some initial criticisms of the ILEA's *Keeping Schools under Review* scheme and similar "checklist" schemes:

- checklist information was easy to collect but often difficult to analyse in any meaningful or valid manner;
- such schemes were sketchy and were incapable adequately reflecting the complexity of teacher professional knowledge;
- little insight was gained on how the information gained was to be used to develop and improve processes;
- checklist indicators were value laden and tended to invite "correct" responses;
- the perceived prescriptive intent of checklist items resulted in respondents (rightly or wrongly) assuming they represented "correct" or "ILEA approved" activities;
- teacher mistrust of ILEA motives grew as Governors sought information from the self-reviews for accountability purposes;
- danger of review reports fostering self-justification rather than self-evaluation;

Other perceived difficulties included:

- problems with confidentiality of responses;
- implications for teacher promotions and appointments;
- doubts about the cost effectiveness of school self evaluation.

Writing in 1984, Helen Simons painted a "gloomy picture" of the future of school self-evaluation, suggesting that there was "a preoccupation with the mechanics of

appearing to account for schooling" and that it could be argued that this is "an effective way of meeting political pressures without actually interfering with the work of schools." (Simons, 1984, 53.)

By 1987 research over the previous six years had lead Clift, Nuttal and McCormack (1987, 209-210) to a number of conclusions:

"A close association between contractual accountability and school self-evaluation leads to the impoverishment of the latter and to the ineffective assertion of the former.

School self-evaluation requires that schools devote a substantial amount of time energy and resources to it.

School self-evaluation requires that teachers be trained for it. Precisely how and in what ways are not entirely clear: perhaps the methods of educational evaluation and the skills of educational evaluators provide the best model. The pursuit of objectivity is the keynote.

In its idealized form, school self-evaluation requires idealized schools in which collegiality, cooperation, open communication and fraternity rule and where professional development and professional self-respect go hand in hand. A measure of egalitarianism is probably vital. Not many schools match this reality!

In its more instrumental (ie. means to an end) forms, school self-evaluation can certainly be effective and can be a means of enforcing 'standards' on teachers. It is not very cost-effective, however, and is certainly never the 'cost-free' means of obtaining school improvement which some of its advocates have implied.

That since the purpose of review is to bring about school improvement, provision for reform should be included explicitly right from the outset in plans for school self-evaluation "

Continued political pressure for improved "monitoring and review" saw an ongoing demand from administrators for manageable approaches for the systematic and consistent gathering of information over time about the work of the school (monitoring), and for carrying out periodic systematic assessment of that information in relation to the school's objectives in order to plan further action (review). (After Aspinwall et al, 1992, 15.)

Other attempts to establish school self-evaluation programmes in the United Kingdom failed when they fell victim to the restructuring of the late 80s and early 90s. One such programme in 1988 saw 16 Grampian schools (11 secondary, 5 primary) commence a development programme which involved the identification of their own priorities for development or change. Nisbet (1991, 59) reports that progress varied with five schools having made substantial progress and commitment after 15 months, nine having made a cautious start and two were still at the preparatory stage of initial survey and staff discussion. The programme experienced difficulties in obtaining the resources it required and following "restructuring" in the Regional Authority, planned extension of the programme was abandoned and the programme had lapsed by 1991.

The programme aimed at improving pupil learning and at "promoting staff development through teachers extending their professional skills by involvement in the process of school-based reform." (Nisbet, *op.cit.*, 62). A basic assumption was that by giving schools responsibility for self evaluation, staff would develop a greater commitment to "tackling real problems" (*ibid*) and that reforms would be implemented. Consequential outcomes were expected to be "improved learning by pupils, a school climate more open to change and better able to handle stress, and a continuing process of professional development among teachers" (*ibid*).

Although the programme lapsed some lessons were learned according to Nisbet (*op.cit.* 65):

- a cyclic process of review and action was shown to be feasible;
- implementation needed to be well planned;
- support in the form of resources and commitment was required;
- an open climate of confidence and good relationships among staff needed to emerge as the project proceeded if it was not already present.

For Nisbet, this final point leads to the need to consider four underlying social and cultural issues: power; conflict; school climate; and the current managerialist ethos.

The initial attempts to apply school self-review during the 1970's and 1980's in the United Kingdom failed primarily because the educational professionals involved misinterpreted, or underestimated the power behind the growing, universal, and popular political demand for professional agencies of state to be publicly answerable for their work. This unwillingness, inability or naivety, was costly to the interests of quality education as in turn it resulted in a regime of counter-educational assessment strategies being implemented (or attempted to be implemented) by technocrats in an attempt to bring the teachers and administrators to account collectively and personally.

Inappropriate, impractical and unaffordable measures have been introduced at a cost, not to the individual professionals, but to pedagogy and learning, and indeed to what is meant by education. Teaching method must be fully explicit and explainable, objectives clear and measurable, knowledge discrete and quantifiable, and anything which is unable to be so expressed can no longer be justified as part of what the taxpayer body expects from the education community which it sponsors.

As Hopkins et al. (1994, 72) point out, school self-evaluation also failed as a "door" to change in the U.K. as most schools found it "easier to identify priorities for future development than to implement selected targets within a specific timeframe." Schools were unable to "connect" priority setting from review with action plans for improvement, and the actual implementation of those plans. Popular though it was in the U.K. during the '80s, school self-review was not able to connect itself in a culturally sustaining manner as a means of bringing about on-going improvement.

(II) School self-evaluation in Australia

Cumming (1987) examined efforts to implement school-based review and development schemes in Australian schools over the preceding ten years. He found that while there had been considerable activity at national, state and local levels fostering school-based review, the common perception was that not much happened as a result of such exercises. Approaches which were still operating in 1987 included the *School Improvement Plan* (SIP) in Victoria which was designed to help primary and secondary schools to "reflect on their total practice and to develop in ways that will improve the learning experiences of all students". (Cumming, 1987, 43). The SIP approach involves teachers, students and parents collaboratively, with financial and regional network support. In Western Australia *Project Baseline* was set up in 1983 to encourage schools to collect, interpret and use good quality information. Data collection packages were constructed and "circulated widely in the school community with a view to raising awareness of the processes of review and reporting specific findings." (Cumming, op. cit.). As with the Victorian model it was a participatory exercise at the planning, implementation and follow-up stages with an emphasis on the visual display of data to enhance shared meaning. In Tasmania, a *School Improvement Project* was implemented also along the lines of the Victorian *SIP*, also a collaborative venture supported and encouraged by central grants. Tasmanian schools were also encouraged to undertake forms of school based action research and to take part in

staff development programmes aimed at school self-evaluation. In Queensland the *Co-operative School Evaluation and Development Programme* was introduced in the late 1970s with a series of ten booklets used to promote and support the use of systematic school-based evaluation practices enabling schools to participate in and control their own review and development activities. This was followed by the *Information-based School Development Project* in which an external team assists the school to identify its own information needs and then supports school personnel in collecting, collating, and presenting relevant information. A series of *School Development Resource Documents* were developed and used in South Australian schools as a guide to whole school identification of needs and priorities, followed by the planning and implementation of long term improvement programmes. As with the projects in the other states there was an emphasis on community participation.

School-based internal self-evaluation in Australia suffered from the same perceived shortcomings as identified earlier for the United Kingdom experience. By the end of the '80s many of the above Australian approaches were being abandoned and replaced, or at least supplemented by combination external/internal models. As well as not meeting some of their original espoused purposes, the self-review approaches came to be seen as inadequate in terms of changing views on the management of education. Ironically, moves towards "self-management" and "decentralised control" increased the perceived need for externally controlled and standardised accountability reviews. With increasing school based responsibility for expending the taxpayer dollar came increased demands for formal accountability beyond that seen to be able to be provided by the schools. Despite this, however, Cuttance (1992) argues that the more 'consumer orientated' a school system becomes, the weaker the argument for direct control through centrally dominated accountability mechanisms.

School self-evaluation must serve both accountabilities: to demonstrate effective and efficient use of public resources towards public goals; and, to demonstrate high quality service at the consumer level in terms of parent and local community goals and expectation.

In South Australia the Education Review Unit (ERU) of the Education Department of South Australia has been given the responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of individual schools and agencies as well as of the education system globally. Reviews of individual schools centre around School Development Plans (SDPs) which focus on the development and change that school's intend to implement in order to improve teaching and learning. (Cuttance, 1989, 2.) Three different types of reviews of

individual schools are involved: reviews of the progress that schools have made in terms of their *development plans*; reviews of the process that schools use in the production of their development plans and of the management of the development process itself; and, reviews of a range of key aspects of the functioning of schools. As well as the three yearly review by the ERU team, each school is required to undertake an annual internal review of progress in meeting the objectives set out in its development plan. Also, "as a part of good management practice schools are expected to monitor their development on a continuous basis, so that they are able to make appropriate on-going adjustments to the individual strategies in their development plan." (Cuttance, op.cit., 5).

(III) Centrally driven innovation through local school-based review and implementation in Belgium.

Roland Vandenberghe (1995) has described the use of a school-based review (SBR) process to assist in the implementation of national school improvement policies in Belgium. Schools are helped to develop their own innovation strategies through the use of a SBR process involving the use of external "change facilitators" to prepare principals and staff.

Three assumptions underlying the use of SBR in this context were identified by Vandenberghe:

- SBR will result in those involved justifying their decisions;
- it is assumed that structures exist in the school to support the development and implementation of the local plan, or that schools are capable of creating new structures if needed;
- schools will establish "steering" functions for co-ordinating, assisting, providing guidance and directing the elaboration and realization of the plan.

Subsequent research (Vandenberghe et al., 1989) into the effectiveness of the project attempted to establish the extent to which schools actually did implement the innovations they planned at the end of the review year, and the quality of their implementation work related to the quality of the previous review process. Another study (Vandenberghe and Verheyden, 1989) examined the reasons why schools which had withdrawn from the project had done so.

The studies found that the SBR procedure did not lead to an enhancement of the capacity for justification with few teachers understanding the process or reasons for it.

(IV) The United States:

Action Research and Participatory Evaluation

The action research tradition in the United States emerged from the work of Kurt Lewin (1947) who advocated the application of social science methodology by groups in practical settings as a means of bringing about change for improvement in organisations. Lewin saw action research as a three-step spiral process of :

- (1) planning which involves reconnaissance or fact-finding;
- (2) taking actions; and
- (3) fact-finding about the results of the action. (Calhoun, 1994, 20)

Corey (1953) was one of the first to promote Lewin's ideas in school contexts believing that action research aided decision making and implementation of change. Both Lewin and Corey sought to change existing organisational norms, changing standards of behaviour from individualistic, autonomous, and isolated mode to a collaborative and integrated mode through action research. (Calhoun, *op.cit.*, 17.)

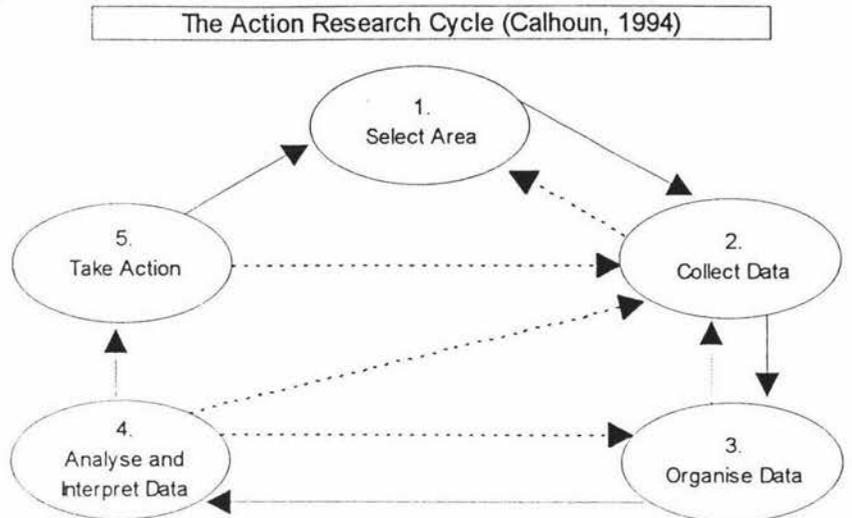
In more recent years Glickman (1990, 1993) and Calhoun (*op.cit.*) have been instrumental in initiating a revival of action research as a school improvement strategy.

Glickman's three dimensional framework for renewing education involves:

- democratic governance (involving shared decision making and a "charter");
- educational focus (involving a teaching and learning "covenant"); and,
- action research (to assess the results of its current programs on commonly valued goals). (Calhoun, *op.cit.*, 19.)

Emily Calhoun (*op.cit.*) has described a five phase cycle for schoolwide action research by school staff involving: the selection of an area or problem of collective interest; the collection of data; the organisation of that data; analysis and interpretation of data; and, the taking of action based on that information.

Figure 2.13



Note: The solid bold lines indicate the primary direction of the action research cycle from Phase 1. The dotted lines indicate common moves (rolling back and then forward again) that occurs as faculty members seek to redefine or clarify information and identify the effects of actions being taken.

For Calhoun (op.cit., 11) there are three improvement purposes for school-wide action research:

- the improvement of the organisation as a problem-solving entity (enhanced collegiality and collaboration by staff);
- an improvement in equity for students (improved instruction by all staff);
- improvement across the whole school and including students, parents and the wider community.

"... school wide action research is primarily a process of collecting data about an ongoing system (our school) with the purpose of improving practice (teaching and learning)."
(Calhoun, opt.cit. 13.)

Calhoun suggests six "recommendations" or tangible conditions which need to be established for successful implementation of Schoolwide Action Research:

1. A faculty where a majority of teachers wish to change the status quo of education in their school;
2. A common public agreement about how collective decisions will be made and implemented;
3. A facilitation team willing to lead the action research process;
4. Small study groups that meet regularly;
5. A basic knowledge of the Action Research Cycle and the rationale for its use; and
6. Someone to provide technical assistance and support. (opt.cit., 40.)

Participatory Evaluation

Participatory Evaluation, as described by Cousins and Earl, refers to evaluations conducted by "trained evaluation personnel *and* practice-based decision makers working in partnership." (1995, 8). It is a responsive social action research approach which differs from critical theory approaches in that it is not centred on emancipatory interests, but rather on "seeking to enhance the use of evaluation data for practical problem solving within the contemporary organizational context." (op.cit. 9). The technical skills of the researchers are combined with the practitioners' indepth knowledge of context and content. It is unabashedly conservative and evolutionary in its orientation to change, endeavouring to provide a pragmatic but professionally supportive means for evaluating at an organizational level.

King (1995) has differentiated between participatory evaluation and three other forms of collaborative evaluation:

Figure 2.14

Comparison of approaches to collaborative evaluation/research. (King, 1995, 88.)

Characteristic	Stakeholder	Traditional Action Research	Participatory Evaluation	Practitioner-Centred Action Research
Who's in charge of the study?	Evaluator as principal investigator	Researcher/evaluator, with input from practitioner	Evaluator with assistance of practitioner/student at first	Practitioners, with assistance of research consultants
What practitioners are involved in the study?	Large number of stakeholders, anyone with a stake in the program	Small number of those who actively engage in the study, people who are interested or helpful	Small number of primary users	Action researchers
How do practitioners participate?	Consultative role give information on context, information needs	Active role, ask questions, give input, help analyse etc	Active role, engage in 'nuts and bolts' of evaluation process	Active role, control the research process
What time frame?	Length of Study	Length of study	Length of study or on-going	Ongoing research cycle, organizational learning
What involvement in theory development?	[If any] Develop program theory	Create traditional social science theory	Develop program theory (theories-in- action, mental models)	[If any] Develop practical theory or critical theory

Of the above, practitioner-centred action research comes closest to what has generally been described as "school self-review". King (op.cit. 89) argues that the concept of organisational learning which Cousins and Earl see as a central theoretical justification for participatory evaluation "at best is exactly what can take place over time in practitioner-centred action research." Following an analysis of three collaborative evaluation/research studies, King identified four "lessons" which those wishing to undertake such evaluations should note:

- the importance of people's wanting to participate (volunteers are needed);

- the power of political context (a supportive political environment in the school);
- the necessity of continuing support (support and trust building);
- the need for common meaning between distinct worlds of practice (practitioner and evaluator).

(V) Israel:

School Self-evaluation as a Reflective Dialogue

Keiny and Dreyfus (1993) have reported on an evaluation project in Israel in which researchers operated in partnership with the staff of a school through a process of "reflective dialogue". Such a process allows practitioners to modify their perception of the situations and to reframe their knowledge (Schon, 1983). For Keiny and Dreyfus such reflective dialogue "can only take place between *partners* whose contributions are truly complimentary" (op.cit., 282.) Two preconditions for this state exist:

- The practitioners need to be experienced in the subject of evaluation, and have access to data which can be used as a basis for dialogue; and
- the researchers, as well as the practitioners, need to have become sensitized to their own perceptions.

The purpose of the researcher's involvement in this project was not to improve their own theories but to help teachers reflect on their actions and to better understand the link between their behaviour and their assumptions, or beliefs. By helping teachers become aware of and analyse their own evaluation findings the researchers helped them to reframe their expectations and conclusions. From such a re-conceptualisation the staff are empowered to make second order changes aimed at further improvement. Keiny and Dreyfus maintain that although such a process involves external agents it is a process of *self*-evaluation because the activity "starts from the needs of the school staff, involves them in implementation and the evaluation of their actions, and ends up with the staff being able to make its own decisions. (Op.cit., 293.)

A Whole School View

Six groups of school quality indicators which can be used for internal self-evaluation as well as for external evaluation of the school have been developed by David Nevo (1995, 155-157):

1. Community and students served by the school.

- 1.1 nature of community served by the school
- 1.2 community/parent involvement
- 1.3 students' socioeconomic background
- 1.4 students' aptitude level
- 1.5 special groups of students

2. School vision

- 2.1 school goals and objectives
- 2.2 pedagogical perspective
- 2.3 admission and retention policies
- 2.4 integration policy
- 2.5 perspectives on authority and responsibility
- 2.6 evaluation policy
- 2.7 management style

3. School personnel

- 3.1 quality of teachers
- 3.2 quality of administrators
- 3.3 quality of support personnel
- 3.4 student/teacher ratio
- 3.5 school personnel turnover
- 3.6 staff development and in-service training

4. Material resources

- 4.1 school size
- 4.2 school budget
- 4.3 size of classes
- 4.4 instruction hours per class
- 4.5 classroom space
- 4.6 laboratories and libraries
- 4.7 computer equipment
- 4.8 sport and recreation facilities
- 4.9 landscaping

5. Educational programs and activities

- 5.1 major educational programs
- 5.2 selective and high quality programs
- 5.3 programs for special groups of students
- 5.4 extra-curricular activities
- 5.5 tutoring and remedial programs for slow learners
- 5.6 innovative/experimental school projects
- 5.7 participation in national/regional projects
- 5.8 community and parent involvement programs
- 5.9 self-evaluation and planning activities

6. School achievement.

- 6.1 school holding power
- 6.2 student achievement on national/regional tests
- 6.3 student achievement on research studies
- 6.4 student achievement on school initiated tests
- 6.5 student achievement on national competitions
- 6.6 achievements of school graduates
- 6.7 judgements by professional inspectors and supervisors
- 6.8 parent satisfaction
- 6.9 school awards and national recognition."

Obviously Nevo's "indicators" depend upon the values of those involved in the evaluation. What counts as a "selective" or "high quality" programme for one person may not mean the same to someone else. Some consensus as to what a "quality" teacher or administrator is, for example, would also be needed before "indicators" as condensed as Nevo's are able to be used to communicate common meanings for all stakeholders and audiences. Many of the indicators listed above are more correctly aspects affecting school effectiveness rather than indicators which collectively signal the worth of a school.

By attempting to demonstrate the wide scope of factors influencing the success of schools Nevo attempts to counter the dangers of assessing the worth of schools on student achievement outcomes alone. A comprehensive "wide-angle" focus does, however, have dangers of its own. By attempting to focus too widely within one evaluation phase the exercise can very easily become unmanageable. Nevo recognises this and suggests that a school should set priorities for data collection according to its needs and priorities.(opt cit 163).

SECTION 4

Some New Zealand Experiences and Perspectives

(I) Early experiments and policies

Viviane Robinson (1984) reported on an early effort to promote school review in New Zealand intermediate schools by the Department of Education between 1977 and 1980. According to Tate (1978, 7) the objectives of the review were:

"to help the intermediate schools to identify the needs of their pupils, to define their aims, to gather empirical data, to review their programmes and to evaluate their achievements; to help intermediate schools to become aware of alternatives and possibilities that may enable them to improve the quality of the education that they provide: to improve communication and cooperation between teachers, schools and parents, schools and the department"

Such objectives have a lot in common with the predominant purposes for school self-reviewing identified in the present survey (see Chapter 4). Internal improvement rather than public accountability were the espoused aims of encouraging school self-reviewing.

Schools were invited by the Department to take part and by 1981 47% of the 142 intermediate schools had done so. Support was provided by departmental officers at national and district levels with two pupil-free days being made available to enable staff to collect and analyse data. Schools were given considerable flexibility in how they went about the review, but most regions encouraged schools to examine the following areas: the needs of the children; guidance and counselling; evaluation and testing; curriculum; administration; community and the local district. (Stewart & Prebble, 1985: 93.)

Four assumptions underpinning the model used were identified by Robinson (op.cit., 143-144).

- *Voluntary involvement* That staff that volunteer to do a review will be more committed and will generate more valid information about their school, than a staff which has been persuaded or coerced to do a review.
- *Role of principal* That the school principal should play a key role in deciding whether or not to conduct a review but should not direct or lead the review once a positive decision is made.
- *Review method*
 - (i) That the conduct of a survey of one or more areas of a school's functioning is an appropriate method for fostering self-evaluation and self-improvement in school.
 - (ii) That school staff have sufficient technical skills to design, conduct and interpret the results of questionnaires and interviews administered to staff, parents and pupils.
 - (iii) That the interpersonal norms which exist in a staff group are supportive of problem-

- solving activities.
- *Review outcomes* That the process of conducting a review cannot be harmful to the school's current level of effectiveness. At worst, a review may have no impact on a school."

Robinson found the process fell short of achieving its goals of school self-renewal. Firstly the negotiation strategies used by the Department to obtain voluntary involvement were lacking with the inspectors (or 'keen' principals) often unable to resist pressuring staff into participation thus negating the "commitment benefit" of true voluntary participation. Secondly, the model assumed a much higher level of pre-requisite collaborative inquiry skills than the school staffs generally in fact had. This latter point led Robinson (op.cit., 150) to suggest that in such cases the services of an outside facilitator able to by-pass interpersonal and organisational barriers is needed. For a school to overcome such barrier itself would require a much longer term process than the intermediate review model provided. Such a longer term process of organisational learning may, concludes Robinson, "be what is involved however, in becoming a self-renewing school."

Similar approaches were trialed by some New Zealand schools on an individual basis, especially during the late '70s and '80s, often as a result of single purpose development initiatives involving surveys of staff and parents on topics such as school climate and supported by a number of "kits" produced by the Department of Education and other groups.

Other schools experimented with systematic data-gathering approaches in support of the *Register of Progress and Achievement* (Department of Education, Form E 19/16). Part II of the *Register* was intended for the recording of assessment data to:

"provide the class teacher with information for reviewing, from time to time, the work in particular subjects of the class as a whole... If, throughout the year, there is an adequate programme of review and evaluation of the work of individual children in the class, including observations and tests of different kinds, it should not be necessary for special tests or examinations to be given at the time of each half-yearly survey..." ("Notes on the Use of this Register")

Part III of the *Register* provided space "for recording a signed general report in some detail by the head or sole teacher on the work of the class as a whole in each subject at the time of a survey." ("Notes on the Use of this Register"). Some schools experimenting with various forms of self-review began to develop approaches to preparing the "Head Teacher's General Reports" which came close to the type of self-review being promoted in the United Kingdom and elsewhere at that time.

Some individual principals and staffs utilised review methodologies to establish development needs. For example, Martyn (1983) took advantage of his "new-comer" status as a newly appointed principal to initiate a data gathering exercise based on the *Illuminative Evaluation* methodology of Parlett and Hamilton (1977) aimed at identifying salient issues, problems, and development needs as well as providing an opportunity for learning about the general social, cultural, organisational and psychological variables of the school context. A ten week initial review period was broken up into four stages:

Stage 1: General Overview (2-3 weeks)

This stage involved a relatively unstructured preliminary appraisal by the principal who observed and noted salient points, identified tentative central issues, and began to formulate guiding questions for further inquiry and refocusing.

Stage 2: Co-operative planning (2-3) weeks

This stage aimed at whole staff involvement in:

- identifying central issues for re-focusing at the data gathering stage;
- selecting and scheduling data gathering techniques suitable for illuminating these issues within the total context of the school.

Stage 3: Data Gathering (3-4 weeks)

The techniques decided on in Stage 2 were used with individual teachers, groups of staff, the whole staff, students, parents and others with an interest.

Stage 4: Data Analysis (2 weeks)

This stage involved the collation, classification, ordering of data, and emergence of tentative explanation of issues identified earlier. (Stewart & Prebble, 1985, 98-103.)

(II) Recent Developments

The National Administrative Guidelines

The revision of the National Education Guidelines in 1991-2 as a result of the incoming National Government's dissatisfaction with the previous Labour Government's "Charter" requirements led to the promulgation of a new set of National Education Guidelines (Ministry of Education, 1993b) which included a requirement on Boards of Trustees to "maintain an ongoing system of self-review". The reasons why self-review was made a mandatory requirement for all schools have been explained by David Philips (1996) who was a member of the Ministry of Education team charged with revising the original 1990 National Education Guidelines. The new Minister of Education (Lockwood Smith) was keen to revise the existing guidelines as they reflected the previous Labour government's agenda. The new government wanted to see the guidelines focus more strongly on curriculum and achievement. The

requirement for self-review came about because there was a feeling amongst those in the project team that National Administration Guideline No1

"Boards of Trustees must foster student achievement by providing a balanced curriculum in accordance with the national curriculum statements...

In order to provide a balanced programme, each Board, through the principal and staff, will be required to:

- i. implement learning programmes based upon the underlying principles, stated essential learning areas and skills, and the national achievement objectives; and
- ii. monitor student progress against the national achievement objectives; and
- iii. analyse barriers to learning and achievement; and
- iv. develop and implement strategies which address identified learning needs in order to overcome barriers to students' learning; and
- v. assess student achievement, maintain individual records and report on student progress."

needed some mechanism for monitoring how well Boards were following the Guidelines. Hence Guideline no 4, sub-section (ii):

"Each Board of Trustees is also required to... ii. maintain an ongoing programme of self-review."

The Education Review Office were also consulted during the revision process and supported the inclusion of the self-review requirement as a means of monitoring Board success in delivering on National Administrative Guideline No1. According to Philips, the decision to make self-review mandatory was also influenced strongly by the prevailing school effectiveness and school improvement research, especially the literature from the United Kingdom from Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) and the newly formed Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED). It is interesting to note, however, that many of the critiques of self-review were also evident in the literature by the late 1980s and early '90s. (See for example: Holt, 1981; Clift et al., 1987; Hopkins, 1989; and Hargreaves, 1988.) No effort was made at the time (and very little since) on the part of the Ministry to elaborate on what it meant by "...an on-going programme of self-review" or to provide guidance on designing and implementing such a programme. It was left to a small number of writers and professional development providers to

produce a very mixed bag of resource packages and guidebooks. The Section III below reviews some of these.

An Education Review Office Perspective

The Education Review Office (1994) carried out an analysis of information about self-review published in the Office's accountability and effectiveness reports on individual schools. Additional information was gathered from a number of follow up case studies of schools which were regarded by the Office as having 'good' self-review practice. The investigation focused on six areas:

1. Documentation and Reporting;
2. Analysis;
3. Managing Change;
4. School Development;
5. Data Gathering;
6. Establishing a Timetable for Self-review.

The Review Office study made a number of rather prescriptive general observations about school self-reviewing based on the findings of the study which it hoped would help schools to develop their own on-going programmes of self-review:

1. Obtaining information about student achievement is a major problem but is needed to: (a) improve delivery of instruction; and (b) to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's programmes.
2. Most school self-review programmes are not an integral aspect of the management of the school.
3. Good documentation of policy and procedures, clearly specified objectives, delegation of authority, and systems for checking these are features in schools which undertake self-review.
4. Analysis of data to establish patterns and trends helps schools to: identify needs; develop policies to meet these needs; and, assess the effectiveness of efforts to meet the identified needs.

5. Self-review programmes help schools with long-term planning and these plans, in turn, support subsequent self-review.
6. Self-review as part of a planning process has been most useful when it has involved staff, student, parent and community consultation and communication.
7. The implementation of the self-review programme needs to be planned. (For example: using a regular timetable or series of cyclical stages.)
8. The on-going nature self-review has been interpreted in a variety of ways.
9. Self-review may be validated by external evaluation.

The report sees Self-review as "the process of monitoring the policies and curriculum management strategies authorised by the Board of Trustees" (op.cit. 4.) For the Review Office "Self-review conclusions and supporting information should tell the Board whether the decisions it has made have produced effective learning opportunities for the students". (op.cit. 4)

The ERO report emphasises the legal requirements of Boards to maintain an on-going programme of self-review (as provided in National Education Guideline No4) and stress the legal compliance and accountability aspects of review ahead of "improvement".

"The main purpose of a self-review programme is to assure the Board of Trustees and the principal that:

management systems the Board has approved are operating;
 the curriculum is being delivered effectively;
 personnel responsibilities are properly managed; and
 school property is maintained and cared for and provides a safe environment.

There is also the broader purpose of assuring the community, parents, teachers and students that the Board's commitment to its stated vision, aims and mission has substance." (Op.cit 6.)

This accountability and assurance focus is one of control which creates a tension with the more traditional formative purposes for school self-review: the improvement of teaching and learning. The report generally paints a picture of self-review which serves the agenda of control and assurance rather than of development and improvement which tends to be treated as incidental. This conclusion is supported by the comments of Phillips (1996, op.cit.) who reported that National Administration Guideline No4

was included in the revised guidelines as somewhat of an after thought in order to provide a mechanism for monitoring of board's implementation of the other guidelines.

Public Sector Accountability

The current movement towards school self-review in New Zealand also owes its existence, at least in part, to a move during the early 1980s towards reform of public sector accounting standards. A public sector study group was established under the auspices of the New Zealand Society of Accountants in 1982 at a time when concern was being expressed by the Government Audit Office about the standard of reporting in local and central government. As well as recommending a shift from cash to accrual accounting, a need was seen in the non-profit sector for adequate reporting of *non-financial*, as well as financial, measures of performance. (Pallot, 1991, 200). In 1987 the New Zealand Society of Accountants issued *Public Sector Accounting Statement No 1* (PSAS-1) and a *Statement of Public Sector Accounting Concepts* (SPSAC). The SPSAC required that public sector service-orientated entities (such as schools) should include "statements of objectives and service performance" as well as the more traditional financial information. The Society's standards formed the basis for the reporting requirements prescribed in the *Public Finance Act 1989*.

The concern during the '80s was at the adequacy of information provided in the reports for both internal management purposes and for accountability reporting to Parliament. Improved reporting is only one side of the equation: improved *use* of information by management and policy-makers is the other.

Pallot (1991, 216-217) raises questions about the ability of Parliament to effectively scrutinise report information: "...does Parliament have the resources, skill and time to evaluate what is now a much more comprehensive and detailed set of reports?" It could also be suggested that, in the case of schools, boards of trustees, principals, teachers and parents are also struggling to interpret and utilize the information presented in current annual reports given the complexities of accrual accounting on the one hand, and the prescribed focus of statements of performance on *outputs*, while virtually excluding *outcomes*, on the other hand.

The idea that school accountability requirements should promote a culture of "organisational learning and openness" through the demonstration of the connections between outputs and their intended outcomes has been suggested by Robinson &

Haliday (1994, 43). The current statement of performance requirements with their input/output focus does not provide the most useful information for *users* of the information, such as school leaders seeking to improve the match between services delivered (outputs) and the desired outcomes of those services in educational terms.

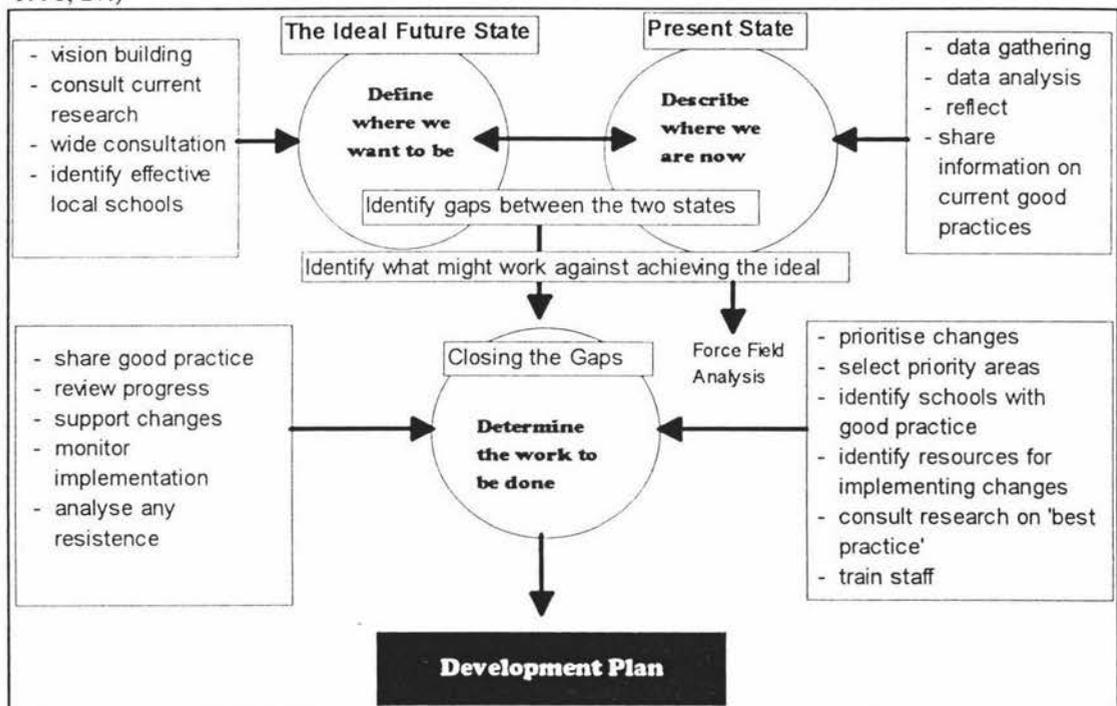
The move by the accounting fraternity to improve the usefulness of information has failed because of an apparent lack of understanding of the type of information which is useful for school based practitioners and policy makers to have access to enable them to make the decisions needed to improve the quality of their services. Added to this is a failure to comprehend the complex nature of "the bottom line" in education, the processes involved in reaching it, and the subsequent complexities and subtleties involved in "accounting" for both.

(III) Resource Packages and Guidebooks

The User Friendly Package

Jeanette Schollum and Brent Ingram (1991) produced a comprehensive resource kit for school self-review based on the following "gap identification" approach:

Figure 2.11 Visual Summary and Pathway Through Review (in part) (Schollum & Ingram, 1991, 27.)



The school follows a series of carefully planned stages to enable it to identify what it is really like (the reality) and to compare these findings to its vision. Key attributes of reviewing promoted by Schollum and Ingram's resource kit include:

- a focus on improving teaching and learning;
- identification of factors which help or hinder improved performance of teachers and students, rather than the performance of individuals;
- review process open and accessible to all staff members;
- the review will be visible in the school and the local community;
- everyone will be "in the know", not just "the few";
- ownership of the review is with the school;
- a collaborative framework will be established;

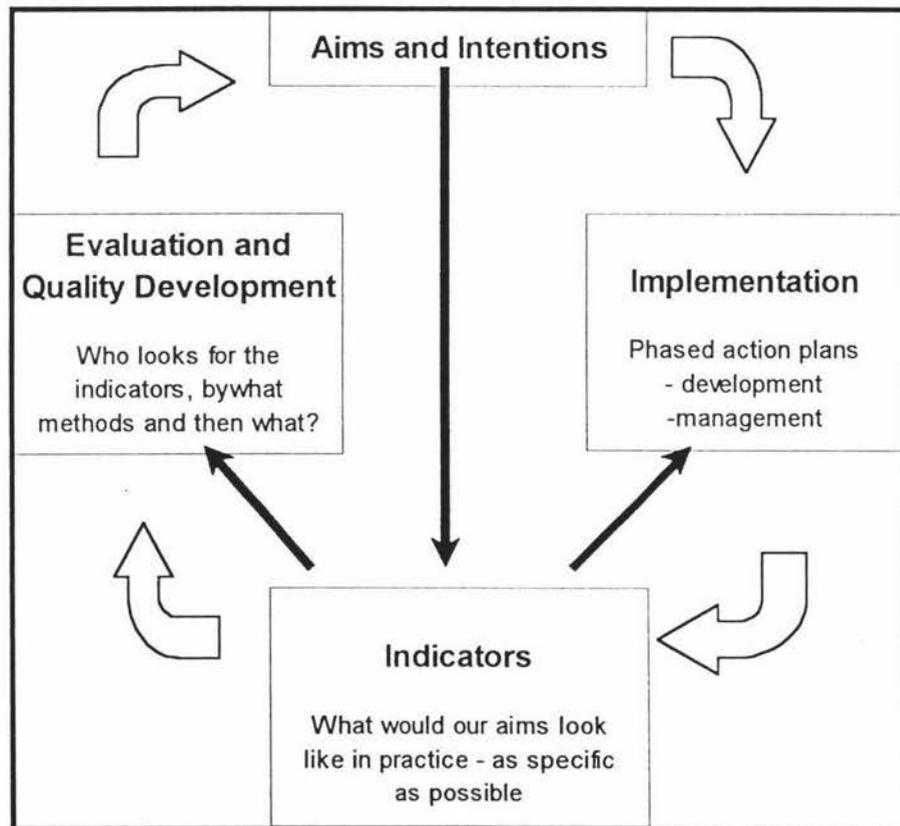
[Schollum & Ingram, 1991, 16]

Ruth Sutton's Approach

English educational consultant Ruth Sutton visited New Zealand during the early 1990s to deliver professional development seminars for principals and Boards of Trustees on School Self Review. Sutton introduced schools to an approach based on a four stage cyclical model which starts by:

- (1.) analysing existing aims and intentions, setting targets for action;
- (2.) implementing the action plan;
- (3.) identifying indicators; and,
- (4.) evaluating by checking indicators for success.

Figure 2.12 Sutton's Overview of the Process of School Evaluation (After Sutton, 1994, 12.)



As with Schollum and Ingram, Sutton emphasised the connection between review and development planning. As well as outlining the above approach, Sutton's 1994 book *School Self Review: A Practical Approach* examines extrinsic and intrinsic reasons for undertaking self-review and the conditions which should exist in a school before beginning. The special case of the small school is dealt with and two imaginary case studies presented to illustrate the application of the approach in a secondary and primary school. Guidance is also given on reviewing the quality of teaching and learning.

A self-assurance package

The Otago Region School Trustees' Association (ORSTA), in association with the Education Review Office (ERO), have produced a comprehensive resource package designed to provide boards of trustees with a systematic process for:

- reviewing compliance with charter and legislative requirements;
- reviewing the effectiveness of governance and management in enhancing outcomes for students;
- reporting;
- informing improvement. (ORSTA, 1995, 1-2)

The ORSTA package sees the focus of the self-review process as on "the delivery of the curriculum and the support students receive during their schooling..." addressing "the real work of schools, particularly the management of teaching and learning..." (op cit, 1).

The aim of the package is to give practical guidance to schools "in establishing an effective review and planning cycle that will lead to school improvement" (op cit, 2).

A number of purposes for school self-review are identified:

- self-review to check for legal compliance;
- to check that achievement expectations are being met;
- to investigate issues as a basis for planning;
- to check that existing plans are successful. (2)

Such purposes are essentially concerned with compliance, accountability, public confidence, reinforcement of central curriculum and administrative control, enhancement of the quality of the national education system, as much as with the self-improvement of the individual school.

By following an on-going process of self-review, it is expected that school boards will be able "to demonstrate that legislative and charter requirements are being met, or show that the board is planning to comply." (Op cit, 3). It is also expected by the writers of the ORSTA package that the process of review and development they advocate will advance the *National Education Goals* and help the schools comply with the *National Administrative Guidelines* (Ministry of Education, 1993).

It is expected that schools undertaking an on-going and effective programme of self-review will:

- "establish a sound basis for school development and future planning;
- satisfy requirements for schools to be accountable to the Crown and the community they serve, and
- enhance public confidence in individual schools and the education system as a whole." (ORSTA, 1995, 5)

By gaining a clear understanding of the schools current stage of development, trustees, staff, students, parents/caregivers become informed insiders with a good knowledge and understanding of how their school works, what it does well, and what it needs to change. At the same time, the ORSTA writers believe, morale, confidence and commitment are enhanced through consultation that is designed to bring about school improvement (op cit, 6). It is also considered that the school self-review process will provide information to enable boards "to report annually on achievements" (op cit, 7).

The self-review and improvement processes are not regarded as a "bolt-on" extra: they need to be woven into the management of the school as a planned, on-going process: planned in terms of scope and a time frame, a time frame which may take several years. Self review is regarded as complimentary to external review.

Self-review is also seen by the ORSTA writers as going beyond simple evaluation and including the management of change for improvement:

"Self-review is a means of improving the quality of service and outcomes through managing change effectively."(ORSTA User's Guide, 2)

The ORSTA package provides self-review tables for a number of curriculum management topics which are referenced to the relevant legislative requirement (eg the appropriate NAG). Descriptors are suggested (usually a scale of three: eg 1 = we do this well; 2 = some improvement needed; 3 = needs priority action), provision is made for indicating participants, and a checklist table of performance indicators set out with columns for indicating the 1 - 3 judgment scale for each indicator or sub-indicator. There is also provision for notes and references. Conclusions are then recorded on a summary sheet. For legislative aspects checklists are provided with columns to indicate: compliance; non-compliance; not applicable; comments and development action; and, name and date.

Despite ORSTA's expressed desire to focus on "the real work of schools" (ie teaching and learning), even the section on "Curriculum Management" has far more to do with

compliance, management and systems than the quality of teaching or learning, or of curriculum content. A table has been provided for only one of the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework's* Essential Learning Areas (Mathematics) (Ministry of Education, 1993a) with very general performance indicators given for the achievement aims. It is difficult to see how such general indicators can usefully inform staff of the specific areas for improvement. The remainder of the Tables provided in this section are focused on National Administration Guidelines and other legislation with the indicators generally being concerned with legal compliance rather than curriculum quality improvement.) The tables provided under the heading "Student Support" are also heavily weighted towards review of "compliance" with legislative requirements.

The ORSTA approach provides a useful collection of resources (mainly checklists) which could be used selectively by a school wishing to make a start on school self-review. The package would be of particular value to those schools wishing to self-review their management systems to check on legislative compliance. The "checklist" approach is somewhat more limiting however when it comes to self-review of the "real work" of schools: the effectiveness of teaching and learning. ORSTA does promote a cyclical school improvement approach, suggesting a "school development plan" format for on-going improvement planning based on the self-review outcomes. Some sample questionnaires are provided for data gathering from a range of stakeholders, as well as suggestions for developing indicators and tables.

Missing, however, are guidelines on making the judgements required and reaching consensus amongst stakeholders on those judgements. Although the checklists of indicators may provide an initial indication of areas for deeper, more focused investigation, ORSTA does not provide methodological suggestions for this. If meaningful improvement action is to follow an initial survey, specific focus is needed by those implementing such improvement.

School-wide curriculum self-review

Curriculum review in schools is seen by Michael Absolum (1995,2) as a natural and legitimate adjunct of self-management. A school should want to answer the same sort of questions asked by external reviewers: "What do you want students to learn? How do you know you have achieved these objectives?", not because they are required to do so to comply with legal or statutory requirements, but because they are "reasonable

questions which deserve quality answers"...and which are seen by the school as "legitimate and *not* incompatible with (the school's) autonomy as a self managing 'Tomorrow's Schools' school."

Absolum uses the example of reviewing the outcomes of a school's written language programme to demonstrate his suggested approach. The purpose of the review is seen as the detection of "mismatches between intended and actual outcomes and to revise, clarify and expand intended goals of the programme." (op cit, 3). A sequence of steps is outlined:

- clarification and refinement of learning objectives at each level (of the curriculum - in this case: *English in the New Zealand Curriculum*, Ministry of Education, 1994);
- identification of "standards of school wide achievement" acceptable to the school (eg. a percentage of children achieving at a given curriculum level may describe "high quality");
- establishment of an assessment system, involving clarification of assessment purposes (- both formative and summative);
- the devising of "a procedure for judging when students have completed each level" to provide "information about actual outcomes and allow comparisons with the expectations." Detailed guidelines are provided to assist schools in developing such a system in the case of Written Language;
- the documentation of the agreed objectives and standards, and of how they will be used, when, by whom, and how the review outcomes will be used.

Absolum also suggests some points to be taken into account concerning the management of the review process itself:

- a data-based approach to self-review and quality management requires a major shift in teachers thinking and this will take time;
- the objectives clarification process can be threatening - challenging existing practice and requiring professional development to facilitate change and enhance consistency;
- the integrity of the self-review process can be put at risk if staff do not accept that it can (and should) have an accountability function;
- time is needed - two terms for 3 or 4 subjects is about as fast as it can be done.

The Casa Nova Model

The need for an introductory guide to school self-reviewing to help New Zealand schools meet the requirements of National Administration Guideline No4(2) was recognised by Ross Willcocks (1995). Based on his own experience in developing a model for self-review at Casa Nova School in Oamaru, he has suggested the following review structure:

1. The staff review four areas twice a year (June and November):
 - (a), Children's Success and Concerns (barriers to learning, aids to success);
 - (b), Curriculum & Teaching (satisfactory achievement, less than satisfactory -why?);
 - (c), Whole School (systems and structures that (i) support, (ii) hinder progress in teaching and learning;
 - (d), Short Term Goals (those that have been achieved - why and why not?, continued planning).

2. In November, the staff also takes part in an annual review of the wider aspects of Whole School Growth and Goals. The scope of this section includes:
 - (a) Specific Curriculum Goals (in relation to the *National Education Goals* and *National Administrative Guidelines* (NEGs and NAGs) - (Ministry of Education, 1993), the School Development Plan, and task performance by teachers.
 - (b) Specific School Goals (in relation to the special needs or characteristics of the school, and of the B.O.T.'s specific school goals.)
 - (c) Professional Development (what's been achieved, what to move on to - development plan.)

3. The Board of Trustees members conduct an annual self-review in November of:
 - (a) Financial management for the year (annual report);
 - (b) Grounds and Property (goals achieved - cost analysis and future direction)
 - (c) B.O.T. responsibilities (consultations, reporting, policy, NEGs & NAGs.)
 - (d) Special or specific school goals.

An Integrated Approach

Chapple et al (c1995) have produced a useful resource for schools based on an integrated approach towards documentation of: the school charter; board of trustees organisation and policy review; and policies related to the National Administration Guidelines (including Guideline 4 (ii) "...maintain an ongoing programme of self-review".

The section on school self-review provides a sample task description for the board member with responsibility for overseeing implementation of the National Education Guidelines and the school's programme of self-review. Sample policies on self-review

are also provided together with suggested formats for planning reviews, writing review reports, and preparing school development plans. There is a (rather loose) attempt to tie all the various elements back to the *National Administrative Guidelines* with little attempt made to place the suggested approaches within a theoretical framework, or to provide methodological advice or procedures. Lack of guidance on how to actually use the forms provided and how they actually relate to one another has limited the potential for the manual to be useful.

Conclusion:

From the above New Zealand literature several themes emerge:

- the importance of voluntary participation in enhancing commitment;
- the leadership of the principal is central to initiating review but should not dominate the process once under way;
- in today's context, school self-review in New Zealand is expected to serve the multiple purposes of control, accountability and statutory assurance; as well as the more traditional purpose of informing functional improvement;
- review is an on-going developmental or cyclical process rather than unrelated single events;
- most review models are based upon gap analysis between intended and actual outcomes;
- success is viewed in terms of how well outcomes match the schools own aims, goals and mission statements, on the one hand, and on how well statutory and regulatory obligations are met on the other;
- the National Administrative Guidelines (1993) have played an important part in the establishment of self-review in schools;
- the Education Review Office has played a leading part in determining the form of self-review to be followed for their own purposes;
- attempts by individuals and resource providers to provide guidance has generally been rather piecemeal and lacking a definitive theoretical basis, tending to be driven by regulatory adherence rather than being informed by theories of change, organisational learning, school improvement, and school development.

The present study attempts to place these themes, and those from the overseas literature, within a theoretical context of school improvement which offers an on-going

developmental perspective aimed at allowing school personnel to design, implement and develop customised on-going programmes of school self-review.

SECTION IV

Lessons from the Literature

The preceding sections offer many lessons which should be considered by any school system or individual school considering the implementation of policy for and/or practice of school self-review. Some common themes emerge throughout the literature which seem to have theoretical and practical implications for policy development, implementation, and the practice of school self-review in New Zealand schools. These themes, together with the findings of the survey reported in Chapter 4, will inform the development of a prototype school self-review model in Chapters 5 and 6.

(a) Lessons to do with school culture (values, attitudes and mores):

- reviews must be honest, open and "public" in their methodology;
- participants need to share a common culture of collaborative action for collective decision-making and implementation;
- the school's culture needs to foster genuine collegiality and co-operation amongst participants;
- information is shared: everyone will be "in the know", not just "the few" (Schollum & Ingram, 1991.)
- the interests of the "clients" rather than the providers should be central;
- motivation to review and consequent development must be institutionalised as a part of the school culture rather than externally imposed;
- review participants should be committed to change for improvement rather than protecting the status quo and vested interests of providers;
- as well as shared values, attitudes and mores, the school culture must develop and nurture shared meanings: a common language of review.

(b) Lessons in time and resources:

- the scope of programmes of self-review must be manageable within the constraints of time and resource;
- resources must be properly budgeted for and provided on an on-going basis if self-review is to have a long term improvement effect;
- requisite skills must be identified and adequate training provided for all participants;
- technical assistance and support may need to be brought in from outside;
- support and training must be on-going beyond the initial implementation stage;

- manageable systems of data recording and documentation are needed.

(c) Strategic lessons:

- initial implementation needs to be well planned;
- school self-review should be an integral part of the overall management of the school;
- participants need a theoretical understanding of the process and its place in the overall administrative and instructional structures of the school;
- prerequisite knowledge and skills should not be assumed of participants;
- good documentation of shared vision, mission, goals and objectives aids effective self-review;
- an analysis of the school's existing aims and intentions is an appropriate starting point for initial and subsequent cycles of review; (Sutton, 1994.)
- purposes and uses of review outcomes must be explicitly and honestly established at the outset;
- the relationship between the information gained and how it will contribute to improvement must be clear to participants, and improvement action seen to be achievable;
- not only must the self-review be planned, but the subsequent improvement actions must also be planned and in turn evaluated;
- a cyclic process of review and action is a feasible approach;
- a supportive political environment, both within and without the school, is needed.

(d) Lessons about the purpose of self-review:

- research suggests that "a close association between contractual accountability and school self-evaluation leads to the impoverishment of the latter and to the ineffective assertion of the former" (Clift et al, 1987);
- if self-reviewing is to contribute to both accountability and self-improvement purposes then this must be agreed by all at the outset;
- while the dangers of multiple purposes must be considered, the dangers of re-running the credibility crisis of the 1970s and '80s is high if accountability purposes are not addressed as well as direct improvement purposes.

(e) Lessons on methodology:

- as a field of evaluation school self-review draws on a range of methodologies;
- different methodologies are appropriate for different stages and types of questions within the review process;
- the overall approach should include methodologies sensitive to the complex social, political and cultural context of the school;

- a critical-reflective approach seems to offer possibilities for overcoming some of the weaknesses of other approaches (Coomer, 1986.)
- to maintain credibility, instruments and review strategies used must be of a high technical standard: free of bias, valid and reliable;
- methods of analysis and interpretation need to be rigorous and understood by participants;
- Clarification and refinement of purposes, goals, and objectives should be a major part of review methodology as well as an outcome of the review (Absolum, 1995).

(f) Lessons on organisational learning:

- as an organisation the school needs to learn not only how to improve in its delivery, and to adjust its assumptions and expectations, but also to improve its ability as an organisation to learn through reflection and self-evaluation (Argyris & Schon, 1978; Calder 1994.)

(g) Some other lessons:

- the danger of review reports fostering self-justification rather than self-evaluation should be avoided;
- any implications for the career futures of individual participants must be recognised;
- there may be value in having school self-review validated by external evaluation.

Conclusion

The concept of school self-review has emerged internationally as a particular form of educational evaluation programme over the last two to three decades in response to a number of pressures. Initially in the 1970s self-review was experimented with as a means of school improvement and of applying the "new evaluation" in a practical school context. Pressure for accountability saw an official capture of the approach as a "soft and cheap" means of introducing institutional accountability in a political climate which was demanding improved accountability across all sectors of public service. The failure of the soft and cheap approach to deliver the robust forms of accountability expected, coupled with a universal move towards managerialism and in particular, towards "self-management" in schools, saw a strengthening of external evaluation in the early 1990's on the one hand, and a refreshed demand for managerial evaluation structures and systems within the school on the other. Technical difficulties and the expense of major assessment based effectiveness approaches, together with a resurgence of interest, at least at a theoretical level, in non-technocratic and non-

positivistic approaches to school evaluation over more recent years have countered these pressures to some extent. While the "hard" technocratic approach is likely to remain in order to satisfy the demands of positivist politicians, a combination of the "soft" interpretative or naturalistic approach, and an emergent "critical" approach would seem to be necessary to provide a balance and counter the weaknesses of the former.

School self-review as a field of educational evaluation is functionally part of both the accountability and improvement dimensions of the school. While the improvement dimension is more frequently emphasised as the prime purpose for self-review, the accountability agenda can not be ignored as it is structurally an integral outcome of any form of evaluation. Developmental school improvement is dependent on an evaluative component. Research and theories of change and organisational learning demonstrate the power of organisational self-evaluation or self-reflection as a powerful means of bringing about change for improved school effectiveness.

Experience in New Zealand and elsewhere has demonstrated many of the practical problems associated with school self-review. Many of these problems arise from confused theories held by participants and a lack of the technical skills, knowledge, and resourcing needed to adequately implement ongoing programmes. The survey undertaken as part of the present study (Chapter 4) has confirmed that many of the issues and problems emerging from experiences overseas, and from earlier New Zealand studies, continue to frustrate current attempts to implement programmes of self-review in New Zealand schools today. The nature of these problems will be more closely examined in the following chapters, and some effort made to clarify a set of assumptions and principles for practice which may offer guidance for a more coherent approach to school self-review in New Zealand schools.

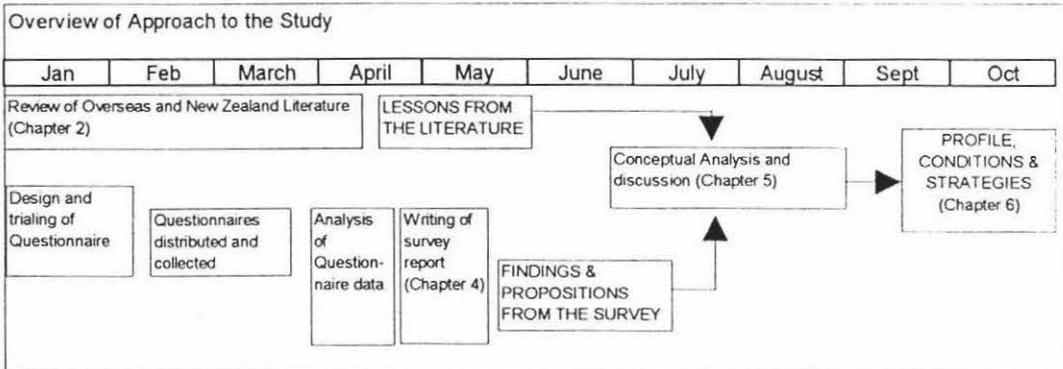
Chapter 3

Methodology

The general approach of the study

The method of this study follows three broad approaches: (1) a general overview of the literature associated with evaluation and school self-review from New Zealand and overseas; (2) a questionnaire survey of a sample of practising New Zealand primary and intermediate principals; and, (3) an attempt to analyse and clarify concepts and assumptions from the literature and from current New Zealand practice, and synthesise these into a prototype theoretical framework which may give a theoretical base for improved practice.

Figure 3.1



The review of literature begins by setting the scene of educational evaluation in general and presents some well known classifications and descriptions of the various approaches and models of the last 40 to 50 years. This is followed by a review of New Zealand and overseas literature more specifically about school self-review and similar processes. The purpose of this review is to provide a background for the remainder of the study by identifying some of the key perspectives and directions, both theoretical and practical, in the literature.

The survey of current practice aims at gaining a broad picture of the forms of school self-review operating in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools and the reasons why schools have undertaken such review. It is hoped that by gaining more specific information as to the nature and motives of self-reviewing, and by examining the development and conceptual basis of school self-reviewing in other parts of the world, a number of key principles will emerge which would help individual schools develop self-review systems suited to their own needs and purposes.

Following a preliminary review of related overseas and New Zealand literature, including some New Zealand examples of published self-review methodologies, it was recognised that little was known about the nature of self-review in New Zealand schools, and the espoused purposes for such reviews. A questionnaire was used to survey a representative sample of principals of primary and intermediate schools throughout the country. As well as focusing on self-review method and purpose, the survey also examined the implementation and perceived success of self-review systems.

The complex nature and multiple understandings of what is meant by "school self-review" in practice and in the literature, together with the overlap with similar terms, has necessitated a relatively in-depth analysis and clarification of the language and meanings involved. While the writer has little experience in formal conceptual analysis the importance of some ordering and clarification of language and meaning associated with school self-review is needed if some means of moving forward, both theoretically and in practice, is to be found. In doing this Scriven's (1988, 144) advice is noted:

"...limit the amount of analysis to the least amount the job requires."

1. The Literature Review

Structure

Chapter Two attempts to review the literature associated with school self-review and related concepts within the overall context of educational evaluation and school development. The first section overviews the field of educational evaluation, the range of approaches found within it, and asks the question: where does "school self-review" fit into this very broad and diverse area of educational theory and practice?

Section Two reviews four key related areas: school effectiveness; school development; school improvement; and, organisational learning, before investigating the implications of these fields for school self-review.

The third section reviews theory and practice with school self-review, or similar processes, in some other countries including: The United Kingdom; Australia; Belgium; The United States; and Israel.

Section Four describes some New Zealand experiences with school self-review and examines a number of resource packages and guidebooks or manuals. The question of why self-review was introduced into New Zealand is explored.

The Chapter concludes by identifying some common themes throughout the literature which seem to have theoretical and practical implications for policy development, implementation, and the practice of school self-review in New Zealand schools. These themes, together with the findings of the survey reported in Chapter 4, will inform the development of a generic school self-review model in Chapter 5.

In reviewing the literature in this way it is hoped that the current attempts by school professionals to introduce and use school self-reviewing systems in their schools will be given a historical and theoretical context which will help to inform the development of a body of knowledge and theoretical basis for further research.

2. The Survey of Current Practice

Chapter Four reports on the results of a survey aimed at gaining some current information regarding the forms of school self-review being used in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools and the reasons why schools do use school self-review.

The Sample:

A total of 42 principals of primary and intermediate schools in Southland, Otago, Canterbury, Westland, Nelson, Hawkes Bay, and Auckland were approached by the

researcher or his agents. The purposes of the survey were explained and prospective respondents asked if they would agree to completing a questionnaire. Schools ranged in size from small country primary schools to large city contributing and intermediate schools. 34 respondents had returned the questionnaire in time for inclusion in this report.

The Instrument:

A **questionnaire** (Appendix I), based on the purposes of the survey was constructed and trialed with 6 principals. Following some minor revision, questionnaires, together with a covering letter and a reply-paid envelope were distributed to a total of 42 principals between late February and the end of March 1996. The major categories and items were derived from the types of issues and themes which emerged during the literature review (see especially Section IV, Chapter 2.)

Advantages and Disadvantages of Questionnaires

A questionnaire survey was chosen as the major empirical data gathering method for this study due to the economy of time and resources involved compared with other methods such as interview or case-study. The objective was to gain responses from a reasonable number of principals to provide a database upon which to base (together with literature research) the subsequent conceptual and philosophical aspects of the study. Although a standardised response was not a major requirement of the present study, as Sax (1979, 89) points out, questionnaires do ensure that each respondent receives the same questions.

As suggested by Burns (1990, 301) the possibility of misinterpretation of questions and terms in complex conceptual areas can be a problem with questionnaires. Because the meaning of school self-review and many of its associated concepts is yet to be established with any consistency the difficulty of differential meaning was a problem in this study. Difficulties (some anticipated and some not) did arise in this regard with respondents interpreting meanings in ways other than the instrument's constructor anticipated. This problem was evident when some responses were cross-checked between items of a similar nature in different sections when it appeared that some respondents interpreted essentially the same concept differently in one section to the other. Other inconsistencies of this type were noticeable in the open-ended responses.

Ideally, semi-structured face to face interviews would have provided a more satisfactory means of checking on such features and clarifying the respondents' understandings of the items and allowed for on the spot clarification of open ended questions. (Burns, 1990, 286.)

Because the purpose of the first section of the questionnaire was to identify the *range* of forms of school self-review in current practice and not to arrive at a statistical comparative summation of the extent to which various forms are utilised this difficulty has not significantly restricted the survey's usefulness at least as far as Section 1 is concerned. In an attempt to overcome this difficulty in Section 2 which involved even more complex statements, alternative statements were included for very similar ideas.

Some possible disadvantages of questionnaire methodology were allowed for however in the design of the project. For example, the typical difficulty of low response rate was alleviated to some extent by arranging for prospective respondents to be approached personally by agents in several different parts of the country. These agents explained the purpose and nature of the questionnaire and forwarded questionnaires only after obtaining respondents agreement to take part. As these agents were personally acquainted professional colleagues of the respondents the majority approached agreed to take part. Of the 42 principals approached in this way, 34 (81%) had responded in time for inclusion in the analysis and a number of late responses were also received. This response rate compares favourably with the 75% found to be the average rate of return of mailed questionnaires according to one study on the rate of return in published studies (Shannon, 1948), although others (Burns, 1990, 301) suggest response rates seldom exceed 50% with rates between 15 and 50% being common. While a higher response rate undoubtedly could have been obtained by following up on those not returned it was decided that this would constitute unwarranted pressure on prospective respondents (busy professionals whose days are full enough without filling out yet another questionnaire from some loopy academic!)

Wilson (1984, 36) warns that in a survey attempts to produce comparable information can lead to an obscuring of the subtler differences and that over simplification, although it may ease analysis, has a cost. In the present study attempts were made to compensate for this by having relatively subtle differences worked into the items and by providing ample opportunity for open-ended responses. Although this produced a larger amount of data, the strategy was worthwhile as a number of subtle differences between forms of review and between purposes for review were identified.

Section I of the questionnaire examined the **forms** of self-reviewing currently being used in schools. Respondents were asked to indicate how accurately a number of descriptors matched the form of the review process operating in their school on a three point Likert type scale:

- 1 - closely describes a characteristic of your system;
- 2 - partially describes a characteristic of your system;
- 3 - has no relationship to a characteristic of your system.

Sub-sections focused on: the **frequency** of reviewing; what the **scope and focus** of the reviews were; who made **decisions** about what was to be reviewed; the **methodology** of the review processes; and, how data was **analysed**. Each sub-section also allowed for responses other than those listed.

Section 2 set out to discover the various **purposes** for school self-review. Respondents were asked to use the same three-point scale to indicate how accurately 19 descriptors reflected characteristics of the review process used in their schools. Provision was also made for respondents to list any other purposes which they did not consider to be covered by the list provided.

Section 3 attempted to identify the tangible **outcomes** which were resulting from the use of self-reviewing. Eight descriptors were listed for use with the same three-point scale and the opportunity provided for open-ended responses by way of comments.

Section 4 surveyed perceptions of the extent to which school self-reviewing processes were **successful** in meeting their purposes. Five sub-sections focussed on:

1. success in identifying strengths and weaknesses, establishing priorities, providing accountability information;
2. success in leading to improved performance across 13 areas of school activity;
3. overall ease of implementation;
4. difficulties experienced with initial implementation;
5. continuing difficulties.

Section 5 investigated the development of the process, seeking information on:

1. how long self-reviewing had been operating in the school;

2. changes in form over that time;
3. nature of changes of form;
4. reasons for changes of form;
5. changes to purposes of self-reviewing over time;
6. nature of changes of purpose;
7. reasons for changes of purpose.

Section 5 allowed respondents the opportunity to add any additional comments which they felt may help to describe the form, purposes, outcomes, success, or development of the self-review process currently operating in their schools. Comments on experience with self-reviewing at other schools, and about the role of self-review in New Zealand schools generally, were also invited.

Analysis:

Responses for Sections 1 - 4 were entered on a spreadsheet for each respondent with data collated to summary tables for each of the sub-sections. Summary tables analysed data by:

- number of responses for each point on the three and five point scales;
- number of non-responses;
- total number of responses (including non-responses);
- number of responses as percentages of total responses, referred to as Percentage Scores (PS) in the tables;
- weighted scores (number of responses x weighting). For the three-point scales, weightings were: x2, x1, and x0. For the five-point scales: x4, x3, x2, x1, x0;
- Weighted Percentage Scores (WPS) derived by aggregation of Percentage Scores weighted as above;
- for some sub-sections WPS were also expressed as a percentage of the weighted total.

Trends and patterns were highlighted graphically on the spreadsheet tables, with larger tables being sorted by WPS to rank responses by aggregated weighted percentages. Additional comments made by respondents were also analysed with relevant and significant outcomes incorporated into summaries at the end of each section. A number of possible follow-up questions for investigation in Part Two of the research have been identified.

Statistical data from Section 5 has been analysed in table format, while information supplied regarding change has been categorised according to a number of emergent issues.

Additional comments supplied by respondents in Section 6 have also been grouped according to predominant themes and issues. Finally, some tentative propositions have been made and focus points for further study identified.

Limitations:

The survey has been designed as an indicative instrument only. Its main purposes are to illuminate representative forms of self-reviewing being undertaken by the types of schools surveyed, identify the purposes or reasons for the adoption of self-review systems, and gain some indication of principal's perceptions of the level of implementation success. The survey has not been designed to provide an overall indication of the extent to which particular forms of self-review are operating in schools, but rather to give an indication of the range of difference evident in the sample.

Generalisations derived from its data must be interpreted within the context of the sample group: ie 34 New Zealand primary and intermediate school principals who were individually invited by the researcher and associates to take part. In particular, the survey did not seek responses from other than school principals and cannot, therefore, be regarded as indicative of the perceptions of other individuals and groups associated with the schools.

Although a good representation of urban and larger rural schools has been included in the initial survey, very small rural schools are under-represented in terms of their occurrence in the total New Zealand school population. Secondary and Area schools have not been included.

These points aside, it is considered that the 34 schools whose principals were surveyed are representative of the target school population. Trends established when the first 20 responses had been received did not alter significantly as the remaining 14 were added, and it is not considered likely that this pattern would vary over a larger sample of the *same* types of schools.

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis

Chapter Five of the study attempts to bring together the themes or "lessons" of the literature with the outcomes of the survey in a way which demonstrates the inter-relationships of school self-review and associated aspects of school functioning. It also seeks to clarify some of the principal theoretical assumptions which underlie the practice of school self-review, evaluation and related disciplines. An attempt is made to suggest elements of these which can be adopted within an eclectic approach to school self-review.

Conceptual Analysis

Chapter 5 of the study explores a range of theoretical constructs which offer some explanation to the nature and function of school self-reviewing. The chapter examines the concept of "evaluation" itself and its relationship to school improvement. From this the idea of "school self-review" is discussed and the relationship between the two clarified. Also discussed are a number of theoretical and philosophical ideas which have been associated with school self-review in the past, or which seem to offer some orientation for a theory of school self-review. The conclusions drawn from this discussion are offered as prototypes rather than definitive constructs, their purpose being to contribute towards an overall perspective rather than to offer a strictly empirical description.

While not pretending to have overcome the difficulties involved, the approach taken attempts to avoid some of the methodological difficulties which have been noted. Paul Thagard (1992, 24-25) warns that the traditional view that *concepts* can be defined by giving "necessary and sufficient conditions for their application" is limited by two major problems: "(1) it is nearly impossible to find defining conditions for nonmathematical concepts, and (2) concepts show typicality effects." (some objects/events more typically fit a concept than others). This problem has been circumvented to some extent by using the term *prototype* which can accept broader criteria of "what counts as" than a concept. In addition to this the term *core* has been used where the core is "more diagnostic than the prototype even though the prototype may be useful for quickly identifying instances." (ibid, 25.) A core then can be thought of as a slightly looser explanation than a concept but still serve to give concepts stability, while a prototype is more general and tentative.

Scriven (1988) has warned that two approaches commonly followed in conceptual analysis are flawed. First, the use of operational definitions, that is definitions based on measurements of operations, and second, the idea that it is "just a matter of convention" how terms are defined. The first of these involves creating definitions according to some functional measurable criteria of what the object or event is or does. The second involves attempting to create a convention of use which suits the context or purpose of an individual proposer of a definition. The effect of combining these two approaches was intended to be the creation of fresh (unbagged) concepts based on scientifically measurable criteria which offered an unambiguous and useful language for practitioners. As Scriven (op cit, 137) points out however, the success of this doctrine has been limited. New operational definitions are rarely adopted with such attempts to over rationalise the arbitrariness of language making no really new contribution to understanding them. The very baggage and clutter the redefiners' attempt to discard hold much of the interconnectability of thought and language for potential users of the new definitions.

Israel Scheffler (1960, 12) writing on the evolving nature of scientific definitions states: "...scientific definitions, in particular, are continuous with contemporaneous statements in their environing (theoretical) networks, and cannot well be evaluated in abstraction from these networks." Such definitions are intended for a professional scientific audience. More "general" or "stipulative" definitions, intended for a more general audience of non-scientific practitioners (teachers for example), are "often simply a stipulation to the effect that a given term is to be understood in a special way for the space of some discourse." (ibid, 13). Scheffler suggests that there are two sub-groups of stipulative definitions: those for which there is no established prior usage of the term ("inventive" stipulation); and, those for which there is an established usage (non-inventive). The analysis and discussion in respect of concepts and definitions in Chapter Five of this study is primarily concerned with establishing a clarified understanding of meaning at this latter level: ie. at the level of general (practical audience) non-inventive stipulative definition and conceptualisation. In this sense any resulting "network" of definitions is prototypical of a "practical" rather than "scientific" theory.

Similarly, Clark (1990, 197) points out that "Our concepts do not stand in isolation, having essential meanings, but gather whatever meanings they have from the theoretical network of which they are part." Clark makes the point that the traditional view, (that analytic statements are true by virtue of the meaning of the words of the statement, while synthetic statements are true by the empirical support they can

muster), collapses because no sharp boundary can be delineated between the two. Rather, all statements have both conceptual and empirical content.

The approach taken in Chapter 5 of this study accepts that such boundaries are artificial and seeks to explain the concepts discussed in terms of both within the practical context of schools while using theoretical constructs for purposes of explanation and (hopefully) clarification. Through such discussion interrelationships are made more evident while maintaining an emergent overall perspective of school self-review as "Collaborative Reflection" (see especially: Chapter 5, Section 4.) Clarification is sought through contextual discussion rather than purely "empirical" definition. Because of this some attention has been given to a wide range of theoretical ideas which help to explain the contribution of the prototype concepts to the emergent model. The theoretical and conceptual insights of Chapter 5 are merged in Chapter 6 with the key findings and propositions from the survey of current practice (Chapter 4) to suggest nine conditions which have implications for the practice of school self-review in schools.

Conclusion

This study uses a combination of empirical and conceptual approaches in an attempt to gain understanding and clarify meanings related to the theory and practice of school self-review in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. A review of literature in the field of educational evaluation, school improvement and effectiveness, and in the area of school self-review and self-evaluation is used to overview the theoretical and research context of the study and to provide a base of knowledge for the subsequent sections of the study. A survey of 34 principals has provided particular additional insights into the nature of school self-review, its purposes and the success schools report in implementing self-review programmes. The survey findings have been used to formulate a number of propositions about school self-review as currently practiced in some New Zealand schools, and to suggest areas for future research and study. From this base the nature of school self-review is analysed in terms of its relationship to evaluation and a number of theoretical perspectives from the literature which seem to offer the notion of school self-review a theoretical frame. Together with the findings and propositions of the survey, the theoretical and conceptual discussion suggests a number of guidelines and considerations for the design and practice of school self-reviewing.

Forms and Purposes of School Self-review in New Zealand Schools

Findings from a survey of school self-reviewing in 34 New Zealand primary and intermediate schools.

Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings of a survey carried out to investigate the nature of school self-review processes currently operating in New Zealand schools, the reasons why schools have adopted self-review, and the extent to which principals of the schools surveyed believed their review programmes were successful in meeting the intended purposes.

A postal questionnaire survey of 34 New Zealand primary and intermediate schools was conducted to give an overview of the nature of self-reviewing in the sample. Details of the methodology for this survey were outlined in Chapter 3. Some tentative propositions are suggested and possible focus points for further investigation are identified.

The purposes of this survey were:

1. to obtain an indication of the forms of school self-review currently being used, or which have been used by schools in the past;
2. to identify the reasons given by schools for undertaking school self-review;
3. to gauge the perceptions schools have of the effectiveness of their self-review schemes in achieving their purposes;

4. to gain information on how schemes were implemented and the sorts of problems experienced;
5. to provide a base of information to be used in conjunction with theoretical perspectives to identify a number of conditions and considerations for the practice of school self-review.

The following working definition of "school self-review" was used for the purposes of the survey:

"Any information-gathering and evaluative process conducted by all or some of the individuals or groups having a direct interest or involvement in the day-to-day work of the school. (Such as: students, teachers, administrators, board members, parents, other employees.)"

Section 1 presents and discusses responses related to the form of self-reviewing being practiced in the schools surveyed including the frequency of reviewing activity, the scope and focus of review events, the nature of decision making about review scope and focus, and the types of data gathering and analysis used by the schools surveyed.

Section 2 examines the survey results concerning the purposes of self-review given by the surveyed principals, while Section 3 looks at the use made by schools of their review outcomes. Responses concerned with the perceived success of self-review programmes in achieving their purposes are presented and discussed in Section 4. Section 5 is concerned with the development of the self-reviewing programmes over time and the reasons for subsequent changes to the form or design of those programmes, while general comments made by the surveyed principals are examined and discussed in Section 6, including the role of school self-reviewing in New Zealand schools today.

Section 7 offers a summary outline of major survey findings, formulates some tentative propositions about the nature, purposes and success of school self-reviewing, and suggests some possible areas for further research and study.

SECTION 1

Forms of Self-review in use

One of the main objectives of this survey was to identify the range of different forms of self-review operating in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. Anecdotal evidence gained through informal discussion with fellow principals indicated that many different activities were being labelled as "school self-review". Consultants and advisers around the country appeared to be promoting varying forms of review methodology, while the Ministry of Education seemed to be singularly disinterested in providing anything in the form of guidance for schools on "how to do review" other than decreeing by way of National Administration Guideline No 4(ii) that "Each Board of Trustees is also required to... maintain an ongoing programme of self-review." (Ministry of Education, 1993b). A few schools had been able to access Ministry promoted professional development courses, others had obtained the services of overseas and local consultants, or utilised guidelines or self-review packages or kits as starting points. The range of different approaches, the extent to which such efforts were seen as being successful, and what might be learnt from such pioneering endeavours was, however, unknown.

Casual discussions with fellow principals and a brief review of available publications tended to suggest that key variables related to the forms or methods being used included:

- the **frequency** at which various activities deemed to be part of self-review processes were undertaken;
- the **scope and focus** of what was reviewed;
- **who makes the decisions** about what is to be reviewed (and when);
- what sort of **data** is used and how is it collected;
- what methods were used to **analyse** data.

These areas formed the first section of the survey and the results are presented below.

(i) The Frequency of Review Activities

When asked to rate four descriptors of frequency on a three-point scale the principals surveyed gave a very clear indication that review activities in their schools were on-going rather than periodic or irregular.

70.6 % of principals surveyed reported that on-going review closely resembled a characteristic of their school's self-review system. However, it should also be noted that 32.4% of respondents indicated that reviewing carried out at irregular intervals was at least partially a characteristic of the self-review system operating in their schools, while for 29.4% a brief review once a year was at least a part of their school's review system. This indicates that for a significant number of schools, (about one-third), a combination of on-going reviewing with periodic reviewing is a feature.

A sizeable minority of principals (44.1%) indicated that a brief review once a year was not a feature of the review system in their schools, while 52.9% were just as clear that a comprehensive review carried out once every two or three years had no relationship to their school's system.

Table 3.1(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and Weighted Responses for Frequency of Review Activities		Number of Responses					TOTAL	Weighted
		1	2	3	NR			
1.10	A brief review is carried out once a year.	4	6	15	9	34	14	
1.11	A comprehensive review is carried out once every two or three years	2	7	18	7	34	11	
1.12	Reviewing is carried out at irregular intervals.	3	8	15	8	34	14	
1.13	Reviewing is on-going.	24	6	0	4	34	54	

Table 3.1(b)

Percentages

Responses for FREQUENCY sorted by weighted percentage scores		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n=200
1.13	Reviewing is on-going.	70.6	17.6	0.0	11.8	100	159
1.10	A brief review is carried out once a year.	11.8	17.6	44.1	26.5	100	41
1.12	Reviewing is carried out at irregular intervals.	8.8	23.5	44.1	23.5	100	41
1.11	A comprehensive review is carried out once every two or three years	5.9	20.6	52.9	20.6	100	32

When weighted percentage scores (WPS) are examined the tendency for review to be on-going is clearly evident: (WPS = 159).

(Note: *Weighted Percentage Scores* (WPS) are derived from the percentage of responses by weighting them as follows: *Closely describes...* x2; *Partially describes...* x1; and, *No relationship...* x0. The weighted scores are the added to give the WPS for each item.)

When asked to comment further on the frequency of review activities a number of schools indicated that some form of schedule or regular cycle was followed but that there was considerable variation in such schedules:

"Has been at end of each term (3 term year). This year will probably be done mid/end of year". (3)

"A comprehensive review is brought together once a year." (4) (25) (33)

"A comprehensive review is held at end of each year and revisited mid year." (7)

"Specifically scheduled at the end of each term and produced in written form." (17)

"Formal syndicate/programme reviews are conducted twice each year. Individual teacher appraisal is also part of school review. This is also conducted twice each year." (23)

"A three year cycle has been drawn up to ensure each area of B.O.T. responsibility and each curriculum area is reviewed in depth at least once in the life of a B.O.T. - 3 years. Plus annual class reviews." (26)

"School review at mid-year and end of year (is a) more detailed and comprehensive document than on-going more informal reviewing." (28)

"A classroom review is carried out each six months and a full review involving teachers, management and B.O.T. is completed at the end of each year." (32)

Some schools indicated that the nature of the area to be reviewed may determine the frequency of review:

"Some areas are looked at annually, eg. curriculum development, whole school objectives, student performance, environmental issues. Curriculum areas are covered in depth on a two year cycle." (25)

"Planned review of school's Annual Plan - 12 monthly; focus on Teaching and Learning - Barriers to learning - 6 monthly." (32)

Discussion:

It seems likely that while many principals would describe the school self-review systems operating in their schools as "ongoing", many schools have some combination of periodic or scheduled plan for regularly recurrent events. There is a need, when considering frequency, to differentiate between "small" and "large" evaluation events, that is between on-going larger single events, and continuous series of smaller events.

The relationship between:

- (1) **size** (time and resources);
- (2) **type** (nature/methodology) of evaluation events; and,
- (3) **frequency** (recurrence),

of those events are dimensions which would benefit from further study.

For example: Are small one-off "snap-shot" type events to be regarded as "on-going" if they cannot be compared to any baseline data for comparison?

The whole question of "what counts as school self-review" also comes into question when considering principals' responses and comments related to this (and other) questionnaire items. Although a working definition was provided, this was purposefully made very broad so as to be as inclusive as possible at this stage in the study. The extent to which respondent principals held a common interpretation of this definition is problematic, as is the extent the respondents were able to consistently apply this definition from one point in the questionnaire to another.

2. The Scope and Focus of Self-review Activities

The management of scope and focus in self-review processes was the second area to be examined by the survey. The purpose of the items in this section was to identify strategies used by schools to keep the process manageable and focused.

Principals surveyed gave a clear indication that the review processes in their schools were more likely to be planned to cover focus areas over a number of years [item 1.23: WPS=150], rather than following a schedule which saw "all charter goals" reviewed in depth each year [Item 1.24: WPS 47].

Responses were more evenly distributed across the three responses in regard to whether review covered a small number of activities, or a wide range of activities. [Items 1.20, 1.21: WPS range = 97 - 94].

70.6% of review systems used a system of progressive refocusing to some extent to identify focus areas [Item 1.25: WPS = 91], but fewer schools (55.9%) were likely to utilise an initial wide-ranging survey to any extent to identify areas for more in-depth study [Item 1.22: WPS = 74].

Table 3.2(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and Weighted Responses for SCOPE & FOCUS		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	Weighted
1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system 2= PARTIALLY describes a characteristic of your system 3= has NO RELATIONSHIP to a characteristic of your system							
1.20	The review covers a wide range of school activities each year	12	8	11	3	34	32
1.21	The review covers a small number of activities.	13	7	11	3	34	33
1.22	An initial wide ranging survey is used to identify areas for more in-depth inquiry	6	13	12	3	34	25
1.23	Areas to be focused on are planned to be covered over a number of years	20	11	1	2	34	51
1.24	All charter goals are reviewed in depth each year.	1	14	17	2	34	16
1.25	A system of progressive refocussing is utilised to illuminate salient issues.	7	17	7	3	34	31

Table 3.2(b)

Percentages

Responses for SCOPE & FOCUS sorted by weighted percentage scores:		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n= 200
1.23	Areas to be focused on are planned to be covered over a number of years	58.8	32.4	2.9	5.9	100	150
1.21	The review covers a small number of activities.	38.2	20.6	32.4	8.8	100	97
1.20	The review covers a wide range of school activities each year	35.3	23.5	32.4	8.8	100	94
1.25	A system of progressive refocussing is utilised to illuminate salient issues.	20.6	50.0	20.6	8.8	100	91
1.22	An initial wide ranging survey is used to identify areas for more in-depth inquiry	17.6	38.2	35.3	8.8	100	74
1.24	All charter goals are reviewed in depth each year.	2.9	41.2	50.0	5.9	100	47

The need for reviews to be responsive to particular issues or events of the day was seen by some principals to be as important as planned coverage:

"A review can be responsive to the need arising in a particular area. For example: Parent interest in homework." (23)

"...incidental reviews (ie ski trip etc) help the school focus on issues that the teaching team or principal then 'rework' or develop." (10)

The methods used by schools for deciding on priorities for review focus at any particular time where either a "need analysis" type initial survey, or some form of progressive re-focusing, is not used is an area which raises questions given that most principals indicated that review processes were spread over a number of years. Unless various aspects are selected on a purely random basis it must be concluded that some individuals influence this decision-making in some way.

The principals surveyed seemed very aware of the management issues involved, seeing the need to restrict the scope of the review process at any one time, and to maintain an ongoing process of progressive refocusing to avoid a tendency for review events to grow beyond the resources of the school. The need to manage self-review without distracting staff and others from teaching and learning to the extent that the review process actually becomes counterproductive to teaching and learning rather than serving to enhance it appeared to be generally recognised, especially by those principals indicating some experience in implementing self-review.

The reality of emergent issues and the tentativeness of schedules and plans was recognised by some principals. The extent to which schools indicated that they followed a predetermined schedule, or a cyclical approach, do in fact allow emergent issues to overtake their planned programme is an area worthy of further study. Do emergent issues simply slot into the programme to be dealt with concurrently? Or, is the programme extended outwards to allow for them? Is there a danger that some aspects may be continually demoted down the programme to the point where they are never likely to be dealt with? What criteria are used by decision makers in this respect? Whose interests prevail when such decisions are made (and remade)?

3. Decision-making about what is to be reviewed

The power of the principal and staff as joint decision-makers in deciding on what is to be reviewed at any particular time clearly predominates in this section, signalling that other stakeholders (board members, students, parents, community) have little say in the direction review processes take, so far as the subject of review events is concerned.

Weighted responses from the surveyed principals to the items related to this question give a clear indication that decision-making about what is to be reviewed is generally in the hands of the principal and staff jointly [Item 1.31: WPS=153], with the Board of Trustees and Parents having some input [items: 1.30, 1.32, 1.33: WPS range = 79 - 68].

While principals signalled that "principals alone" were significantly less influential than "principal and staff together" a survey of non-principal staff members on this item may

show a somewhat different perception. This would be an interesting area for further study.

Table 3.3(a)

Number of Responses

WHO DECIDES WHAT IS TO BE REVIEWED?		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	Weighted
1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system 2= PARTIALLY describes a characteristic of your system 3= has NO RELATIONSHIP to a characteristic of your system							
1.30	The principal decides on areas to be reviewed.	3	17	9	5	34	23
1.31	The principal and staff decide together what is to be reviewed	18	16	0	0	34	52
1.32	The Board of Trustees decides what should be reviewed.	4	19	10	1	34	27
1.33	Parents are consulted to help identify areas for review.	2	21	8	3	34	25

Table 3.3(b)

Percentages

Responses for DECISION MAKERS sorted by weighted percentage scores		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n= 200
1.31	The principal and staff decide together what is to be reviewed	52.9	47.1	0.0	0.0	100	153
1.32	The Board of Trustees decides what should be reviewed.	11.8	55.9	29.4	2.9	100	79
1.33	Parents are consulted to help identify areas for review.	5.9	61.8	23.5	8.8	100	74
1.30	The principal decides on areas to be reviewed.	8.8	50.0	26.5	14.7	100	68

Comments from respondents to this section tend to support the above conclusions:

"B.O.T./Principal/Staff identify areas in real need of review. Tends to be driven by Principal and Senior Staff." (1)

"School staff and B.O.T. review their own areas of activity to contribute to the over-all review process" (4)

"The B.O.T. has, at present little involvement in directing or identifying areas for review, BUT they are interested in the results of any review." (10)

"Pupils may identify an issue to be addressed." (23)

"Team approach is used. Shared ideas and shared decision-making from Principal, Staff and Board."(24) (26)

While responses and comments from principals generally indicate that Board members and parents generally do have some input into the decision-making process little information is available from this survey on the nature of such input. The extent to which the principal's leadership determines the focus of review activities, and the

degree to which staff input influences decision-making in this regard, are questions which would be worthy of further study.

4. Data Gathering Methods Used

An analysis of weighted scores indicated a strong tendency for schools to examine Board policies and practices as part of their review methodologies.

The use of teacher and parent interviews and questionnaires, the examination of teacher planning and evaluation, and the observation of teaching/learning process were also commonly used methods.

While schools were likely to examine the outcomes of student learning (samples of work, portfolios etc.) as part of school self-review processes, they were far less likely to use more formal or "hard" data such as records of student achievement. A small number of schools did use student interviews or questionnaires. Special assessments of student performance were less likely to be features of self-reviewing processes, although 67% of principals surveyed did report special assessments as a characteristic of their school's self-review programmes in part.

Table 3.4(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and weighted responses for DATA GATHERING:		Number of Responses					TOTAL	Weighted
		1	2	3	NR			
1.40	Student outcomes (samples of work, portfolios, etc.) are examined.	17	16	1	0	34	50	
1.41	Records of student achievement are analysed.	5	20	8	1	34	30	
1.42	Special assessments of student performance are made as part of the review	1	23	5	5	34	25	
1.43	The teaching/learning process is observed.	11	18	5	0	34	40	
1.44	Student interviews or questionnaires are used.	7	15	11	1	34	29	
1.45	Teacher interviews or questionnaires are used.	17	13	4	0	34	47	
1.46	Parent interviews or questionnaires are used.	13	19	2	0	34	45	
1.47	Teacher planning and evaluation is examined.	16	14	4	0	34	46	
1.48	Board policies and practices are examined.	21	11	2	0	34	53	

Table 3.4(b)

Percentages

Responses for DATA GATHERING sorted by weighted percentage scores:		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n= 200
1.48	Board policies and practices are examined.	61.8	32.4	5.9	0.0	100	156
1.40	Student outcomes (samples of work, portfolios, etc.) are examined.	50.0	47.1	2.9	0.0	100	147
1.45	Teacher interviews or questionnaires are used.	50.0	38.2	11.8	0.0	100	138
1.47	Teacher planning and evaluation is examined.	47.1	41.2	11.8	0.0	100	135
1.46	Parent interviews or questionnaires are used.	38.2	55.9	5.9	0.0	100	132
1.43	The teaching/learning process is observed.	32.4	52.9	14.7	0.0	100	118
1.41	Records of student achievement are analysed.	14.7	58.8	23.5	2.9	100	88
1.44	Student interviews or questionnaires are used.	20.6	44.1	32.4	2.9	100	85
1.42	Special assessments of student performance are made as part of the review	2.9	67.6	14.7	14.7	100	74

Comments made in this section indicate some difference in understanding on the part of the principals surveyed as to what counts as self-review. The following comments, for example, reflect considerable variation not only in the sources or types of data likely to be reviewed, but also on differing views regarding the purpose or function of self-review and how it relates to the various forms of assessment and evaluation operating in the school.

"The teaching/learning process is observed as part of (teacher) appraisal." (3)

"Board policies and practices are examined but not by Board members," (8)

"As yet the reviews... have not focused on specific learning areas." (10)

"We review the extent to which we have carried out our policies procedures, and implemented our curriculum plans. We have separate systematic review of student achievement both school wide and, in some cases, individually. We also use parent and staff questionnaires and student self-review." (21)

"Annual objectives are examined and reset." (25)

"Management/administrative processes (are examined.)" (29)

"Curriculum Development Goals and B.O.T. strategic goals are reviewed." (32)

"B.O.T. review separate from Curriculum Review. ie. B.O.T. carry out own self-review on policies and practices." (33)

The conceptual variation evident in comments such as the above (and in other sections of the questionnaire) tend to suggest not only that there is considerable difference amongst the principals as a group, but that there is a more general lack of clarity and coherence within the theory in action of practitioners who have largely been left to their own devices to find some sort of theoretical framework on which to base their practice.

Further research is needed into the specifics of the methods used by schools and the technical skills needed, equipment required, and the training needed.

5. Methods Used to Analyse Data

As well as questioning principals on the data sources and types of data gathering used in their school's self-review procedures, the questionnaire also asked principals to indicate the methods used to analyse that data.

When weighted percentage scores are considered a group of four descriptors fall within a significantly higher WPS range [174 - 141] than the remaining five descriptors [WPS range: 129-115]. However, all nine descriptors were reported as being used to *some* extent by over 70% of schools.

All respondents saw the identification of development priorities as a major outcome of analysis to some extent: (Closely describes... 73.5%; Partially describes... 26.5%). The analysis of discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups was also reported by principals to be a commonly used form of analysis: (Closely describes... 61.8%; partially describes... 35.3%).

Other highly favoured forms of analysis involved comparing intentions with perceived outcomes:

- practice is compared with policy; (Closely describes...55.9%; Partially describes... 35.8%)
- evidence is matched with predetermined performance indicators; (Closely describes...52.9%; Partially describes... 35.3%)

The matching of evidence with achievement statements, although somewhat less likely to be identified by principals as a form of analysis, was considered to be closely related to their school's self-review process by 44.1%, and partially by 41.2%, meaning that 85.3% of principals reported *some* use of this method of analysis.

Examples of comments from principals:

"Much of the review at B.O.T. level is response to achievement information provided by Principal to B.O.T. at monthly meetings." (1)

Evidence is matched with pre-determined indicators "but not in a negative way." (8)

"Policy review process is on-going." (23)

"Syndicate and room objectives, which may differ from school-wide objectives, are identified and actioned." (25)

"Achievement patterns matched to budget spending/staffing allocations." (to see if there is?)

"(any match between inputs/outputs ?)" (27)

"Areas of satisfactory teaching/learning; areas of less than satisfactory teaching/learning; children enjoying success; children of concern; effective school structures; aspects that hinder effective school operation; professional development; B.O.T. initiatives." (32)

Table 3.5(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and weighted responses for ANALYSIS		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	Weighted
1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system 2= PARTIALLY describes a characteristic of your system 3= has NO RELATIONSHIP to a characteristic of your system							
1.50	Achievement is compared with Charter goals and objectives	12	15	6	1	34	39
1.51	Practice is compared with policy.	19	12	3	0	34	50
1.52	Policy and practice are compared with legislative and regulatory requirements	13	15	5	1	34	41
1.53	Evidence is matched with pre-determined performance indicators	18	12	4	0	34	48
1.54	Evidence is matched with achievement statements.	15	14	4	1	34	44
1.55	Patterns and trends are noted.	16	9	9	0	34	41
1.56	Areas for further inquiry are identified.	15	13	6	0	34	43
1.57	Discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups are noted	21	12	1	0	34	54
1.58	Development priorities are identified.	25	9	0	0	34	59

Table 3.5(b)

Percentages

Responses for ANALYSIS sorted by weighted percentage scores:		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n# 200
1.58	Development priorities are identified.	73.5	26.5	0.0	0.0	100	174
1.57	Discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups are noted	61.8	35.3	2.9	0.0	100	159
1.51	Practice is compared with policy.	55.9	35.3	8.8	0.0	100	147
1.53	Evidence is matched with pre-determined performance indicators	52.9	35.3	11.8	0.0	100	141
1.54	Evidence is matched with achievement statements.	44.1	41.2	11.8	2.9	100	129
1.56	Areas for further inquiry are identified.	44.1	38.2	17.6	0.0	100	126
1.52	Policy and practice are compared with legislative and regulatory requirements	38.2	44.1	14.7	2.9	100	121
1.55	Patterns and trends are noted.	47.1	26.5	26.5	0.0	100	121
1.50	Achievement is compared with Charter goals and objectives	35.3	44.1	17.6	2.9	100	115

Questions arising from responses to these items do not only centre around the actual techniques employed and the logistics of undertaking time-consuming methods. The value of data analysis may not simply be in arriving at some "final" descriptive report or set of recommendations, but in the learning opportunity the process itself offers. School improvement may result in part from the review outcomes informing future action, but the collaborative enterprise of reaching conclusions and recommendations from self-analysis of data is itself likely to contribute towards the establishment and enrichment of an organisational culture where inquiry and reflection become part and parcel of the day to day activities of everyone, leading to more meaningful and deep-seated change for improvement.

SECTION 2

The Purposes of School Self-review

As well as setting out to obtain some data regarding the types of review activities schools were undertaking, the survey set out to examine the purposes or reasons why schools were carrying out self-review. Section 2 of the questionnaire asked principals to rate 19 possible "purposes" of school self-review according to how closely each purpose resembled a purpose of the self-reviewing activities undertaken in the school.

The principals surveyed saw six prime reasons for self-reviewing in their schools:

- to identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development; (WPS= 197).
- to evaluate the success the school is having in achieving its own goals and objectives find out how well the school is meeting its own goals and objectives; (WPS=191)
- to give an indication of how well the school is delivering its curriculum.(WPS=182)
- to provide ongoing feedback to help teachers and management make adjustments to the quality of learning in the school (WPS=182);
- to assist school management in targeting resources to areas which are most in need of support (WPS=179).
- to help staff prepare a school development plan which sets development goals for the next period of time (WPS=176);

Purposes more directly concerned with the quality of teaching and teaching programmes [items 2.12, 2.2, 2.7 and 2.18] were not regarded by respondents as being as closely associated with their school's review processes as those concerned more with the over-all functioning of the school. Although the differences are very subtle, this may suggest that principals see school self-review as being somewhat functionally distinct from evaluation of teaching and program evaluation. (Further investigation needed to confirm this.)

[Items: 2.12, 2.2, 2.7, 2.18: WPS range = 159 -141]

Items which involved legislative or governance purposes were also seen to be less closely descriptive of the perceived purposes

[Items: 2.9, 2.13, 2.3, 2.14, 2.5: WPS range = 150-126]

Table 3.6(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and weighted responses for PURPOSES of Self-reviewing:		Number of Responses					Weighted
1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system 2= PARTIALLY describes a characteristic of your system 3= has NO RELATIONSHIP to a characteristic of your system		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	
2.1	To give an indication of how well the school is delivering its curriculum	28	6	0	0	34	62
2.2	To identify which aspects of the school's programmes are being covered well and which are not	21	11	2	0	34	53
2.3	To discover whether or not the school is meeting legislative and regulatory requirements	17	15	2	0	34	49
2.4	To evaluate the success the school is having in achieving its own goals and objectives.	31	3	0	0	34	65
2.5	To gather the information needed to prepare an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the school's effectiveness.	14	15	5	0	34	43
2.6	To gather information in preparation for external review or audit.	9	15	9	1	34	33
2.7	To provide teachers with feedback on how well they are performing their duties	18	15	1	0	34	51
2.8	To provide parents with the information needed to make decisions about choice of school.	3	5	26	0	34	11
2.9	To meet the National Administration Guidelines requirement that the Board of Trustees "maintain an on-going programme for self-review".	18	15	1	0	34	51
2.10	To provide information for the community generally which indicates how effectively the school is using the taxpayer resources entrusted to it.	4	11	19	0	34	19
2.11	To identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development.	33	1	0	0	34	67
2.12	To improve teachers' and students' knowledge of how well they are achieving their teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	23	8	2	1	34	54
2.13	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is achieving it's teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	20	11	3	0	34	51
2.14	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is implementing it's management and administrative policies and indicate directions for future policy revision and procedural improvement.	17	15	2	0	34	49
2.15	To provide positive feedback to all stakeholders on how well the school is doing in achieving its mission and signal ways and means for doing things better.	11	20	2	1	34	42
2.16	To help staff prepare a school development plan which sets development goals for the next period of time.	26	8	0	0	34	60
2.17	To assist school management in targeting resources to areas which are most in need of support.	27	7	0	0	34	61
2.18	To systematically assess student performance to identify aspects in need of improved teaching.	21	6	7	0	34	48
2.19	To provide an ongoing and systematic process of feedback to help teachers and management make adjustments needed to improve the quality of learning in the school.	28	6	0	0	34	62

Table 3.6(b)

Percentages

Responses for PURPOSES sorted by weighted percentage scores:		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS of 200
2.11	To identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development.	97.1	2.9	0.0	0.0	100	197
2.4	To evaluate the success the school is having in achieving its own goals and objectives.	91.2	8.8	0.0	0.0	100	191
2.1	To give an indication of how well the school is delivering its curriculum	82.4	17.6	0.0	0.0	100	182
2.19	To provide an ongoing and systematic process of feedback to help teachers and management make adjustments needed to improve the quality of learning in the school.	82.4	17.6	0.0	0.0	100	182
2.17	To assist school management in targeting resources to areas which are most in need of support.	79.4	20.6	0.0	0.0	100	179
2.16	To help staff prepare a school development plan which sets development goals for the next period of time.	76.5	23.5	0.0	0.0	100	176
2.12	To improve teachers' and students' knowledge of how well they are achieving their teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	67.6	23.5	5.9	2.9	100	159
2.2	To identify which aspects of the school's programmes are being covered well and which are not	61.8	32.4	5.9	0.0	100	156
2.7	To provide teachers with feedback on how well they are performing their duties	52.9	44.1	2.9	0.0	100	150
2.9	To meet the National Administration Guidelines requirement that the Board of Trustees "maintain an on-going programme for self-review".	52.9	44.1	2.9	0.0	100	150
2.13	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is achieving it's teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	58.8	32.4	8.8	0.0	100	150
2.3	To discover whether or not the school is meeting legislative and regulatory requirements	50.0	44.1	5.9	0.0	100	144
2.14	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is implementing it's management and administrative policies and indicate directions for future policy revision and procedural improvement.	50.0	44.1	5.9	0.0	100	144
2.18	To systematically assess student performance to identify aspects in need of improved teaching.	61.8	17.6	20.6	0.0	100	141
2.5	To gather the information needed to prepare an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the school's effectiveness.	41.2	44.1	14.7	0.0	100	126
2.15	To provide positive feedback to all stakeholders on how well the school is doing in achieving its mission and signal ways and means for doing things better.	32.4	58.8	5.9	2.9	100	124
2.6	To gather information in preparation for external review or audit.	26.5	44.1	26.5	2.9	100	97
2.10	To provide information for the community generally which indicates how effectively the school is using the taxpayer resources entrusted to it.	11.8	32.4	55.9	0.0	100	56
2.8	To provide parents with the information needed to make decisions about choice of school.	8.8	14.7	76.5	0.0	100	32

The trend for principals to regard school self-reviewing as being more to do with informing the management and staff of the school for school development purposes, rather than to meet accountability requirements of others, was extended even more markedly to items concerned with informing stakeholders in the wider community, including potential client parents.

The overall perception of school self-review as an activity driven by self-improvement, with accountability, promotional, or legislative purposes regarded as (often distant) secondary purposes, was supported by comments made in this section:

"Particularly review is related to ensuring good coverage of curriculum and achievement of objectives. Promotion of school through results is really not a consideration." (1)

"To provide a focus for discussion of future growth and development for the total operation of the school by the staff and the B.O.T. together." (4)

To improve the Board of Trustees' knowledge of how well the school is implementing its management and administrative policies and indicate directions for future policy revision and procedural improvement. *"..as a by-product but not primary purpose." (10)*

"we have a schedule of policy reviews and reports and we report on our reviews of student achievement and curriculum delivery to the board on a schedule." (21)

"We have not finely tuned systems for all these purposes, but processes are in place and we are working to ensure an integrated system with as little doubling up as possible. ie. We don't gather separate information for reporting to the B.O.T. but report using data used for internal self-review." (21)

"To assist with establishing an accurate and workable budget that directly relates to the needs of students and the school." (25)

To gather information in preparation for external review or audit. *"No, but we hope it ERO proofs us!" (32)*

SECTION 3

Outcomes of the Self-review Process

When asked to rate eight possible uses of the outcomes of the school self-reviewing processes operating in their schools the principals' responses tended to confirm the dominant view of the previous section that the primary purpose of school self-review was to inform development and improvement.

Outcome uses which were reported as being most closely in line with current reviewing practice included:

- revision of the school development plan to accommodate review recommendations [item 3.5: WPS =176];
- adjusting the school budget to ensure proposed improvements are adequately funded [Item 3.7: WPS = 176];
- planning and implementing teacher development to allow staff to make the improvements recommended by the review [Item 3.6: WPS = 171];

Although the gathering of information "in preparation for external review or audit" was collectively scored low in the previous "purpose" section, it is interesting to note that item 3.9 was scored relatively highly as a use of outcomes:

- outcomes are filed and made available to external reviewers.[Item 3.9: WPS 162].

This would tend to suggest that although principals did not generally regard the support of external review as a reason in itself for undertaking self-review, they did recognise the value of self-review as a form of self-defence against unfavourable external review. Or, in the words of one respondent, self-review was seen as a way of "ERO proofing" the school. It is possible that this view is actually more commonly held than most principals would openly admit, even in confidence, and that the current drive towards some form of self-review is motivated at least in part by the belief that self-review will act as some sort of insurance against, or counter-view to, a less than favourable external review report. Alternatively, self-review may be seen as a means of pre-empting external review altogether.

Table 3.7(a)

Number of Responses

Raw and weighted responses on the OUTCOMES of school self-reviewing:		Number of Responses					Weighted
		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	
3.1	Review findings are published in the school's annual report.	7	15	10	2	34	29
3.4	A special review document is produced which presents the data gathered, reports on its analysis, and makes recommendations for improvement.	15	14	5	0	34	44
3.5	The school's development plan is revised to accommodate the review's recommendations.	26	8	0	0	34	60
3.6	Teacher development is planned and implemented to enable staff to make the improvements suggested by the review.	26	6	1	1	34	58
3.7	The school budget is adjusted to ensure proposed improvements are able to be resources adequately.	28	4	2	0	34	60
3.8	Everyone receives a copy of the review report and are expected to implement those recommendations which are relevant to their sphere of work in the school.	8	22	3	1	34	38
3.9	The outcomes are filed and made available to external reviewers (for example, The Education Review Office.)	24	7	2	1	34	55
3.10	A summary of the review findings is published in (for example), the school newsletter, local newspaper, school prospectus.	1	8	24	1	34	10

Table 3.7(b)

Percentages

Responses for OUTCOMES sorted by weighted percentage scores		1	2	3	NR	TOTAL	WPS n=200
3.5	The school's development plan is revised to accommodate the review's recommendations.	76.5	23.5	0.0	0.0	100	176
3.7	The school budget is adjusted to ensure proposed improvements are able to be resources adequately.	82.4	11.8	5.9	0.0	100	176
3.6	Teacher development is planned and implemented to enable staff to make the improvements suggested by the review.	76.5	17.6	2.9	2.9	100	171
3.9	The outcomes are filed and made available to external reviewers (for example, The Education Review Office.)	70.6	20.6	5.9	2.9	100	162
3.4	A special review document is produced which presents the data gathered, reports on its analysis, and makes recommendations for improvement.	44.1	41.2	14.7	0.0	100	129
3.8	Everyone receives a copy of the review report and are expected to implement those recommendations which are relevant to their sphere of work in the school.	23.5	64.7	8.8	2.9	100	112
3.1	Review findings are published in the school's annual report.	20.6	44.1	29.4	5.9	100	85
3.10	A summary of the review findings is published in (for example), the school newsletter, local newspaper, school prospectus.	2.9	23.5	70.6	2.9	100	29

The production of a special review document and its distribution to all concerned with the work of the school was less likely to be a characteristic of the review systems operating in the surveyed schools. This adds weight to a general observation that self-reviewing in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools today is more likely to be dominated in design, implementation and outcome utilisation by the principal and staff rather than other stakeholders.

[Items 3.4, 3.8: WPS range = 129-112]

While 64.7% of schools made some use of the review findings in their annual reports, it was not generally seen as a strong characteristic of review systems surveyed with only 20.6% regarding it so. [Item 3.1: WPS = 85.3]

Only one school reported that a summary of review findings was published widely (eg. in the school newsletter, or local newspaper, or school prospectus.) This tends to reinforce the conclusions made in the previous section regarding the purpose of school self-review. Review findings are strongly regarded by school principals as the business of the professionals within the school [Item 3.1: WPS=29.4], with the notable exception of the Education Review Office [Item 3.9: WPS = 162].

The tendency to keep review outcomes "in house" was also evident in the comments made in this section:

Copies of the review report are "available to parents but each is not issued with a copy." (1)
"All teachers and B.O.T. are issued (with copies of reports) parents are asked to collect, but hardly anyone does." (10)

"Because our review identifies children, it is only available to staff. A summary review is written and circulated amongst staff and B.O.T. and comment from them is attached." (32)

SECTION 4

The Success of School Self-reviewing

Perceived Success of self-review Processes

When asked to rate, on a one-five scale, the success of their school's self-review process in meeting a number of possible purposes almost 50% of the surveyed principals saw their processes as being "usually successful", with almost all of the remaining responses being evenly distributed between "highly successful" and "often successful".

Table 3.8(a) *Success in meeting purposes.*

Percentages:						
4.10 How successful do you believe your school's self-review process has been in:	Highly Successful	Usually Successful	Often Successful	Rarely Successful	unsuccessful	NR
(a) identifying strengths ?	29.4	44.1	26.5	0.0	0.0	0
(b) identifying weaknesses ?	17.6	55.9	26.5	0.0	0.0	0
(c) establishing development priorities ?	38.2	44.1	17.6	0.0	0.0	0
(d) providing accountability information ?	8.8	52.9	29.4	5.9	2.9	0
Totals:	94.1	197.1	100.0	5.9	2.9	0.0
Mean Percentage:	23.5	49.3	25.0	1.5	0.7	0.0

Table 3.8(b)

Responses for the SUCCESS of school self-reviewing sorted by weighted percentage scores:								
How successful do you believe your school's self-review process has been in:	Percentages						WPS n#	WPS %
	1	2	3	4	5	NR		
(c) establishing development priorities ?	38.2	44.1	17.6	0.0	0.0	0	321	80
(a) identifying strengths ?	29.4	44.1	26.5	0.0	0.0	0	303	76
(b) identifying weaknesses ?	17.6	55.9	26.5	0.0	0.0	0	291	73
(d) providing accountability information ?	8.8	52.9	29.4	5.9	2.9	0	259	65

When the responses were weighted (1. Highly Successful = x4; 2. Usually Successful = x3; 3. Often Successful = x2; 4. rarely successful = x1; 5. Unsuccessful = x0), there was little discrimination between the four "purposes". Although "Providing accountability information" was rated lower overall than the other three purposes, it did not score as low as could be expected given the relatively low rating accountability type purposes received in Section 2.

How successful has the review been in leading to improvement?

Principals were generally positive in their assessments of the success of self-review procedures in leading to improvement across a range of areas.

When weighted scores were considered, principals of the schools surveyed ranked curriculum and teacher development as the two areas in which review processes had been most successful in leading to improvement. [Items 4.20(b), (c): WPS range = 321-315]

Financial Management was also regarded as an area which had benefited from self-review processes. [Item 4.20(g): WPS = 294]

Review outcomes had usually lead to improvement in: teaching and learning processes; collaborative planning; assessment and evaluation procedures; administrative procedures; policy development; and, annual reporting. [Items 4.20(a), (i), (j), (d), (e), (f): WPS range = 288 -268].

Areas ranked significantly lower than the others were: property management, community consultation, public relations, and parental "choice of school" decision making. [Items 4.20(h), (k), (l), (m): WPS range = 238 - 118]

Table 3.9(a)

Raw and weighted responses on SUCCESS in leading to improvement	Number of Responses							TOTAL	Weighted
	1	2	3	4	5	NR			
1 = highly successful; 2 = usually successful; 3 = often successful; 4 = rarely successful; 5 = unsuccessful									
<i>How successful has the review been in leading to improved:</i>									
(a) teaching and learning processes;	7	17	9	1	0	0	34	98	
(b) curriculum development;	13	18	1	1	0	1	34	109	
(c) teacher development;	12	15	7	0	0	0	34	107	
(d) administrative procedures;	6	17	9	1	0	1	34	94	
(e) policy development;	5	19	7	2	0	1	34	93	
(f) annual reporting;	4	17	12	0	1	0	34	91	
(g) financial management;	8	18	6	2	0	0	34	100	
(h) property management;	5	13	8	6	1	1	34	81	
(i) collaborative planning;	8	16	8	2	0	0	34	98	
(j) assessment and evaluation procedures;	7	17	7	3	0	0	34	96	
(k) community consultation;	3	9	17	5	0	0	34	78	
(l) public relations;	2	14	11	4	1	2	34	76	
(m) parental "choice of school" decision making?	1	3	10	7	6	7	34	40	

Table 3.9(b)

Sorted by Weighted Percentage Scores Percentages

How successful has the review been in leading to improved:	Number of Responses						TOTAL	WPS n# 408
	1	2	3	4	5	NR		
(b) curriculum development;	38.2	52.9	2.9	2.9	0.0	3	100	321
(c) teacher development;	35.3	44.1	20.6	0.0	0.0	0	100	315
(g) financial management;	23.5	52.9	17.6	5.9	0.0	0	100	294
(a) teaching and learning processes;	20.6	50.0	26.5	2.9	0.0	0	100	288
(i) collaborative planning;	23.5	47.1	23.5	5.9	0.0	0	100	288
(j) assessment and evaluation procedures;	20.6	50.0	20.6	8.8	0.0	0	100	282
(d) administrative procedures;	17.6	50.0	26.5	2.9	0.0	3	100	276
(e) policy development;	14.7	55.9	20.6	5.9	0.0	3	100	274
(f) annual reporting;	11.8	50.0	35.3	0.0	2.9	0	100	268
(h) property management;	14.7	38.2	23.5	17.6	2.9	3	100	238
(k) community consultation;	8.8	26.5	50.0	14.7	0.0	0	100	229
(l) public relations;	5.9	41.2	32.4	11.8	2.9	6	100	224
(m) parental "choice of school" decision making?	2.9	8.8	29.4	20.6	17.6	21	100	118

How easy was the self-review process at your school to implement?

Overall, the principals of the schools surveyed considered that the self-review procedures used in their schools had been relatively easy to implement. When comments in sections 4.4 and 4.5 are considered however, real difficulties were experienced, and are continuing to be experienced, by a good number of the schools surveyed.

Table 3.10

Raw and weighted responses for Ease of IMPLEMENTATION: 1 = very easy.... 5 = with extreme difficulty	Number of Responses						TOTAL	Weighted
	1	2	3	4	5	NR		
How easy was the self-review process at your school to implement ?	4	16	10	4	0	0	34	88
Percentage and weighted percentage scores for Ease of IMPLEMENTATION:	1	2	3	4	5	NR	TOTAL	WPS n# 400
How easy was the self-review process at your school to implement ?	11.8	47.1	29.4	11.8	0.0	0	100	259

Difficulties experienced in the initial implementation.

The overwhelmingly most prevalent difficulty experienced by schools during the implementation of self-review processes concerned difficulties related to a perceived lack of time with 14 of the 34 principals surveyed reporting this as a major difficulty.

Another common difficulty during the implementation stage was the difficulty of convincing teachers that self-review was a worthwhile activity and would result in benefit to the teaching/learning process.

The tendency to take on too much was another characteristic of initial implementation in some schools.

Other problems concerned initiating participation by Board members and parents. Several schools commented on apparent lack of interest or understanding of the processes by parents and parent representatives on Boards. Difficulties were experienced in helping parents to see the purposes of the review in a constructive light.

Establishing meaningful and practical review techniques was another area of difficulty for schools.

"More data needed to complete a more comprehensive report." (18) (26)

"Collating information in order to produce the 'big picture' ". (23) (34)

"The most difficult task was detailing the guidelines so that the information and reporting was directed in a meaningful way and a consistent format used across the school." (25)

"Gathering baseline data from teachers - ie. involving them in self-evaluation of programmes - teaching methods, as I followed a very dictatorial principal who had made the decisions." (3)

"Making the process meaningful." (34)

The lack of a suitable model or overall plan for the review process also caused initial implementation difficulties.

"Developing a model which suited all parties." (4)

(Having) "No specific plan." (5)

The most frequently reported difficulty arising from the initial implementation of school self-review was the lack of time available to carry out the data gathering, analysis and reporting tasks involved with 14 respondents commenting on this in response to this item and frequent references being made to the time problem at other points throughout the questionnaires. Related to this was a resistance to implementation by participants (principally teachers) many of whom were unable initially to see any worthwhile benefits from proposed schemes of self-review.

A tendency to try to cover too much at any one time was commented upon by a number of principals, indicating that difficulty in managing the scope and focus of review endeavours was a relatively common problem for schools starting out on systems of school self-review.

Other areas which caused initial difficulty included: apparent parental disinterest; lack understanding by Boards of Trustees of review purposes; difficulty in maintaining a focus; technical difficulties with data gathering, analysis, and reporting; making the process meaningful to participants and sustaining commitment; time needed to fully develop a satisfactory system;

Continuing Difficulties

The majority of on-going difficulties tended to be centred around a lack of time and/or resources:

"Lack of time" (2) (3) (6) (8) (11) (15) (16) (19) (33) [TIME]

"Budgeting constraints. Lack of operational grant funding." (15) [COSTS - FUNDING]

Managing the scope and focus of review also continued to be a problem for schools:

"Keeping it manageable - limit the areas for review: - one curriculum, - one administration; - one policy area." (14) (17) (20) [SCOPE & FOCUS]

Difficulties associated with motivation, understanding of, and commitment to, the process lead to difficulties in maintaining participation:

"Weaknesses in teaching personnel." (15) (19) *Bringing new staff up to speed with our systems. Staff who helped develop it have 'ownership' whereas new staff don't have an awareness of how the system is evolving.* (21) [STAFF - TRAINING]

"The mistaken belief by parents and some board members that the review process is the same as the complaints process and should be dealt with in the same way." (10) (28) [PARENT/BOT UNDERSTANDING]

"Parents 'don't really care'." (15) [PARTICIPATION - PARENTS]

"Staying focused on the issue." (16) (19)[PARTICIPATION - PERSEVERANCE]

Some schools continued to meet technical difficulties:

"Achievement statements: % or not % ? That is the question!" (3) "Providing accountability information and assessing/evaluating trends in curriculum areas." (24) [METHOD - DATA ANALYSIS]

Others recognised more fundamental problems:

"Many of the factors which influence learning are beyond the school's direct control." (27) [METHOD - ANALYSIS]

Difficulties associated with other initiatives and tasks in the school were also noted:

"Continual changes in other, closely related, areas (eg. curriculum) make the settling process difficult." (29) [CONTINUAL CHANGE]

"Matching financial needs to curriculum needs an on-going difficulty - Not enough money!" (1) [OUTCOMES - RESOURCING]

"Finding the balance between reviewing/evaluating and teaching/learning activities." (27) [BALANCING REVIEWING WITH TEACHING]

Three principals reported no significant on-going difficulties:

"No significant difficulties." (4) (9) (25) [NO CONTINUING DIFFICULTIES]

A lack of time and resources to carry out self-reviewing is the most commonly reported continuing difficulty. Difficulties associated with managing scope and focus are also seen as on-going problems, while a number of schools have experienced continuing difficulties with parent, staff, and board understanding of the processes in place. The problem of bringing new participants 'up to speed' is seen as a difficulty for established systems. One school reports a tendency for parents to regard self-reviewing as a means of making a complaint. Keeping everyone on-task also continues to cause problems for a small number of schools.

Technical problems associated with the analysis and interpretation of achievement data are an on-going concern for some principals, while continuing change in associated areas (such as curriculum reform), an inability to adequately fund review outcome recommendations, and keeping the time and resources spent on reviewing activities in appropriate proportion to that spent on teaching and learning activities is another area of concern.

A number of questions for possible further study emerge from this analysis:

1. Given constraints on time and resources, how do schools which report successful processes manage time and resources without compromising the validity, reliability, credibility, meaning and usefulness of the review process?
2. Have schools which have not reported difficulties associated with *participation* overcome these sorts of difficulties? Or, have they disregarded them as concerns?

SECTION 5

Development of the Process

This section examined the development of reviewing processes over time.

When asked how many years some form of self-review had been operating in the school responses ranged from 0 to 15 years. (Mean = 4.1, Median = 3.5, Mode = 2). 62% of respondents indicated that the form of reviewing had changed significantly over the time reviewing had been operating.

The principals were also asked to report on the ways in which reviewing had changed.

A general trend was for reviews to have become narrower in scope and deeper focus:

"It's constantly being reviewed. It's becoming more integrated and systematic - and compact." (21) *"Depth of review increased."* (4) (12) (14) (23) (27) [FOCUS - NARROWER & DEEPER]

Focus changed from organisation to curriculum (1) (2) (10) [FOCUS- TO CURRICULUM]

From syndicate based to whole-school based (2) [FOCUS - TO WHOLE SCHOOL]

"More focus on development of specific objectives and learning outcomes." (7) (12) (30) [FOCUS - SPECIFICITY]

Three schools, however, did report a widening of scope:

"Covering a wider range of areas." (6) (30) (32) [SCOPE - WIDER]

There was also a tendency for schools to come to regard reviewing as an on-going part of the business of the school rather than a periodic single event:

From a separate event (programme) to on-going part of everyday programme (2) (26) (27) [FREQUENCY- TO CONTINUOUS]

"From regular reviews, changed to two times a year, now going back to once a term." (24) [FREQUENCY - TO ONCE A TERM]

The design of the review system also tended to evolve over time with a move towards integration with other systems evident in a number of schools:

"Model has been refined" (4) *"We have worked on a School Development Plan which lines up our School Charter, Curriculum Plan, Policies, Appraisal System, and Job Descriptions with the N.A.G.s."* (5) *"Its constantly being*

reviewed. Its becoming more integrated and systematic - and compact." (21) (9)
(10) (15) [MODEL - MORE COHERENT]

Although some principals reported difficulty in establishing and maintaining parent, staff and Board of Trustees interest and participation in the process, others reported that participation increased as the process matured in their schools:

"BOT participation has increased." (4) "Review information is now gathered by staff curriculum teams before general discussion with whole staff/parents/board." (27) (28) [PARTICIPATION - INCREASED]

Methods used also tended to evolve as schools developed their review methods in response to contextual conditions and theoretical perspectives:

"Became more likely to be presented in a standard format." (6) (18) (29) [METHOD - REPORT FORMAT]

"Try to get most useful information with the minimum of fuss and then show staff that worthwhile change can be instigated." (8) (9) [METHOD - TIME-BENEFIT]

" Collaborative involvement of staff (shared)." (9) [METHOD - MORE COLLABORATIVE]

"Sub-committees have taken larger amounts of responsibility." (14) [ORGANISATION - TO COMMITTEES]

"Needs based on trial and error 'checks and balances'." (15) [METHOD - NEEDS BASED]

"We are currently using aspects of the Otago School Trustees Manual and are finding it very useful."(20) [METHOD - OTAGO STA]

In general it can be concluded that while the overall scope of reviews sometimes widened to include a more comprehensive range of areas, the most commonly reported tendency as review processes developed over time was for a narrowing and deepening of focus on selected areas within that range. Focus also tended to move from a predominantly administrative and/or organisational orientation, to a closer and more specific examination of learning outcomes. A shift from syndicate to whole-school focus was also noted.

Several principals reported a change from periodic stand-alone (or "single event") reviews, to a continuous process of reviewing as part of the day-to-day functioning of the school. Movement to more frequent periodic reviews was also noted.

Several schools had refined the model of review they were using, linking reviewing to other planning and evaluation systems. The overall process was becoming more

integrated, systematic, compact and theoretically coherent as the result of an on-going process of review and development being applied to the self-review process itself.

A tendency for increased Board of Trustees, parent, and whole-staff involvement in the process was noted by a number of principals.

There was some indication that review methodology was becoming more structured and standardised and that schools were attempting to become more effective and efficient in the methods employed. Collaborative methods were being more frequently used in one school, while specialist committees were taking a larger responsibility for parts of the review in another.

One school reported using the Otago Region School Trustees' Association (1995) review framework, and another was applying content from a Ministry of Education contracted staff development course.

Questions emerging for further study include:

1. What measures are taken to deal with any counter-productive influences resulting from continual change in schools where self-review systems are continually evolving,?
2. Are review systems needing to change in any way as participation becomes more representative of all stakeholders?
3. What reasons are given for change towards more collaborative approaches? Are such changes motivated by: a pragmatic need for efficiency and economy, (re. time/resource constraints); or by a more altruistic need for educational effectiveness (re. achievement of educational goals/objectives/values); or by personal or collective political agendas (control/ power building/emancipatory concerns/democratic values)?

Reasons for Changes to the Form or Design of Self-reviewing

Change in response to external pressure, and in particular, to the requirements of official regulations was reported by a number of respondents:

"The advent of the "Curriculum Framework" "NEGs and NAGs". (9) (12) (5) (29) (30)

[EXTERNAL PRESSURE - MoE REGULATIONS]

"Expectations of ERO at an assurance audit." (6) [EXTERNAL PRESSURE - ERO]

An awareness within the school of a need to improve the reviewing process was a major reason given principals responding to this item:

"The principal observed a greater need in (for) examining curriculum rather than organisation." (1) [PERCEIVED NEED - PRINCIPAL]

"Fine-tuning the process to make the outcomes more effective." (2) (25) (26) (30) [FINE-TUNING - EFFECTIVENESS]

"Because we're finding better ways of doing things." (21) (25) (26) [FINE-TUNING - EFFICIENCY]

"Trying to make it more meaningful and worthwhile." (23) [FINE-TUNING - MORE MEANINGFUL]

"Time constraints. Keeping things manageable." (14) *"Management of Time."* (2) (20) (24) [TIME - WORKLOAD]

"Nothing at all was in place." (28) [INITIAL ESTABLISHMENT]

Changes were made by some schools in response to a recognition that broad general reviews were unsuccessful in producing meaningful outcomes:

"We tried to review everything and did nothing well". (5) *"Need for reviews of more depth to produce more meaningful and reliable data."* (27) (14) [FOCUS-NARROWER AND DEEPER]

Other schools changed to include a wider scope:

"...to include aspects of management and governance... hopefully now covers the whole school." (32) [FOCUS - WIDER & MORE COMPREHENSIVE]

Changes also occurred in some schools as a result of staff training, improved receptiveness, more supportive management/governance processes, and improved data-gathering techniques:

"Training for senior staff." (6) (29) [STAFF - TRAINING]

"Receptive teachers." (9) [STAFF - RECEPTIVENESS]

"Management / BOT support processes." (9) [MANAGEMENT/BOT - SUPPORT]

"We have become aware of other methods or ways in which we can obtain (student) performance data - still the hardest data to obtain." (10) [DATA GATHERING]

A significant number of principals pointed to external causes for the changes made to self-reviewing processes in their schools. In particular the Ministry of Education's (1993) *National Education Goals* and *National Administrative Guidelines (N.E.Gs, and N.A.Gs.)*, the ongoing nationally driven curriculum reforms, (as outlined in the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* (Ministry of Education, 1993) and its attendant curriculum documents), were recognised as pressures which helped change the shape of school self-reviewing procedures already operating. Although mentioned only once in this section of the survey as a cause of change, the Education Review Office (E.R.O.) has also undoubtedly had a marked influence on the emerging shape of school-review systems, with assurance audits checking on the N.A.G. requirement that schools carry out on-going self-review.

Changes also occurred as a result of schools' own efforts to review and improve their self-evaluation methods, during and after implementation. Of particular concern was the need to make systems as efficient as possible without losing effectiveness. Time constraints and a concern for meaningful and valid outcomes have motivated some principals, staffs and boards to revise their self-review procedures.

Related to the self-recognised need for improved efficiency and effectiveness as a reason for changing aspects of the review schemes, was a recognition that while the overall scope of review needed to be comprehensive, the focus at any time should be specific and deeper than many schools had previously considered necessary, if outcomes were to be summatively meaningful and formatively useful.

The form of review in some schools also underwent change as a consequence of changing attitudes, values, and skills amongst participants. As well as gaining new technical skills which equipped them more adequately for reviewing tasks, participants (especially teachers) needed to change culturally if review purposes were to be satisfactorily achieved. It seems evident from responses to this section and others, that as implementation proceeded, entrenched attitudes and values altered in response to educative process, and these schools were able to introduce further changes which may have been unacceptable at an earlier phase.

Some areas for further investigation, which would expand our understanding of the factors involved in introducing and maintaining programmes of self-review in schools, include: the ways in which school culture changes to allow school self-reviewing to be accommodated; the identification of particular aspects of school culture which assist in the assimilation and accommodation of a self-reviewing regime in a school; a study of

the short-term compromises which need to be made (to self-reviewing proposals and/or to existing school culture) to allow schools to get started on self-reviewing; and, the extent to which such compromises become established.

SECTION 6

General Comments

In this section respondents were invited to comment generally on the form, purposes, outcomes, success and development of school self-review processes at their current schools. These comments tended to reinforce responses and comments made in earlier sections of the questionnaire.

Principals commented on several issues associated with participation in the review processes operating in their schools. Increasing acceptance (or "ownership") and commitment of participants to the process was a feature of some systems, as was the collaborative involvement of the different groups associated with the school. The development of an appropriate climate within the school was seen as being vital to the success of self-review.

"The school review and development process hinges on senior staff and B.O.T. cooperation." (1) "Combined responsibility - shared." (12) [PARTICIPATION - COLLABORATIVE]

"... our process is... representative of the different groups in the school..."(4) [PARTICIPATION - REPRESENTATIVE]

"Importance now recognised." (12) [PARTICIPATION - ACCEPTANCE]

"Our review processes have met with varying degrees of success. Staff still do not totally 'own' the process but we're working on it. Initiatives usually left to management - more commitment from staff as they become familiar with new curricula." (34) [PARTICIPATION - ACCEPTANCE]

"An appropriate climate within the school is vital to successful self-review."(23) [PARTICIPATION - CLIMATE]

The interrelationship between review processes and other aspects of school policy development, operational functioning, and of school development or improvement, was identified as an important consideration by a number of the principals surveyed. There was a strong tendency to view any process of self-review as an integral part of the totality of the school's functioning. In particular, the interrelationship between the staff performance appraisal, student achievement assessment, and school self-reviewing was emphasised. While in some cases this tended to be associated with a desire to be economical and avoid duplication of effort, there was also the suggestion that principals surveyed recognised the conceptual and theoretical relationships involved. A desire to see the outcomes of the review process inform subsequent teaching and learning practice was stressed as an important factor .

Comments associated with relationship of self-reviewing to other aspects of school functioning included:

"It is important that self-review process is not an isolated event. It must be part of the school development programme."(23) [CONCEPT - INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

"Self-review is a vital part of school development. In the milieu of the primary school environment - time is a constant challenge. Retaining objectivity is also a challenge." (13) [INTERRELATIONSHIPS/TIME/OBJECTIVITY]

"The self review process is closely related to the staff appraisal and class support programmes in the school."(2) [CONCEPT - INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

"...our process is... selective (do not review everything every year) - is part of on-going review and strategic planning process." (4) [CONCEPT - SCOPE & FOCUS /INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

"Self-review must be meaningful and should be focussed. (Linked to staff appraisal)" (9) [METHOD - MEANINGFUL & FOCUSED] [CONCEPT - INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

"Attempting to integrate the review of classroom practice to the appraisal/performance process to avoid duplication of effort." (16) [INTERRELATIONSHIPS/TIME]

"We are currently investigating or developing our curriculum review process so that it becomes an integral part of our unit assessment and evaluation." (30) [INTERRELATIONSHIPS/TIME]

"The main development over the last five years has been to ensure that outcomes of review are carried over and become a focus when planning the following year."(33) [OUTCOMES - PURPOSE /INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

Comments related to the scope, focus and frequency of self-review events showed that schools were consciously endeavouring to cover a comprehensive range of school-wide aspects (usually over a number of years), but at the same time they were appreciative of the need for tight focus and in depth inquiry if valid, meaningful and developmentally useful outcomes were to emerge.

"Self-review at (our) school is too broad at present. There is a need to develop a more focused approach on selected areas. At present it is hard to move away from curriculum delivery as the New Zealand Curriculum Framework is being implemented - BUT there is a need to identify areas in teaching style and learning styles which we are only lightly touching upon." (10) [SCOPE/FOCUS]

"Now moving towards implementing reviews once a term. Partly involving curriculum focus - for reporting to B.O.T., with parts involving general classroom activities, areas of concerns, input from staff development, and room for assessment/evaluation input." (24) [FREQUENCY/FOCUS & SCOPE]

"The review covers school-wide aspects, syndicate/individual room curricula areas, specialist and special needs areas, all administrative areas, and the budget."(25) [SCOPE & FOCUS]

"Curriculum review follows a 3 yr process. Yr 1- teachers are identified as facilitators and undertake training. Yr 2 - General inservice training in selected

curriculum area. Yr 3 - In depth review undertaken culminating in the updating or writing of a Curriculum Statement." (11) [FOCUS - FREQUENCY]

"Our self-review plan covers a three-year cycle and we are just initiating it into the school. Hopefully we will be happier with the outcomes than we have been previously." (5) [FREQUENCY - CYCLICAL (3 YR)]

Both formative (for improvement) and summative (for accountability) purposes of self-reviewing were recognised. Principals were conscious of the need for their systems to evolve responsively over time, and recognised the role of personal learning in the development process.

"Accountability."(12) [PURPOSE]

"...It also very specifically sets the focus for the school for the next year."(25) [PURPOSE]

Always developing." (12) [DEVELOPMENT - ONGOING]

"The process has been evolutionary in that time and personal learning has impacted on the context and direction of our (my) self-review process. For some time I felt that I was the only one doing this in schools (I even wrote a booklet to help others) and tried to learn from other models." (32) [CONCEPT - DEVELOPMENT]

One principal emphasised the reflective and multi-level nature of self-reviewing in the school, with an implementation aim being to develop reflective practice at all levels: staff; students; board.

"Self-review assists on lots of levels. I'm working to develop a "reflective" approach at all levels - staff, children, board." (21) [CONCEPT - MULTI-LEVEL/REFLECTIVE]

The extent to which collaborative participation is a feature of self-reviewing and the forms it takes in schools which see themselves as using it are areas for further study. The extent to which collaborative practices are seen to help and/or hinder the purposes of self-reviewing is also worthy of further investigation.

The recognition by principals of the connections between school self-review and other aspects of school business raises questions about the assumptions they (and other participants) hold about the theoretical and practical relationships between school self-reviewing and other school functions, and of their theoretical preconceptions in general.

Other terminology also needs to be examined and made explicit. For example: what does school 21 mean by "a reflective approach", and how is reflective practice used in the school as a review methodology?

School Self-reviewing and its Role in New Zealand Schools Today

When asked to comment generally on school self-reviewing and its role in New Zealand schools today, a good number of comments were related to the purpose or reason why schools should be involved in self-review. Self-review was generally seen as being justified if it resulted in improved teaching and learning, but not simply as a means of accountability, or for satisfying regulatory requirements.

" - important process but not an end in itself - only part of our purpose." (4)
[PURPOSE]

"Self-review is an important process in: - providing feedback to teachers/community; - improving teaching and learning opportunities; - providing objectives to meet a vision; - giving the school direction." (9)
[PURPOSE]

"Necessary for professional satisfaction. Not a tool for 'school choice'." (14)
[PURPOSE]

"Valuable; the system ensures schools take stock, reflect, review and modify or change where necessary." (22) [PURPOSE]

"Reviews should be on-going - aimed at informing principal, staff appraisal, and informing B.O.T. (covering N.A.Gs.)." (24) [PURPOSE]

"Probably the most important aspect of the school's organisation for without it we have no focus, no evaluative process, little directed staff development, and no accountability. (25) [PURPOSE]

"Self-review is only worthwhile if it can produce a clearly identifiable outcome of increased learning for pupils. The time involved for teachers cannot be justified for simply going through the motions, or satisfying some statutory requirement."(27) [PURPOSE]

"I think it is vitally important and stress the need for it to be a team effort for growth of teaching and learning." (28) [PARTICIPATION - COLLABORATIVE - PURPOSE]

"We find the self-review process an excellent way to develop new objectives for curriculum teams." (33) [PURPOSE]

" - must have some influence on change and future development." (4)
[OUTCOME - IMPROVEMENT]

"... - the action, what one does with the information found is what is important." (8)
[OUTCOME - ACTIONING/FOLLOWING-UP]

Principals were also generally concerned about the development processes involved in introducing and maintaining self-review systems:

"Expecting (at MoE and ERO level) every school to arrive at its own effective self-review mechanisms is a big ask. Performance requirements being developed in 1996 and 1997 should be more explicit if schools are to manage to comply."(1) [DEVELOPMENT]

"I believe that self-reviewing schools will be achieved, but only over time." (10) [DEVELOPMENT]
"Self-review as a total package cannot happen all at once. It needs to be integrated into the system."(18) [DEVELOPMENT]
"The Otago(Region) School Trustees' Association (1995) Self Review Manual has been a great asset." (20) [DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT]
"Ministry (staff development) contract provided a model that highlighted specific needs, and overcame the bulk of previous reviews. We now have a continuous review process that is 'built into' the school's day to day processes. Very positive comments from recent ERO report." (29) [DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT - SCOPE & FOCUS/ CONTINUITY/ INTERRELATIONSHIPS]

The time and support needed for introducing a self-review system into a school, or for the on-going development of existing schemes, were also commented upon, as was the need for review processes to be economical on time and resources. There was a recognition that large "single event" type reviews were likely to be too much of a drain on resources and energy. A need for internal self-review to be moderated in some form by independent outsiders, was recognised by some principals.

"- must be economical in terms of time and energy." (4) [TIME/RESOURCES]
"I believe some reviews, brilliant in their presentation, may be such a major production that everyone is exhausted when the review is 'completed' ..." (8) [TIME/RESOURCES]
"To review properly takes time."(11) [TIME/RESOURCES]

The relationship of self-review to external review was also commented upon:

"I think school self-review is a healthy trend in New Zealand education but I also think there is a need for outside agencies' affirmation of what is happening to ensure 'national' standards and expectations are maintained." (7) [INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMBINATION]
"I look forward to an independent school review (agency) or inspectorate that schools contract and work with to make progress towards agreed goals and ideals: I look forward to a post-ERO era!" (10) [INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMBINATION]

Other points reinforced by principals in their final comments included: the need for participants to have ownership of the process; the need for the process to remain in the control of the school; the relationship between self-review and staff performance appraisal systems; and, the need for a greater recognition of the benefits of self-review.

"Staff need to have a stake in it." (11) [PARTICIPATION - OWNERSHIP]

"A good idea that should have been part of schools' administration for years. It has to be controlled and autonomous."(17) [SELF-CONTROL]

"I will be interested to see how our system stacks up against requirements of (the Ministry of Education's (1996)) 'Performance Management Guidelines'."(19) [INTERRELATIONSHIP -STAFF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL]

"I believe as people begin to see the value of self-review, it will be a focus of greater emphasis. People will therefore treat the process with greater sincerity." (30) [ACCEPTANCE]

Questions related to the agenda of principals who tend to see the main justification for self-review as being the ultimate improvement of teaching and learning arise. Is this general tendency:

(a), simply a sign of "bloody-minded" *resistance* to other purposes (such as personal or institutional accountability) which are perceived as a threat to their comfort zone or power base;

or, (b) do principals base their beliefs on *technical* arguments grounded in a perception that school-self-reviewing is unable to demonstrate sufficient proof of reliability or validity to be safely used as the basis for "high risk" (personal or institutional) public accountability;

or, (c) have they evidence (empirical or otherwise) that the actual *process* of intensive school self-evaluation can lead more constructively to improved teaching and learning than alternative approaches?

SECTION 7:

Summary of Findings, Tentative Propositions and Focus Points for Further Study

Summary Overview of Survey Findings

Section 1: Forms of Self-review in use.

1. Frequency of Review Activities

The majority of principals indicated that reviewing in their schools was on-going although periodic reviews were also used by more than half. A range of combinations of ongoing and periodic or single event review activities were used.

2. The Scope and Focus of Self-review Activities

There was a strong tendency for review activities to be planned over a number of years with a small number of aspects being covered at one time. Some schools focused on the same aspects every year.

3. Decision-making about what is to be reviewed.

The principal and the staff were the major decision makers with other stakeholders having little say in the choice of focus.

4. Data Gathering Methods Used.

The examination of policy documents, student work outcomes, teacher evaluations and planning, and the use of questionnaires were the most strongly reported data collection methods used.

5. Method Used to Analyse Data.

Four approaches to data analysis were most characteristic of approaches used by schools: the identification of development priorities; identifying discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups; comparison of practice with policy; comparison with pre-determined performance indicators.

Section 2: The Purposes of School Self-review

Six purposes for undertaking self-review which emerged more strongly than others in the survey were: identification of priorities for improvement; evaluation of success in meeting the school's own goals and objectives; assessment of how well the school is delivering its curriculum; to provide systematic feedback to teachers and management to enable adjustments to be made; to assist management in targeting resources; and, to help staff to prepare a development plan.

Section 3: Outcomes of the Self-review Process

Self-review outcome uses which principals indicated as being most closely in line with self-reviewing practice in their schools included: the revision of the school development plan; the adjustment of the school budget; and, the planning and implementing of staff development to support improvement recommendations which emerged from the review.

Section 4: The Success of Self-review Processes

Almost 50% of the principals surveyed saw the self-review processes operating in their schools as being "usually successful", with almost all of the remaining responses being evenly distributed between "highly successful" and "often successful". Principals were generally positive in their assessments of the success of self-review procedures in leading to improvement. Generally speaking principals saw self review as being more successful in helping to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to establish development priorities rather than to provide accountability information.

The most commonly reported difficulties experienced in the initial implementation of school self-review programmes related to a perceived lack of time, convincing staff that self-review was a worthwhile activity, and a tendency to attempt to take on too

much too soon. On-going difficulties also highlighted the constraints of time and keeping the scope and focus manageable within available resources.

Section 5: Development of the Process

The most commonly reported tendency as review processes developed over time was for a narrowing and deepening of focus within a predetermined range. Focus also tended to move from a predominantly administrative and/or organisational orientation, to a closer, more specific, examination of learning outcomes. Changes made to the design of self-review programmes occurred as a result of external reviewers suggestions and self-recognition of a need to change in a particular direction. The influence of the *National Administrative Guidelines* was also a significant influence on the development or re-direction of existing self-review programmes.

Section 6: Other Comments

Several issues associated with participation in review processes emerged from the general comments made by respondents including "ownership" of the process, collaborative involvement, and the establishment of a supportive "climate" for reviewing. The relationship of the review programme to other administrative systems was noted by some principals with a general tendency to view any process of self-review as an integral part of the school's overall functioning. Both formative and accountability purposes for self-reviewing were recognised, principals were conscious of the need for programmes to evolve responsively over time, and the role of personal learning was recognised.

The role of school self-reviewing in New Zealand schools today was generally seen to be one justified by subsequent improvement in the quality of teaching and learning, rather than just as a means of demonstrating public accountability, or of satisfying regulatory requirements.

Some tentative propositions and focus points for further study

The following points, which have emerged from an analysis of the findings outlined above, are offered as tentative propositions about the nature and purpose of self-reviewing, and its introduction, use and development in schools. The findings from this survey are offered as points for consideration by those interested in the design and implementation of programmes of school self-review. Points from this survey are also incorporated into the "profile" of school self-review, and in the "conditions" suggested as necessary for successful self-review as presented in Chapter Six.

1. The Nature of School Self-review

The following propositions which have emerged from the survey are seen as having implications for the design and implementation of school self-review:

Questions concerned with *frequency of reviewing* are dependent upon *size and nature of evaluation events*. How often review events should be undertaken or scheduled will depend upon the length of time and scope of content to be evaluated. Some aspects may be reviewed in very small on-going "monitoring" type reviews, while other review projects may develop over time and continue for lengthy periods before reaching any useful conclusion.

In an on-going self-review regime some activities are likely to recur more often than others. When designing a programme of school self review consideration needs to be given to how frequently different types of evaluands are likely to need revisiting. Not all of these are likely to be accurately predicted and the approach should therefore be to plan a schedule over (say) a three year period, building in those aspects which are likely to need revisits more than once within the three years, but allowing for an on-going review of the schedule itself and allowing plenty of room in the schedule for re-scheduling in response to emergent needs or ideas.

While some principals refer to reviews as *single events* which occur periodically (eg. once every three years, once a year, once a term), others refer to a *continuous process of reviewing*. Although the *programme* may very well be continuous it is not

practical to be continually reviewing particular aspects, although they may be continually *monitored* for some specific purpose or other. Monitoring, however is not the same as reviewing. It may well be that some aspects of school life are only formally reviewed every three or four years while others are looked at once a year or even once a term.

In continuous process school self-review, small interrelated events recur on varying cycles over time, varying from one occurrence to the next in *size of event*, at varying levels in terms of methodological complexity, depth of focus and breadth of scope. While many of these can be formally scheduled, others will emerge out of the day to day business of the school.

Differences reported by principals in the frequency, scope and focus of reviewing practices in their schools are likely to be explained by way of a multi-dimensional/multi-level model or framework which integrates the above concepts. While some review targets are under small scale but continual monitoring and periodic special purpose review, other larger scale events may be occurring at the same time at another level and when completed will be replaced by other disjointed periodic reviews. Thus designers of review programmes need to consider that resources may be called on for reviewing at more than one level at any particular time. Leadership of review events is therefore likely to be shared and general participation effected in such a way as to avoid overload for individuals or groups. Careful design and scheduling is essential if participants are to remain committed not only to the review of the moment, but also to the ongoing nature of the programme and, most importantly, to the actioning of consequential improvement action.

School self-reviewing is interconnected conceptually, and in practice, to other structures and functions within the school and must be viewed within a total school context. Many of the principals responding to the survey recognised relationships between the review programme and other on-going aspects of school management. In particular the connections between review and school-based curriculum development, policy development, teacher performance appraisal, staff development, and resource management were recognised as closely connected to school self-review. In other words, school self-review is centrally positioned in the whole process of overall school development.

Continual process school self-review is at essence an exercise in collaborative reflective practice. Its "life forces" are critical self-reflection, collaborative dialogue,

and self-critique. Whole school self-review depends upon collaboration between individuals and groups in supportive and coercion free contexts. Honest, open, power-free dialogue is essential to the establishment or re-definition of shared meanings, the generation of new knowledge and understanding and the clarification of shared values, as well as subsequent collaborative judgements of worth and expressions of improvement action.

The survey also raised an awareness of a number of areas which would benefit from further study and research:

- an exploration of the above ideas conceptually;
- a search in the literature for similar conceptualisations;
- the gathering of further more focused information in the light of responses to this survey;
- a critical/reflective dialogue on the above propositions with selected principals.
- An examination of the extent to which principals distinguish conceptually between: self-review, evaluation of teaching, and programme (or curriculum) evaluation; the ways in which they make such distinctions; and, the assumptions or theoretical principles which such distinctions are based upon.

2. The Purposes of School Self-review

Responses to the survey also suggested some tentative propositions regarding the principal's given reasons for involving the school in a self-review programme.

Review for Improvement. A preeminent justification for "doing" school-self review is to give direction to the improvement of teaching and learning. Reviewing is seen as leading to improvement and improvement is seen positively by teachers and principals who don't really want to spend their time doing things which have no obvious immediate payoff for improved teaching and learning. Some very strongly rejected the suggestion that a justifiable purpose for school self-review was to facilitate external review for accountability reasons. Immediate improvement of practice at the school level was unquestionably seen as a legitimate justification for self-review, while the idea that school self-review leading to improved public accountability may also contribute towards an improved education system was not so readily accepted.

Review for Accountability (to the local school community, and to national education authorities), and to meet statutory reporting requirements, can be considered to have a

potential function so long as it eventually informs national and local policy in the interests of improvement. It is the use (or purpose) of an evaluative event that determines whether it can be termed "formative" or "summative" (Scriven). This conception of accountability as a formative agent needs to be the subject of further professional dialogue and understanding. In the final analysis however, school self-reviewing can only be regarded as "formative" if it (potentially) leads to improvement. The connections between public accountability and improvement are not clearly articulated in teacher discourse.

Review for Control. School self-review (even in its most democratic and participatory modes) can be interpreted as having just as much of a "controlling" role over people as autocratic internal non-participatory internal evaluation, or externally controlled evaluation approaches so long as the dominant internal power structure remains unchallenged. Unless power is suspended school self-evaluation is only *self*-evaluative for those with the power. It is therefore possible that the only person who is truly *self*-reviewing in the school is the principal! Or, if a Board of Trustees interprets its self-review role in the National Administrative Guidelines literally, it may only be the board which is truly self-reviewing. As far as the non-empowered members of the school community (for example: students, teachers, parents, non-teaching staff), are concerned they are being controlled and manipulated for managerial purposes which may not always coincide with their own interests or what they see as the interests of the students.

Review for Change. Non-critical school self-reviewing is fundamentally conservative. If school self-reviewing is to avoid a conservative role (reinforcing and further entrenching existing social structures within the school), and is to be truly transformative and lead to real change in the true interests of improved teaching and learning, then very high moral and ethical positions must be adopted and self-critical/reflective evaluative dialogue take place within a potential "ideal-speech" situation (in the sense proposed by Habermas). Designers and leaders of school self-review programmes must therefore ensure that the systems and processes they set up facilitate situations where power free and self-critical dialogue is able to operate in a way which will see established and taken for granted curricula, methods, learning outcomes, administrative systems, social structures, values, attitudes and personal agendas challenged and their protagonists called upon to publicly justify both means and ends. The personal threat of such critique must be minimised however if such discourse is to avoid becoming simply a power struggle or opportunity for "mud-slinging" or "one-upmanship". A critical approach to school self-review has much to

offer but also much to be learnt by participants in terms of the interpersonal and social interactive skills needed to freely take part, and to let others freely take part .

As with the responses related to the nature of school self-review, the responses concerned with the purposes for self-reviewing also suggested some areas of possible further study.

- How others view the purposes (teachers, board members, client parents, community leaders, potential client parents, Ministry of Education, ERO, politicians, minority groups etc.)
- The personal interests of participants in school self-reviewing contexts, and of the wider community (society, the taxpayer).
- How well do they see these interests being served? What reasons do they give for the patterns they observe? What improvements can they suggest?
- The positions taken by principals and other participants in determining purposes for self-review.
- Explicit and implicit purposes, intentional and unintentional eventual uses, and contradictions between espoused theory and evident practice.
- The identification of different "layers" of meaning associated with purposes. That one "purpose" can be interpreted in different ways (mean different things) to different people and in different contexts.
- The investigation of some self-review social and cultural contexts to illuminate further the types of dynamics operating within review situations: tensions, conflicts of interest, power struggles, power relationships.

3. The Success of School Self-review

Comments from principals participating in the survey offered a number of suggestions for the successful implementation of school self-review.

Participants must see the time and resources expended as worthwhile in terms of immediate improved teaching and learning as well as the potential for improvement in the long term. Teachers and principals are generally quick to criticise any initiative which can not be demonstrated to show real and immediate spin off for improved teaching and learning. While this position can sometimes be used as a way of avoiding perceived threat, most educational professionals are genuine in not

wishing to spend valuable time and resources (which they have often been involved in fundraising for) on activities which they do not see as having any significant positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Evidence that school self-review does make a difference is needed to help convince sceptical teachers and others that the expenditure of time and effort on school self-review is worthwhile and in the interests of students. For this reason, as well as for informing improvement of the review process itself, initial review events and their follow-up actions should be carefully evaluated.

The scope must be manageable within available resources, and the focus aimed at agreed priority areas in sufficient depth, and with sufficient rigour, to identify, with acceptable validity and reliability, *key growth points* which can be addressed with the certainty of high value improvement. (ie growth points within the school's realm of effective influence). Overly ambitious programmes are doomed to failure and are probably a very good way of sabotaging the project. Designers of school self review programmes should carefully assess the extent to which the school is ready psychologically, culturally, financially and in terms of the necessary technical skills and knowledge to embark on a programme before any start is made. By choosing the most manageable events initially, until benefits are recognised, skills and attitudes develop favourably, collaborative reflection and action has become established, and improved financial resources are made available, designers of school self-review programmes will help develop the cultural and technical pre-requisites for the successful implementation of more complex and demanding events in the future .

Realistic expectations need to be established of the extent to which school self-review can be expected to operate within existing resource allocations without placing the viability of teaching and learning programmes at risk, while still remaining a credible and trustworthy evaluative mechanism.

Provision must be made for appropriate staff training in both the technical data-gathering and analytical skills required, and in the skills of reflective critical practice.

The need for teachers, other staff, and board members to be trained in the techniques of school self-review was commented upon by a number of respondents. Again it is important not to try running before walking and to plan reviewing events which are able to be validly and reliably carried out within the technical limits of participants. The necessary skills can be built upon progressively, possibly with the support of a professional consultant and specific training sessions.

Compromises must be worked out between the existing culture of the school, on the one hand, and the theoretical ideals of a self-reviewing system on the other hand. The established beliefs, values, norms, attitudes, and social/political structure of the school is likely to need to make some self adjustment to accommodate the new system, while the system will almost certainly require some tailoring to allow for its assimilation, especially in the early stage. The long-term success of the system will depend on the degree to which the modified 'ideal' self-review structure is able to operate without jeopardising its technical viability, or its perceived credibility, and the extent to which the culture is able to further accommodate subsequent movement to reconstruct the ideal.

Two areas emerge as suitable areas for further study

- An examination of the implications of theories of change for the implementation of school self-reviewing in schools.
- A consideration of the technical skills, the skills of critical reflection, and of the social and communicative skills needed by participants to make quality self-reviewing a successful reality.

4. Conclusion

The above tentative propositions, although far from being an exclusive listing of definitive statements, provide some direction for further inquiry based upon the outcomes of the survey. The experience of the 34 principals surveyed suggests there remains much to learn especially about the nature of school self review and its implementation. However the tentative propositions outlined above do provide some initial guidance for those interested in designing and implementing programmes of school self review in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools.

In the next chapter the implications of the survey findings and propositions outlined above, together with other concepts, ideas and theoretical positions from the literature will be explored conceptually in a effort to gain further understanding of the nature of school self-review, its relationship to evaluation, and some possibilities for developing a theoretical frame for school self-review.

Chapter Five

Defining the Ground

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to clarify definitions and concepts associated with school self-review, explore the conceptual relationships between those concepts, attempt to organise these concepts into a prototype framework which offers a structure for developing some theoretical perspectives. As well as looking conceptually at school self-review itself, the chapter also attempts to relate school self-review to some key ideas from the literature which seem to offer some theoretical dimensions within which school self-review may operate.

The chapter begins by examining the concept of evaluation, drawing a distinction between evaluative processes and programmes of evaluation. The essential elements of evaluative processes are identified and the distinction between evaluative and descriptive comparison explored, along with the role of perception and judgement. The relationship between a programme of evaluative processes or "events" and school improvement is examined in the context of a range of definitions and conceptions from the literature.

Section 2 looks at the concept of school self-review as it has traditionally been understood in the literature and examines the conceptual relationship between evaluation and school self-review, and between school self-review and school improvement.

Section 3 discusses a number of theoretical and philosophical ideas which have been associated with school self-review in the past, or which seem to offer some orientation for a theory of school self-review. These include: collaborative evaluation; critical self-reflection; schools as self-critical communities of learners; needs assessment approaches; collaboration and collegiality; contradictory ideologies and school self-review as a professional-contextualist alternative to technocratic reductionalist evaluation; teacher, team and organisational learning; school culture; the role of

reflective and critical dialogue; critical inquiry; communicative competency and "ideal speech situations"; "problemization"; and, constant improvement and team analysis.

The idea of school self-review as collaborative reflection is proposed in Section 4 with the relationship between reflection and action (following Schon) being incorporated into a prototype model of school review involving combinations of individual reflection "in-action" and "out-of-action", collaborative group (or "team") reflection, and collaborative whole school reflective review.

SECTION 1

The Nature of Evaluation

Evaluation can be thought of both as a functional *process* of evaluating at one level, and as a *programme* of pre-evaluative, evaluative, and post evaluative activities on the other. This section endeavours to clarify this distinction.

The literature on educational evaluation abounds with definitions of "evaluation".

Beeby (1977) offers what **Wilcox** (1992: 7) has described as "one of the best definitions of evaluation:

"the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence leading, as part of the process, to a judgement of value with a view to action."

For Wilcox this definition succinctly incorporates four important attributes:

- "Evaluation is based on evidence which is *systematically* collected.
- The meaning of evidence is seldom unambiguous and therefore needs to be *interpreted*.
- *Judgements of value* are made about the entity being evaluated and its effects.
- Evaluation is *action orientated*, intended to lead to better practices and policies."

David **Nevo** (1995: 7-8) has identified some of the different meanings the term has come to be associated with in its more general sense:

- a judgement of quality;
- a systematic way of looking at important matters;
- a daily activity which we perform whenever we make a decision;
- the testing of achievement;
- the reassessment of major policies or courses of action;
- as a constructive tool for improvement and innovation;
- a destructive activity which threatens spontaneity and paralyses creativity;
- a way to make things look good when they really are not.

In the field of education some well known perspectives include:

- determining the extent that educational objectives are actually being realised (Tyler);
- providing information for decision making (eg. Cronbach, Stufflebeam, Alkin);
- the assessment of merit or worth (Scriven, Stufflebeam, Eisner, House);
- an activity comprising both description and judgment (Stake, Guba & Lincoln);

- a non-judgemental systematic examination of events (Cronbach).
(Nevo, 1995: 10.)

Evaluation as a process

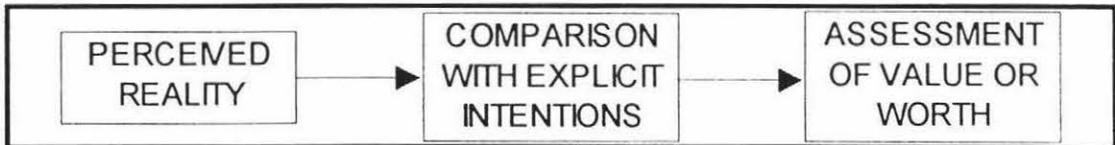
While evaluation can be applied in many ways and for many purposes there is a central *process* of evaluation which makes applied systems or programmes of evaluation evaluative. **House** (1980), offers a reasonably typical description of such a process which firstly describes the actuality of "the case", moves on to compare "the case" with criteria, and deduces of the degree of congruence between the two.

"At its simplest, evaluation leads to a settled opinion that something is the case. It does not necessarily lead to a decision to act in a certain way, though today it is often intended for that purpose... Evaluation leads to a judgment about the worth of something... This judgment often is arrived at by grading or by ranking something according to how well the object fulfils a set of standards or criteria. Evaluation is essentially comparative, and usually explicitly so..."(House, 1980: 18.)

"...in its essence, evaluation entails adopting a set of standards, defining the standards, specifying the class of comparison, and deducing the degree to which the object meets the standards." (ibid: 19.)

Evaluation as a process involves comparing perceived reality with explicit intentions to arrive at an assessment of value or worth.

(Figure 5.1): *The Essential Elements of Evaluative Processes*



More simply: **LOOK** **COMPARE** **JUDGE**

Some writers, such as Scriven (1967) stress the *comparison* function of evaluation: (evaluation is) "...an observed value compared to some standard". Scriven (1974: 64) claims "that all useful evaluation is comparative and that in fact all nontrivial evaluation is at least implicitly comparative."

For others the *judgemental* dimension is kept to the fore: "*Evaluation*" according to Holt (1981:13) "is a way of passing a judgement on an action." Judgements, however,

require comparison of the evaluand against some criteria, standard of merit, worth or established values.

In the case of *value judgements* that comparison is against values. The "ultimate problem" in evaluation according to Scriven (1974: 66), is "where the values come from."

Comparison

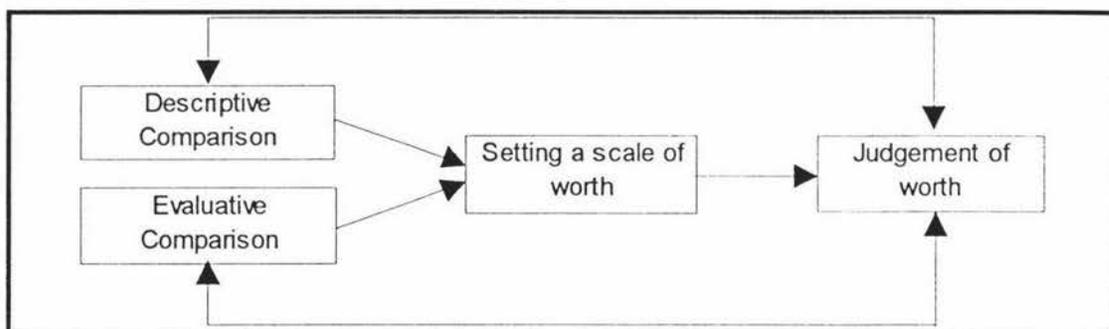
The three stage model presented above does not allow for the need to differentiate between two different forms of comparison in the evaluation process. Comparison, examining case A with case B and determining the extent to which they match or do not match. Descriptive comparison may stand without judgement, or at least without explicit judgement. Comparison in this sense is mathematical - "finding the difference" or establishing the degree of congruence. It is possible to say, for example, that John is wearing a hat but Mary is not wearing one without saying that wearing a hat is better or worse than not wearing one.

Whether wearing a hat is good or bad depends upon the context. If the context is inside a church then, depending upon the traditional values of the particular church, wearing a hat may be "good" in the case of Mary, but "bad" in the case of John. However, in the context of "a hot sunny day" wearing a hat may be good and in the best interests (health wise) of both Mary and John. (Fortunately churches are seldom sunny places or another level of comparison would arise: comparison between conflicting values.)

Descriptive comparison differs from *evaluative* comparison in that descriptive comparison involves comparing one thing with another in terms of observable differences and similarities, while evaluative comparison involves comparing a case with some non-evident (but potentially identifiable) criteria, value or norm. A descriptive comparison would just tell us that all the men in the church were hatless except John, while evaluative comparison would tell us that all the men in the church, except John, were good because they had taken their hats off before entering the church (an expected norm based on a set of values which may or may not be immediately evident). In the context of the sunny day, descriptive comparison would simply tell us that three children in the playground were wearing hats compared with twenty who were not, while evaluative comparison would tell us that it was not in the best (health) interests of the twenty children to be hatless (criteria of interest, value of good health).

Following the descriptive comparison (20 out of 23 children are not wearing hats), and evaluative comparison (being hatless does not equal healthy living where "healthy living" is a held value), the third element, that of judgement, is applied. Judgement is the outcome of comparison where a conclusion is reached and expressed in terms of some scale of worth. Such as scale may be as simple as stating that x is more (or less) worthy than y , or that the hatless children's behaviour was not as meritorious as that of the hat wearers.

(Figure 5.2): *The Evaluative Process*



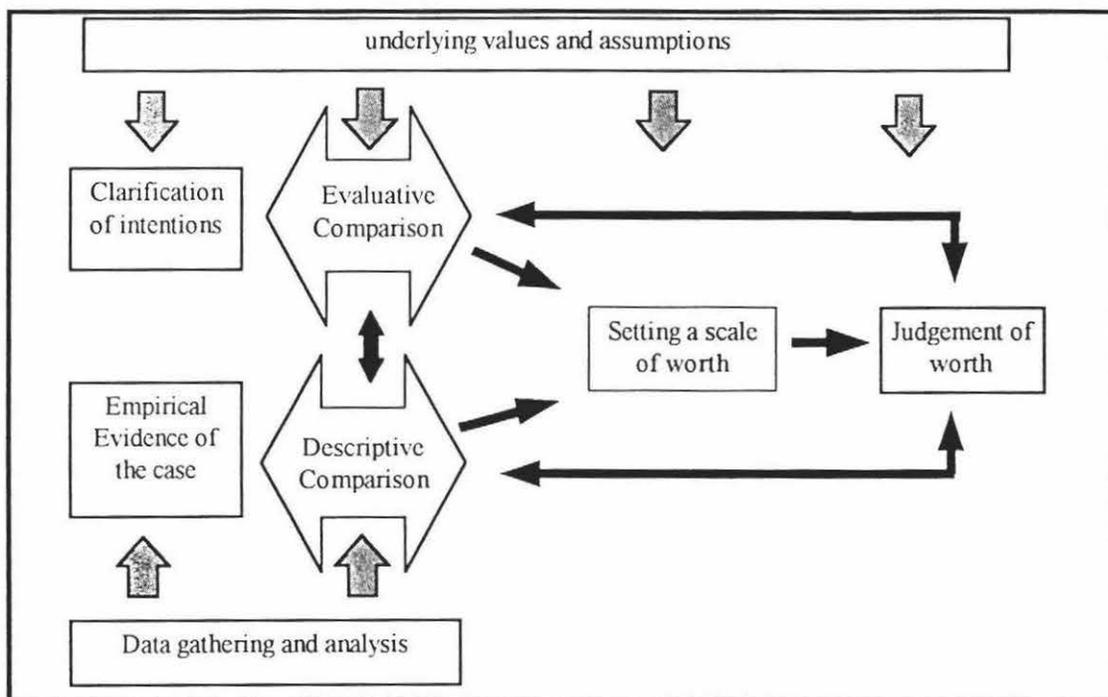
Setting a *scale of worth* is central to the evaluative process. It provides the means of communicating the judgement. It provides a frame of reference for bringing together the outcomes of descriptive and evaluative comparison.

For example, if descriptive comparison establishes that 10 students in a class of 30 seven year olds have an instructional reading age of less than 7 years, and evaluative comparison tells us that an instructional reading age equivalent to or better than chronological age is a desired standard or criteria of merit, some means of communicating the worth of a resulting judgement is needed. This scale of worth may be based on some established normative distribution such as percentile ranking or stanines.

Evaluation is an act of judgement but it depends upon acts of comparison - both descriptive and evaluative. It depends upon descriptive comparison to clarify the case in relation to given observable criteria (wearing or not wearing hats), and evaluative comparison to clarify the case in relation to contextually relevant (pertinent) values, norms or interests (cultural, social or political criteria).

Because there cannot be judgement without comparison there cannot be evaluation without comparison. Descriptive comparison, evaluative comparison and judgement act together to form a process of evaluation. This interaction (shown by the double headed back arrow in *Figure 5.3* below) helps determine the scale of worth upon which the judgement of worth will be made. This scale is a representation of what counts as worth and degrees of worth.

(Figure 5.3): The Process of Evaluation



The process of evaluation includes pre-evaluative activities such as data-gathering and analysis as well as identification/clarification of underlying assumptions and values.

Davis (1980) incorporates a goal for evaluation into his definition of evaluation as a process.

"Evaluation is simply the process of attributing value to intentions, actions, decisions, performances, processes, people, objects - almost anything... The main goal of evaluation... is to make available the best (most accurate, most useful) information for improving understanding and facilitating decision-making." (Davis, 1980: 13.)

"...evaluation can be regarded as *the process of delineating, obtaining and providing information useful for making decisions and judgements.*" (1980: 13.)

The idea of evaluation as a generic process as set out in *Figure 5.3* helps us to understand what is involved in evaluating. Such a model does not however offer much

in the way of appropriate evaluation strategy for any particular evaluation context, such as the evaluation of a school. In the next section the idea of a programme of evaluation is examined: that is a planned and systematic sequence of evaluative actions each of which applies the process of evaluation for a particular purpose to provide a collective evaluation of a complex context.

Evaluation as a programme for improvement

Helen **Simons** (1987: 8) who is concerned particularly with "evaluation as a means of assisting professional self-direction in the improvement of schooling," presents an even wider profile of evaluation as: "...a practical, particularistic, political, persuasive, educative system."

Aspinwall et al (1992, 2) point out that at the most "straightforward level... *evaluation means placing a value on things*", but also offer the following definition:

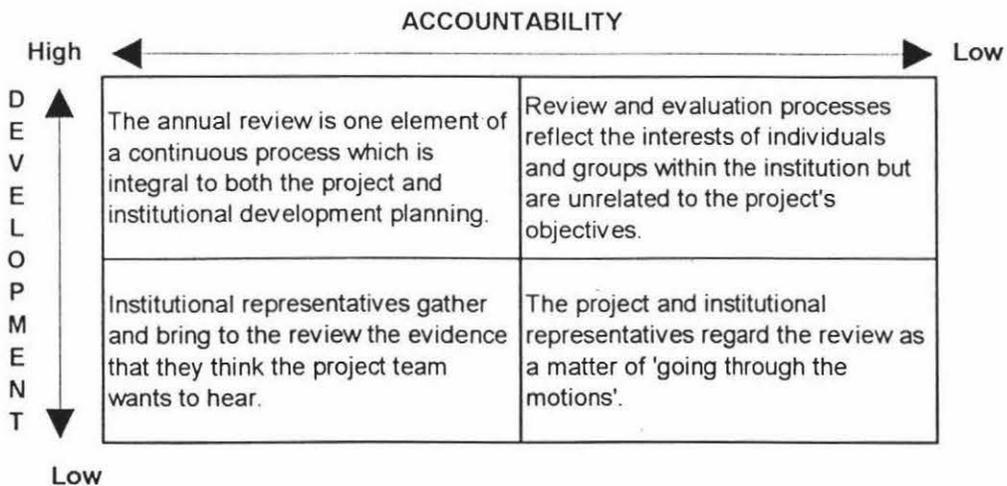
"Evaluation is part of the decision-making process. It involves making judgements about the worth of an activity through systematically and openly collecting and analysing information about it and relating this to explicit objectives, criteria and values."

In particular,

- "Evaluation involves making judgements.
- Evaluation is, at best, open and explicit.
- Evaluation contributes to decision making." (ibid, 4)

Aspinwall et al also emphasise the development and accountability dimensions of evaluation:

(Figure 5.4): Dimensions of Evaluation



Dimensions of Evaluation (Aspinwall et al, 1992, 5.)

Nevo's definition of *educational evaluation* combines description and judgement but sees the two as conceptually different in nature:

"Educational evaluation is the act of collecting systematic information regarding the nature and quality of educational objects. It results in a comprehensive description and collection of value statements regarding the various aspects of its quality. The conduct of professional evaluation is usually based on applications of quantitative and qualitative research methods from the behavioral sciences" (Op cit, 27.)

Description (for Nevo) is based on systematic data collection and thus results in highly objective information, while judgement is likely to be much more subjective, being based on values, social norms, and personal preferences. Nevo's definition is interesting in that it refers to the "comprehensive description and collection of value statements regarding the various aspects of quality" which seems to imply that it involves the collection of pre-judgements by participants (as "value statements") but does not suggest that these in turn need to be evaluated.

Writers such as Parlett and Hamilton deliberately avoid the active dimensions of judgement and decision-making, preferring to concentrate on the information gathering and *descriptive* component of evaluation (1972, 30.) Those who take this position are really only involved in pre-evaluative processes: ie. data gathering, analysis and description, without committing to judgement which they leave to someone else. Thus they may be said to be taking part in a programme of evaluation but not in a process of evaluation.

Other writers, such as Scriven (1967) stress the *comparison* function of evaluation: (evaluation is) "...an observed value compared to some standard". For others the *judgemental* dimension is kept to the fore: "*Evaluation*" according to Holt (1981, 13) "is a way of passing a judgement on an action." Judgements, however, require comparison of the evaluand against some standard of merit, worth or value. In the case of *value judgements* that comparison is against values. The "ultimate problem" in evaluation according to Scriven (1974, 66), is "where the values come from."

Scriven (1974, 64) claims "that all useful evaluation is comparative and that in fact all nontrivial evaluation is at least implicitly comparative."

David Hopkins, (1989, 14. after Nevo, 1986, 24-6.) allows for either one or both of the descriptive and judgmental aspects, defining educational evaluation as "a systematic description of educational objects and/or an assessment of their worth."

The judgemental aspect of evaluation is stressed in some definitions. Adelman and Alexander describe *educational* evaluation as:

"... the making of judgements about the worth and effectiveness of educational intentions, processes and outcomes; about the relationships between these; and about the resource, planning and implementation frameworks for such ventures." (1982, 5.)

Elliot Eisner (1991) avoids the word "evaluation", preferring the broader term "inquiry". Eisner sees evaluation and research as forms of inquiry, but points out that not all inquiry is evaluation or research. (Op cit, 6.)

Some argue that there is *no* "right" way to define *evaluation*. If a way could be found it would forever put an end to argumentation about how evaluation is to proceed and what its purposes are. For Guba and Lincoln there is no answer to the question, "But what is evaluation really?" and there is no point in asking it." (1989, 21)

Michael Apple (writing in 1974) described traditional educational evaluation as a "social construct" and made the following points:

- (1) evaluation is a political language that prevents rather than fosters the questioning of school procedures by people other than professionals;
- (2) the power of the evaluation expert is distinctly limited in dealing with organizations like schools by the definition of his role;
- (3) the basic clinical perspective of experts contributes to the conservatism of evaluation; and,
- (4) the interests underlying the basic methodologies evaluators employ may foster the ideology of strict control of human action that guides a good deal of educational policy making." (op.cit., 13).

Apple (1974, 25-28) refers to "institutional evaluation" as "the assessment of the 'quality of life' students experience in schools". For Apple institutional evaluation involves the assessment of ethical issues asking such questions as: "Does the basic style of interaction in this institution reflect a commitment to treat individuals *justly*? If the roles were reversed and educators were to become students, would they (the educators) consider the basic forms of activity to be morally responsible?" Such an evaluation would require a legal and philosophical dimension to institutional evaluation, not in place of rigorous empirical inquiry, but to supplement and complement it. A greater emphasis on descriptive analysis, rather than a "means-end" or "process-product" orientation, would be a necessary characteristic of such a form of institutional evaluation.

Apple's proposal to shift the focus from learning outcomes to the quality of institutional life as a whole has a particular relevance in the New Zealand context

today where over recent years schools have come under increasing political and bureaucratic pressure to become accountable (in empirical, measurable, comparable terms) for instructional outcomes. An approach to school self-review which incorporated assessment of ethical "quality of life" issues would be one means of providing some balance. The point (and challenge) here is not that schools shouldn't be accountable or empirically rigorous, but that such accountability and rigour should be balanced in terms of wider matters than student achievement of prescribed instructional objectives.

Conclusion:

Evaluation is about becoming informed about socially conceived value and perceived actuality, comparing one with the other, and, forming a contextually dependent judgement of worth based upon the established discrepancy between the two. Comparison is made not just with previous explicit intentions and their underlying values, but also (simultaneously and more implicitly) with current perceptions of priority for change, redefined intentions, and newly revealed underlying assumptions and emerging or reclarified value positions, and the implications of these for future interests. Judgements of worth are made in terms of the past, of the present, and of the future for the subject of the evaluation in focus. Evaluation takes place in the "here and now" but also considers the lessons of the past, and the needs of the future. A *programme* of evaluation involves a series of planned and emerging evaluative processes or "events" which together make up "an evaluation". In the next section the idea of school self-review as a programme of evaluation is explored.

SECTION 2

The Nature of School Self-review

The notion of "review" shares much in common with that of "evaluation". Review involves a systematic process of looking back at actions, and at the outcomes of actions, and considering them in terms of not only the specific objectives set, but also in terms of the more general goals and mission of the school, as well as the aims and purposes of "education" itself. A school review is a structured programme which overviews what has happened and how it has contributed to the current state of things in the school. As such the self-review of a school is akin to a programme of evaluation but it moves beyond evaluation per se and is strongly linked to the school's improvement programme. School self-review aims not only at evaluating particular aspects, but at painting a more broad brush picture of the business of the school as an organisation, highlighting its areas of strength and prioritising its areas of development need. It is in itself a learning activity for the individuals and groups within it, as well as the school as an organisational entity in itself. While a programme of evaluation of a particular aspect (for example of the teaching and learning of a curriculum area) focuses on specific goals and objectives, a review is also looking at the cultural, social, political, and structural dimensions of school life and work and identifying desired needs for development through change in these contextual factors..

Review is a learning experience which interprets the meaning of the past in terms of both explicit prior expectations or intentions, and desired ambitions and priorities for the future. School self-review should be a powerful learning process dedicated to the improvement of school actions and outcomes in the interests of better teaching and learning.

Review is fluid in nature. Rather than being a periodic stop and look in terms of static ambitions, it is a plastic ever-changing, dynamically evolving, on-going process which involves evaluation which is more than "snap-shot" assessments of single events. Programmes of review encompass a wide range of interrelated activities including: assessment, description, data-gathering, monitoring, interpretation, analysis, comparison, identification of congruence, clarification of values and intentions, judgement of worth, summation, concluding, recommending, decision-making, and planning future actions.

It stops short of initiating the improvement action itself, but it takes place within or alongside of action. In this sense review operates on a number of dimensions: prior to action; during action; and, after action.

A programme of school self-review is part of a programme for renewal, or part of the total self-improvement strategy of the school. In this sense school self-review is an application of evaluative processes which operated simultaneously at different levels and through a number of dimensions and for a range of purposes.

As with evaluation, school review means different things for different people. School Review is often used synonymously or even interchangeably by many writers. Certainly this is true when it comes to the use of the terms "school self-evaluation" and "school self-review". In both these instances, however, the writers are referring to a *programme* of review or evaluation. That is, to some strategic plan of data gathering, analysis, evaluation, and recommendation. Such programmes may be:

- (a) cyclical with similar aspects being repeatedly focused on from one cycle to the next;
- (b) periodic "one off" surveys of specific aspects;
- (c) on-going and evolving.

According to Clift et al (op cit) *School-based Review* corresponds with what has become known in the United Kingdom as *School Self-Evaluation*. For these writers the terms "evaluation" and "review" are synonymous within similar contexts at least.

Simons (1987) described the school self-evaluation movement in the United Kingdom as "a movement ostensibly concerned with institutional self-evaluation, not pupil, teacher or classroom self-evaluation, though aspects of classroom practice or pupil assessment may well form part of the whole school evaluation." Elsewhere, Simons (1984: 124) suggests that although it must be accepted that there is a "need for schools to present accounts of their work to the public" the "basis of control for how this should be done" should be shifted from external sources to "the people within the school". For Simons school-based evaluation in this context "is not a defensive reaction to accountability demands from the centre or outside the school but a positive means for institutional self-development" which will at the same time "provide a document of self-accountability."(ibid.) Evidence from the current survey suggests that a number of New Zealand principals may see school self-review as a "defensive reaction to accountability demands" while others see it as a necessary compliance. While respondents indicated that the prime purpose of self-review in their schools was

improvement, well over half the principals surveyed indicated that a further purpose was to demonstrate compliance with National Administration Guidelines requirements.

Two ideas are seen as central by McCormick (1986, 109) to any definition of true school self-evaluation: "participation" and "control". Lewy (1989) views self-evaluation as a process which is (a) initiated and (b) implemented by the school staff, and (c) whose findings answer the school's internal purposes, and not those of external agencies. The very clear requirement on New Zealand schools to undertake an ongoing programme of self-review, and the promotion of school self-review as a management strategy by the Education Review Office, have undoubtedly disqualified the "self" evaluation in many New Zealand schools from meeting Lewy's absolute definition. Following McCormick and Lewy the extent to which an evaluation programme in a school can be regarded as "self" evaluation (or review) depends upon the extent to which the people of the school take an active part in and control the evaluation. In the current New Zealand context however, it seems reasonable to accept that self-review can involve high levels of participation and control even though the requirement to undertake it is mandatory and overseen by a Government agency.

"Institutional self-evaluation" has often been the term applied to self-evaluation in higher education institutions. Adelman and Alexander (1982) see *institutional self-evaluation* as:

"...the means by which individuals and groups find out about and judge their own and each other's activities as these contribute to the institution's *collective* endeavours. It is the tool of *accountability*." (1982,24.)

Wilcox (1991, 208) suggests that because external evaluation of every institution annually (by inspection) is not feasible, "Self-evaluation is the only realistic way of ensuring an annual evaluation cycle."

Some writers, such as Aspinwall et al, (1992, 15), have seen review as "periodic": "The periodic systematic assessment of an activity's, or programme's, progress and achievements in relation to its objectives or targets, with a view to determining a course of action." Review for Aspinwall et al is a periodic systematic yet manageable "taking stock", the purpose of which is to "reflect on what has happened, clarify the present situation, and to identify what might happen next." (ibid, 54.)

Typically Aspinwall et al envisage review "sessions" or meetings and list a number of advantages of these:

- "Existing meetings can be set aside for a process of review so that other time is not intruded upon.
- Issues are openly shared and discussed and participants are able to be active in the process of establishing conclusions.
- A lot of ground can be covered quickly, enabling more in-depth study to focus on issues identified as requiring this.
- The process of clarifying issues and ideas can be satisfying and give everyone a sense of moving forward.
- If problems are revealed and shared, there is the possibility of shared commitment to take appropriate action.
- It is possible to establish some picture of what a whole staff is feeling about development in a short period of time.
- There is opportunity for definitions and conclusions to be fully discussed." (ibid, 54-55).

Some problems with this style of review are also recognised by Aspinwall et al:

- "Status or difficulties in relationships may make some people unwilling to be open about their ideas or opinions.
- Individuals may dominate a group discussion and push it in certain directions.
- Only the perceptions of the moment can be captured, and other outside events may effect the mood of the meeting in a way that influences outcomes.
- These events need to be carefully structured and managed and not everyone has the necessary skill or confidence.
- Some people may be reluctant to recognise such activities as a legitimate method of evaluation.
- Some people may hesitate to express criticism that may hurt others.
- Conversely, the isolation of individuals who do not share the consensus of the group may be painfully revealed." (ibid, 55.)

"School-based review" has been described by Abbot et al (1988,) as

"...the process by which teachers systematically examine the work of their school, with the ultimate aim of improving the education provided for the pupils. The term "school-based" emphasises the fact that it is the staff themselves who take responsibility for the review, preferably with help from parents, governors and consultants." (1988, 1)

The concept of *School Based Review* (SBR) has been popularised by the International Schools Improvement Project (ISIP) of the Centre for Research and Innovation (CERI) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). According to Clift, et al (1987) the conceptualisation of SBR has been summarised by Robert Bollen (Sip's convenor) as: "a systematic inspection by a school, a subsystem or an individual, of the actual functioning of the school" with an emphasis on "systematic", implying that SBR has to be integrated into management procedures, that special instruments will be used and that the outcomes of the review are intended to be applied directly to the subsequent functioning of the school. Bollen has described three different perspectives in SBR:

1. SBR as a "*technique*" utilizing instruments such as questionnaires, assessment schemes, interviews and requiring analysis of the consequent data;

2. SBR as a "*phase*" in any process of innovation or improvement in which the nature of the innovation tends to dictate the nature of the SBR process;
3. SBR as an "*end in itself*", a structural part of the day-to-day functioning of the school which will bring about change for improvement. (After Clift et al, op cit 203-204)

Similarly, Hopkins (1989) differentiates between: "Evaluation of school improvement"; "Evaluation for school improvement"; and "Evaluation as school improvement". "**Evaluations of school improvement** have frequently taken the form of the measurement of the attainment of objectives... **Evaluation for school improvement**... is evaluation conducted for the purpose of bringing about improvements in practice. ...its prime focus is on facilitating change. **Evaluation as school improvement**... evaluation and school improvement is to all intents and purposes the same process as in some of the more developmental approaches to school self-evaluation, such as the GRIDS project." (Hopkins, 1989, 27-28). These three views of evaluation and its relationship to school improvement reflect differing approaches outlined in the literature review (Chapter 2) and also evident in the comments made by respondents to the survey of current practice (Chapter 4). Some respondents simply saw evaluation as a conclusion to a single event (evaluation of school improvement), a majority stated that self-review was *for* school improvement (that is: to initiate change for the better), while fewer principals surveyed recognised school self-review as a process of school improvement in its own right.

School self-review is likely to include all three forms in that reviews have improvement as a purpose (review *for* improvement), but are in themselves formative in that the on-going reviewing process is a strategy of improvement (review *as* improvement), and any comprehensive review process will also seek to review the improvement processes and their outcomes including the self-reviewing programme itself (review *of* improvement.)

Del Goddard (1992, 84) has suggested **four types of review** which together meet the various purposes for evaluation:

1. "*School self-evaluation*" the purpose of which is "to build the school's capacity for improvement through its own rigorous internal scrutiny." School self-evaluation procedures should be: integral to the school's development and planning processes, complementary to teacher appraisal for professional development, foster collaborative activity amongst staff, and provide the framework for external review.
2. "*Specific reviews*" which provide the school and local education authority with judgement on specific areas of work, for example mathematics teaching or the administration of the budget. Specific review is linked to self-evaluation, uses internal self-evaluation outcomes,

takes place at a time determined by the school, but involves reports by outsiders and includes an external professional report.

3. "*Whole School Inspection*" on a periodic (eg. three-yearly) basis but drawing on the other forms of review and concerned with both the achievement of the school and practice of management and evaluation. The agenda would be collaborative, but the evaluators external and the outcomes public.

4. "*Local Education Authority Survey*" to gain information to aid LEA decision making related to resource management, policy, and teacher development. Such a survey may utilize data from other types of review but specific inspections are also likely.

The relationship between evaluation and school self-review

Some clarification of the conceptual relationship between *evaluation* and *review* is needed. Evaluation can be described as a *process (of evaluating)* on one level, and as a programme of evaluative actions, at another. Review also has a similar division of meaning, being simply a process of looking back at something at one level (with or without judgement), or as a programme of review which involves looking back, and around, and to the future, evaluating (comparison and judgement), as well as recommending and action planning.

The term *monitoring* is often also rather loosely associated with evaluation. Goddard (1992 following Eraut, 1984) analysed *evaluation* in terms of its function and sub-forms as follows:

"Evaluation is a general term used to describe any activity where the quality of the provision is subject to systematic study. It involves the collection, analysis, interpretation and reporting of evidence about the nature, impact and value of the entity. Thus monitoring, review and assessment are aspects of evaluation if systematic analysis of data is used to provide information for decisions." (Goddard, 1992, 81.)

However it seems more logical to consider the *process* of evaluation an aspect or function of review, rather than the other way around as Goddard suggests. Aspects of review may be *forms* of evaluation. Monitoring can be regarded as an aspect of the pre-evaluative stage of the evaluation process. Review, however, is more logically an application of evaluation rather than an aspect of evaluation.

Eraut (op cit, 54.) has suggested that there are four main kinds of evaluation to be usefully distinguished in all educational institutions:

- *monitoring and trouble shooting* (the largely informal process [of "spotting and scanning"] by which teachers and administrators regulate their environment);
- student assessment (formal assessment for reporting and informal day-to-day formative assessment for instructional decision making);
- staff appraisal;
- review of policy, performance and procedures .

Eraut makes three important distinctions between *monitoring* and *reviewing*:

(a) *monitoring* is continuous and informal while *reviews* are more likely to be periodic and semi-formal;

(b) *monitoring* may sometimes be implicit or semi-conscious but *reviews* are always explicit and deliberate;

(c) *monitoring* is mainly concerned with detecting and remedying deviations from accepted norms while *reviews* are also concerned with questioning such norms. (Op cit, 56-57).

The distinction between monitoring and reviewing is central to understanding the idea of school self-review. Reviewing is more than simply checking for compliance (continually or otherwise). Reviewing involves evaluating the checklist itself rather than simply taking it for granted and ticking off its items. By challenging values and priorities a review is likely to illuminate new pathways for improvement rather than simply checking on the maintenance of well trodden and possibly misdirected routes.

Based on the "lessons" from the literature presented at the conclusion of Chapter Two, on the findings and propositions developed from the survey of current practice (Chapter 4), and on the theoretical ideas discussed in the present chapter, the current study takes the view that rather than being a type of evaluation, school self-review is an integrated element of an approach to *school improvement* which incorporates evaluation and utilises a range of appropriate evaluation sub-types. Thus the totality of evaluation methods, approaches, types, forms and models are available to be used appropriately within a school self-review programme. *School self-review*, from this stand point, is therefore **not** synonymous with *school self-evaluation*. School self-review involves evaluation (self and/or otherwise depending on one's perception of "self"). *Evaluation* is simply the process making a judgement of worth, or value, of an object, or event: it is but one process in a system.

SECTION 3

Some Associated Ideas

A number of related concepts or ideas which contribute to what has become known as school self-review are evident in the literature . While evaluation is very much the central process of self-review, school self-review programmes also draw on:

- (a) various data gathering and analytical techniques of empirical educational research;
- (b) assessment of student learning;
- (c) approaches to teacher evaluation/appraisal;
- (d) needs assessment approaches;
- (e) quality assessment, control, and continuous improvement;
- (f) strategic planning approaches;
- (g) organisational and team learning theories;
- (h) reflective practice;
- (i) collaborative practice;
- (j) critical social theory;
- (k) leadership, power, and authority;
- (l) ethical and moral considerations;
- (m) accountability.

While it is not proposed to discuss all of the above in this section, it is worth examining the implications for school self-review of a number of theoretical ideas and concepts in an attempt to help clarify the notion of school self-review itself. These ideas and perspectives provide a theoretical context which adds meaning and utility to practice. They are included here to offer some theoretical dimensions for the profile and suggestions presented in Chapter 6 which draws also on the conclusions which were developed from the survey of current practice.

Collaborative Evaluation

Collaborative Evaluation can refer to two quite different forms. It can: (1) mean evaluation collaboratively carried out jointly by an external "evaluator", "researcher", or facilitator", and members of the community being evaluated; or,(2) it can refer to evaluation collaboratively carried out solely by insiders. Different variations of these forms occur depending on the extent of outsider involvement, ranging from overall dominance of outsider leadership and of minimal insider participation at one end of the continuum, to absolute internal leadership and democratic control by insiders at the

other. King's analysis (see Chapter 2) provides one analysis of four typical forms of collaborative evaluation.

Collaboration and participation refer not just to who participates, but also to how they participate, interact and relate to one-another within the overall process. The survey of current practice presented in this study indicates a very strong tendency for collaboration on decision making about school review so far as the principal and the staff are concerned, but also found that collaboration with Boards of Trustees and parents in this regard was significantly lower.

School self-review involves people working together and adopting the role of participant researcher. The people associated with the school are both conducting the inquiry and the subject of it. School self-review should offer frameworks and strategies which foster collaborative reflective inquiry. The process should aim at achieving a state akin to Habermas' "ideal speech situation" which "requires a democratic form of public discussion which allows for an uncoercive flow of ideas and arguments and for participants to be free from any threat of domination, manipulation or control." (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, 142)

This is not something which can be "turned on" for a school self-review programme alone. It must be part of the way the school does things, an intrinsic part of the school culture. No school community is likely to come anywhere close to the 'ideal' situation. However, the more readily the culture of the school, and the power relationships within it, are able to facilitate ideal speech type situations, the more likely it is that review outcomes emerging from such situations will be followed up with committed collaborative action. A truly collaborative culture is, therefore, an ideal precondition for school self-review. In practice the best most schools could hope for is an environment in which participants feel free to contribute by way of review structures which offer some degree of freedom from coercion or domination by those in positions of relative power. Outcomes which are attributed to groups rather than individuals, for example, may allow some people to contribute in a truer and more just manner than would otherwise be possible. The object is to reach, in a free and just manner, a rational consensus of what is true.

In discussing the applicability of Deming's Total Quality Management principles to schools, Schmoker & Wilson (1993, 22) have also alluded to the idea of collaborative culture stating that :

"a democratic, collegial atmosphere should prevail in schools. Ideas should be shared in a setting that recognises and supports on-going data collection and assessment. All decisions and

practices should be information-driven; facts, reasoning, and evidence, not power or authority or personality, should determine practice and govern decision making."

Calhoun's concept of "*Collaborative Action Research*" (see also Chapter Two), has its roots in the work of Kurt Lewin and others from the 1940s and '50s who developed a "collective problem-solving cycle" for improving life in organizations. According to Calhoun (1994, 7) "The term *action research*, then as now, captures the notion of disciplined inquiry (thus, "research") in the context of focussed efforts to improve the quality of the organization and its performance (thus, "action")." Central to this approach to school improvement is the focus on careful disciplined collection and analysis of data to diagnose problems, a disciplined search for alternative solutions, and, the crucial link between becoming informed and acting: "*an agreement to act*, and the conscientious monitoring of whether and how much the solution worked - with a recycling of the process..." (ibid, 8. Emphasis added.) Collaborative action research from this perspective is more than just doing research together, it also involves planning action, implementing it and re-evaluating it in an on-going manner.

Critical Self-reflection and Self-critical Communities of Learners

The concept of *critical self-reflection* has more frequently been applied to the individual practitioner (the reflective practitioner (Schon), the reflective teacher, the reflective principal (Stewart and Prebble). This concept can however be transferred to group situations and can itself prepare individuals to contribute reflectively in collaborative contexts. The critical self-reflective teacher (for Carr and Kemmis, 1986, 40)

"...submits some part of his or her work (and, in principle, all of it) to *systematic examination*. To the extent that it is possible to do so, he or she *plans thoughtfully, acts deliberately, observes the consequences of action systematically, and reflects critically on the situational constraints and practical potential of the strategic action being considered.*"

But, as Carr and Kemmis also point out, such activity at the personal level can move to the collaborative level:

"He or she will also construct opportunities to carry this private discourse into discussion and debate with others - teachers, students, administrators and the school community.. In so doing, he or she helps to establish *critical communities of enquirers* into teaching, the curriculum and school organization, and administration with groups within the school, the whole schools or between schools. This *critical self-reflection*, undertaken in a self-critical community, uses *communication* as a means to develop a sense of comparative experience, to discover local or immediate constraints on action by understanding the contexts within which others work, and, by converting experience into discourse, uses language as an aid to analysis and the

development of a critical vocabulary which provides the terms for reconstructing practice."(Op cit.)

The development of self-critical communities of enquirers within the school community is a key consideration for promoting a form of school self-review capable of producing outcomes capable of sustaining the changes needed for real improvement. There are parallels between the idea of *self-critical communities of enquirers* and the idea of schools as *communities of learners* (Barth, 1990) given that self critique (individual and collective) is a form of learning.

A similar concept again is Freire's concept "*culture circles*" based on his alternative model of schooling which originated in the provision of "non-school" education to impoverished illiterate adults. (Freire, 1973, 42). In essence this model proposes a coordinator instead of a teacher, dialogue instead of lectures, participants instead of passive students, and, "codified" learning units instead of an "alienating" syllabus. Culture circles which aim at a wider educative and emancipatory purpose than simple mechanical instruction, utilise group debate to either clarify situations or to seek action arising from that clarification.

School Self-review and Needs Assessment

One of the most strongly supported purposes for school self-review reported in Chapter Four was "*To identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development*" (97% of respondents agreed that this purpose for school self-review closely described a characteristic of the system operating in their schools.) Stufflebeam (et al, 1985, 6-7) have provided a framework for needs assessment in schools which offers a number of strategies which could be adopted as part of a self-review process.

Stufflebeam et al identify four definitions or "views" of need:

1. *Discrepancy view*: A need is a discrepancy between desired performance and observed or predicted performance.
2. *Democratic view*: A need is a change desired by a majority of some reference group.
3. *Analytic view*: A need is the direction in which improvement can be predicted to occur, given information about current status.
4. *Diagnostic view*: A need is something whose absence or deficiency proves harmful.

A definition of "needs assessment" is also offered: "needs assessment (can) be defined in general as *the process of determining the things that are necessary or useful for the fulfilment of a defensible purpose.*" (ibid, 16). For Stufflebeam et al needs assessment serves two primary functions:

1. it assists in determining what needs exist and how these needs should be addressed;
2. it can provide criteria against which a program's merits can be evaluated.

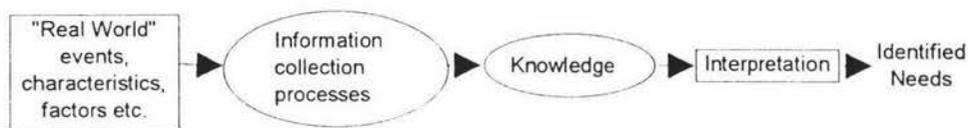
Five interrelated (and recyclical) steps to a needs assessment process are suggested:

1. Preparing to do a needs assessment.
2. Gathering desired needs assessment information.
3. Analysing the needs assessment information.
4. Reporting needs assessment information.
5. Using and applying needs assessment information.

A sixth step involves the evaluation of the Needs Assessment itself.

For Stufflebeam et al needs assessment is "an on-going, cyclical set of activities that is an integral part of the process of program development, implementation, and evaluation. It provides information about the good to be sought by a program and the characteristics of potentially effective programs or interventions."(ibid, 22.) As such it shares many of the purposes and processes of school self-review.

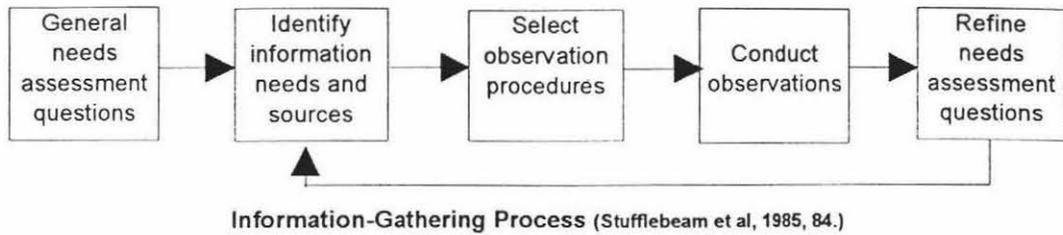
Figure 5.5 : A Needs Identification Process



Needs Identification Process (Stufflebeam et al, 1985, 84.)

In particular, the data gathering and analysis methods offered by Stufflebeam et al provide some very useful strategies for school self-review, given the need demonstrated in the literature and in the present study for improved participant skills in empirical/analytic methods.

Figure 5.6 Information Gathering Processes.



Analysis, according to Stufflebeam et al, is not simply a mechanical process of choosing and applying statistical procedures but involves specification and justification of assumptions, rules, and procedures for interpretation of information.

"The process of analysis involves efforts that are thoughtful, investigatory, systematic, and carefully recorded so that they can be replicated and reviewed. The primary goal of analysis is to bring meaning to the obtained information and to do so in the context of some philosophy, relevant perspectives, and value positions that may be in conflict. ...all analyses necessarily are based on decisions that are subjective, as, for example the choice of performance criteria. There is no objective reality or unassailable philosophy that can serve as the final authority for analysis plans. Rather, people acting as responsibly and rationally as they can must use their best judgement and all their wits in investigating and interpreting the obtained information. This is the essence of the analysis process." (Ibid, 112).

The usefulness of Stufflebeam et al's Needs Assessment approach within school self-review contexts becomes obvious when the scope of their analysis guide is examined: (ibid, 122-123)

While the contents of the cells in the matrix below are obviously orientated to the high school situation in the United States, the column and row headings provide a useful structure for planning both the data gathering and data analysis processes (at the empirical-analytic level) in a school self-review programme. In particular, the types of information available for analysis will vary somewhat in the typical New Zealand primary, intermediate or secondary school context. The range of analytical techniques will be dependent upon the degree of technical skill available although sound guidance in most of these methods (and others) is available from appropriate texts. The main point is that participants in school review do need to plan the empirical data gathering and analysis stage carefully and in relation to both the column and row headings set out

above if the review is to be both purposeful and focused. As the present survey has found, the lack of technical expertise or the time and resources to train staff to become more proficient in technical aspects is a concern of schools which have undertaken self review. New Zealand and overseas accounts also identify this as a need of an effective self-review programme.

Figure 5.7

Questions to Guide Analysis of Need and Strengths Assessment Information

	1. What educational outcomes are desired?	2. Which desired outcomes are and are not being achieved?	3. What factors might explain acceptable performance?	4. What could be done to sustain or improve acceptable performance and to improve substandard performance?
Types of information to be analysed	Mission statements, lesson plans, goals, collective judgements of desired performance levels, position papers, policies, minutes of meetings, laws, court rulings, survey results, and individual educational plans.	Test scores, activity records, school population characteristics, grades, committee reports, survey results, crime statistics, employer judgements, and post-secondary school academic records.	Attendance records, socioeconomic data, site visit reports, test data, cumulative folder information, classroom observation reports, time study reports, school climate reports, and educational theory.	Budget and expenditure reports, research articles, reviews of research, reports of visits to other districts, consultant reports, accreditation reports, court rulings, and advocacy team proposals.
Purpose of the Analysis	To identify and contrast competing views of what outcomes are desirable for groups, subgroups, and individuals.	To assess, summarize, and interpret descriptive and judgemental information so as to contrast performance with purpose for groups, subgroups, and individuals.	To formulate and assess hypotheses about what strengths and weaknesses in the school programs are associated with both acceptable and unacceptable performance.	To identify and assess competing proposals for addressing both met and unmet needs and provide recommendations for resource allocation.
Guiding Assumptions	Desired outcomes may legitimately differ as a function of value perspective and individual differences	Alternative analyses will usually be required to take account of relevant value perspectives and individual differences.	Ideally, causal explanations should be developed; realistically, however, the available information usually will permit only reasoned interpretations	Before converging on a solution strategy, alternative possibilities should be examined for their feasibility in meeting the needs of groups, subgroups, and individuals.
Relevant Techniques	Content analysis, Delphi technique, system analysis, expert review, and judicial hearings.	Descriptive statistics, analysis of variance, a posteriori analysis, committee review, norm referenced analysis, objectives referenced analysis, and goal-scale analysis.	Discriminant function analysis, committee review, a posteriori analysis, meta analysis, effect parameter analysis, and modus operandi analysis.	Advocacy teams, adversary/advocacy reviews, sociodrama, and cost analysis.

An Overview of the Analysis of Needs Assessment Information (Stufflebeam et al, 1985, 122-123)

Problems with collegiality and collaboration.

A form of incestuous dialogue can become evident when professionals (such as teachers) act collegially together. Apple (1974) has referred to this tendency in terms of "invisible colleges" where individuals discuss and debate only with others who already share much of their basic orientation. Such professional activity is not open to challenge from "outsiders" of differing persuasions. This tendency is one which needs to be overcome if self-review is to be genuinely inclusive of groups other than teachers (ie. students, parents, board members). Any move towards a more inclusive review

environment must therefore involve some means of bridging the communication gap between professionals and others. While professionals can come some way by avoiding professional "code" in their communication, there is also a considerable educational need for the non-professionals to come to understand the professional stance on issues.

Fullan and Hargreaves (1992) warn of three forms of teacher collaboration which can be counterproductive to improvement. 1. *Balkanization*, where schools become split into sub-groups or cliques and can result in poor communication, indifference, or groups going their separate ways in schools. Although more likely to occur in secondary schools because of traditionally strong subject based departmentalisation, balkanization also occurs in primary schools, between junior and senior syndicates for example. 2. *Comfortable Collaboration* can occur where collaborative activity is bounded within the group and does not extend outwards, or welcome critique even from within, let alone from without. Effective collaboration must move beyond congeniality and while retaining collegial security and support seek to "bite the bullet of fundamental, deep and lasting change" and move into the "world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives and working hard together at bringing about improvements and assessing their worth." (ibid, 77.) 3. *Contrived Collegiality* occurs when management seeks to control collaborative activity by formalising it into the management structures of the school. While it may be intended on the one hand to encourage collaboration and collegiality it can also operate negatively by reducing teachers' motivation to cooperate further if overtly imposed from above. Although contrived collegiality may be valid as an intermediate step to introduce the idea, real collaboration depends upon a slow evolution of a collaborative culture where teachers and others work together as a matter of cultural course rather than as a requirement of a technocratic decree.

The survey of current practice conducted as part of this study indicated a need for teachers to see the direct benefits to teaching and learning of self-review activities. Collaboration for its own sake was not likely to be successful unless leadership was able to convince participants that there would be real payoff in terms of improved instruction and consequent learning.

Contradictory Discourses of Educational Evaluation

Codd (1994: 50-51) has argued that there are currently two contradictory discourses in educational evaluation in New Zealand. The dominant of the two, a technocratic, reductionist, positivist approach which draws on the ideology of economic rationalism, is exemplified by the practice and rhetoric of the Education Review Office. In opposition to this is an alternative, based on the traditional ideologies of teacher education, and which emphasises evaluative judgement within a professional context. The differences between the two can be illustrated as follows:

Figure 5.8

Contradictory discourses of educational evaluation (Codd, 1994: 50)

	<i>Technocratic-reductionist</i>	<i>Professional-contextualist</i>
Role model	Skilled technician	Reflective practitioner
Criterion of good practice	Competence	Integrity
Pedagogical aim	To produce the attainment of specific learning outcomes	To enable the development of diverse human capabilities
Administrative context	Efficient management (hierarchical)	Professional leadership (collaborative)
Type of motivation	Extrinsic	Intrinsic
Form of accountability	Contractual compliance	Professional commitment

The typical approach to school self-review which emerged from the survey of current practice presented in Chapter 4 fits very much into the technocratic-reductionalist mould, at least as it is openly expressed in responses and comments. This outcome is probably more indicative of principal's conceptions of how self-review ought to be done (ie a scientific activity) rather than how in fact much of the less formal everyday reviewing is in fact undertaken. Most New Zealand primary schools (from this writer's experience) tend to be closer to the professional-contextualist style in their day-to-day operations with evaluation and review being generally reflective and intrinsically motivated. It is likely that a good deal of what appears on the surface to be technical and "scientific" is in fact based primarily on teacher experience in action, judgement and reflection. What does seem to have happened over recent years, largely as a result of the perceived need to comply the National Education Guidelines, is a tendency for schools to follow primitive technocratic approaches which generate the "hard data" needed to demonstrate "compliance". This tendency has been actively promoted by the Education Review Office and a number of educational and management consultants.

School self-review as a professional-contextualist alternative to technocratic reductionist evaluation.

A resurgence of positivist and technical views of knowledge during the post-war years was met during the seventies and eighties by renewed doubts that the professions could deliver the technical perfection evident in engineering and medicine to the problems of society. As Schon (1995) has explained, practitioners suffered a crisis of legitimacy as the realities of practice (complexity, uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value-conflict) were perceived to fall short of the ideals of technical rationality. The impotence of a technical problem-solving approach became recognised and the credibility of the social sciences slumped.

The application of positivist technical approaches to evaluation (as typified, for example, by such evaluative methods as psychometric testing, or the Tyler rationale), suffered the same doubting and were met by a range of alternative approaches (naturalistic, democratic, responsive, illuminative, goal free, etc.) in an effort to regain lost credibility. The late 1980's and early 1990s have seen a further resurgence in demand for technical solutions to be applied to educational evaluation in the name of accountability. Educationalists have come under tremendous political pressure to devise "hard" technocratic approaches to evaluation of educational outcomes. Shipman (1990, 118), commenting on the situation in the United Kingdom at the time, described the newly legislated requirement for self-evaluation as a part of a new assessment-led National Curriculum to be based on output indicators as "a technically dubious exercise". As well as technically dubious, such grand schemes are certainly financially dubious. Similar doubts have emerged in New Zealand as the *New Zealand Curriculum Framework* and its associated documents are progressively introduced. Early intentions to incorporate a grand assessment monitoring scheme into the reforms were quickly watered down once the costs of such an exercise were seriously considered. Only when the complexity of the situations are represented to policy makers in terms of costs have they drawn back and accepted "softer" solutions. The ideals of technocratic assessment and evaluation remain, however, in the legislation of both countries, waiting backstage for the failure of the new soft alternatives and/or the development of more practical and affordable systems.

Lack of affordability is an emergent barrier to the expansion of positivism as evidenced by the inability of society to utilise existing high technology in many fields including medicine and education. Certainly many of the principals surveyed in this study (Chapter 4) indicated a very strong need for increased resources to enable them to

provide the time and expert technical training required to implement their expectations of a positivist/empirical approach to reviewing. Scientific validity, reliability and "fairness" seem to demand expensive methodologies. Given sufficient resources for research and development, schools may be able to design solutions to meet the demands for technical rigour in assessment and evaluation, but, unless this happens, technical/positivist approaches will remain an unaffordable ideal. If current political demands for greater effectiveness accountability continues unsupported by financial resource, the search for alternative more affordable solutions will need to look towards non-technical alternatives. In this environment the naturalistic/interpretive approaches emerged in the 1970s and similarly the adoption of "professional reflective" methods has gathered popularity in the current climate.

Given the failure of positivist approaches to deliver the technical systems required at an affordable price, we turn to the experience, knowledge, and professional judgement of teachers in an effort to be seen to be accountable. To harness this "soft" judgement and present it in a form palatable to those demanding rigorous accountability (for although the positivist methods have failed, positivist standards of proof remain!), schools are expected to adopt managerial strategies and deliver within a managerialistic reporting format. Thus the move has been from professionally controlled scientific positivism to accountability driven managerial pseudo-positivism.

Many current approaches to school self-review can be positioned within this class. School self-review can, at one level, be described as a managerialist structure devised to satisfy political accountability and bureaucratic control demands. As the literature and the present study have demonstrated, time and resources are insufficient to allow a programme of school self-review to proceed in a pure positivist manner. The best we can hope for is a harnessing of what is already known and by way of the softer option, hope to present a view of the school which is at least visually (if not empirically) satisfying to the positivist expectations of much of its audience. We can more than justify such an approach if as a result we are also able to raise the level of self-reflection of participants in a manner which results in improved teaching and learning by all. After all, improved teaching and learning is the number one espoused aim of school self-review, even if political accountability and bureaucratic control rest in a very thinly disguised form just below the surface. The challenge for those of us concerned with bringing about real change in the best interests of our students is to adopt an approach to school self-review which addresses not only the lower level assurance/accountability expectations of technocrats, but at a more enduring level is

able to bring about real cultural change for improved teaching and learning process and outcomes.

To meet this sort of challenge review must not only illuminate development needs, but also act directly as an agent for change. The process of reviewing itself is a process of challenging and reframing the assumptions and values which underlie the actions of those in the school. Such a process of illuminating, challenging and reframing needs to be an on-going, gradual, evolutionary process of cultural and organisational revision.

The on-going need for teacher learning has been explained in terms of the non-routine and context-specific nature of the teaching task by Rosenholtz (1991: 81) whose research has shown that:

"Teachers do not see their effectiveness as routine or unvarying, instead it depends heavily on specific situation, teaching objective, and child. The same strategy that succeeds in one context may fail miserably in another. Their view calls for a full repertoire of teaching techniques, generalised knowledge about their application, and the acquired sense to know when those strategies can be applied - a non-routine technical culture. It follows logically, then, that maximising the fit between teaching method and student need requires continuous learning, refinement, and adaptation of different instructional and managerial strategies. In addition, these comments imply *prima facie* that teaching is something more than the doing; that teachers need to know something other than prescriptions for practice; and that learning is not finished business once one acquires the appropriate certification and credentials."

An on-going programme of school self-review in which teachers are involved collaboratively in genuine free self-critical reflection would seem to offer one means of providing a supportive continuity to teacher learning. Such a review "programme" is possibly better thought of as a "culture" in itself: a culture of continuous collaborative self-review, learning, and improvement.

The sort of school culture required for continuous teacher learning has been described by Rosenholtz (op cit, 208-209) following her research findings for schools with high levels of teacher learning:

"In learning-enriched settings, an abundant spirit of continuous improvement seemed to hover schoolwide, because no one ever stopped learning to teach. Indeed, clumped together in a critical mass, like uranium fuel rods in a reactor, teachers generated new technical knowledge, the ensuing chain reaction or which led to greater student mastery of basic skills. ...Principals often orchestrated collaborative relations between more and less successful teachers, explicitly acknowledging that improvement was possible, necessary, and expected. Teachers saw that working with others seemed to reduce their endemic uncertainty and increase their classroom success. Such was the power of teacher learning that, like good, it became its own propagator."

Peter Senge (1990, 240) quotes physicist and quantum theorist David Bohm who states that "Our thought is incoherent and the resulting counterproductiveness lies

at the root of the world's problems'... (but) since thought is to a large degree collective, we cannot just improve it individually ... we must look on thought as a systemic phenomena arising from how we interact and discourse with one another." Bohm distinguishes between two types of discourse: *dialogue* and *discussion*. Discussion is more closely associated with convincing the other party to accept a point of view, while dialogue is more conciliatory with participants pooling or generating a common meaning which is "capable of constant development and change"(op cit, 241).

Where discussion is concerned with winning a debate, dialogue (for Bohm) is concerned with revealing the incoherence of our thought.

For those concerned with improvement and change, dialogue, rather than discussion, would seem to offer the most fruitful form of discourse. "In dialogue", states Senge (op cit, 242) "*people become observers of their own thinking.*" Because dialogue offers the possibility of clarifying and developing thought collectively and, consequently, to generate *collective meaning*, its use within a process of collaborative school self-review offers a powerful means of arriving at evaluative conclusions and recommendations for subsequent action which can not be overlooked.

Bohm identifies three basic conditions that are necessary for such dialogue:

1. all participants must "suspend" their assumptions, literally to hold them "as if suspended before us";
2. all participants must regard one another as colleagues;
3. there must be a "facilitator" who "holds the context" of dialogue." (Senge, op cit, 243)

The "suspension of all assumptions" in the team situation allows team members to "see" their own assumptions more clearly because they can be held up and contrasted with each others assumptions. In this way the team learns new and shared meanings and collective understandings about their workplace, the problems it presents, and ways of solving them.

Aspinwall et al (1992, 114) have described a number of common problems associated with group review processes including what they have termed *group ensemble*. Failure of the group as a whole to establish some sort of agreement about its identity and its reason for being may result from a lack of motivation on the part of group members because of a feeling of having the process thrust upon them and that it does not meet personal needs and values. This, together with a feeling of lack of common purpose can lead to a sense of alienation and purposelessness which in turn may lead to a

collaborative sabotage of the process. According to Aspinwall et al (op cit, 117) "the key to successful ensemble lies in the creation of effective basic assumptions in the group. These basic assumptions are embodied in agreements about how people are going to behave in relation to one another." Such assumptions and agreements are aspects of the group *culture*. For Aspinwall et al, a suggested solution to dysfunctional group ensemble is the use of "leadership" in "setting the conditions for decent membership of the group in the relation to the avoidance of collusive politeness, the development of creativity as a basic assumption, and the placing of a proper value on the strengths that different people bring to the group." Following the work of Belbin (1981) the fulfilment of a number group roles are seen as necessary conditions for effective group work:

- to orchestrate the group's personal resources towards its task;
- to drive and shape the work of the group;
- to generate lots of ideas for the group;
- to do solid reliable work for the group
- to create and maintain harmony in the group;
- to get the group to complete its task on time;
- to keep a check on the group's progress and achievements;
- to look for the resources for the group." (Aspinwall et al, 117-118, after Belbin op cit).

The role of leadership in school self-review situations is commented upon by a number of respondents to the survey of current practice. The principal in particular is seen as a key figure in ensuring implementation is effective and the programme is able to be sustained in an on-going manner. The principal's role in developing a supportive culture for school self-review was seen as important. While decision making about school self-review was seen as being more effective if it was shared with staff (and on fewer instances, the Board of Trustees), the task of initiating and sustaining a review programme depended upon the leadership skills of the principal.

Keiny and Dreyfus (1993) report on an evaluation project in which researchers operated in partnership with the staff of a school through a process of *reflective dialogue*. Such a process allows practitioners to modify their perception of the situations and to reframe their knowledge (Schon, 1983). For Keiny and Dreyfus such reflective dialogue "can only take place between *partners* whose contributions are truly complementary." (op cit: 282).

Two preconditions exist: (1) The practitioners need to be experienced in the subject of the evaluation, and have access to data which can be used as a basis for dialogue; and, (2) the researchers, as well as the practitioners, have become sensitized to their own preconceptions.

The purpose of the researcher's interpretation was not to improve their own theories but to help teachers reflect on their actions and to better understand the link between their behaviour and their assumptions, or beliefs. By helping teachers become aware of, and analyse, their *own evaluation* findings the researchers helped them to reframe their expectations and conclusions. From such a reconceptualisation the staff are empowered to make second order changes aimed at further improvement. Keiny and Dreyfus maintain that although such a process involves external agents it is a process of *self-evaluation* because the activity "starts from the needs of the school staff, involves them in implementation and the evaluation of their actions, and ends up with the staff being able to make its own decisions.(op cit: 293).

Reflective collaboration and dialogue are powerful tools of self-review. They take the learnings of individuals and groups about perceived states of school activities, the underlying assumptions and values which control them, and allow for collective judgement and redirection to be made. Although such collective re-learning and re-directing draws on the learning of individuals, organisational learning is not the same as individual learning. As Argyris and Schon (1978, 9) have suggested:

"It is clear that organisational learning is not the same as individual learning, even when individuals who learn are members of the organisation. There are too many cases in which organisations know less than their members. There are even cases in which the organisation cannot seem to learn what everybody knows."

Unless collaborative learning is fostered in a supportive non-coercive situation it is unlikely to result in true culturally based change. Seymour Sarason (1991, 50-51) has pointed out that despite vast sums of money having been poured into school systems in the past twenty-five years, educational outcomes have not noticeably improved. He points out that the problem is not simply lack of resource but "one of bureaucratic tradition and style in which those directly or indirectly affected by an educational policy did not have a voice in formulating that policy." By broadening the power base of school systems to include a genuine participation "new participants, new ideas, a greater willingness to depart from stifling tradition would be the fruits of new power alignments." Sarason warns, however, that altering the powerbase will in itself not automatically bring about improved educational outcomes.

What is missing is a legitimate process for rational discourse which unmask such cultural assumptions, challenge them in a power neutral (or at least "suspended") context, and allows for their reconstruction in ways which lead to improved practice. By providing structures and facilitating opportunities for dialogue of the type

envisaged by Habermas, Bohm and Senge, a collaborative process of school self-review is likely to offer real chances for schools to develop in ways which are based on true cultural and socially sustainable change.

Without some deliberate effort to challenge the status quo, schools, (which are typically conservative in nature), are unlikely to initiate fundamental (radical) change from within, but on the other hand, as Sirotnik and Oakes (1986, 17) point out, equally unlikely is the prospect of change to other than trivial matters as the result of external pressures. In other words, the culture of the typically conservative school acts to resist internally instigated change just as passionately as it defends itself from external change.

Sirotnik and Oakes (op cit, 20) have pointed out that the idea of *critical inquiry* is not solely influenced by *critical/dialectical* methods but that it requires "a reasonable integration and application" of its sometime methodological rivals: the *empirical analytic* and *naturalistic/phenomenological* approaches or "modes". Such an eclectic view may not satisfy the purists, but it does offer a practical theoretical perspective for school self-review. It would also seem to overcome many of the resourcing problems associated with a techno-scientific approach and which concerned the majority of respondents to the survey.

Rather than discard the logical empirical dimension altogether however, as some advocates of critical evaluation tend to suggest or infer, Sirotnik and Oakes recognise the value of developing the "empirical database" of the school and using it as a basis for "interpretation, understanding, and normative critique." (Op cit, 32.) Such data gathering is "exploratory" or descriptive rather than "confirmatory" or seeking to establish proof or judgement. It seeks to build a wide reaching comprehensive view of the school context or, as Parlett and Hamilton (1972) term it, the "learning milieu" and includes social and cultural elements as well as student learning outcome data. It is a broad brush empirical overview, built on over time to give a dynamic perspective. Such a database is also collectively developed building a common shared view from the aggregation of data within and across groups about contextual features. (Sirotnik & Oakes, op cit, 33-34). Such an approach is "illuminative", bringing forth new views of "the way things are" and preparing the way for the other modes of inquiry. This approach to school self-review would leave the way free for schools to develop a data base within their financial means, and in line with their own perceptions of data need, rather than in line with some pre-determined standards of empirical competence.

The naturalistic/phenomenological mode of inquiry also has a part to play in an eclectic approach such as that suggested by Sironik and Oakes. Naturalistic methodology is utilised to provide a depth of understanding through the interpretations placed on the data gathered at the empirical level by the participants in the school context. Individuals contribute by "valuing of experiences under scrutiny, making judgements about the intrinsic worth of phenomena, and assessing their importance in relation to other ends." (Sironik & Oakes, op cit, 35) By sharing and examining each others' perceptions of the issues arising from the exploratory empirical analytic mode, participants are able to gain greater understanding of what is held in common and what is contentious. By setting aside taken for granted assumptions, and suspending judgement, those involved in the context are able to gain deeper, and hopefully clearer, understanding of the various meanings which constitute the totality of the context. Such understanding is essential if change to the fundamental belief systems which govern the action of individuals in the context is to take place. It is change at this level which will allow subsequent change for improvement in the way things are done in the school.

If the naturalistic/phenomenological mode took us "beyond the facts" and illuminated depths of meaning, it is the critical/dialectical mode of inquiry which looks beyond fact and perception and into the moral dimension: into the fundamental evaluative question of "*whose interests are being served?*" If we are concerned about improving schools in the best interests of students, (and few would question such a mission for school self-review - certainly not the respondents in the present research), it is fundamental questions such as this which must become the focus of our endeavours. These "interests", and the forces which affect them, extend beyond the school gate and if real change is to be made "in the interests of" then a critical self-reflective knowledge both of the culture of the school (its social, cultural and educational dimensions), and of the outside social and political forces which influence the way things are done in the school is necessary.

For Sironik and Oakes (and others) a critical approach to inquiry goes beyond an awareness by participants of the restraints acting on them in the here and now. It also has an emancipatory function in a more global sense, seeking to cultivate "the best in all human beings so they may create a just society." (op cit, 37.) This is essentially an educative ambition and one, therefore, which has little difficulty in being embraced by education practitioners in their daily work.

The critical/dialectic mode of inquiry involves unconstrained discourse (discussion and dialogue) as discussed earlier in relation to the work of Habermas and Bohm, and, according to Sironik and Oakes, "on a belief in the potential of groups to reach a justified consensus" (op cit 37.) Such consensus about the "truth" of current practice and decision-making alternatives (- "evaluations" if you like), would come from the collective self-reflection and critical inquiry of those involved in the school context (students, teachers, administrators, Board of Trustees members, parents) **if** such discourse was able to be held in a situation characterised *as much as possible* by "free exploration, honest exchange, and non-manipulative discussion" (dialogue) "of existing and deliberately generated knowledge in light of critical questions..." (ibid, 39).

Because the critical/dialectic mode of inquiry is based upon discourse, the competent use of language in a social (group) situation is essential to critical inquiry.

"Competence" in this sense refers to "a mutual sharing of understanding, trust, and active engagement in the process of change." (ibid, 39), or in Habermas' terms "...the mastery of an ideal speech situation" (1970, 376). Such mastery would involve competence in four conditional communicative skill areas:

1. *communicative* speech acts: all participants must be equally able to initiate and perpetuate discourse;
2. *constative* speech acts: all participants must be free to make or challenge statements, explanations, interpretations and justifications;
3. *representative* speech acts: all participants are able to freely, truthfully, and sincerely able to express their attitudes, feelings, intentions etc. to make their 'inner nature' transparent to others;
4. *regulative* speech acts: all speakers are able to command and to oppose, to permit and to forbid, etc. (after McCarthy, 1973):

Aligned to these properties of communicative competency, Habermas proposes four *validity claims* which he claims can only become explicit, and capable of consensual resolution, in a situation where such competency exists.

- "1. *Comprehensibility*. Utterances must be understood; misunderstandings must be clarified, exemplified, illuminated, etc. before further communication can transpire.
2. *Factuality*. All available and mutually recognised pertinent information must support the truth of utterances; this can often involve a form of dialectical argument and counter-argument.
3. *Sincerity*. The speaker must be truthful and the hearer must trust the intentions of the speaker; both parties show good faith through their actions.
4. *Justifiability*. The rightness or righteousness of utterances must be recognised by all parties as not only appropriate or legitimate for the speaker but, more important, appropriate relative to a commonly accepted value system;" (Sironik and Oakes, op cit, 42-43).

The combination of these two sets of conditions offers a powerful, if ideal, theoretical base for the practice of school self-review so long as we accept that such an ideal is just that: an ideal to be sought rather than a practical model for action. It does, however, allow us to "anticipate" the ideal and strive for the "best possible" situation we can achieve. By structuring school self-review practices in a way which allows us to anticipate or envisage the ideal we can create as close a realisation of the "ideal" as possible, hopefully without compromising the validity of the ideals beyond a point where the ultimate best interests of students are jeopardised. The standards and disciplines applied are moral however, rather than purely empirical.

The critical social theory of Habermas can be made even more useful if, following Sironik and Oakes, some of the ideas of Freire (1973) are also adopted into a theory for practice of school self-review. Freire is concerned that teachers and others will become "anesthetized" by technical assistance paradigms of educational change and innovation leaving them acritical and naive in the face of their educational-social context. This tendency is certainly appears evident in New Zealand schools today as teachers, students, parents and others become overwhelmed by the on-going administrative and curriculum changes imposed from without. The scale of current continual and radical change does not allow teaching staff (let alone students, board members and parents) the opportunity to stand back and critically appraise its impacts and consequences unless very deliberate opportunities are made available for this. It is a suggestion of this study that such opportunities should become routinized aspects of school self-review.

To counter the tendency for people to become overwhelmed by the technical and scientific Paulo Freire suggests that a "truly emphatic relationship of cooperative exploration" (Sironik & Oakes, op cit, 48) of work, expectations, beliefs, fears, and so forth should be entered into. Freire offers a number of "elements" of this educative process which he has termed "problematization" in which "the educator" works collaboratively with "the educatees", each taking the role of the other as teacher-learner and learner-teacher. This view has parallels with both the "communities of learners" idea of Carr and Kemmis, and with the "team learning" scenario discussed by Senge.

For Freire (1973, 154) the process of problematization "implies a critical return to action. It starts from action and returns to it. The process of problematization is basically someone's reflection on a content which results in an act, or reflection on the act itself in order to act better together with others within a framework of reality."

The elements of the problemization process include:

1. *Tuning In* or coming to know the setting context through investigation and dialogue with those who are part of it;
2. *Generative Themes*. Ideas or perceptions which constitute and guide human beings' view of the world and the relationship they have with it, such as ideas, concepts, hopes, doubts, and values, as well as challenges and obstacles which Freire refers to as "*limit-situations*". Limit situations incorporate themes which form the content of transformational projects. In a school self-review situation generative themes and limit situations will be reflected in the focus areas. They are in many ways similar to what Parlett and Hamilton (1972, 27) refer to as "salient issues" emerging out of initial inquiry to become points of focus.
3. *Decodification, Codification, and Transformative Action*. *Decoding* is the analysis of the reality of a situation, both in the identification of the theme or situation in the first place, and later in analysing it in itself. These processes are at the heart of Freire's approach and utilise all three of the inquiry modes referred to by Sironik and Oakes: data gathering (empirical-analytical); reflection and interpretation (naturalistic/phenomenological); and, social and historical analysis (critical-dialectical). *Coding* is a process akin to synthesis, which generates an abstracted but concrete representation of a dominant generative theme or limit situation. *Transformative actions* are the actions taken in an attempt to overcome the barriers of limit situations.

An eclectic approach to critical inquiry which draws on empirical approaches to data gathering and analysis, naturalistic/phenomenological strategies for illuminating depths of meaning, and, critical-dialectical processes for analysing that meaning in terms of judgement, mirrors the type of processes an inquiry based school self-review approach should take. Such an approach cannot however claim to be pure theory in action. Certainly there are immediate problems for purists as the application of critical theory in a technical manner presents a "limit situation" in itself. However to *make use* of any theory can be regarded as a technical act. Any action for any purpose is a technical act. It is not the fact that we are practicing a technology, but rather the "true" purpose(s) for which the technology is being used that is the moral issue. If school self-review can be utilised to serve the best educational interests of students, without jeopardising more universal interests, it does not seem unreasonable to include the powerful concepts of the critical theorists to this end along with other appropriate methods.

The key to achieving this "best possible" non-hegemonic state is awareness and critique of the wider social and historical aspects as a built in element of the review.

Review processes should ensure that participants reach evaluative consensus *after* becoming aware of the implications of current and proposed actions. For this to happen in practical terms, such a mode of operating must become an integral everyday day part of the school culture at one level, but *also*, at a technical level, be consciously structured into an agreed formal review setting. The process itself should provide safeguards against unjust dominance or influence and the mission of interests kept to the fore. Ivan Snook's (1993, 9) reminder on the nature of assessment is equally pertinent in relation to school self-review: "In education, ends and means can never be separated...*to assess is to pronounce on both means and ends.*" We must keep in mind that the means (of review) is itself part of the review context and therefore part of the end (review outcomes).

In other words: "Yes, the use of critical theory in this way *does* "reduce" it to a technical level, but for those of us expected to put theory into practice that *is* the level we have to operate at." What we can hope to do, however, is to build into our techniques strategies for ensuring all involved are aware of all dimensions of meaning, and free to critically appraise situations (including the review process itself) in the short term educational and longer term socio-political interests of all participants. This, in essence, is the mode of evaluation which school self-review should adopt, if it is to find truth in a free and just manner: in an ethically and morally responsible manner.

A further idea which prevails in much of the literature on school self-review is that of reviewing as a continuous ongoing improvement orientated process. The on-going nature of a review process was also a key feature of the reviewing surveyed in this study. The idea of *constant improvement* is one of the principles underpinning Total Quality Management (TQM) as promoted through the work of W. Edwards Deming (1986). For Deming "improvement" means "better allocation of human effort. It includes selection of people, their placement, their training..." and "statistical controls through study of records." By reviewing statistical records of what is happening in the school and analysing methods and processes we are able to adjust and improve our efforts. (Schmoker & Wilson, 1993, 12.) Improvement from the perspective of TQM can be thought of as the reduction of waste or the addition of value. Schmoker and Wilson (op cit, 12-13) suggest that from the educator's standpoint "waste includes time spent on unfocused, unproductive activities or less-effective teaching strategies" and that adding value includes "whatever accelerates, engages, or more efficiently promotes learning. It requires regular team discussion and analysis of every significant process and method that affects outcomes and results."

Central to the principle of constant improvement is team analysis. In the constant search for better ways of doing things, the people involved must be given time to meet together to think and talk about their work. The concept of on-going monitoring and self-review by those involved in schools is one means of structuring time and expectation for such collaborative group work. This includes team analysis of statistical data, but, as Deming has stressed, this data "must never, ever be used to place blame on an employee or group of employees. It is only to provide useful knowledge with which to consider training needs, to adjust methods and processes, and to improve the way things are done." (Schmoker & Wilson, op cit, 15). This principle raises questions related to the use of school self-review findings for teacher appraisal. A number of schools in the present study reported that their self-review programmes were linked to teacher appraisal. Some published models of review also include teacher evaluation or appraisal as an adjunct to the review process.

School self-evaluation (or review) presents a number of ethical methodological considerations which should be addressed by those involved. Helen Simons (1984) has listed a number of principles and procedures which may help overcome or avoid such difficulties, and which provide safeguards both to the privacy of individuals, and the credibility of the evaluation, if made explicit to all involved. The following is a summary of the principles:

1. *Impartiality:*

- (a) awareness of bias and acceptance of checks and criticism;
- (b) protection against cooption by interest groups;
- (c) gain external credibility to strengthen internal acceptance as well as to demonstrate its worth to outsiders.

2. *Confidentiality/Control:* Much of what is taken for granted in normal day-to-day practice is open in self-evaluation to critique. This may be threatening to some staff. Information that is private to the individual should be governed by confidentiality, and control over its release remain in the hands of participants.

3. *Negotiation:* Negotiation is a central principle in democratic evaluation and helps to ensure that a balance is maintained between the "public's right to know" and the individual's "right to be discreet". Negotiation does not lead to a "watered down" account. Rather it: encourages people to take part; gives them room to contribute equally and fairly; improves the impartiality of the account by inviting checks on biases; and, improves the reliability and validity.

4. *Collaboration*: However harmonious relationships in a school appear to be, however democratic the organization, trust does not automatically exist between professionals. It has to be created. The principle of collaboration ensures that teachers begin to share their work with others while the other principles give them control over how and at what pace they do this.

5. *Accountability*: "Schools should take the initiative for further ways of reporting to the public by first accounting to themselves. By opening up their own practices to internal criticism and documenting their perspectives and aspirations on issues central to their development, teachers can facilitate self-reflection within their own school. In so doing they might produce accounts which meet outside accountability demands." (after Simons, 1984, 125-129)

Such principles remain pertinent to the practice of school self-review in the New Zealand context today. Such guidelines are important if school self-review is to be a credible means of meeting dual purposes of improvement and accountability.

SECTION 4

School Self-review as Collaborative Reflection

A lack of skills and time to carry out review activities was frequently reported by respondents to the survey as a feature of school self-reviewing in New Zealand schools today. This restraint has also been noted by various writers as a problem in self-review initiatives elsewhere in the world. It is the position of this study that such claims are based in part on an overwilling acceptance of positivist methodology in the hope that its inevitable non-affordability will preserve professional self interest from the perceived threat of accountability. An alternative approach is offered which bases its validity on moral rather than purely empirical standards or ethics.

The everyday knowledge of non-specialists is tacit, we know we have such knowledge because our actions demonstrate it, but it is tacit in the sense that we are unable to clearly verbalise it. Schon (1993: 49) suggests that the "workaday life of the professional also depends on tacit knowing-in-action... Even when he makes conscious use of the research-based theories and techniques, he is dependent on tacit recognitions, judgements, and skilful performances." This does not mean that teachers (for example) do not think about what they are doing (even while they are doing it). When some unexpected event occurs, (a teaching strategy performs better or worse than expected for example), teachers do try to analyse the event, or, to use Schon's words "turn thought back on action and the knowing which is implicit in action."(ibid, 50).

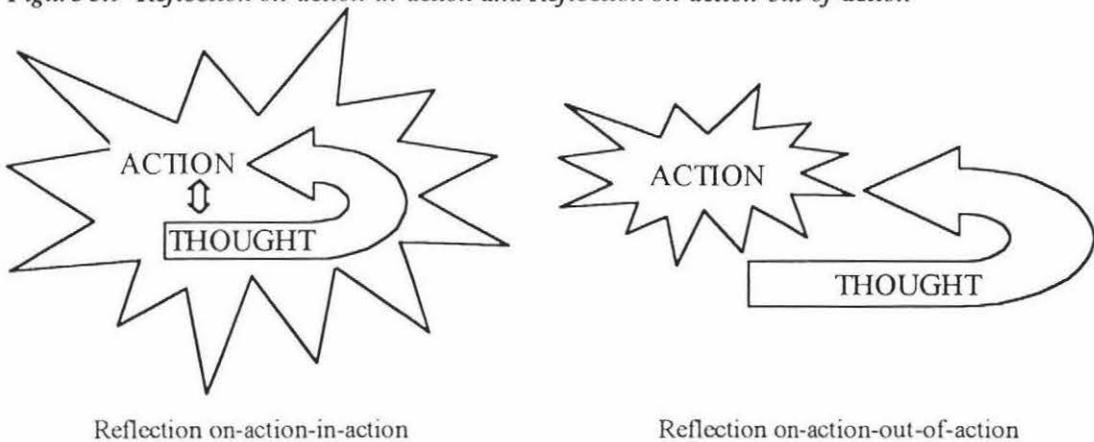
For Schon, reflection on knowing-in-action goes together with reflection on the information at hand. As the teacher reflects on the unexpected outcome of the teaching strategy and tries to make sense of it, reflection on the understandings implicit in the teaching action are reflected upon. Such reflective activity seems to offer some meaning for the process of "review".

Individuals review their own actions and the actions of those they are interacting with. In the case of the classroom teacher it is their interactions with and of students, colleagues, administrators and parents that counts as everyday thought-in-action. By "turning thought back on action" teachers reflect on what has happened, how well the teaching/learning activity went, what possible reasons for the success or lack of

success might be, and, most significantly: what all this might mean for future teaching and learning events.

Much of this teacher reflection is carried out "on the trot" or, "in-action". To review something is a similar process: turning thought back on itself; to reflect it back; to have another look and think about it in retrospect. Thus individual reflection for the busy classroom teacher is typically *on-action-in-action*. Much teacher self-review can be thought of as individual teachers reflecting *on action in action*, supplemented by further reflection "out-of-action" (eg in the car on the way home). Reflection both in and out of action is important to the improvement of the individual teacher's work.

Figure 5.9 Reflection on-action-in-action and Reflection on-action-out-of-action

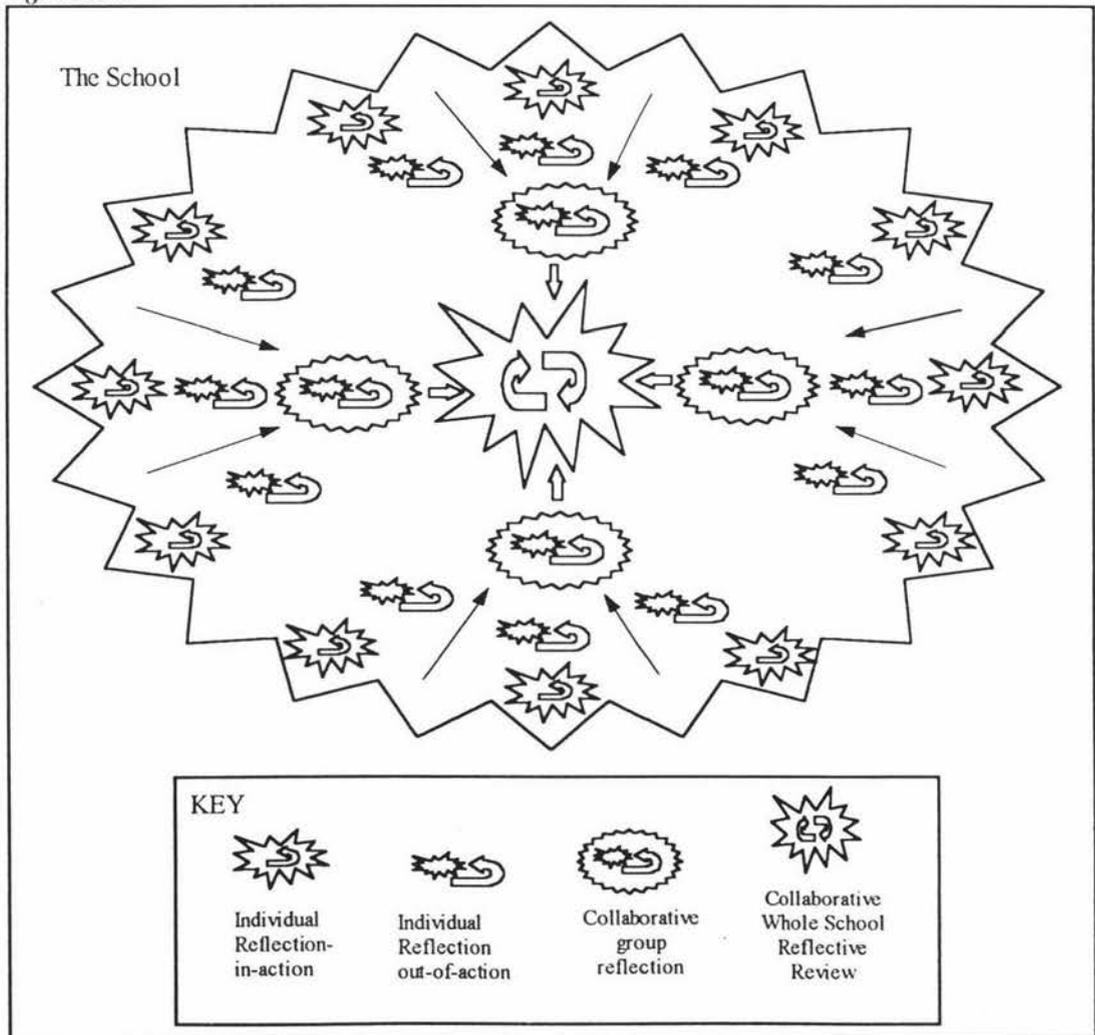


School self-review can be thought of as the *collaborative* reflection by all participants in school actions. It is more than simply bringing together or aggregating the outcomes of individual reflection, although this contributes to it. School self-review is a dynamic interactive reflective action in itself. It involves the school, in group situations, reflecting self-critically through free and open discourse in a climate of mutual trust or empathy. The outcome of such collaborative reflection is organisational learning (as opposed to individual personal learning) and a shared commitment to collaborative and individual action and further reflection. Just as individual reflection-in-action is stimulated by surprise, collective reflective action needs stimulation. In the collaborative situation, stimulation can arise from collegial critique so long as it is allowed to emerge in a free and emphatic climate.

Collaborative reflective school self-review is more than ticking off a series of checklists (although checklists may help provide some of the subject matter of the review). It is the meaningful re-consideration of past action: the bringing of meaning to past action and of the understandings implicit in this action. It involves the process of bringing such understandings to the surface and making them explicit through

collaborative critical and self-critical group discourse in a manner which generates insights of future action. For collaborative action to do this it must bring into question not only what happened and the assumptions of practice underlying that, but also, what was intended to happen and the assumptions of value underlying those intentions. Neither the events that happened, nor the intentions, are evaluated (compared) at a taken-for-granted level: both are opened up through collaborative discourse (dialogue) to a restructuring of meaning and a clarification of values based upon what is learnt in the process. From new meaning and clarified values come reframed intentions for new action. Reflective reviewing is more than just reflecting on a taken-for-granted image of past events. It involves examining the features of that image and reorganising its components, and reviewing related events in the light of this re-organisation to reshape knowledge itself.

Figure 5.10



A Collaborative Reflective Model of School Self-review

At the individual level the classroom teacher almost continually reflects on-action-in-action, and also, (somewhat less frequently,) reflects-on-action-out-of-action. At the group (or teaching/planning team/syndicate/department) level reflection becomes collaborative, drawing on both the tacit knowledge-in-action and the assumptions underlying that knowledge of the individual teachers in the group. The group helps make explicit and communicable (and therefore accountable) the very valuable "professional" or "practical" knowledge, judgements, underlying assumptions and values otherwise unavailable from a strictly empirical or positivist approach.

While some may criticise such an approach as "technocratic" or "managerial" this is so only to the extent that the overall process is subject to autocratic leadership or control. Democratic leadership and self-control are more likely to predominate in any school culture which meets the prerequisite conditions for a true collaborative reflective approach to operate. Certainly the approach can be described as "technical": any applied approach is technical.

Such a description of school self-review draws upon a range of the theoretical insights discussed in this chapter and in Chapter Two. It also draws, however, from the practical experiences of the principals who responded to the survey presented in Chapter Four, and from the personal experience of the writer. The practical implications of such a notion of school self-review are explored in the following chapter.

Chapter Six

From Theory to Practice

Guidelines and Considerations

Having concluded that school self-review is best conceptualised as a programme of evaluative events aimed primarily at school improvement but which is also expected (by outsiders if not insiders) to contribute towards public accountability, what shape should such a programme have, and what are some of the principles, assumptions and practical guidelines which are central to a practical approach to school self review in New Zealand primary and intermediate schools? This chapter seeks to move some way towards answering this question given the conclusions drawn from the preceding chapters.

Those conclusions provide us with the following profile:

School self-review is:

- a programme of collaborative self-reflective and self-evaluative activities;
- planned strategically to optimise its effectiveness within the resource constraints of schools and the imprecision of available or affordable empirical methodology;
- integrated into the on-going everyday instructional and administrative activity of the school;
- based on trustworthy information, which is collected and analysed by participants with or without support and assistance from outside professional facilitators or consultants;
- reliant, also however, upon the knowledge-in-action of teachers and others;
- conducted through critical discourse in situations which strive to attain the conditions of "ideal speech."
- aimed primarily at organisational learning for school improvement;
- expected to contribute towards internal and external accountability;
- not just the business of the board of trustees, principal and staff but should also involve the students, parents, and members of the wider school community;
- responsive (within an over all strategic approach) to emerging needs and issues;

To successfully develop and implement such a notion of school self-review, schools must develop conditions supportive of:

- free, open and honest communication amongst all participants;
- the uncovering, clarification and redefinition of values, expectations and intentions;
- systematic, on-going, functionally integrated but manageable data collection processes;
- illuminative, progressive, participative, and responsive inquiry dedicated to the discovery of truth and social justice;
- collaborative analysis, reflection and critique;
- democratic, culturally sensitive and morally just leadership;
- commitment to personal learning and self-improvement action;
- the development of a shared vision for improvement;
- the formulation of a consensually determined plan of development action;

Each of these "conditions" suggests particular treatments or strategies for practice:

(1) Free, open and honest communication

Because the very essence of evaluation involves expression and comparison in a social inter-personal context, the ability of participants to use communicative social skills is a central pre-requisite to collaborative evaluation. Not only must participants be capable of effective receptive and expressive language, but they must also be able to understand, recognise and appropriately respond to the social, political, cultural, and psychological milieu of the group contexts within which the collective evaluations occur. Becoming conscious of these sorts of realities is essential if participants are to be able to freely, openly and "honestly" take part in the type of dialogue necessary to reach consensus, not only in forming a commonly held perception of what the "state" of things is, but also what the ideal state of things should be, and what needs to be done to achieve it (or at least to move closer towards it.)

Such skills can be fostered and developed over time, as long as those in positions of power are genuinely able to "suspend" power relations. Suspension in this way needs to be gradual and incremental and will be dependent on the building of trust. Initially conscious suspension is eventually replaced by a more "automatic" non-conscious suspension which in turn, through repetitive use, eventually becomes a norm of the

situation. That is, it becomes the culturally expected and usual way for power holders to act in collaborative discourse situations. Once established in this way, and as long as genuine conditions of trust and justice remain, collaborative review situations have less need for facilitation or contrived strategies. Such an ideal situation can not be taken for granted however and requires conscious maintenance, as well as enabling newcomers to become part of the established group "way".

There is a thin line between managerial manipulation or "contrived" collegiality and genuine collaboration on the one side, and between genuine collaboration and defensive professional conservatism on the other side. Both extremes are likely to be counterproductive to the types of communicative activity needed to honestly and freely describe and critique the collective work and worth of the school. The challenge for school leadership is to move the norm towards a central position in a manner which is in itself morally and socially just. By modelling and making explicit, honest, fair and self-critical evaluative practices, the culturally facilitative (rather than managerially manipulative or professionally conservative) school leader will help bring about the sorts of cultural and social changes needed to meet the communicative conditions needed for effective school self-review.

(2) Values, expectations and intentions

One of the main needs for communicative competence within a collaborative self-evaluation context is the need for participants to uncover, clarify, and, as necessary, redefine the values, expectations and intentions existing in the context. Before comparison and subsequent judgement can take place, the participants need to come to some consensus as to the values (and their explicit expression such as aims, goals, objectives and priorities) which they share and upon which their collective judging will be based. Through collaborative processes, all involved in making judgement need to become aware of the often rather implicit values which are consciously and unconsciously held as exemplars of worth. As well as being possibly aware of what these value positions are, and the differences in positions held by individuals and groups within the school, seemingly similar positions need to be critically examined to identify underlying interpretive differences.

School self-review programmes need, therefore, to provide opportunities for making explicit the implicit, identifying ambiguity and inconsistency, and generally raising the

consciousness of participants as to the divergent value positions held by people associated with the school. Once these have been identified, and understandings of their meanings agreed, it is more likely that progress can be made towards an agreed consensual statement of "what counts as worthy" for a particular evaluand to be arrived at and become available as a basis of comparison with what the "current state of things" is. Working in groups, people can use a range of activities which help with identification and examination, starting with explicit written statements of aims, goals and objectives and examining them in terms of how closely they reflect the feelings and views of members of the group, and how well they seem to serve the perceived interests of individuals and groups in the school. Existing statements may need re-working following critical examination and the question is then raised as to whether the prior statements or the revised statements are used as the basis for comparison. There would actually seem to be much to be gained from judging in terms of both prior and revised positions as the difference between prior and present interpretations can be relevant in itself as evaluative data. The reasons why value positions appear to have changed (even very subtly) are in themselves illuminative in that they may well signal salient issues for further investigation.

(3) Data collection

As well as becoming conscious of, and collaboratively clarifying, underlying values and other explicit and implicit "cultural knowledge", a programme of school self-review needs to provide a systematic method for collecting data across the agreed scope and focus of the programme. A wide range of essentially empirical methods are available to help build such a data base. The design and implementation of such methods does however require some training on the part of those involved, or as some approaches suggest, such expertise may be "purchased" from an outside consultant. However, most New Zealand schools are unlikely to have the funds to employ consultants or professional data collectors on a large scale. Such involvement is more likely to be aimed at the training of school staff and board members to become competent in the use of some of the more straight forward techniques.

The development of an on-going system for the routine collection of some types of data is required to provide a picture of (for example) differences in learning outcomes over time. Regular recording of assessment data should be carried out as part of the everyday teaching/learning process rather than carried out just at a period review time. While the focus of review may be periodic, the collection of data should be on-going

and cumulative. The use of computer programmes such as MUSAC's "Progress Monitor" and "Curriculum Framework" should be considered to collect data in a form which lends itself to analysis when needed within the school's cycle of review focus.

(4) Illuminative, progressive, participative, and responsive inquiry dedicated to the discovery of truth and social justice

School self-review should follow a progressive on-going process of inquiry which seeks to illuminate new understandings and perceptions rather than simply check findings against some set of static criteria. In this way self-review activities uncover and follow "lines" of inquiry in a responsive manner, challenging the traditional and expected standards as much as using them as models for evaluative comparison. Such a mode of operation seeks its legitimacy in truth and justice, measuring school outcomes in terms of ethical rather than purely empirical criteria. The methodologies used need to reflect this and be flexible enough to allow participants to respond in an open-ended rather than prescribed manner. While school self-review programmes will continue to need structure and purpose, this must not result in a narrow approach blinkered by the restraints of pure science.

(5) Collaborative Analysis, Reflection and Critique

Central to any process of self evaluation, personal or collective, is some sort of analysis of what is "known" about the situation and the situations aspired condition, reflection about these and some sort of self-critical appraisal or judgement of worth. In the case of school self-review this process is collaborative.

The people who do things in the school work together to analyse the information they have about what is happening and what was agreed should be happening and why it should be happening. Various group approaches are documented in the literature on ways and means of performing such analysis. (See for example: Schollum & Ingram, (1991); Sutton, (1994); Otago Region School Trustees' Association (ORSTA), (1995); Wilcox, (1992).) In using the strategies and exercises outlined in such books and resource kits, the key is to allow the dialogue emerging from the interaction they generate, to take place in an environment as close as possible to the condition of ideal speech (Habermas) discussed in the previous chapter. If true collaborative discourse and reflection is to result from semi-formal exercises (such as "Force Field Analysis" (Sutton op cit, 29) or the collaborative analysis of data collected on checklists such as

those offered by ORSTA (op cit), then it must operate within a genuinely established collaborative culture which provides, as a matter of course, a non-coercive group setting which encourages free and frank exchange aimed at truth and justice in the best interests of all. Only from analytical, reflective, and critical dialogue in these conditions will self-review move beyond soon to be forgotten mechanical form filling and "warm fuzzy" game playing, to a collective commitment for agreed change.

The building of a genuine collaborative culture which permeates all of school life must be regarded as a prerequisite for successful school self-review.

(6) Democratic, Culturally Sensitive and Morally Just Leadership

As in all aspects of school life, the nature of leadership and its role in the process of school self-review is an important consideration. In particular the leadership role of the principal is crucial to the successful implementation and development of an on-going programme of self-review in schools. While the official regulations (Ministry of Education, 1993b) and much of the official rhetoric (for example: Education Review Office, 1994) firmly points to "The Board" as the responsible body, the results of the survey presented in this study (Chapter 4) clearly indicate the central role of the principal and teaching staff in leading self-review.

While leadership of the review programme is more likely to come from the principal, it is important that such leadership is democratic and facilitative rather than autocratic and "controlling". The principal's role should be very much one of guiding and empowering the process rather than controlling and influencing the outcomes. In terms of contributing to collaborative dialogue the principal (and other senior staff) must endeavour to suspend as much as possible their personal and positional influence on others and ensure the processes used, allow for free participation by all individuals and groups of stakeholders.

Such a role requires considerable personal skill on the part of the principal who must be aware of and sensitive towards the cultural, social and political context in which the review is operating. The principal must be well connected to the realities of individuals and groups, keeping closely in touch with their perceptions, values, concerns, and ambitions. Leadership of the review must also be morally and ethically competent, with real and genuine effort made to ensure free and just participation which

recognises the interests of all concerned: students, parents, board members, Ministry of Education, staff and management. As with collaborative analysis, reflection and critique, it is not so much *what* is done as *how* it is done which is important for democratic, sensitive and just leadership.

(7) Commitment to Personal Learning and Self-improvement Action

Self-reviewing is about learning. At a personal level it requires individuals to self-evaluate what their own contributions are towards the school's business and to strive towards improvement. Such personal learning and action is more likely to succeed when supported collaboratively through collective learning situations and improvement action. Collaborative personal learning also contributes towards collaborative organisational learning where the school as an organisation changes its collective or cultural way of doing things. School self-review, as a major means of facilitating cultural change within the school, is therefore capable of being a powerful and empowering means of school improvement.

A commitment to personal learning and improvement both contributes towards and grows from a school culture which values and fosters inquiry, the search for truth, the building of knowledge, and the use of that knowledge justly in the best interests of all through improved action. By valuing small scale personal learning and improvement actions, the school will strengthen its commitment to learning and improvement at the institutional and cultural level, which in turn builds the sustenance and encouragement required for further personal commitment. Personal and organisational learning therefore operate symbiotically to bring about cultural change through learning.

(8) The Development of a Shared Vision for Improvement

As well as learning together about what is going on in the school, the school community needs to work together to clarify and develop in an on-going way, a dynamic vision of what the ideal should be. A shared understanding of what *should* be going on and *why*, must emerge and develop out of the process of organisational learning. School self-review both depends upon and helps to refine and propagate the vision. The vision provides review with an ultimate standard of comparison for its

evaluative functions, while review critiques and seeks to clarify the vision (and the values and assumptions underpinning it).

Any programme of school self-review should, therefore, consciously incorporate procedures or strategies for examining the school's vision in both its explicit (publicly articulated) forms, and in the more implicit, private, taken-for-granted manifestations of "the ideal" held by people individually and collectively in the school. By deliberately, openly, honestly and freely clarifying questions such as: "what is meant by....?" and "what counts as...?", improved understandings of what the school is attempting to do and what can be gained. Aims, goals, objectives and other statements of intent can be clarified and, as necessary, restated in ways which more accurately reflect true intentions and interests. School self-review is therefore as much about improving intentions for action as it is about improving the action itself.

(9) A Consensually Determined Plan of Development Action

School self-review must lead to school improvement. Deciding what is to be done to improve various aspects of school practice is the formative outcome of school self-reviewing. While it has been argued by some that evaluation should stop short of deciding what should be done with the new knowledge it has generated, it can also be argued that deciding on recommendations is also an evaluative act and should be part of any programme of evaluation or review. School self-review as a programme of evaluation, is generally expected to make specific recommendations for improvement and therefore should be directly linked to development planning. Designers of school self-review programmes should, therefore, provide ways and means of ensuring that planners are able to access the new knowledge and judgements resulting from the review. Just as the review utilised collaborative and participatory procedures to gain knowledge and form judgements, collaborative procedures are also appropriate procedures for making consensual decisions about the use of the review outcomes. Recommendations for development actions are therefore legitimately part of the review process and strategies for forming such recommendations must be incorporated into the review design.

Conclusion

While the above "conditions" can be thought of as necessary prerequisites to successful school self-review, they can also (and more realistically) be thought of as growth points for improved self-review. Obviously a school cannot wait until such conditions exist in their ideal state before implementing a programme of review, rather these conditions should be thought of as conditions to be considered, aimed for, and developed progressively. It is through working towards these conditions, rather than waiting for them to become ideal, that the overall culture of the school will develop to a point where on-going collaborative self-reflection, critique and action becomes an established part of the everyday life of the school with accountability information a natural non-threatening by-product. School self-review is certainly not something which can be successfully introduced into schools by ministerial decree or technocratic pressure tactics. Successful implementation requires culture sensitive and socially aware inschool professional leadership, which seeks to foster the conditions necessary to allow a programme of school self-review to become the accepted way of evaluating the school for improvement purposes.

Appendix I

School Self-review: Initial Survey Questionnaire

Distributed to a total of 42 principals of primary and intermediate schools from late February until the end of March 1996.

Dear Colleague,

SCHOOL SELF-REVIEW SURVEY

Thank you very much for agreeing to help with this survey. The purposes of this initial questionnaire are:

1. To obtain an indication of the forms of school self-review currently being used, or which have been used by schools in the past.
2. To identify the reasons given by schools for undertaking school self-review.
3. To gauge the perceptions schools have of the effectiveness of their self-review schemes in achieving the purposes they have identified.
4. To gain information related to how schemes were implemented and the sorts of problems experienced.
5. To provide a base of information to help identify schools for focused interviews and questionnaires.

A Definition: For the purposes of this questionnaire the following is what is meant by the term "school self-review":

Any information-gathering and evaluative process conducted by all or some of the individuals or groups having a direct interest or involvement in the day-to-day work of the school. (Such as: students, teachers, administrators, board members, parents, other school employees.)

Selected responses to this questionnaire will be followed up with more focused interviews. These interviews will be conducted by phone, individualised faxed questionnaires, or in some cases, personally.

No schools or individuals will be identified publicly, with data being used to describe "the big picture" rather than case studies of individual schools. However, it is necessary to obtain a contact phone and/or fax number to follow up the questionnaire responses where desirable and you are asked to supply this information which will remain confidential to myself.

Please return the questionnaire in the enclosed "Free Post" envelope as soon as possible. Many thanks for your assistance.

Graeme Martyn

SECTION 1: FORMS OF SELF-REVIEW IN USE

The purpose of the questions in this section is to discover what forms of school self-review are currently being used in schools in New Zealand.

Please indicate how accurately each of the following items describes the review process used in your school by drawing a circle around one of the numbers according to the following key:

- 1 = **closely** describes a characteristic of your system;
2 = **partially** describes a characteristic of your system; or,
3 = has **no relationship** to a characteristic of your system

FREQUENCY

PLEASE CIRCLE

ONE NUMBER

- | | | | | |
|------|--|---|---|---|
| 1.10 | A brief review is carried out once a year. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.11 | A comprehensive review is carried out once every two or three years. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.12 | Reviewing is carried out at irregular intervals. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.13 | Reviewing is on-going. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.14 | Other: _____ | | | |
-

FOCUS

- | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| 1.20 | The review covers a wide a range of school activities each year. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.21 | The review covers a small number of activities. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.22 | An initial wide ranging survey is used to identify areas for more in-depth inquiry. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.23 | Areas to be focused on are planned to be covered over a number of years. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.24 | All charter goals are reviewed in depth each year. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.25 | A system of progressive refocussing is utilised to illuminate salient issues. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.26 | Other: _____ | | | |
-

WHO DECIDES WHAT IS TO BE REVIEWED ?

- 1.30 The principal decides on areas to be reviewed. 1 2 3
- 1.31 The principal and staff decide together what is to be reviewed. 1 2 3
- 1.32 The Board of Trustees decides what should be reviewed. 1 2 3
- 1.33 Parents are consulted to help identify areas for review. 1 2 3
- 1.34 Other: _____

HOW IS THE REVIEW CARRIED OUT ?

- 1.40 Student outcomes (samples of work, portfolios, etc.) are examined. 1 2 3
- 1.41 Records of student achievement are analysed. 1 2 3
- 1.42 Special assessments of student performance are made as part of the review. 1 2 3
- 1.43 The teaching/learning process is observed. 1 2 3
- 1.44 Student interviews or questionnaires are used. 1 2 3
- 1.45 Teacher interviews or questionnaires are used. 1 2 3
- 1.46 Parent interviews or questionnaires are used. 1 2 3
- 1.47 Teacher planning and evaluation is examined. 1 2 3
- 1.48 Board policies and practices are examined. 1 2 3
- 1.49 Other: _____

ANALYSIS

- | | | | | |
|------|--|---|---|---|
| 1.50 | Achievement is compared with Charter goals and objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.51 | Practice is compared with policy. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.52 | Policy and practice are compared with legislative and regulatory requirements. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.53 | Evidence is matched with pre-determined performance indicators. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.54 | Evidence is matched with achievement statements. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.55 | Patterns and trends are noted. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.56 | Areas for further inquiry are identified. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.57 | Discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups are noted. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.58 | Development priorities are identified. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 1.59 | Other: _____ | | | |
| | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | | | |
| | _____ | | | |

SECTION 2: PURPOSES OF SELF REVIEW

The questions in this section are intended to discover the various purposes for school self-review currently being used in schools in New Zealand. Please indicate how accurately each of the following descriptors describes the review process used in your school by drawing a circle around one of the numbers according to the following key:

1 = closely describes a characteristic of your system,
 2 = partially describes a characteristic of your system, or,
 3 = has no relationship to a characteristic of your system.

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE

- | | | | | |
|------|--|---|---|---|
| 2.1 | To give an indication of how well the school is delivering its curriculum. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.2 | To identify which aspects of the school's programmes are being covered well and which are not. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.3 | To discover whether or not the school is meeting legislative and regulatory requirements. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.4 | To evaluate the success the school is having in achieving its own goals and objectives. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.5 | To gather the information needed to prepare an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the school's effectiveness. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.6 | To gather information in preparation for external review or audit. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.7 | To provide teachers with feedback on how well they are performing their duties. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.8 | To provide parents with the information needed to make decisions about choice of school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.9 | To meet the <i>National Administration Guidelines</i> requirement that the Board of Trustees "maintain an on-going programme for self-review". | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.10 | To provide information for the community generally which indicates how effectively the school is using the taxpayer resources entrusted to it. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.11 | To identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

- | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| 2.12 | To improve teachers' and students' knowledge of how well they are achieving their teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.13 | To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is achieving it's teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.14 | To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is implementing it's management and administrative policies and indicate directions for future policy revision and procedural improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.15 | To provide positive feedback to all stakeholders on how well the school is doing in achieving its mission and signal ways and means for doing things better. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.16 | To help staff prepare a school development plan which sets development goals for the next period of time. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.17 | To assist school management in targeting resources to areas which are most in need of support. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.18 | To systematically assess student performance to identify aspects in need of improved teaching. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.19 | To provide an ongoing and systematic process of feedback to help teachers and management make the adjustments needed to improve the quality of learning in the school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

2.20

Others: _____

SECTION 3: OUTCOMES OF THE REVIEW PROCESS

The purpose of the questions in this section is to discover what tangible outcomes result from the self-review processes currently being used in schools in New Zealand. Please indicate how accurately each of the following descriptors describes the review process used in your school by drawing a circle around one of the numbers according to the following key:

- 1 = **closely** describes a characteristic of your system;
- 2 = **partially** describes a characteristic of your system, or,
- 3 = has **no relationship** to a characteristic of your system

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE

- | | | | | |
|------|---|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Review findings are published in the school's annual report. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.4 | A special review document is produced which presents the data gathered, reports on its analysis, and makes recommendations for improvement. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.5 | The school's development plan is revised to accommodate the review's recommendations. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.6 | Teacher development is planned and implemented to enable staff to make the improvements suggested by the review. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.7 | The school budget is adjusted to ensure proposed improvements are able to be resourced adequately. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.8 | Everyone receives a copy of the review report and are expected to implement those recommendations which are relevant to their sphere of work in the school. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.9 | The outcomes are filed and made available to external reviewers (for example, The Education Review Office.) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.10 | A summary of the review findings is published in (for example), the school newsletter, local newspaper, school prospectus. | 1 | 2 | 3 |

3.11 Others: _____

SECTION 4: SUCCESS OF THE PROCESS

The purpose of the questions in this section is to survey perceptions of the extent to which school-self review processes currently being used in schools in New Zealand are successful in meeting their intended purposes.

Please draw a circle around one of the numbers beside each question to indicate how successful you feel the school self-review process in your school has been:

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE

4.1 How successful do you believe your school's self-review process has been in:

1 = highly successful; 2 = usually successful;
3 = often successful; 4 = rarely successful;
5 = unsuccessful

- | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) identifying strengths ? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) identifying weaknesses ? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) establishing development priorities ? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) providing accountability information ? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4.2 How successful has the review been in leading to improved:

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| (a) teaching and learning processes; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (b) curriculum development; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (c) teacher development; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (d) administrative procedures; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (e) policy development; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (f) annual reporting; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (g) financial management; | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (h) property management ? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4.2 (cont.)

How successful has the review been in leading to improved:

1 = highly successful; 2 = usually successful;
3 = often successful; 4 = rarely successful;
5 = unsuccessful

(i) collaborative planning;	1	2	3	4	5
(j) assessment and evaluation procedures;	1	2	3	4	5
(k) community consultation;	1	2	3	4	5
(l) public relations;	1	2	3	4	5
(m) parental "choice of school" decision making?	1	2	3	4	5

4.3 How easy was the self-review process at your school to implement ?

1 2 3 4 5

(Rate 1 to 5: 1 = very easily... 5 = with extreme difficulty)

4.4 Briefly outline any difficulties experienced in the initial implementation:

4.5 Briefly outline any continuing difficulties:

SECTION 5: DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROCESS

5.1 How many years has some form of self-review been operating in your school? _____

5.2 Has the form of the review process changed significantly over that time? Yes / No

5.3 If Yes, briefly explain the ways in which it has changed:

5.4 If the process has changed, please give some of the reasons for that change:

5.5 Have the purposes for the review changed over time? Yes / No

5.6 If Yes, briefly describe how:

5.7 If the purposes have changed, please give what you believe to be the reasons for those changes:

SECTION 6: OTHER COMMENTS

6.1 Please add any additional comments you feel may help describe the form, purposes, outcomes, success or development of school self-review processes at your current school. (Please use another sheet of paper if necessary.)

6.2 Please comment on any form of school self-review you have had experience with at any other school:

6.3 Add any other comments you may like to make about school self-reviewing and its role in New Zealand schools today.

Name: _____ Institution: _____

Postal Address: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

* * * * *

**Thank you for your time and help !
PLEASE RETURN IN THE "FREEPOST" ENVELOPE AS SOON AS
POSSIBLE**

Appendix II

Survey Data Summary Sheets

Collation of responses and conversion to percentages.

SCHOOL SELF-REVIEW INITIAL QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY DATA COLLATION
 QUEST2 ME1 + ME2

1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system

FREQUENCY:		Number of Responses				TOTAL	Percentages				
		1	2	3	NR		1	2	3	NR	
1.10	A brief review is carried out once a year.	4	6	15	9	34	11.8	17.6	44.1	26.5	100
1.11	A comprehensive review is carried out once every two or three years	2	7	18	7	34	5.9	20.6	52.9	20.6	100
1.12	Reviewing is carried out at irregular intervals.	3	8	15	8	34	8.8	23.5	44.1	23.5	100
1.13	Reviewing is on-going.	24	6	0	4	34	70.6	17.6	0.0	11.8	100

Not Sorted FOCUS		Number of Responses				TOTAL	Percentages				
		1	2	3	NR		1	2	3	NR	
1.20	The review covers a wide range of school activities each year	12	8	11	3	34	35.3	23.5	32.4	8.8	100
1.21	The review covers a small number of activities.	13	7	11	3	34	38.2	20.6	32.4	8.8	100
1.22	An initial wide ranging survey is used to identify areas for more in-depth inquiry	6	13	12	3	34	17.6	38.2	35.3	8.8	100
1.23	Areas to be focused on are planned to be covered over a number of years	20	11	1	2	34	58.8	32.4	2.9	5.9	100
1.24	All charter goals are reviewed in depth each year.	1	14	17	2	34	2.9	41.2	50.0	5.9	100
1.25	A system of progressive refocussing is utilised to illuminate salient issues.	7	17	7	3	34	20.6	50.0	20.6	8.8	100

Not Sorted WHO DECIDES WHAT IS TO BE REVIEWED ?		Number of Responses				TOTAL	Percentages				
		1	2	3	NR		1	2	3	NR	
1.30	The principal decides on areas to be reviewed.	3	17	9	5	34	8.8	50.0	26.5	14.7	100
1.31	The principal and staff decide together what is to be reviewed	18	16	0	0	34	52.9	47.1	0.0	0.0	100
1.32	The Board of Trustees decides what should be reviewed.	4	19	10	1	34	11.8	55.9	29.4	2.9	100
1.33	Parents are consulted to help identify areas for review.	2	21	8	3	34	5.9	61.8	23.5	8.8	100

Not Sorted

HOW IS THE REVIEW CARRIED OUT ?		Number of Responses			
		1	2	3	NR
1.40	Student outcomes (samples of work, portfolios, etc.) are examined.	17	16	1	0
1.41	Records of student achievement are analysed.	5	20	8	1
1.42	Special assessments of student performance are made as part of the review	1	23	5	5
1.43	The teaching/learning process is observed.	11	18	5	0
1.44	Student interviews or questionnaires are used.	7	15	11	1
1.45	Teacher interviews or questionnaires are used.	17	13	4	0
1.46	Parent interviews or questionnaires are used.	13	19	2	0
1.47	Teacher planning and evaluation is examined.	16	14	4	0
1.48	Board policies and practices are examined.	21	11	2	0

TOTAL	Percentages			
	1	2	3	NR
34	50.0	47.1	2.9	0.0
34	14.7	58.8	23.5	2.9
34	2.9	67.6	14.7	14.7
34	32.4	52.9	14.7	0.0
34	20.6	44.1	32.4	2.9
34	50.0	38.2	11.8	0.0
34	38.2	55.9	5.9	0.0
34	47.1	41.2	11.8	0.0
34	61.8	32.4	5.9	0.0

1= CLOSELY describes a characteristic of your system
 2= PARTIALLY describes a characteristic of your system
 3= has NO RELATIONSHIP to a characteristic of your system

Not Sorted

ANALYSIS		Number of Responses			
		1	2	3	NR
1.50	Achievement is compared with Charter goals and objectives	12	15	6	1
1.51	Practice is compared with policy.	19	12	3	0
1.52	Policy and practice are compared with legislative and regulatory requirements	13	15	5	1
1.53	Evidence is matched with pre-determined performance indicators	18	12	4	0
1.54	Evidence is matched with achievement statements.	15	14	4	1
1.55	Patterns and trends are noted.	16	9	9	0
1.56	Areas for further inquiry are identified.	15	13	6	0
1.57	Discrepancies between the responses of different participant groups are noted	21	12	1	0
1.58	Development priorities are identified.	25	9	0	0

TOTAL	Percentages			
	1	2	3	NR
34	35.3	44.1	17.6	2.9
34	55.9	35.3	8.8	0.0
34	38.2	44.1	14.7	2.9
34	52.9	35.3	11.8	0.0
34	44.1	41.2	11.8	2.9
34	47.1	26.5	26.5	0.0
34	44.1	38.2	17.6	0.0
34	61.8	35.3	2.9	0.0
34	73.5	26.5	0.0	0.0

Not Sorted

SECTION 2: PURPOSES OF SELF REVIEW

		Number of Responses			
		1	2	3	NR
2.1	To give an indication of how well the school is delivering its curriculum	28	6	0	0
2.2	To identify which aspects of the school's programmes are being covered well and which are not	21	11	2	0
2.3	To discover whether or not the school is meeting legislative and regulatory requirements	17	15	2	0
2.4	To evaluate the success the school is having in achieving its own goals and objectives.	31	3	0	0
2.5	To gather the information needed to prepare an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the school's effectiveness.	14	15	5	0
2.6	To gather information in preparation for external review or audit.	9	15	9	1
2.7	To provide teachers with feedback on how well they are performing their duties	18	15	1	0
2.8	To provide parents with the information needed to make decisions about choice of school.	3	5	26	0
2.9	To meet the National Administration Guidelines requirement that the Board of Trustees 'maintain an on-going programme for self-review'.	18	15	1	0
2.10	To provide information for the community generally which indicates how effectively the school is using the taxpayer resources entrusted to it.	4	11	19	0
2.11	To identify aspects of the school's activities which should be priorities for improvement or development.	33	1	0	0
2.12	To improve teachers' and students' knowledge of how well they are achieving their teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	23	8	2	1
2.13	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is achieving it's teaching and learning objectives and indicate directions for future improvement.	20	11	3	0
2.14	To improve the Board of Trustee's knowledge of how well the school is implementing it's management and administrative policies and indicate directions for future policy revision and procedural improvement.	17	15	2	0
2.15	To provide positive feedback to all stakeholders on how well the school is doing in achieving its mission and signal ways and means for doing things better.	11	20	2	1
2.16	To help staff prepare a school development plan which sets development goals for the next period of time.	26	8	0	0
2.17	To assist school management in targeting resources to areas which are most in need of support.	27	7	0	0
2.18	To systematically assess student performance to identify aspects in need of improved teaching.	21	6	7	0
2.19	To provide an ongoing and systematic process of feedback to help teachers and management make adjustments needed to improve the quality of learning in the school.	28	6	0	0

TOTAL	Percentages			
	1	2	3	NR
34	82.4	17.6	0.0	0.0
34	61.8	32.4	5.9	0.0
34	50.0	44.1	5.9	0.0
34	91.2	8.8	0.0	0.0
34	41.2	44.1	14.7	0.0
34	26.5	44.1	26.5	2.9
34	52.9	44.1	2.9	0.0
34	8.8	14.7	76.5	0.0
34	52.9	44.1	2.9	0.0
34	11.8	32.4	55.9	0.0
34	97.1	2.9	0.0	0.0
34	67.6	23.5	5.9	2.9
34	58.8	32.4	8.8	0.0
34	50.0	44.1	5.9	0.0
34	32.4	58.8	5.9	2.9
34	78.5	23.5	0.0	0.0
34	79.4	20.6	0.0	0.0
34	61.8	17.6	20.6	0.0
34	82.4	17.6	0.0	0.0

1= highly successful 2= usually successful 3= often successful 4= rarely successful 5= unsuccessful

Not Sorted

SECTION 4: SUCCESS OF THE PROCESS

4.10	How successful do you believe your school's self-review process has been in:	Number of Responses						Percentages							
		1	2	3	4	5	NR	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	NR	
	(a) identifying strengths ?	10	15	9	0	0	0	34	29.4	44.1	26.5	0.0	0.0	0	100
	(b) identifying weaknesses ?	6	19	9	0	0	0	34	17.6	55.9	26.5	0.0	0.0	0	100
	(c) establishing development priorities ?	13	15	6	0	0	0	34	38.2	44.1	17.6	0.0	0.0	0	100
	(d) providing accountability information ?	3	18	10	2	1	0	34	8.8	52.9	29.4	5.9	2.9	0	100

4.20	How successful has the review been in leading to improved:	Number of Responses						Percentages							
		1	2	3	4	5	NR	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	NR	
	(a) teaching and learning processes;	7	17	9	1	0	0	34	20.6	50.0	26.5	2.9	0.0	0	100
	(b) curriculum development;	13	18	1	1	0	1	34	38.2	52.9	2.9	2.9	0.0	3	100
	(c) teacher development;	12	15	7	0	0	0	34	35.3	44.1	20.6	0.0	0.0	0	100
	(d) administrative procedures;	6	17	9	1	0	1	34	17.6	50.0	26.5	2.9	0.0	3	100
	(e) policy development;	5	19	7	2	0	1	34	14.7	55.9	20.6	5.9	0.0	3	100
	(f) annual reporting;	4	17	12	0	1	0	34	11.8	50.0	35.3	0.0	2.9	0	100
	(g) financial management;	8	18	6	2	0	0	34	23.5	52.9	17.6	5.9	0.0	0	100
	(h) property management;	5	13	8	6	1	1	34	14.7	38.2	23.5	17.6	2.9	3	100
	(i) collaborative planning;	8	16	8	2	0	0	34	23.5	47.1	23.5	5.9	0.0	0	100
	(j) assessment and evaluation procedures;	7	17	7	3	0	0	34	20.6	50.0	20.6	8.8	0.0	0	100
	(k) community consultation;	3	9	17	5	0	0	34	8.8	26.5	50.0	14.7	0.0	0	100
	(l) public relations;	2	14	11	4	1	2	34	5.9	41.2	32.4	11.8	2.9	6	100
	(m) parental "choice of school" decision making?	1	3	10	7	6	7	34	2.9	8.8	29.4	20.6	17.6	21	100

4.3	How easy was the self-review process at your school to implement ?	Number of Responses						Percentages							
		1	2	3	4	5	NR	TOTAL	1	2	3	4	5	NR	
		4	16	10	4	0	0	34	11.8	47.1	29.4	11.8	0.0	0	100

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