

**THE COMPLEXITIES of SCHOOLS SUSTAINING THEIR
FOCUS on a SCHOOL-WIDE INITIATIVE**

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ABSTRACT

Within a framework of sustainability and change this research set out to examine ways that three primary schools have attempted to sustain a school-wide Talent Development Initiative once their three year, Ministry of Education, funding had ceased. This research also examined the different interpretivist perceptions and experiences held by the three groups of stakeholders within each school: principals, Talent Development Initiative (TDI) coordinators and focus groups (classroom teachers) both during and after the TDI's implementation.

A qualitative methodology was employed for this small scale research. Three principals and three TDI coordinators were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. All six of these participants had played a key role in the implementation of a TDI in their respective schools since its inception. Thirty classroom teachers across five focus groups, in three different schools, were involved where responses to questions were discussed within a group. In this way the findings were less likely to be intentionally influenced by the interviewer.

The findings in this research have revealed that the issues of sustaining an initiative after external funding had ceased are complex. Issues include: decision-making processes and ownership, professional development and induction, and initiative overload. The modification of these issues either contributed to or hindered the level of ownership experienced by all stakeholders. Among all stakeholders there were perceptions or assumptions of the change processes that were viewed differently according to where a member was situated managerially in their school structure.

However the perceptions or assumptions of an initiative's implementation that are held by all stakeholders were not so easily aligned and unless questioned, appear to influence the complexities and tensions inherent in sustaining an initiative. How one group interprets the actions of another group and how they are constructed into perceptions and assumptions is the essence of what makes sustainability such a complex issue.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Initiative implementation, as a form of change, typically must be adopted via the organisational decision-making and execution processes of a school. The literature of initiative sustainability within organisational change theory has become increasingly valuable in the understanding of stability in relation to initiative change. Chapter One begins by providing a framework of issues that arise in an attempt to focus on the sustainability of an initiative. A brief summary of the complexities of sustainability are presented as the rationale for this research. Following the rationale is an outline of the aims, objectives and questions used to guide the findings from the data process. The final section provides a brief outline of the thesis structure.

Background

In New Zealand the National Administration Guidelines (NAGs) for school administration set out statements of desirable principles of conduct or administration for specified personnel or bodies. NAGs are fundamentally important because they administer compliance of national curriculum delivery. NAGs comply with legal requirements and more importantly they provide a sense of national strategic learning and teaching direction in New Zealand schools.

NAG1 from the Ministry of Education, MoE, (2003) states that: “From 2005, all schools will be required under NAG 1(iiiic) to show that they are identifying and providing for their gifted learners.” Identifying and providing for gifted learners means for all schools that: “You will need to show that you have in place an effective school-wide process for identifying [gifted] learners” (NAG, 2003, iiiiic). In order to identify gifted learners, teachers will need to know about issues like the difference between gifted and high achievers, the underachieving gifted, and the factors which disguise giftedness such as dual exceptionality. Teachers will also need to know what tools to use and the answers to questions that arise in relation to gifted and talented (G&T) teaching and learning. With regard to NAG1 Talent Development Initiatives (TDI’s) were offered to schools across New Zealand. The TDI’s were funded by the MoE for three years.

During this time the principal as lead facilitator appointed a coordinator of the initiative within the school. The coordinator's role was to act as a conduit between leadership and classroom teachers in an effort to implement and sustain the TDI long-term after the funding had ceased.

Funding was specifically granted for TDI implementation. Formal written and oral milestones to the Ministry reflected that money was used for TDI. However few measures (if any) were put in place by the MoE to ensure accuracy and transparency of the reported funding spending. These issues will be explored in depth when researching the principals' and TDI coordinators' perception of their roles and how this has influenced their decisions and actions when managing change in their schools in order to sustain a TDI long term. Once the contract and funding had ceased after three years TDI coordinators were left with the issue of TDI sustainability without external funding for professional development and resources.

Rationale for this research

School improvement might be considered according to the number of initiatives and their level of sustainability within a school. Hargreaves and Goodson (2006) support this notion by suggesting that sustainable school improvement secures enduring changes that last. Sustainability preserves the most valuable aspects of learning long term. Fullan (2005) also supports this claim by suggesting that sustainability is the capacity to engage in the complexities of continuous improvement consistent with deep values and human purpose. Sustainable improvements continue year upon year, from one reform or leader to the next. They are not fleeting changes that depend on pilot project initiatives or on exemplary leaders' efforts which then disappear when project funds have disappeared or leaders have left.

Studies carried out in the United Kingdom by Gray (2001) suggest that changes to school management and organisation seem easier to secure [and sustain] than changes to classroom practice. Most studies to date have been rather short on measured improvements over time. It is essential therefore to understand how teachers respond to educational change aimed at school improvement if innovations [initiatives] are to be successful and sustainable (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). This research focuses on the management of change made at a classroom level in relation

to the leadership and implementation strategies used to embed a TDI into a curriculum with a focus towards sustainability.

Framework of sustainability

The TDI aimed at improving outcomes for gifted and talented students. Schools could opt to apply for funding through the MoE's funding pool for varying amounts. Twenty one schools were funded for three years between 2006-2008 to integrate G&T programmes into their school. During this time strategies to sustain the TDI long-term were constantly considered in relation to how the TDI was being implemented by coordinators and principals within each school. Challenges became apparent because one-size-does-not-fit-all when it comes to initiative implementation across schools. One main concern espoused by Gray (2001) is that policy makers constantly considered what sustainability involves in relation to the sustainability of an initiative post external support through professional development and funding. Schools can take on externally funded initiatives for different reasons. One consideration was to improve their institutional image which according to Gunter (2001) "...is telling parents [and the community] what we do and why we do it well. Otherwise education will be mutated into a transmission and measuring process" (p. 140). Initiatives are often taken on-board by principals in an attempt to give their school a point of difference from other local schools. In this way a school might become more desirable for parents and caregivers to enrol their children due to a broader range of curriculum areas on offer.

Provision of a broader curriculum is evident in the integration of G&T teaching and learning programmes in the three schools in this research. The New Zealand curriculum (2006) policy has become less restrictive in that it is delivering resources to schools and allowing some anatomy to schools to respond to their local content. In this way the TDI curriculum is being integrated into classroom teaching practice, using a local context, in an attempt to provide sustainability of a TDI post external funding. In so doing the political positions of external providers are being replaced by school management teams and, classroom teachers who implement the initiatives into a school's curriculum. Mandated policy for the TDI was interpreted within each school's local context thus providing flexibility of practice and perhaps more ownership of schools towards the TDI.

The research problem

Twenty-one initiatives between 2006-2008 aimed at improving outcomes for gifted and talented students were funded through the MoE TDI funding pool for varying amounts. These schools were funded for three years by the MoE to integrate G&T learning and teaching programmes into their school curriculum. Fullan (1991) describes how external funding can be helpful in the initial establishment of new initiatives but further warns that the larger this external support the less likely that the project will be sustained after the funding is removed.

Different models of professional development relating to school improvement and change are being implemented in schools. Gray (2001) in his research on the limitations of school improvement is concerned that policy makers have a too restricted view of what school improvement involves. Harris (2002) agrees with Gray and the policy makers' limited view points when she writes that "many schools currently feel pressured by the often competing demands of new government initiatives and strategies" (p. 114). Initiative overload, where too many in initiatives are taking place simultaneously, is at worst perhaps susceptible to schools taking charge of their own aspects of cultural change and development. Initiatives are undertaken in an effort to become effective as a school organisation for teaching and learning which is an external expectation on schools from the MoE. With the in-depth learning required to effectively embed an initiative into a school's curriculum, many schools are prevented from what Harris (2002) writes as "concentrating on the issues and concerns of most importance in their school, in their particular context" (p. 114). Funding for the sustainability of such initiatives post contract appears to be elusive. Harris (2002) also goes on to say that the current stream of initiatives is unlikely to subside in coming years. Therefore consideration to the way in which change is managed, with a focus towards initiative sustainability, implies that leaders and their management teams may need to reconsider ways to manage such change effectively.

Research aims and objectives

The aim of this research was to uncover the complexities of sustaining professional learning and focus in schools post Ministry [MoE] contract by identifying key issues surrounding the implementation of a TDI with a focus on its sustainability post-external funding. This research

has attempted to explain the differing strategies that either create ownership or hinder the implementation of an externally mandated initiative and its sustainability post MoE funding. In order to achieve the broad aims, the following specific objectives and questions, have been formulated to guide the findings from the data.

Research objectives:

1. To analyse what informs perspectives held by groups of stakeholders when an externally funded initiative is implemented with a focus of long-term sustainability.
2. To describe the practice in schools used to sustain practice related to an external initiative once funding has ceased.

Research questions:

1. How does a school attempt to sustain an initiative focus post MoE funding?
2. What perspectives of staff ownership can emerge post Ministry funding?
3. How do [school leaders'] perceptions of their role influence their decision making in order to sustain an initiative post-funding?

School details

My research took place in three schools. School One was a multi cultural decile 4 primary school with 355 pupils. The decile rating a school is given relates to the economic and social factors of the community immediately surrounding it. Schools are grouped in a way that reflects the average family or whanau situations and socio-economic backgrounds of students at that school. Specific factors such as: household income; occupation; household crowding; educational qualifications; income support are taken into account when deciding upon the decile rating of a school. The decile rating does not reflect anything about the quality of education at that particular school.

The key roles within the TDI included the principal, a full-time TDI coordinator and fourteen classroom teachers making up two focus groups. School Two was a multi cultural decile 4 primary school with 291 pupils. The key roles were the same as for School One with ten classroom teachers participating in two focus groups. School Three was a decile 7 Northland rural primary school with 232 pupils. The key TDI roles included the principal, a TDI coordinator who was released from classroom teaching part-time and one focus group comprising of five classroom teachers.

Outline of thesis

The literature review in Chapter Two provides a backdrop to the findings from the data by identifying key issues surrounding the implementation of initiatives in schools. Key issues around effective initiative implementation and long-term sustainability stem from the level and depth of leadership skills. Key themes such as: change and sustainability; managing change and professional development; collaborative decision-making; intensification of work and ownership and resistance are presented as a background to what the data revealed.

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Chapter Three provides the details of qualitative methodology justified from the literature that guides the findings from the data. Data collection, timing and, analysis methods are outlined for the semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. Issues of reliability and validity have been considered as well as ethical issues. A brief evaluation of difficulties experienced has been explained in this chapter.

Chapter Four presents the data findings and Chapter Five provides a discussion of the data. The discussion has synthesised the data through interpreting and explaining. It also looks beneath the layers and has related the findings back to the literature.

Chapter Six concludes the main findings of the findings from the data linking them to the introduction by highlighting the findings from the data aims and objectives and linking them to the findings from the data questions. Strategic implications, possibilities for future research and overall limitations of the findings from the data are then presented.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Change takes place within the framework of culture. When an initiative is introduced into a system, it disrupts the equilibrium (organisational culture) and, attention from culture is devoted to that point in order to achieve stability again. It would seem perhaps that sustainable initiative implementation is dependent upon the way in which the management of change takes place. According to Hargreaves and Fink (2006) “change in education is easy to propose, hard to implement, and extraordinarily difficult to sustain” (p.1); they prove that externally mandated initiatives show promise but are rarely converted to system wide change.

Without initial external funding, initiative implementation within a school might be difficult to achieve let alone to achieve initiative sustainability. Fullan (1992) describes how external funding can be helpful in the initial establishment of new initiatives but further warns that the larger this external support the less likely that the project continues after the funding is removed. Sustaining a professional learning focus of a contract (initiative), post MoE funding, involves change and a refocusing of cultural conditions. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) also go on to say “they prove that externally innovations easily attract early enthusiasts, but it is harder to convince more skeptical educators to commit to the hard work of implementation” (p.1). Sustainable improvement in schools depends on the school leadership’s skill-base to manage change and culture in such a way that effective school improvement and long-term sustainability is realised (Forsyth & Elliott, 1999; Schein, 2004; Smyth, 1995; Thrupp & Willmott, 2003). It is contested that resistance to organisational change requires that leaders need to learn, and employ the skills of using different lenses or multiple frameworks to reframe and, analyse their organisation.

In this research issues and circumstances will be discussed around: change and sustainability; managing change and professional development; collaborative decision-making; intensification of work and ownership and resistance of an initiative in light of principals’, co-ordinators’ and teachers’ points of view when implementing a TDI initiative into a school’s curriculum. The

different types of frameworks used by leadership in each school in order to unpack these issues will be revealed by the data.

Change and sustainability

The concept of sustainability according to Hargreaves and Fink (2006) is concerned with “developing and preserving what matters, spreads and lasts in ways that create positive connections and development among people and do no harm to others in the present or in the future” (p. 17). Fullan (2005) adds to Hargreaves and Fink’s definition of sustainability from an educational perspective by stating that “[sustainability is]...the capacity of a system to engage in the complexities of continuous improvement consistent with deep values of human purpose” (p.17). In order for sustainability to be realised according to O’Donoghue and Dimmock (1998) personnel and human resource management skills of the principal and management team are expected to manage organisational change in ways that gain the participation and commitment of both professional and ancillary members of the school community. A key to sustainability is to have all members in agreement in order to be able to move in the intended direction and achieve long-term sustainability.

External agencies in Australia, England, Wales and the United States are being given the ability of school systems to develop the sophisticated skills and competencies to meet the economic challenges of the 21st century as acknowledged by Hargreaves (2003). In effect this has provoked numerous attempts to complete restructuring of the organisation of teaching and learning in schools. The Western Australian education department is described in O’Donoghue and Dimmock (1998) as “one focused on increasing school-based initiatives...particular emphasis has been placed on the role of the school principal, and to a lesser extent, on teachers and parents, in the translation of restructuring initiatives into practice” (p. 78). O’Donoghue and Dimmock (1998) go on to say that the restructuring from the Western Australian perspective has had a negative impact on teachers. Their research findings on the change literature regarding school restructuring “demonstrated that teachers who have no input into an innovation will have no sense of ownership to it and, consequently, little commitment to it” (p. 105). The overall result is low teacher morale. On the contrary if teachers are trusted to contribute to decision-

making, then they might contribute positively in light of ownership towards an initiative's implementation into a curriculum.

The changes that are prevalent in England, Wales, and the United States are also found in different ways in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. According to Hargreaves (2003), research involving a deeper understanding of educational practice, and how to improve it by working in and with schools that transcend geographical boundaries, he espouses that where external decision making powers are handed over to individual schools it can lead to diversity, innovation and teacher empowerment.

Effects of the realities such as ideological compliance and financial self-reliance inherent in change, for many of today's schools and their staff are clearly visible according to Abrahamson (2004) in reforms and initiatives that teachers have to deal with. Hargreaves (2004) goes on to say that in the British extreme case of multiple mandated change, there are similarities to New Zealand change and implementation of initiatives. These changes that teachers address include: changes in the new curriculum and context based teaching which Hopkins (1996) refers to as branch changes. Such specific changes of practice are significant which teachers can "adopt, adapt, resist or circumvent as they arise" (p. 6). Beneath the branch changes are root changes which "at the very roots of teachers' work, address how teaching itself is defined and socially organized" (p. 6). Root changes according to Hargreaves (1994) include performance appraisal to regulate teaching methods and the shift to local management of schools. These changes can be ways of making teachers and leaders more dependent on and responsive to the market force of parental choice between schools. Therefore parents might perceive a school to have an educational advantage over another school because of the type of initiatives implemented into its curriculum.

Where teachers see the initiatives being implemented into the classroom as too restrictive then the initiative risks being resisted by stakeholders and possibly not actualised in the way that it was intended for students' learning. Southworth (1998) points out that if improvements are not perceived to be effective in a particular school context then the probability of sustaining such a change is greatly diminished. On the contrary if change is perceived as contributing to school

improvement then the issue of sustaining that change becomes the focus. Several authors agree with Southworth (1998) by explaining that a school's management team is important in motivating staff and other stakeholders to recognise the need for change brought about by the introduction of an initiative. They go on to argue that change [initiatives] will fail unless staff can see how the change will assist them in the delivery of education (Fullan, 2003; Gray & Wilcox, 1995; James & Connolly, 2000). Piggot-Irvine (2006) reinforces the importance of staff motivation when she mentions that where a principal is seen to be involved in the professional learning of an initiative then teachers are more likely to be motivated to be a part of the change process initiative.

The involvement of teachers in educational change is also vital to its success according to Hargreaves (2003). He goes on to say that if the change is complex then there is more involved than teachers acquiring knowledge of curriculum content, because teachers are not only technical learners they are social learners too. Hargreaves (2003) points out in the British case of multiple change more than anything it is extreme in the disrespect and disregard that reformers have shown for teachers themselves. His research suggests that teachers' voices have been largely neglected, their opinions overridden and their concerns dismissed.

Power structures that might leave teachers out of decision making processes according to Bottery (1992) underpin the view that "teachers have no rights to participation, only the opportunity if their employers feel that it is in their (employers') interests" (p. 173). Change around a new initiative is sometimes imposed and developed in a context where teachers have been given little credit for changing themselves, and for possessing their own wisdom to distinguish what reasonably can be changed and what cannot.

Change is made difficult because so many issues being faced have tried to be buried. According to Bolman and Deal (2003) "communications in organisations are rarely candid open or timely" (p. 30). Depending upon where a person sits in the hierarchy of an organisation determines how they play their part. If the participants who are involved in the implementation of an initiative and its sustainability focus, do not see the whole picture then they can continue to play their part blindly unaware of any other option.

The restrictive view of policy initiatives once transferred back into the classroom is backed up by Hargreaves (2003) in saying that change can look impressive when represented in boxes and arrows of administrator's overheads, but they are superficial. According to Bolman and Deal (2003) "they do not strike at the heart of how children learn and teachers teach. They achieve little more than trivial changes in practice" (p. 11). The ownership and involvement of teachers' in educational change which involves initiative implementation is vital to its success and a focus of long-term sustainability.

Unless all stakeholders fully understand the rationale for change then it is possible that only the surface features of change will occur temporarily, especially where funding is an issue in an organisation where it is limited. Fullan (1993) goes on to say that "it is possible to change 'on the surface' by endorsing certain goals, using specific materials, and even initiating behaviour without specifically understanding the principles or rationale for the change" (p. 40). Strategies to assist members to develop collegiality and agreement might include the building of team efficacy; induction of new staff members; restructuring the responsibilities of existing staff, in order to focus on an initiative's sustainability.

Managing change and the issue of professional development

The last decade in education systems around the world has been marked by the extraordinary volume of reform [change] initiatives that require effective teamwork and collaboration as a part of the professional development programme in order to provide a support structure for their sustainability. Fullan and Mascal's (2000) work on some initiatives has led them to the conclusion that "professional development is the key to the success of any reform [change] initiative, provided that it is linked to ongoing learning of individuals, and to school improvement, and to related policy and program implementation" (p. 33). Fullan and Mascal (2000) also claim that it is staff passion that, in turn, helps to drive sustainability of the [professional] development. According to Piggot-Irvine (2007) "passion alone, however, is not enough. There also needs to be a long-term commitment to 'deep' development... that goes beyond the surface or quick-fix, short-term approaches" (p. 1) A deep approach includes:

“establishment of detailed outcomes, consideration of how outcomes will be measured, identification of responsibilities, provision of adequate resource allocation and writing timelines to guide the approach” (Piggot-Irvine, 2006, p. 481). Hargreaves (2003) suggests that professional development “is a personal path towards greater professional integrity and human growth” (p. 48). It is not just a self-managed portfolio of certificates and achievements. Rather “it is the product of shrewd selection, varied experience, good leadership and effective mentoring” (p. 48). Therefore initiatives that keep more mature teachers engaged and motivated might lead to their support of younger teachers perhaps as Hargreaves (2003) suggests on a volunteer or part-time basis after they have retired. In this way depth of learning might be supported and sustained over time.

Professional development

Each year the professional development programme of a school will be based on the analysis of what students, and teachers have, and have not been able to do well in the previous year. Professional development will hold the central position that such work has in the life of the whole school. Precision-targeting development across a system is what Barber (as cited in Elliott, 2001a, p. 193) advocates as “one of our most important strategy innovations” ensuring both quality and cost-effectiveness. Baldwin (2005) notes that professional development should be: “purposeful, needs based, focused, coordinated, resourced, effective, evaluated and documented” (p. 5). Hill, Hawk and Taylor (2002) go on to add that keeping up to date with professional reading is also a critical aspect of effective professional development which is also well documented by Poskitt (2001). Professional development in order for changes to occur in organisational learning is essential so that effective sustainable long-term initiative implementation might take place.

Effective professional development is part of a system of learning. Fullan and Mascal (2000) found in their professional development research that [initiative implementation] is likely to be more successful [and sustainable] where top-down strategies of professional development can take different forms such as workshops and conferences. Teachers and leaders are trained in individual activities often unrelated to other work and using passive learning. Yet according to Darling-Hammond (1990) qualitative research has made it clear that professional development

programs must be collaborative, active, connected and ongoing. Hawley and Valli (1999) agree by suggesting that if a teacher does not work in a professional learning community, where teachers work collaboratively, sharing passion and purpose for their work, then professional development is short-lived. In the absence of a professional learning community for teachers, and principals then the lasting change of an implementation will be a slow process.

It seems that both professional development and school improvement are intertwined. Hawley and Valli's (1999) research on effective professional development found that school improvement cannot occur without a closely connected culture of professional development. Fullan and Mascal (2000) assert that the key to professional development is in treating professional development as an integral part of developing learning communities at all levels. This is where principals and teacher work well together through school improvement planning and action. Fullan and Muscall (2000) go onto say that "in such schools, principals and teachers are not at the mercy of state policy [external mandates] but actually exercise greater influence and control over the details of the [initiative] implementation" (p. 39). If stakeholders have a voice in the strategic action there is a greater likelihood of ownership occurring. This might have a positive effect on how an initiative is implemented into a school curriculum.

There are many influences that affect teachers ability to engage more deeply in theory and its implications for practice. The implementation of professional learning has the intention of changing current teaching and learning practices but unless teachers know, or at least come to realise, how to make knowledge accessible in the form of intellectually demanding tasks then professional learning and its sustainability will be limited. Timperley, Wilson, Barrar and Fung (2007) clarify that decisions need to be made by teachers about what "theories and practices can be evaluated and decisions made about what should be changed" (p. 199) in order to improve teaching practice. Robinson and Lai (2006) also explain how important it is to engage teachers' prior understandings in any change situation. Without this engagement it is unlikely that new learning will be adequately integrated with existing theories of practice. Timperley et al., (2007) explain that if the professional learning building does not build upon teachers' prior knowledge then the "consequences range from non-implementation to adaptation-beyond-recognition" (p. 199). Because the implementation of a MoE contract is externally mandated it would seem

important that during the process of professional learning that both providers and teachers understand each others' theories concerning the change in practice and beliefs upon which the practice is based.

Because every school context is different there is no simple recipe when it comes to deciding the best pathway for professional learning to take. According to Timperley et al. (2007) “any effective teaching act requires teachers to integrate their understanding of content to be taught with decisions concerning how to best present that content to that particular group of students” (p. 197). What constitutes valued knowledge in one school may not be the same as for another school. In this regard professional learning mandated by external policy may make change and school improvement work better in one school but not so in another. This issue applies not only to school organisations, but to individual teachers as well. In a detailed study of teachers' reactions to feedback following classroom observations (as cited in, Parr, Timperley, Reddish, Jesson & Adams, 2006) it was discovered that “teachers did not act on the feedback they were given , either because they disagreed with the observers' judgments about their practice... or they had no idea how to integrate the alternative practices into their existing practice” (Timperley, et al., 2007, p. 198). Kennedy (1999a) points out another issue in the professional learning process as ‘the problem of enactment’: teachers need to translate what is learned into their particular teaching context. As pointed out in research by Parr et al., (2006) not only do teachers need to integrate new information into their teaching context but also into their belief system (cited in Timperley et al., 2007, p. 198).

The sustainability of an initiative embedded with professional learning that aligns with teachers' beliefs and pedagogical practice would seem more assured if professional learning was on-going and maintained over-time and led to continued improvement of student achievement. For teachers who have been members of a staff since the beginning of an initiative's implementation then it would seem that the professional learning around a specific initiative would be on-going.

Teacher induction

Conditions for sustainability might be linked back to the induction systems for new staff in a school. Timperley et al., (2007) suggest that “sometimes conditions that make for sustainability

are not considered until the end of a professional development programme...Our view is that the conditions for sustainability are set in place during the professional learning experience as much as after it” (p. 218). The task of induction for new staff is not just about keeping up to date with initiative implementation and its associated research but according to Tickle (2000) “keeping apace in it” (p. 190) in agreement with Timperley et.al., (2007) as a basis for continuing improvement and a focus on sustaining an initiative long-term. Another way to develop an effective induction programme is to restructure the existing responsibilities of existing staff that enables experienced staff to mentor new staff.

Restructuring

When funding that has previously supported the implementation of an initiative ceases then another complex issue arises for principals regarding resources and funds in order to sustain an already established initiative. Because funding has ceased this does not mean that the initiative must also cease. According to Ball (1987) “established micro-political structures inside the school can be disrupted when changes are thrust upon the institution” (p. 177). The establishment and focus on sustainability of an initiative can be one such change. Increasingly a principal’s role is to create new ways of managing and financing the initiative. One such way might be found in restructuring existing staff job descriptions and responsibilities in order to accommodate the existing changes effectively. Ball (1987) suggests that by providing alternative forms of organisation, staff are given more opportunity to have ownership of the process as their ‘folk knowledge’ or the culture of teachers is valued. In relation to a TDI teachers might be encouraged to be a part of the programmes when alternative staffing roles are organised according to areas of skill and expertise.

Initiatives are often introduced to a school in an attempt to realise school improvement. In order to achieve school improvement Poster (1999) explains that a school management team needs to decide its own “roadmap to restructuring -the route it will take to holistic change” (p. 171). Priorities need to then be decided and the proposal made public to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of them and will give them their support. The strategy of restructuring requires organisational maturity which Poster (1999) states that “not all schools will be able to demonstrate” (p. 171). Even with the best of intentions, is there any guarantee that structures will

be sustained long-term? Poster (1999) reinforces what several authors advocate that for “change to be effective and lasting, it must be holistic” (Sergiovanni, 2000; Connell, Welsh, & Campbell, 2007, p. 174). By giving staff buy-in, a voice in the restructuring procedures through collaborative decision-making procedures then there might be a greater level of ownership achieved as the change process is managed.

Collaborative-decision making

By giving staff buy-in (a voice in the restructuring procedures) through collaborative decision-making procedures, then there might be a greater level of ownership achieved as the change process is managed. For collaborative decision-making to become sustainable then the changes associated with it must involve realistic expectations of all stakeholders. Benefits of a collaborative approach to strategic management according to Cardno (1998b) include “a heightened sense of ownership and commitment” (p. 110). An assumption commonly held according to Cardno (1998b) is that collaborative decision-making involves everyone in every decision. If this was the case then the time taken to reach decisions might become a significant barrier to decisions being made. Cardno (1998b) draws on “three rules of thumb: the tests of jurisdiction, relevance and expertise” (p. 111). The test of jurisdiction involves those who have jurisdiction and clarify parameters in terms of official roles and responsibilities. The test of relevance involves those for whom the decision is highly relevant and the test of expertise which ensures those with knowledge to inform those with jurisdiction. If the level of expertise is not sufficient amongst members then it must be heightened by providing opportunity to learn from experience or by arranging more formally for the prospective participants’ professional development in that area.

The product of a capacity focus in relation to collaborative decision-making framework will ensure that the right people are involved in decision-making at the right times with the right information. The idea is to arrive at better informed decisions or solutions faster. In recent years according to Darling-Hammond (1995) “the policy community has come to understand that building the capacity of teachers is the only hope for transforming the nature of teaching and learning in schools” (p. 10). She goes on to mention that the shift for new initiatives among

major foundations to fund teacher development efforts will demand more intensive, imaginative approaches to educating and inducting new teachers.

For teachers, collaborative decision-making it is about being in teaching teams that are supposed to be highly collaborative. Collaborative management is one way of distributing and sharing the load of work intensification. According to Gunter (2005) distributed leadership is a way of filling a leadership gap by giving value to espoused interdependence of more spontaneous collegial forms of leadership rather than more directed forms of leadership. Here leadership is according to Gunter (2005) and Hargreaves and Fink (2006) not given out or controlled but scattered and allowed to develop naturally. Cardno (2002) says that the use of teams in schools is linked to the “application of collaborative management” (p. 212). Coleman and Bush (1994) also support this notion that there is a strong trend towards collegial approaches in schools and that “one of the main features of collegiality is its emphasis on teamwork” (p. 226). Collegial approaches are also identified by several other authors: Hall and Wallace (1996); Forsyth and Elliott (1999); Gronn (2003a) and Cardno (2002).

Staff and management build a successful culture by maximising collaborative teamwork in an effective learning organisation by caring for others, focusing on quality and so on. Wilson (1999) points out that “culture can be diagnosed and changed to move organizational effectiveness” (p. 103) as long as members are valued, are given a ‘voice’ and not seen as passive objects to control. Fullan’s (1992) research on school improvement shows that many innovations [initiatives] fail to be sustained [or even implemented] due to the resistance of teachers within the school, despite the best efforts of the management team. Young (1983) mentions that “people change more easily when they feel they have been instrumental in bringing about the change, or have in some way participated in the decision that shapes the change” (p. 43). In this way participants have a sense of ownership by being valued and consequently commit to the sustainability of an initiative.

When an initiative is implemented into a school’s curriculum Hargreaves and Fink (2006) suggest that there is an assumption that all of the staff: the principal, management and classroom

teachers, are implementing and sustaining its focus to some degree. However Gray (2001) in his research on the limitations of sustainability writes that:

Changes to school management and organisation seem easier to secure than changes to classroom practice; most studies to date have been rather short on evidence of measured improvements over time; finally there is a shortage of evidence about the extent to which schools manage to sustain improvement (p. 95).

Hopkins (1996) suggests that learning and teaching in the classroom rather than making changes at other levels of management will bring about change needed for sustained school improvement. This is because according to Hopkins (2001) that reform is not proximal enough to the classroom, because there is not enough attention to the way the school organisation supports learning and because most reforms do not adopt a systematic perspective which has depth as well as width. Hopkins therefore stresses “the need for school improvement to drive down to the learning level, in other words to concentrate on teaching and learning in schools rather than assuming that changes at other levels will bring changes in the classroom” (p. 5). Gronn (2003b) sees Hopkin’s perspective in broader terms when he points out that executive staff in a school environment are required in their job description to manage and lead change in a situation such as the introduction of an initiative. However to do their job properly those in management roles rely on many other staff members. The complexities of managing staff change for initiative implementation to be effective across all levels of the school requires the employment of skills from different frameworks. The multiple frameworks outlined earlier by Bolman and Deal (2003) help leaders and management to affect change as it directly affects teachers who influence changes and pedagogy of learning and teaching within the classroom which ultimately affects the students. By leadership utilising the multiple frameworks and collaborative decision-making procedures then perhaps leadership might give teachers’ more voice in the number of initiatives being implemented in to a school’s curriculum at one time

Intensification of work

Leaders, principals and managers of an organisation take on their role with the intention of taking up the challenge of improving learning and teaching in the best interests of school improvement yet according to Hargreaves and Fink (2006) this is counteracted with the implications of possible initiative overload. Together with Abrahamson (2004) they refer to

initiative overload as a repetitive change syndrome which results in change related chaos with continuous upheaval related to too many changes. This in turn might, according to Hargreaves and Fink (2006), causes teachers change efforts to drop off due to change exhaustion and work intensification.

Initiative overload, is not a new phenomenon, it is also referred to by Apple (1983). He goes on to mention that “getting done becomes more important than what was done or how one got there” (p. 59). The pressure involved in coping with conflict and change might begin to take a toll on the health and tolerance of individuals, (Apple, 1983). Due to the new leadership practices required when implementing new initiatives there might also be less time spent with pupils even though the overall working hours have increased. In becoming more professionally equipped to take-on new initiatives Apple (1983) suggests that in doing so staff accept longer working hours and an intensification of work.

When it comes to the impact of reform in schools Harris (2002) argues that “many schools currently feel pressured by the often competing, demands of new government initiatives and strategies” (p. 114). Initiative overload might contribute to a negative attitude by staff and at worst is counter-productive to schools taking charge of their own change and development. Hargreaves (1994) points out that the sheer “cumulative impact of multiple, complex, non-negotiable innovations [initiatives] on teachers’ time, energy, motivation, opportunities to reflect, and their very capacity to cope... is extreme in the disrespect and disregard that reformers have shown for teachers themselves” (p. 6). If senior management teams make decisions about introducing new initiatives in teachers’ absences, then perhaps long-term change and the sustainability of an initiative might become less likely to occur in a school.

In many schools teachers are often swamped with initiatives. This can be driven by a need to be seen as a school with an effective institutional image according to Foskett (2002). He goes on to say that “schools...still seek to convey a positive encapsulating image through their publications, their signs and symbols and their activities [initiatives]” (p. 250). Behind the image teachers learn to treat initiatives like ‘kidney stones’: “it causes considerable pain but it will pass, and so innovation that is imposed by management is resisted until it passes” (Stoll & Fink, 1996, p. 79).

As a result teachers can by-pass ownership of the initiative making its long-term sustainability more difficult to achieve. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) support this claim by saying that leadership's "consuming obsession with reaching higher and higher standards in curriculum achievement within shorter and shorter time lines is exhausting our teachers and leaders" (p. 3). However, a contradiction to this analogy lies in a situation where some teachers seemingly do have ownership of the initiative implementation process while others, at the same time, resist such change. Not all teachers resist the changes 'placed' upon them and consequently do not appear to suffer the initiative overload and shortage of time syndromes in ways that others might.

Having less time for teachers to meet and converse with their colleagues or the community caused by an overload of change initiatives has, according to Hargreaves (2003) research in New York State and Ontario, caused a loss of teaching confidence, early retirements and resignations as a result. According to Hargreaves (1994), "shortage of time is one of the perennial complaints of teachers and teaching in studies of educational change, school improvement, and curriculum implementation" (p.15). Shortage of time repeatedly appears as one of the chief implementation problems of a new initiative.

Scarcity of time creates work intensification which makes it difficult to plan more thoroughly and to commit oneself to the effort of initiative implementation. Yet classroom teachers since 2006 have release time from the classroom where they can reflect on practice and innovations within school teaching hours. This amounts to two hours per fortnight yet it seems with initiative overload the release time is commonly used for getting 'on top' of daily teaching administration tasks rather than it being time to reflect on practice or to collaboratively discuss issues. Research in New Zealand by Timperley et al., (2007) found that:

Teachers were unwilling to use release time made available for their involvement in professional development for two reasons. Firstly because they felt that relief teachers did not have sufficient knowledge of their students to meet their learning needs adequately, resulting in lost teaching time. Secondly, they were concerned about the quality of available relief teachers...When teachers were released from their classrooms they wanted to feel that their programmes were not going to be disrupted and that their students were in good hands. (p. 142)

Timeframes outside of teaching hours are as Cardno (2006) highlights times that “principals and their teams appear to be swamped with initiatives” (p. 468). Unless an issue is viewed as a priority it is unlikely according to Cardno (2006) that a principal will “embark on leading a... cycle of action research” (p. 459) to facilitate the necessary changes adhering to initiative overload. By leadership not employing effective change management strategies during the process of initiative implementation they might run the risk of teachers operating out of defensiveness and resistance rather than ownership of the initiative during the change procedures.

Ownership and resistance

During a change process no one knows ahead of time how teachers will respond to changes or even how they do change in the face of change. More importantly initiators of change need to realise during the process what makes teachers dig their heels in and resist change. Hargreaves (1994) explains that “if we are to understand the specific impact upon teachers of educational change... we must also understand the specific impact upon teachers in the change process more generally” (p. 10). He goes on to mention that conflict is a necessary part of change and that policy cannot mandate what matters because change is a process not an event. Strategies that either encourage or hinder change will be discussed in this section.

The introduction of an initiative must be viewed in light of the changes in structure or working practices that will affect those members likely to be affected, directly or indirectly; “by introducing new working practices which replace established and cherished ways of working, they threaten individual self-concepts” (Ball, 1997, p. 32). Esland (1996) supports Ball’s claim when he suggests that an innovation can represent a denial of much of what staff have previously believed in. In this way initiatives are rarely neutral and they have the potential to either increase ownership or resistance of a project.

Ownership of initiative implementation might contribute to a greater likelihood of long-term sustainability. The goal to allow stakeholders ownership and perceive (aspects of) the change as being self initiated will hopefully encourage positive emotional responses and cause less

resistance to change. When an organisation is required to effectively confront change the emerging problems arising from the need to change can be both ambiguous and ill-understood (Owens, 2004). Because of the unknown, “outcomes of possible alternative solutions are not knowable in advance” (p. 286). In this way leaders of change face many complex issues that arise during a change process, often simultaneously.

As the process involved in initiative implementation continues to develop, other issues become more apparent and might potentially cause resistance within an organisation. Constant swings of emphasis in change and innovation can result in high levels of insecurity in staff. In turn this repetitiveness can cause cynical behaviours in teachers who learn to harden themselves against all change and its champions (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006). Cardno (2002) refers to this defensiveness as a “barrier to learning...the challenge in team learning is to overcome the forces that work against honest communication” (p. 220). Argyris (1985) agrees with Cardno (2002) and calls such barriers defensive routines that are both subtle and persuasive. Argyris (1993) argues that:

Organisational defensive routines exist in educational organisations. Defensive routines are any policy or action that inhibits individuals, groups, sub-groups and organisations from experiencing embarrassment or threat and at the same time prevents the actors from identifying and reducing the causes of embarrassment or threat. (p. 15)

Unless they are recognised they are likely to inhibit team learning because they are anti-learning, over protective and counter-productive. How change is managed is brought about by effective leadership in managing collaborative team cultures through advocacy of non-rational emotional responses by individuals. One strategy that might be employed in an attempt to enhance ownership is called Double-loop learning, advocated by Argyris (1977). Double-loop learning goes beyond changing strategies to changing values which must be implemented by the principal as a part of a school’s strategic management plan in order for values to be owned by all stake holders in a learning organisation.

Defensive behaviour impacts on organisations by inhibiting the detection and correction of errors and effectively inhibiting problem solving and decision-making. All of these factors play a key

role in the practice of creating effective change. However resistance can be productive rather than exclusively repressive according to Foucault and Gramsci (1971, as cited in Olsen, 1999). Where resistance is productive it allows some staff to experience ownership of the initiative while others at the same time experience control and react with resistance in an attempt to achieve initiative sustainability. Where members have buy-in from the beginning of an initiative they tend to have a greater degree of ownership and support therefore heightening the level of sustainability.

Summary

Change mandated by the MoE to implement and sustain a TDI into a school's curriculum might indicate signs of being successful during the funding period, yet depending upon how effectively the change has been managed, then the sustainability of such change might be short-lived post external-funding. A leader's depth and breadth of skills appear to be in direct relation to how the changes made have been made with a focus to long-term sustainability. Effective leadership skills involving change perspectives for teachers include: collaborative decision-making procedures; the ability to manage in-depth change processes and its related professional development; managing work intensification for members and aligning initiative ownership for staff. Such leadership skills need to be administered often simultaneously while restructuring and redistributing resources which are strategically linked to a school's goals after the external funding of an initiative.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this research was to identify the complexities of sustaining a professional learning model for teachers post MoE contract. The focus was to understand multiple participant meanings of initiative implementation in relation to sustainability issues post MoE funding. There is currently little New Zealand based formal research on the impact of sustainability post funding of TDI contracts.

The sustainability of a project linked back to professional development and professional learning in schools is seldom linked back to why the initiative was implemented in the first place according to O'Connell, Timperley, Parr and Meissel, (2008). These authors go on to say that:

Since 2000 researchers have more consistently attended to defining and describing sustainability and drawing conclusions about the links backward to the professional learning design...despite this...few research studies...clarify a definition of sustainability or trace how or why schools discontinue, adapt, or even transform the changes they make over time (p. 2).

The findings from the data have aimed to contribute to the wider body of knowledge that exists in relation to managing change, and the professional development required in order for stakeholders to realise effective school improvement through sustaining a MoE funded TDI initiative. The change and cultural conditions that make sustainability a seemingly elusive focus were approached through a qualitative research design with the methods of semi-formal interviews and focus groups.

This chapter outlines the decisions that were made with regard to the methods of approach of the data collection for the findings from the data being semi-formal interviews and focus group interviews. Details regarding methodology, data analysis procedures, validity and reliability of the findings from the data and the ethical considerations are also explained in this chapter.

Methodology

Within the parameters of qualitative research there is enough flexibility to explore and discover the vast, rich experiences of principals, TDI coordinators and classroom teachers affected by school improvement and cultural change during the implementation and focus of TDI sustainability post Ministry initiative funding. Qualitative data provides rich information in a valid and respectful way for participants' which is interpretative (interested in participants' perspective of reality from past events) to research and to understand why people think, feel, and act as they do in relation to the sustainability of an externally mandated initiative one year since MoE funding. A research design paradigm is required which examines the problem in an holistic way capturing the experiences of teachers, TDI coordinators and principals with the potential for conflicts, dilemmas and difficulties. There is "little research done on this and qualitative research is exploratory and useful...do not know the important variables to examine" (Creswell, 2002, p. 22). Unanticipated as well as anticipated relationships in the phenomena have been accommodated and these were used to inform the findings from the data process (Stake, 1995).

A paradigm using interpretative, qualitative methodology reflects the differences between people according to Bryman (2008). Interpretivism through deconstruction and constructionism considers perceptions and emotions of people in attempting to explain human behaviour, and the ways that the use of power within organisational structures impacts on those who enact their roles within these structures MoE (2006). Although qualitative research is about people, Hakim (2000) goes on to say that "it is not about individuals *per se*" (p. 34). Reports and discussions in the findings from the data focus on the various patterns and themes that emerged from interview and focus group discussions.

Participants were chosen because they all had been involved in the TDI implementation process in their respective schools. Some participants had been involved for three years and others less, yet the TDI contract was common to all participants. All participants at the time of the findings from the data were involved in the focus of sustainability of a TDI contract within their school post MoE funding. Both focus groups and interviews were held in a comfortable permissive environment within the participants' schools.

Table 4.1 Participants across three primary schools

| | | |
|------------------|--------------------|---|
| Principal 1 (P1) | Coordinator 1 (C1) | Focus Groups 1A &1B: (FG1A)Participants1-8 (FG1B) Participants 1-6 |
| Principal 2 (P2) | Coordinator 2 (C2) | Focus Groups 2A& 2B: (FG2A) Participants1-5 (FG2B) Participants 1-5 |
| Principal 3 (P3) | Coordinator 3 (C3) | Focus Group 3: (FG3) Participants1-6 |

Table 4.1 shows the stakeholders within each of the three research schools horizontally, indicated by the same numeral after their code. Vertically the different roles of the stakeholders at each of the three schools are identified and collectively all stakeholders are documented,

The goal of the findings from the data was to understand multiple participant meanings by relying as much as possible on the participants' perceptions of the situation being studied. The findings from the data involved many people from the same staff who interacted over time in three different schools. The qualitative design allowed the findings from the data to describe and interpret the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviours and beliefs of each staff-group (Harris, 1999). A qualitative approach to the constructivist research has allowed the findings from the data to collect open-ended data with the primary intent of developing themes from the data. The knowledge claims are based primarily on what Creswell (2002) refers to constructivist perspectives as multiple meanings of individual experiences.

The intention of data gathering was to go deep and get shared perspectives from people by promoting self-disclosure among participants. The chosen qualitative approach to the findings from the data left room for reinterpretation and reshaping of the problem during the process of dialogue prior to action and even during action. Participants in the focus groups had choices offered as opposed to a predetermined questionnaire, which included closed-ended response choices. This approach was chosen because the findings were less likely to be intentionally influenced by the interviewer through oversight or omission.

Quantitative methodology was considered and discarded. Scott and Usher (2003) clarify that experimental methodology as used in social and educational research assumes that the context of human relations is not central to an understanding of it. So it was deemed inappropriate along with data gathering by observation (due to time restraints) and as explained earlier by Scott and Usher (2003) to have human activity to data sets expressed in numerical terms. Neither approach would have done justice to the complexity of the focus of sustainability of a TDI long-term. The experiences of the participants in this research are influenced by time, workload and school change. The measurement of absolutes, as in quantitative research, was neither possible nor desirable.

Research methods

Schools where the findings from the data took place included three primary schools who had implemented the MoE funded TDI initiative into their curriculum over three years. The researcher was the TDI coordinator at one of the schools in an associate principal's role. At the time of research another coordinator was acting in the researcher's place. The selection of three schools was made as they were the only three primary schools contracted to the MoE for the period of the 2006-2008 TDI contracts in the Central and Northland regions of New Zealand. Cost of travel and access to schools was a consideration when choosing schools for the research and any consequent follow-up.

All schools drew their pupils from communities where parents, caregivers, and whanau involve themselves in the school-wide activities. Information about the findings from the data and participants' involvement was sent to the TDI coordinators and focus group participants. The principals had received theirs earlier when establishing permission to carry our research in their schools. Consent forms for signing were sent to all participants and filed in the findings from the data's locked filing cabinet for future reference. Principals, TDI coordinators and classroom teachers (via their syndicate leaders) were then contacted and interviewed.

The interview method differs from the focus group method of data collection in that the findings from the data take the lead. The interviewee takes a more or less passive role according to Rice (1931) who goes on to say that “information or points of view of the highest value may not be disclosed because the direction given in the interview by the questioner leads away from them” (p. 561). Considering the possibility of the interviewee’s point of view not being heard, the interview was designed to be semi-formal and in-depth in order to allow greater scope for discussion as data was obtained from the participant. In this way the findings from the data took on a less directive and dominating role in the anticipation of deeper responses on areas where the participant felt that they are of most importance.

A total of 30 teachers participated in five different focus groups. The numbers of participants in each of the five focus groups are as follows: FG1A= 8; FG1B= 6; FG2A= 5; FG2B= 5 and FG3= 6. Two separate focus groups took place in two of the schools and one focus group in the remaining school. The reason that one school had only one focus group was due to its smaller staffing size. There were only six teachers in total who were available to participate in that particular school. A focus group with less than five participants might not have provided the necessary level of discussion. Therefore dividing the group of six into two groups of three would not have been appropriate for generating in-depth discussion and gathering the data required.

The focus group sizes of between five and eight participants were small enough for everyone to have an opportunity to share insights and yet large enough to provide a diversity of perceptions. Although time restraints as mentioned at the conclusion of this chapter meant that not all summarised data was discussed within allocated timeframe where groups had more than five participants. The focus groups were restricted in size because when a group exceeds a dozen participants according to Krueger and Casey (2000) “there is a tendency for the group to fragment” (p. 10). Participants begin to whisper to the person next to them as there is not enough pause in the focus group’s conversation for them to talk. Krueger and Casey (2000) suggest that when whispering occurs, this is a sign that the group is too big.

Semi structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide and focus groups using a focus group guide, refer to Appendix A and B at the end of this thesis, with an opportunity for

the interviewer to vary the sequence of the questions. This “allows latitude to ask further questions in response to what are seen as significant replies” (Bryman, 2008, p. 196). Some questions took the form of a list of topics formatted as an interview guide to allow further scope for latitude and the focus group interview participants’ responses to be built on one another to allow deeper meanings to emerge.

Data analysis

When done rigorously and systematically, the analysis and interpretation of qualitative data can be time consuming according to Silverman (1993). Patton (1990) supports Silverman by espousing that:

The analysis of qualitative data is a painstaking process requiring long hours of careful going over notes, organizing data, looking for patterns, checking emergent patterns against the data, cross-validating data sources and findings and making linkages among the various parts of the data and the emergent dimensions of the analysis. (p. 379)

In this research the emphasis was on the ‘raw’ data collected as opposed to a report-writer’s conclusions. Excerpts from interviews and focus groups that displayed a range and variety of perceptions about each question were used to show clusters of feelings, beliefs, contradictions, associations, and themes that have emerged from the data. Answers from different people were grouped by topics from the interview and focus group guides, although the relevant data was not found in the same place in each interview or focus group. Patton (1990) mentions that “in this way the interview guide [and focus group guide] actually constitutes a descriptive analytical framework for analysis” (p. 376). With a wide range of information-rich data to sort through, having the data loosely analysed as it is transcribed, makes the ‘long table approach’ described by Krueger and Casey, (2000) a little more manageable within the time restraints of the findings from the data.

The ‘long table approach’ of gathering and analysing data is a low-technology option that required a lot of room where work remained undisturbed until the analysis work had been done. This method is time-tested and breaks down the analysis task into manageable chunks allowing

the findings from the data to be analysed into identified themes, and categorised into results. In this way as suggested by Smelser (1982) “qualitative research, even when theoretically informed, is the most open-ended and hence least biased type of study” (p. 28). This provides rich information to understand multiple participant meanings by relying as much as possible on the participants’ perspectives in order to draw conclusions around what strategies might assist or hinder the sustainability of a TDI’s professional learning focus post MoE funding.

Not all data gathered is worthy of analysis or can be analysed. Krueger and Casey (2000) suggest that “certain questions are more important than others, and you must know one from the other” (p. 139). In this regard the findings from the data have placed emphasis on parts of the group discussions, and individual interviews in which the most relevant conversations to the findings from the data aims and questions were held. The data gathering process although time consuming adhered to the planned semi-structured interview questions and focus group interviews. However some questions for principals were asked in the wrong order as discussion during the interviews led to a later question being more pertinent question than the one recoded in sequence. This assisted in maintaining a flow to the interview. The final data gathered was not affected by this procedure and all questions were asked and discussed at some stage during the interview. In another instance a question to a coordinator was overlooked. This was the second question listed in Appendix A around school improvement and student achievement. Therefore comments from two rather than three coordinators were used to substantiate the effect of the TDI on student achievement and school improvement discussed in Chapter Five.

Altogether thirty six participants took part in this research. The three principals and three coordinators were all available on pre-arranged dates to participate individually in semi-formal interviews. Thirty four participants participated in the original focus group interviews. At the time of data gathering only 30 focus group participants were involved out of a possible 34. There were two teachers absent in one group and two beginning teachers were exempted from participation by their principal as they had not been a part of the TDI professional development up until the time of the focus group interview. Although this did not appear to affect the validity and reliability of the data, having more participants who had not received TDI professional

development as a part of an induction programme to a new school might have uncovered data not mentioned in the findings from the data findings.

Time restraints also impacted on data collection. Where focus groups had more than five participants this meant that a lack of time to effectively complete the summary section outlined in Appendix B question 4 reduced the amount of data collected. Realising that focus groups were conducted during after school hours where time is precious, I had mentioned in the focus group information forms my taking between 30-45minutes of teachers' time. Where time was up I quickly summarised the main points of the discussion and was not always able to give enough time for participants to feed back to me the adequacy of the previous question's summary. In this way the summary became very brief. Within two days of each focus group taking place I emailed the transcripts to each participant and gave two weeks for anyone to make any alterations before I began writing up the findings of the data gathered. No participants responded with any amendments to be made. The data stands as that collected on the days that each of the five focus groups took place. All ethical considerations were taken into account. Consent forms and written and oral records of the data collected will remain in the findings from the data's personal locked filing cabinet until 2014.

Triangulation

The two primary research methods of semi formal interview and focus groups, allowed for triangulation of data collection across the data collection methods (Denzin, 1997). Triangulation for this research involved combining different data by gathering it from eleven different sources at different levels across three schools. The levels included individuals as the coordinators and the principals who also gave an organisational perspective to the findings from the data. Focus groups, which included a range of five to eight members in each group, were used to gather information from teachers at another level.

Combining levels of data is referred to as methodological triangulation or combined levels of triangulation according to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007). According to Denzin (1997) methodological triangulation ensures validity by the integrity of the conclusions drawn from the findings from the data across all levels of a school's organisation: principal, TDI coordinators

and classroom teachers. Members of each interview and focus grouping were separated in order to keep their views separate, which helped to problematise the data according to what teachers perceive, believe and feel and what principals and coordinators perceive, believe and feel. On the other hand Silverman (1993) argues that multiple data collecting methods should be taken to imply triangulation (that is an overlap of data findings), he argues that also going deeper with one method can also enhance validity. Data triangulation only exists if there is an overlap of findings so the selection of data collection tools in this research enabled the findings from the data to check for data triangulation. In doing so the findings from the data found that there were differences between the multiple sources.

The use of multiple methods to gather data for the findings from the data was to overcome the inherent weaknesses of single measurement instruments as suggested by Denzin (1997). “Interpretative [researchers] who are committed to sophisticated rigor –a term given to refer to researchers employing multiple methods, means they are committed to making their ...interpretative schemes as public as possible” (p. 318). This also required that careful consideration was given to the nature of the sampling framework used to ensure validity and reliability of the findings from the data conclusions, realising as Denzin (1997) mentions that the “realities to which sociological methods are fitted are not fixed” (p. 319). Consequently no one method of data collection will ever capture all of the changing features in the context being studied. Denzin (1997) goes on to say that for this reason “the most fruitful search for sound interpretations of the real world must rely on triangulation strategies” (p. 319). There are five different forms of triangulation strategy and for this research the methodological triangulation method has been used.

The five various forms of triangulation include: data, investigation, theory methodological and member-check (Denzin, 1989). For the purposes of this research methodological triangulation has been used. Methodological triangulation is the most appropriate method because the same unit of research is measured only once and the findings from the data sought to build interpretations from each situation separately.

The results were triangulated once all of the data had been collected. By using two methods of data gathering, different pictures of the findings from the data were allowed to emerge (Trend, 1978) because methodological triangulation allows this to happen. Trend (1978) also suggests that “we give different viewpoints the chance to arise, and postpone the immediate rejection of information...that seem out of joint with the majority viewpoint” (p. 352-353). Therefore it is useful to bring a variety of data and methods to bear on the same problem making triangulation a form of comparative analysis. By combining multiple methods and data sources the findings from the data hoped to “overcome the intrinsic bias that comes from single-methods...” (Denzin, 1970, p. 313). However triangulation did not mean that the findings from the data findings generated by different methods automatically came together to produce an integrated whole. The initial conflicts in findings were as Patton (1990) describes “received with varying degrees of credibility” (p. 466). Because of this the data did not lead to a totally consistent picture and nor did the findings from the data expect everything to turn out the same.

Triangulation was used to juxtapose individual participant’s perceptions and according to McTaggart (1999) “rather than to encompass everything which happened in the [research] within one interpretive frame” (p. 11). By considering and interpreting multiple perspectives relating to change and its sustainability of a TDI implementation, and using semi formal interviews and focus groups to do so, the triangulation of rich information has established a new position with regard to organisational change and the sustainability of a TDI programme post MoE funding. Not only does triangulation incorporate multiple participant perspectives, it also recognises changing perspectives over time (McTaggart, 1999). Something that more time allowed on the findings from the data over several more years might have revealed.

Triangulating qualitative data sources means “comparing the perspectives of people from different points of view” (Patton, 1990, p. 467). This means that validating information that is gathered from interviews and focus groups by checking documents and other written evidence (teachers’ appraisals, pedagogy feedback of TDI) that “can corroborate what interview and [focus group] respondents report” (p. 467). This method of data triangulation was considered but not used in the findings from the data analysis because of time restraints and according to Patton (1990) it will seldom lead to a single, totally consistent picture. The aim of the findings from the

data was to understand when and why there were differences in participants' viewpoints rather than expecting everything to turn out the same.

Validity and Reliability

The intention of the findings from the data was to provide a good match between the findings from the data's observations and the theoretical ideas they develop analysed against the literature. Validity is concerned with the integrity of the conclusions that are generated from a piece of research (Bryman, 2008). Le Compte and Goetz (as cited in Bryman, 2008) argue that validity tends to be a strength of qualitative research because the data is gathered over time: "... [which] allows the findings from the data to ensure high levels of congruence between concepts and observations" (p. 376). The focus groups' elicited a wider selection of different views in a shorter period of time, than any other method of gathering opinions (Kamberelis & Dimitriads, 2004). McTaggart (1999) also writes that "validation in participatory action research (PAC) –the testing of policy as theory) includes interpretive enquiry" (p. 10). In this respect the findings from the data has served the interests of other participants and at the same time has "come to the action and enquiry with obligations, interests and concerns which intersect with those of others" (p, 11). The aim of the findings from the data has not been to cause a conflict of interest rather to establish a process to engage the themes and issues and thus make the findings from the data reporting credible, valid and useful to the participants and others. The validity of this research has been to establish some points of reference from participatory research findings evident at all levels within a school's organisation that discover how an organisation does or does not sustain a focus of sustainability post MoE funding.

The reliability of the findings from the data is concerned with whether the results achieved are, stable repeatable (Bryman, 2008) and dependable (Guba, 1985 & Lincoln, 1994, as cited in Bryman, 2008). The data gathered was in the form of three different schools over a similar time period using two methods. The data could never be repeated using the same respondents, social setting or circumstances as schools are organisations of personnel and initiative change. However if other researchers were given the same rich data they would arrive at the same or similar conclusions. This is an indication that the findings from the data are both reliable and

stable over time in that the results of the respondents do not fluctuate. Reliability of the findings from the data is also evident in that one researcher was involved in the interpretation of the open-ended question data and its categorisation into themes. In this way there was consistency in the decisions made and thus reinforcing the reliability of the data.

Bryman (2008) suggests that credibility and reliability of research is realised when knowledge and understanding have been extended by the findings from the data. Because little research has been carried out regarding the sustainability of a TDI contract post MoE funding the intention of the findings from the data was to provide credible and reliable conclusions through the access and interpretation of rich research data.

Ethical considerations

Consultation with the findings from the data participants was imperative to the success of the findings from the data from the proposal stages through to the dissemination of the data analysis and the final report. Signed consent was obtained from the principal participants initially and then written consent once ethics approval had been given, to have their school involved in the findings from the data. Written consent was sought from each interview and focus group participant and confirmed orally at the commencement of each interview and focus group session. Participants had the option of withdrawing from the findings from the data process up to two weeks after their interview or prior to their participation in a focus group. If a participant had withdrawn their information after a focus group had been held then the remaining data would not be valid in context of the discussion generated.

Signed consent to use the recording data was given at the beginning of each session. This ensured that the findings from the data would check for reliability and validity of what had been said at the time of personal data gathering. Oral text was erased from the recording device once it had been transcribed into the findings from the data report for security, confidentiality and anonymity of participants. As the process of interpreting and analysing data is time consuming when comparing and contrasting data across schools, equipment was locked in a file in the researcher's home for the time that it took to check perspectives from the participants' responses.

Each quotation was attributed to its respondent who was identified by a reference number and transcripts were colour coded according to the group that the participant came from, for example, principal, TDI coordinator or focus group. During this process the findings from the data were constantly compared and decisions were made as to what theme and category responses were best suited to. The findings were then used to write an interpretative overview of the findings from the data's conclusions using some of the quotations and excerpts from interviews.

Confidentiality and anonymity has been assured by the use of: school codes, different coloured paper for different groups of participants and letter and numeral for principals, coordinators and focus group participants. No details about the schools have been provided in order to protect their anonymity and because this research is not wanting to analyse decile rating nor roll numbers. The findings from the data was not taking a strong evaluative approach of what happened in schools but more looking at staff perceptions of sustainability issues.

Due to the limited sample size, anonymity of the schools has been strived for but cannot be guaranteed and nor can the data be generalised. However the data does highlight issues and these might be transferrable to other schools. This is up to the reader to decide or not. Patton (1990) suggests that the “validity, meaningfulness and insights generated from qualitative inquiry have more to do with the information-richness...and the capabilities of the findings from the data than the sample size” (p. 185). In other words a limited sample size does not imply a lack of in-depth research.

While gathering data during the focus group sessions the identity of a group member was known to others in that same group. Confidentiality of participant's responses and their identity was known by fellow participants and confidentiality was orally consented before and after the focus group. The findings from the data had no other means of ensuring that confidentiality was upheld by fellow participants after the data had been gathered. All data transcripts were emailed to all interview participants and the leader of the focus group participants to check for individual comment before data analysis was undertaken.

Summary

Interpretivist, qualitative methodology reflecting the differences of three different participant groups across three primary schools were used by the researcher from the findings from the data to provide rich, deep information. The intention was to look for complexity of views according to where different participants' sat within their organisation as opposed to narrowing meanings into a few themes. In order to generate opportunities for wider points of views to be expressed by the participants, open ended semi-structured interviews and focus group questions were used.

The triangulation of data analysis meant that interpretations of the data were stronger than those built upon the framework of a single method (Denzin, 1997). Likewise the validity of data was strengthened as the data had been gathered over time, and participants' had been able to reflect on the strategies used in their school to implement a TDI with a focus towards long-term sustainability. The same participants' could not be used again to construct the same data and findings due to changes in staffing and initiative emphasis at each school. However if other researchers were given the same rich data it is presumed that the reliability of the conclusions reached would be similar and transferable in similar situations. Reliability is also evident because the findings from the data interpreted the data providing consistency in the decisions made.

Every effort by the researcher was taken to ensure that the findings from the data were taken to provide anonymity and confidentiality for all participants and their respective schools. Signed and informed consent was given by all participants and the findings from the data have endeavored to clearly communicate how different participants felt about the topic. Due to the many voices and multiple views that have been presented, every effort has been made to represent the range of views while upholding anonymity and confidentiality in the public reporting of the findings from the data.

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CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter provides an analysis of the data gathered during semi-structured interviews from six participants being three principals and three TDI coordinators as well as five focus groups of 30 participants in total across three different primary schools. The findings are summarised into themes and presented. The data analysis process is described in Chapter Three. This chapter is divided into four main sections: the principals' perceptions, the coordinators' perceptions, the teachers' perceptions and the complexity and tensions of sustainability.

During the implementation of the TDI all three schools had a TDI coordinator take on the role of developing the three year implementation process across their school while funded by the Ministry of Education. In this research the coordinators' roles were funded initially by the MoE and then the restructuring of positions within the school by their respective principals has helped to continue the funding needed for all three coordinators to carry on their designated roles post MoE funding.

The Principals' perceptions

Principals' involvement.

The principals all attended staff professional learning and development programmes, annual National TDI Huis (gathering of principals and coordinators across New Zealand to discuss the progress and development of individual TDI's) engaged in professional readings (academic readings specific to TDI development) and the related dialogue throughout the three year TDI contract's implementation period. According to all three principals their involvement in the professional learning acted as a model to motivate teachers to develop their own professional learning with a focus of sustainability. The comment made by all three principals is summed up by one of the principals:

P2: The leadership role is about getting alongside people. It is a hands-on role.

The commitment included getting alongside staff as they coped with different aspects of change inherent in implementing a new initiative into a curriculum and two of the principals commented:

P2: Having the principal's role defined as a part of the TDI contract along with specific tasks was useful in adhering to and managing the contract.

P3: I worked collaboratively with the TDI coordinator and personally took TDI leadership programmes with the students. Because of my involvement at classroom level I could oversee the structure of the TDI. I have now taken a back-seat and distributed some of the leadership in that the TDI coordinator has taken on another staff member to assist her.

By principals not leaving the new learning to the classroom teachers and coordinators and becoming involved in it themselves the spin-off effect, according to one principal, was that teachers felt valued and therefore more motivated to take ownership of the new learning for themselves. Discussion of this data can be found later in this chapter under the teachers' focus group data analysis.

Restructuring and managing for sustainability

Once external funding for the TDI had ceased principals had look at ways to restructure staffing roles within their school in order to maintain the existing TDI programmes:

P1: Although the funding from MoE ceased the identified gifted and talented students did not go away so we had to find an alternative way to provide for their identified learning needs.

Since the MoE funding had ceased, the two schools restructured their schools differently in an attempt to sustain the TDI initiative long term. Two principals commented on ways that they had restructured staffing roles in an attempt to allow current and new leadership of the TDI to be sustained:

P3: The work we did with the TDI was huge in light of the leadership school-wide focus we took. It has started to restructure our school. We had to transform and give directorship positions to the teachers in the school to hold responsibilities for different changes occurring in the school if we were to sustain the beliefs that came through the TDI initiative. We could not carry on the previous way of structuring and sustain the programme long-term and without MoE funding. We have directorship positions with financial remuneration from 2008 Ministry of Education remuneration units allocation to the teachers in the school to hold responsibilities for different changes occurring –one being the TDI directorship.

P1: The fact that we have a TDI coordinator now in the DP's role at the school, the TDI programmes continue under the DP's job description which helps to sustain the programmes post-funding.

The third school has retained the role of the TDI coordinator within an Associate Principal's role both during and post initiative funding. Two principals made the following comments:

P3: Having the TDI coordinator oversee the management of the initiative implementation and thereafter has helped to sustain the organisational requirement of such an initiative.

P2: I think that the biggest thing about sustainability is the management of it. You can't just rely on it staying a certain way because it won't. It has to be managed and that's the benefit of having a coordinator do this role.

Formative leadership

One principal mentioned that in order to accommodate the changes being made during initiative implementation the structure needed to be malleable and flexible:

P2: Leadership is about being formative. You still shape and reshape as you go. If this isn't done then other issues arise that might not have been a part of the original initiative implementation process.

Formative leadership and analysis of the initiative according to the three principals must be ongoing because the method of embedding an initiative into a school's curriculum cannot be one-size-fits-all. This is because every school context is different and the TDI initiative is one that develops over-time according to the context and student learning needs of each school. Although the TDI leadership is formative, formal organisational structure is required at the same time.

All three principals played a vital role in restructuring staff responsibilities in an attempt to make a TDI sustainable in the classroom after the MoE funding had ceased.

Teachers and collaborative management

Each principal took a different viewpoint in relation to the classroom sustainability of the TDI.

P1: All teachers have been told to differentiate their programmes. We see this as teachers taking responsibility for those children rather than thinking they will always go out into a withdrawal programme to have their learning needs met.

Another principal commented about differentiating the curriculum for all students in an effort to make the TDI inclusive:

P2: Differentiating the classroom programme was collaboratively planned for in syndicates and was a part of the teachers' appraisal system each term.

The same participant explained the importance of initiative management:

P2: I think the biggest thing about sustaining an initiative is the management of it. You can't just rely on it staying a certain way because it won't. It has to be managed.

Change processes and cultural conditions for both the organisation and individual staff require attention when a new initiative is introduced as all three principals commented:

P3: Managing change is difficult because some people get their noses out of joint because teachers thought that what they were doing wasn't going to make any difference. It was a small number but in a small school it can be quite negative so we had some serious discussions –this is the way it has gone and this is the way it is done.

P2: Teachers see that change will assist them in the delivery of education by getting kudos, satisfaction, acknowledgement and feeling valued. Giving time to teachers to learn in hours which are not outside of teaching hours helps them to get their head around the changes necessary for an initiatives implementation.

P1: As a leader you must understand how people cope with change...Everyone is quite happy then you challenge them and they become depressed about it and you have to help them out of what is sometimes termed the 'pit'.

According to all three principals the issues that emerged from the initiative's implementation and change processes were able to be discussed personally or collaboratively as a staff. Two principals recognised the need for such discussion:

P2: As a team of people you talk often and regularly about the issues. Discussion and dialogue help to bring changes in the classroom necessary to implement the pedagogy of an initiative into the curriculum. We talk about the issues at hand, then take the next-steps and ask what are we going to do about it? How are we going to manage it?...There is no option to resist an initiative being implemented. If a teacher is in the school then they participate in what we have decided to do here. If there is resistance then I will talk with the person concerned and mention the expectations within our school. When people are employed they understand that this is what we do here.

P3: Consultation provides a vehicle for ownership. It's a big thing.

Without consultation with staff and collaboratively amongst staff there is a greater likelihood that any possibility of collaborative team work will be either fragmented or non-existent.

P2: Going back to talk with teachers openly about being effective in their classrooms when implementing an initiative. Asking what they have done well and what hasn't worked so well and asking why?

Two principals assumed that they took time to engage in discussion with their teachers in an attempt to help the teachers to 'own' the initiative and according to the principals this helped to lessen any staff resistance towards change. However the discussion took place amongst teachers and in syndicate meetings according to the principals as opposed to a one-on-one conversation with the principal.

P3: Changes are also made when teachers discuss issues amongst each other. The professional dialogue often brought about by professional readings informed change.

P2: Professional dialogue at syndicate levels gives people opportunities to say what they think and feel and that they have the opportunities to be consulted.

Yet the type of comments made by principals about dialogue suggests that the dialogue was more in the form of a discussion. The discussions served to pass on professional learning information to teachers as opposed to productively discussing perceived issues where a conflict of opinion may have been present.

A perception of teacher ownership

According to the principals how an initiative is managed is critical at all stages of its development through to its focus on long-term sustainability. Without effective management

being able to develop staff collaboration and cooperation, a leader runs the risk of resistance rather than ownership of the initiative according to the principals.

According to all three principals the data revealed that teachers experienced ownership of the initiative. The principals assumed that teachers did have ownership of the initiative as highlighted in the following comments:

P1: We didn't have hindrances or resistance from the staff regarding TDI, rather a passive acceptance.

P2: Ownership is encouraged by providing teachers with support, noticing what they are doing both formally in appraisal systems and informally in passing.

P3: ...every teacher works from the same learning model...so this provides ownership as the teachers are valued for their input.

All three principals took time to engage teachers in an attempt to help them own the initiative and to perhaps lessen possibilities of hindrances during the TDI implementation.

P2: Leadership is important to make sure that resistant teachers (as labeled by the principal) in the beginning stages understand the professional development that they have received. The last thing you want is someone sabotaging a project that has been invested in, in a big way.

One principal commented on the ownership of the TDI being given to teachers through recognition of their work and understanding each others' personalities:

P2: Ownership is encouraged by providing staff with support and noticing what they are doing. Teachers feel valued if they get recognition for their work –formal and informal, through appraisal systems. It also helps me to check on what might need

changing... Leadership is important to make sure that resistant teachers can get hold of the professional development and use it.

One principal mentioned passivity of staff towards the TDI initiative.

P1: Rather than resistance we have passive acceptance. Although I have had one or two teachers say that we are applying for too many initiatives.

Although the school goal of TDI implementation and its long-term sustainability is being worked towards it cannot however be assumed that principals' perception of teacher ownership will be the same as the teachers' themselves. This is an issue I will discuss later on when the teachers' data is discussed.

The Coordinators' perceptions

TDI role and perceived collaborative practice

Principals are the overall designated leaders of the school however they don't lead each specific initiative. Their current role is already complex and fraught with an abundance of administrative and human resourcing responsibilities. For the TDI, a school coordinator played a major role in leading the TDI's implementation and its subsequent sustainability. As one principal mentioned:

P1: The employment of a TDI coordinator was crucial to the implementation as I had no one on the existing staff to do the job.

The coordinators' played an important role in providing infrastructural support. They liaised and consulted between the principal and classroom teachers in an effort to embed TDI practice effectively into each of their school contexts. They provided an environment that supported the professional learning either directly or indirectly by making professional development a priority for professional learning and classroom implementation by: organising staff meetings and professional development workshops; providing professional readings to broaden the knowledge-base of staff; organising release time; timetabling; running and overseeing

withdrawal programmes for identified gifted and talented (G&T) students and making suitable venues available for professional learning both during and after the initiative's implementation.

One coordinator made the following comment regarding her role:

C3: Consultation is a big part of my role on a regular basis, sharing with other staff and the BOT. TDI is a part of who we are which is a part of our culture and helps to sustain the TDI.

Because the coordinators act as conduits, the middle point of contact for the TDI between principals and teachers, they are faced with the task of developing an understanding of professional knowledge and expertise, the knowledge of how it is acquired, to be shared more widely. These tasks are expected to be carried out amidst many other responsibilities in their wider-school roles because coordinators are not solely coordinators for the TDI. In an attempt to sustain a TDI post-MoE funding coordinator's roles are also that of a deputy principal in one school and classroom teachers as well as coordinators in two schools. Therefore time to engage in collaborative enquiry and collaborative practice might have been restricted due to time restraints involving other school-based commitments, outside of teaching hours, for both the coordinators and classroom teachers.

In this research the coordinators' roles were funded initially by the MoE and then by the restructuring of positions within a school. In this way the three principals have made a way to continue the funding needed for the coordinator at their school to continue their designated role post MoE funding. The coordinators' role during the initiative implementation was to work and consult with both the principal and teachers in an effort to sustain a professional learning focus both during and post MoE funding. One coordinator mentioned that a lot of professional dialogue occurred.

A potential of collaborative team-work lies in the ability of those in leadership to develop skills of discussion and collaborative practices. However the data revealed that the collaborative practices generated during team work activities were around the coordinators passing on new

learning and information to staff. This was as opposed to discussing opinions and beliefs about the initiatives and their impact on teachers and their classroom practice. Two coordinators made the following comments that backed up the notion of informative collaborative practice where an emotive issue might have arisen:

C2: Whole school professional development generates conversation and helps to maintain a focus of sustainability of the project.

C3: During staff meeting time I have time allocated to keep teachers informed with TDI practices and new information. I also have release time during the day to consult with staff and provide a way to develop practice with staff.

The collaborative practice with two coordinators in this research was around information transfer as opposed to in-depth discussion about the different aspects of a TDI. The collaborative practice was productive in that it informed staff of current TDI practice. Staff either embedded the new knowledge back into their classroom practice or used the knowledge when strategically planning for the whole-school as in a principal's role. A comment from one coordinator reflects the informative discussion that took place:

C2: I report comments back to classroom teachers to sustain changes that I am making or observing children in the programme.

One coordinator attempted to engage in more in-depth discussion with teachers in order to assist them in having a sense of ownership of the initiative by making them a part of the collaborative decision-making process:

C3: We acknowledge the talents of our staff and have continual dialogue around TDI.

All three of the coordinators' discussions were around delivering new information to staff. Where a teacher was experiencing a dilemma or did not fully understand the expectation of them

by management, then there did not appear to be collaborative practice such as collaborative decision making (Cardno, 1998b). According to two coordinators the teachers were happy to allow management staff to make some decisions for them:

C3: Having the coordinator, who can see the big picture, collate the data that comes in helps teachers immensely who are already overloaded to own more of the initiative.

C1: Our staff are very, very compliant...passive acceptance.

Perhaps the level of participants' passivity depended upon how much knowledge the staff had acquired. If they had not yet developed a knowledge base of the TDI then they might think that they had little to offer and were content to let management do the thinking for them.

Sustainability and managing change

The specific nature of the impact of change associated with the sustainability of an initiative long-term is, according to all three coordinators, a matter of mediation by and through the local context of each school. There does not appear to be a one-size-fits-all method of sustainability. Each school took a different view of how to sustain the TDI post MoE funding:

C2: TDI is a part of our appraisal system so issues are followed up in an attempt to maintain a focus of sustainability of the initiative. Also, children in the TDI withdrawal groups are given feed-back time in their classrooms to share their learning with the rest of the class... The school's goals are aligned with TDI implementation, so it will be sustained as a part of our schools strategic plan over-time... Making sure that everyone 'normalises the TDI, making it a part of the appraisal system, planning is forwarded to the coordinator so I know that it is being done, becomes the school's culture.

C3: The increasing momentum becomes so sustainable because it has become 'our way', the culture, of our school that we have these diverse programmes. It's in the

community through parental feedback... Now that we have all these opportunities available to us parents expect them because it's who we are at [our school]...

C1: Provision has been made to continue the TDI because it has become a part of my DP's job description.

All three coordinators have endeavoured to provide professional learning systems which have been organised and structured throughout the TDI implementation in their school. In this way the TDI became a spontaneous part of teachers' work, according to the coordinators, and thereafter with a focus towards long-term sustainability.

The processes employed that brought about changes that might effectively implement an initiative into a school's curriculum required that the existing culture of a school underwent change at the same time. All three coordinators referred to this process of normalising a contract through a school's culture, in order to create an expectation of the initiative among the wider community and therefore provide opportunities for its long-term sustainability.

Change was constant throughout the implementation stages of the initiative according to all three coordinators. All three coordinators managed change in different ways during the implementation stages with a focus towards sustainability:

C1: We talk about changes being made to check that it is always in teachers' faces.

C2: Because the TDI is integrated into our planning staff are doing it automatically in their collaborative planning, so now it's not such a big issue that the funding has gone.

C3: We continue to manage change by always referring to the G&T Centre... Flexible practitioners help to motivate ownership and therefore change into a school's structure.

Two coordinators mentioned the importance of their Principal's commitment and involvement during the change process in that it motivated coordinators to take ownership of the new learning for themselves. In turn the new learning was transferred from the coordinators to the teachers:

C2: The decisions you make towards changes come from the principal not myself. However I do feed back to the principal what is going well and any changes to my timetable.

C3: Because the principal is so involved in everything it is as authentic and real.

One positive effect of the change process was that all three principals were involved in the change processes. In doing so the three coordinators became more motivated to take ownership of the new learning for themselves.

Professional development and the issue of induction

Before a TDI was fully embedded into a schools' curriculum, all three coordinators provided new knowledge that teachers might need to understand and engage effectively in new TDI routines. This meant that the professional development of all staff was a critical piece in maintaining a focus of sustainability post funding. All three coordinators made comments about the importance of on-going professional learning both during and after the initiative's implementation:

C1: Most of the professional development over that past three years has been about effective teaching practice. All professional development crosses over to include other initiatives so that an initiative doesn't stand in isolation.

C2: Whole school professional development generates conversation and helps to maintain a focus of sustainability of the project...The principal has continued to fund professional development from other sources since the MoE's funding has ceased.

C3: The spin-off of professional development for the TDI saw a holistic approach of children developing their whole-self which permeated to the planning and programmes that were implemented in broader domains because of the type of programmes they were running...multi-faceted...Funding from other initiatives entwines with TDI so, we still have the luxury of mentors coming in, release time and a principal who provides some of the release himself.

With a strong focus on professional development all participants benefitted from the initiative implementation and associated professional development focus because according to the coordinators, staff then had a broad knowledge base to refer to.

It seems that induction was not school-wide at two of the three schools:

C1: You can't expect all staff to know what everyone else knows at the same time. Anyone new on the staff will have missed the professional development that has gone before.

C3: Change of staff means we haven't got to the junior and middle areas of the school as much as we would have liked to...this is in the next six month plan to develop further sustainability in those areas.

And the coordinators' data revealed that induction was a priority across one of the schools:

C2: We make sure that all staff are trained in TDI and have provided the necessary professional development so that they have an understanding of where the rest of the staff is up to.

Data revealed that one coordinator allowed new staff to pick-up where the existing staff were up to, another coordinator undertook induction programmes with some new staff and one coordinator under-took an induction programme with all new staff.

All three coordinators carried out their roles as well as other responsibilities. Therefore, to expect that each new teacher knew what to expect from whom was a daunting task according to one coordinator. However in one school where induction was effective school-wide, the coordinator had been expected by the principal to carry out broad induction responsibilities as a part of their job description as reflected in the third listed coordinator's comment above.

Perceptions of teacher ownership

While all three coordinators attempted to provide the same professional development for their TDI programmes, with the exception of new members to two of the staffs, some staff experienced ownership and enablement of the TDI while at the same time some staff experienced resistance. Two coordinators experienced ownership of their role in the TDI as it was their responsibility to motivate staff towards the same end:

C2: I have found that if you work collaboratively and plan together then teachers get more motivated and this gives staff greater ownership of the initiative... Now we have 5yr olds identified as gifted, which I think is fabulous as initially there was resistance from one teacher in particular. But the good thing is that all teachers received professional development regardless of their resistance and the child's current year teacher was able to identify G&T in a particular child straight away when the resistant teacher would not have previously identify the child as such.

C1: I recognise the TDI as a part of my DP's job description as I recognise the importance of the initiative and how it affects children's learning.

A third coordinator didn't mention personal ownership of the initiative however they did mention the level of teachers' ownership as a result of the coordinator's [and principal's] motivation of the TDI contract on two occasions:

C3: Allowing teachers' freedom to initiate ideas and collaborating on programmes together all assists in creating ownership and lessening resistance of the initiative.

C3: Ownership of teachers came from the introduction of some teachers making connections with people and their stories. Encouraging those who might be unsure to get-on-board until they understand the whole picture. Hopefully they will get caught up in the whole momentum... Strength and passion of the staff to be included in the programmes through their own interests allowed staff to feel that they owned the initiative as well... Flexible practitioners help to motivate ownership for others.

All three coordinators also mentioned the level of ownership that some teachers experienced during and after the TDI's implementation:

C1: If teacher/people have a chance to be a part of the decision making process for a particular initiative then they are more likely to have ownership and a belief in the initiative and work collaboratively to see it embedded into the school's programme. If people do have a chance to be a part of the decision making then it does make a difference.

C2: There has been some resistance in my syndicate but I have found that if you work collaboratively and plan together then teachers get more motivated and this gives staff greater ownership of the initiative.

C3: Sometimes you have to get in the boat and see where the ride is going to take you. Hopefully they [teachers] will get caught up in the momentum... Strength and passion of the staff to be included in the programme allows staff to feel that they own the initiative as well.

One coordinator also noted that the belief system of individual teachers might cause teachers to demonstrate some resistance towards the implementation of a TDI into their classroom practice:

C1: A hindrance to the TDI implementation can be a teacher's own belief. If you can't change a belief system then it is almost impossible to get that person on-board as it goes against what they think. For example, there are no G&T children in a

decile 4 school they only exist in decile 10 schools... It isn't always possible for people to have ownership of an initiative. You can get funding for an initiative but if people don't believe in it then it is irrelevant really.

Further discussion about belief systems and their bearing on a participant's level of ownership or resistance towards an initiative is continued in Chapter Five.

The teachers' perceptions

The issue of ownership

Positive change in the three schools according to the teachers was associated with the benefits of working together collegially to improve teaching and learning for students within the classroom. Where collaboration occurred teachers experienced greater ownership of the initiative according to two teachers' comments below:

FG2A: 1: Like our behaviour management plan, where we all worked on it collaboratively as a staff, everyone took the TDI on-board and owns a part of it or all of it because people have been a part of establishing it.

FG1A: 2: Once we started the G&T intensive professional development course we were freed by management to implement the ideas into our classrooms and put ideas into our planning. This made you feel a part of the implementation.

When teachers who have the necessary knowledge did not feel that they had been a part of the decision making process for an initiative's implementation they are inclined to become frustrated and defensive. Twenty out of the 30 teachers commented about how they would have preferred to have had their ideas listened to during the TDI initiative's implementation. Below are some of the teachers' comments:

FG2A: 3: There is a need for teachers in the classroom to be listened to in order to feel like they own the initiative. This might help teachers to see how an initiative

could work in their classroom. If you are listened to more you feel that you have more to say about how things are done.

FG2A: 4: I don't think there was time for our/my in-put into the TDI implementation. Nobody asked me how it was going...there was an appraisal system where management could see how I was going I suppose.

FG3:4: We were all very compliant which was due to our lack of knowledge when the TDI was being implemented into our curriculum.

FG2A:1: As we had something to say we were listened to in the professional development sessions but I can't remember any major discussions that gave us in-put into the TDI implementation.

FG2A: 4: Maybe having withdrawal TDI programmes was a way of classroom teachers being listened to.

And there was passive acceptance of initiative implementation by some teachers:

FG2A: 1: I was too caught up in other initiatives at the time to be concerned whether I was given in-put or not. It didn't matter to me.

FG1A: 4: If teachers are not listened to then they can resist the needed changes and not really care how the initiative is implemented, embedded or even sustained.

FG 2A: Until we have more knowledge about an initiative it is hard to know what in-put we might make to contribute. This is why we have been compliant about what we have been told that we are doing.

FG2A: 2: Sometimes there is so much going on that you don't mind being told what to do and you don't care so let someone else do the thinking.

The data revealed that while some teachers felt they had input and therefore ownership of the initiative other teachers did not perceive the implementation of the TDI in the same way. It appeared that teachers became recipients of information to embed into their classroom practice rather than participants of collaborative discussion. The teachers' ownership of the initiative was on an informational level as opposed to a decision-making level.

FG3: 3: We were told what readings to understand rather than choosing our own. But I do feel confident that if I did have something to say that I would have been listened to.

There was a sense that initiative overload amongst the teachers' might have contributed to their passivity and acceptance of the initiative because they had so many other things at the same time to get on with.

Managing change

According to five out of the 30 teachers who were critical of mandated change, the major issues concerning negative emotional instances were that teachers were being forced to change without consultation. Mainly working in a reform environment characterised by too much pressure and insufficient support, in terms of workload, marking, pace, shortage of time was identified by 22 of the 30 teachers. Although it was not stated openly by teachers, there was an underlying assumption during the focus group discussions that the mentioned reform environment has led to immense frustration by teachers. 26 out of 30 teachers in the focus groups expressed frustration as an emotion experienced when going through mandated change.

FG2A: 1: When there's too much in the 'to do' pile you begin to feel bad because you know that your kids are missing out but you have reached a point of saturation that you can't take anymore. You are operating on overload.

Support in the classroom to guide teaching a child with an identified learning need was often lacking. This caused frustration as there remained 22 or more other children in the class requiring

the teacher's attention at the same time. However there were specific withdrawal groups outside of the regular classroom programme, held weekly for identified talented and gifted students, where their specific learning needs were attempted to be met by an outside provider. Three out of 30 teachers experienced fulfilment having identified a child's learning needs and were able to teach accordingly. The teachers' fulfilment led to satisfaction and pleasure:

FG2A: 2: I found it enjoyable to engage children in a different way by using different activities to suit their identified learning needs.

FG2A: 3: And because you have the knowledge through professional development you take pride in teaching knowing you are doing it properly.

Professional development and the issue of induction

Some teachers found that there were too many initiatives requiring professional development being introduced to teachers, while others felt that professional development, in a variety of fields, provided the knowledge base to implement these new initiatives:

FG2B: 2: I feel that how we approach professional development needs to change and that we shouldn't have so many initiatives going on at one time. We should have one focus for the year and do it properly.

While others felt that by being involved in a variety of professional development programmes, a wide knowledge base was provided to implement new initiatives:

FG2A: 3: Management prepared our teaching and learning of the TDI in the classroom by providing a wide range of professional development throughout the contract to build our knowledge base of the initiative.

FG1A: 2: I didn't have enough knowledge at the beginning of the TDI's implementation so by completing a G&T course I gained that valuable knowledge.

FG2A: 3: If we don't identify the gifted children who else will do it for us? This is a reason why professional readings have been so important to build our knowledge base.

According to all of the teachers in the findings from the data, professional development was critical for building a knowledge base for teachers to work from. Over time the TDI professional development moved from the transmission of skills and knowledge. Teachers then had time to reflect and improve on their own pedagogical practice both collaboratively and independently:

FG2A: 3: It is good having professional development related to our appraisal system because it makes me put theory back into practice in my classroom.

FG1B: 5: Sometimes I feel like I am flying by the seat of my pants but because we all support each other you keep going and are passionate about it, you keep going and you learn.

FG3: 2: We have always given each other collegial support and being a smaller staff we could actually use each other.

FG1B: 4: Doing professional development as a whole staff ...was good to collaborate ideas amongst other staff.

Induction for new staff was an attempt to achieve better-informed action than otherwise might occur if one's own understanding had not been informed. In one school all new staff had participated in a TDI induction programme. At a second school, some new staff at the senior school levels had been inducted and those in the middle and junior levels had not received induction, rather osmosis by being a part of the TDI. One school did not seem to have a TDI induction programme for new staff in place instead new staff began professional development from where existing staff were up to.

FG1B: 8: Without the induction of new staff to the programme/s sustainability across the school of the TDI seems more difficult and may mean that TDI won't exist as time goes on.

FG1A: 8: Teaching or inducting a new staff member creates more overload for the experienced teacher which is becoming a big dilemma. The induction of new staff is another cost that will be hard to fund now that the TDI funding has ceased.

FG1B: 6: I am a new teacher (last year) and don't know what TDI is. It doesn't seem very obvious at all.

Teachers at all three schools viewed induction from different perspectives. In all three schools the conduct of professional development was actively constructed yet the induction to professional development for new staff members was approached differently within each school. Where one focus group claimed to have members that did not receive any professional development around the TDI, their coordinator mentioned that professional development for all staff was available but if a teacher was new to the staff then they would have missed previous professional development. The coordinator deemed that new teachers participating in the current TDI professional development programmes was an attempt to induct new staff into the TDI. There were no provisions made to up-skill new teachers with previous TDI professional learning since the TDI had commenced. If teachers did have issues around their induction to the TDI there was no evidence that these issues were discussed either collaboratively or with management.

The complexity and tensions of sustainability

When the principals', coordinators' and focus groups' data is combined then the complexities of sustaining a TDI contract post MoE funding are revealed. Issues around induction of new staff, ownership, initiative overload, the impact on students and the sustainability of a TDI emerged as themes from the data.

Induction

In one focus group the data revealed that three out of five junior teachers in one of those schools were new to the school and that they had not received induction training regarding the TDI. Whereas seven out of eight senior and middle level teachers had been through the TDI implementation professional development processes and appeared to have developed a greater level of ownership of the TDI.

The following comments are from junior and middle syndicate school focus group teachers at different schools:

FG3: 1: I feel that the TDI contract is too top-heavy in our school and it really only involves the senior classes.

FG1B: The TDI involvement of teachers in junior and middle classes has largely been neglected...which means that teachers do not see it as being of value in their area of the school for the children.

One principal acknowledged that a change in staff has contributed to a lack of induction for new staff in the middle and junior areas of the school:

P3: A change of staff means we haven't got into the middle and junior areas of the school as much as we would have liked to.

Another principal did not comment on their school's TDI induction programme and a third principal emphasised the importance of induction for new staff:

P2: New staff need time to see what the existing staff have already done. They need to be able to pull all the bits together and constantly go back over what has been done through a specific TDI induction programme.

The following comment by comparison to the previous focus group participant's comment is from senior syndicate teachers in a focus group from the same school:

FG1A: Doing professional development together meant that we could relate the theory back into our classroom practice and therefore support the identified G&T children better.

The coordinator from the same school mentioned how induction, specific to the TDI is not overlooked, rather it is entwined with all other professional development:

C1: Most of our professional development over the past three years has been about effective teaching practice. All professional development crosses over to include other initiatives so that an initiative does not stand in isolation.

Although some junior class teachers from the above coordinator's school mentioned not having been a part of a TDI induction programme, the coordinator had provided some induction although it was a part of a professional development programme for many initiatives not just specific to TDI.

Ownership

Where teachers were able to voice their ideas regarding the implementation of an initiative they felt that they also had greater ownership of it. In two of the schools, the TDI appeared to be more sustainable across the senior syndicate of the school than the junior and middle syndicates due to the ownership gained in being listened to regarding the strategies to embed into classroom practice at the senior levels.

FG3: We all had a say in the ownership of the TDI and could put forward ideas if we wanted to. Everyone is listened to and felt a part of it.

Three other teachers from the same school's senior syndicate agreed with the above quote. The remaining two teachers in the same focus group who did not comment on the sustainability of the TDI were from the middle and junior syndicates of the same school.

C1: If teachers/people have a chance to be a part of the decision making process for a particular initiative then they are more likely to have ownership and a belief in the initiative and work collaboratively to embed it into the school's programme.

Another coordinator commented that:

C3: Flexible practitioners help to motivate ownership.

One principal mentioned:

P2: Consultation provides a vehicle for ownership. It's a big thing.

In two of the schools the junior and middle syndicate classes were largely unaffected by the classroom teaching and learning aspects of the TDI implementation. The principal and coordinator of one of those schools mentioned that more TDI consideration needs to be given to the junior and middle syndicates of the school in order to make the TDI a more holistic implementation across the school. According to the principal this might produce greater buy-in from all staff and create greater ownership and reduce some of the school-wide resistance to aspects of the TDI.

There is evidence from 15 out of the 30 teachers that although initiative ownership is critical to sustaining a TDI it is compounded by initiative overload. Initiative overload is one of the key issues facing effective sustainability within teaching time frames as reported in the following section.

Initiative Overload

Teachers implied that the initiative was worthwhile while at the same time commented on the number of initiatives and amount of other curricular work being implemented at one time. This combination was causing work overload. Seven teachers across three schools made the following comments:

FG2B: 4: I enjoyed the new TDI activity learnt through our professional development but because I am so overloaded with other initiatives I feel that I can't do it right now... It's ICT, it's maths, it's TDI, it's everything almost all-at-once... We are talking about overloading but are our children feeling the same thing?

FG3: 3: I just got too busy doing other things to fit in new initiative activities.

FG2B: 1: It would be useful to allow time after each professional development session as a teacher to get your head around the 'new' thinking. To figure out how you are going to implement the new practice/pedagogy into your classroom. There's too much of: "Here. Read. Go do."

FG2B: 3: So eventually you do become resistant because you are on overload and you go, "No I can't take anymore." The work related to the initiative goes in the 'to-do' pile to be done later (if at all) and you feel bad because you know that your kids are missing out, but you have reached a point of saturation that you can't take anymore.

FG2B: 5: It's that overload. You try and cope as best you can and do a little bit so you can say that you are doing something.

FG1A: 8: We learnt through other professional development that when you put something new into a school, you have to abandon something to make room. The problem is that we teachers just take on more and more.

FG3: 4: You don't get a chance to go in-depth and reflect and embed the initiatives because there is so much going on at once. It is hard to consolidate.

All three principals in the findings from the data considered that they addressed the initiative overload issue by giving their teachers reflection time to implement the initiative. One principal's comment was:

P2: Giving time to teachers to learn in hours that are teaching time, not outside classroom teaching hours.

Yet teachers felt that there was a lack of time to do so. Four teachers gave the following evidence:

FG2A: 2: You are not given time on top of normal time-frames to implement an initiative...That's what I mean about professional development on a Monday staff meeting then using syndicate meeting time to discuss implications in teams. This is time allowed for withdrawal. We need more of this time... A lot of classroom organisation and professional development needs to be done outside teaching hours time and there just isn't enough of it to cater for all the initiatives that come our way.

FG2B: 2: Time is a huge issue. Time to plan and be creative. Balancing all of the different initiatives. Balancing within the time given is really hard.

FG3: 1: You need to be selective about the initiatives that a school is involved in as well as the number of initiatives they are involved in at one time. You can't see the wood for the trees after a while.

All 30 teachers mentioned that they felt that all of the initiatives were worthwhile. The issue of work intensification arose due to a lack of suitable teaching and non-teaching time-frames to plan and prepare for the teaching and learning pedagogy required to embed each initiative effectively and with depth into a classroom curriculum. The data revealed that all 30 focus group participants experienced a lack of valuable timeframes for classroom teachers, within teaching hours, to the implement a TDI initiative alongside a number of other initiatives at the same time.

The impact on students

Teachers also felt that student achievement had improved as behaviours improved due to some students' feeling more valued. One teacher made the following comment:

FG1A: 6: I have begun to understand reasons why certain behaviours are acted out and as a teacher I have begun to value the identified child as their attitudes and behaviours changed by using different teaching strategies to meet their needs.

The new learning from the TDI had a wider school impact not only by up-skilling all staff in knowledge and classroom pedagogy but also by intentionally valuing individual students. Behaviour issues became more manageable in the classroom and student achievement increased in two schools according to two coordinator's comments:

C1: I was employed specifically to coordinate the TDI. It began with a job description and what we wanted from there. Once teachers realised through professional development different ways of identifying G&T students, achievement for such students went through the roof because the negative behaviour stopped once the classroom teacher provided a programme in class more suited to the child's learning needs. The children felt more valued.

C3: Through self confidence and leadership programmes the children felt valued...By having the TDI Centre this has enabled space to create new opportunities. We now look at students in greater depth and with further differentiation... The holistic approach to the TDI makes a variety of skills and knowledge available to the children in this way we are meeting their needs a lot better. 'A Rising Tide Lifts All Ships'.

Teachers also made similar comments to the coordinators:

FG1B: 1: We realise that there is more knowledge amongst teachers than we often realise as a result of TDI professional development . There is a definitive point beyond which things have changed radically...The good thing is now we are looking at valuing children through the TDI implementation. There were times before when I think we as teachers were worried about doing or wrong. Now that we know children

better through identifying their learning needs and behavioural characteristics, we understand their learning needs better and value them, for example, children are valued whether or not they can read or write below their age level.

FGIA: 5: When children were valued having identified some of their learning needs through TDI questionnaires, their behaviours improved.

FGIA: 6: I don't just look at one child who might be identified as G&T. You began to understand reasons why certain behaviours were acted out and as a teacher you began to value the identified child as their attitudes and behaviours changed by using different teaching strategies to meet their needs.

One principal commented that the TDI didn't contribute to student achievement but rather contributed to a more positive self perception of how teachers saw children:

P1: It [the TDI] completely changed the way we looked at Gifted and Talented children. It didn't contribute to student achievement because we couldn't measure it with standardised testing procedures because it is more a subjective analysis of children than a data analysis. It contributed to a more positive self perception of how teachers saw the children not in a standardised way.

Another principal saw that the school's appraisal system contributed to student achievement:

P2: The appraisal system works to identify changes or adaptations to initiatives that we make over time with student achievement in mind.

Sustainability

Sustaining a professional learning focus post MoE funding meant that leadership played a very important role in an attempt to maintain a focus of sustainability in all three schools. All of the roles within the TDI: principals, coordinators, and classroom teachers were adopted in various

ways according to the contextual and student learning needs of each school. Leaders did not leave the learning to their teachers, they became involved in it themselves.

One of the schools had a long-term focus of sustainability from the beginning of the TDI's implementation. All teachers were involved in differentiating the curriculum across all levels of the school and this was tied into the appraisal system in order to provide accountability for the inclusive of teaching G&T across the school. Withdrawal programmes from this school were set up involving children from all syndicate levels. Several teachers made the following comments to back this up:

FG2A: 4: We did have an appraisal system where we were accountable for the differentiated learning programmes being implemented into our programmes at that time.

FG2B: Professional development around the TDI has continued after the MoE funding has ceased due to our Principal overseeing the budget and providing for this on-going professional learning. This is something we appreciate yet are unaware of where the funding comes from.

Coordinators mentioned ways that sustainability of the contract had been maintained:

C2: The withdrawal groups of TDI are sustained because the coordinator is now released [from the classroom] to carry out these tasks...TDI is a part of our appraisal system so issues are followed up in an attempt to maintain a focus of sustainability of the focus.

C3: The increasing momentum becomes so sustainable because it has become 'our way', 'our culture' of our school that we have these diverse programmes.

And all three principals have restructured their staffing allocations post MoE funding in order to provide for the sustainability and maintenance of a TDI coordinator's role. Sustainability of the TDI is occurring in all three schools at varying degrees post-contract.

Summary

The data revealed that each group of participants played a very different role in the implementation of the TDI within their respective schools. Principals played predominantly a restructuring and supportive role. Coordinators played a consultative leadership role in managing others, coordinating the work of others and representing others through their role as a conduit. Classroom teachers had the role of implementing and interpreting TDI professional development into effective classroom pedagogy. By coordinators creating physical space and for identified TDI withdrawal programmes, overseeing the differentiation of learning in classroom teachers' planning and providing the professional development to assist teachers in identifying characteristics of G&T students, there has been a positive improvement in student behaviour and to some extent in student achievement.

As a result of the differing roles carried out by each group of participants the data has revealed that different perspectives of a same theme were held by each group of stakeholders. Differing perspectives of themes were highlighted according to the change processes and work requirements inherent during and after the implementation procedures of a TDI. The change processes that highlighted different viewpoints were evident in: induction programmes, or absence of them, levels of ownership among staff members, initiative overload, the impact of a TDI implementation on students' achievement, and the complexities of sustainability. Each of these themes, with their differing participant group perspectives both within and across each of the three schools will be discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter integrates the literature outlined in Chapter Two with a discussion of the data findings and the different perspectives held by the three TDI groups within each of the three schools. The data has revealed what motivates staff ownership, resistance and at times passivity towards external initiatives post-contract funding. The intention of this chapter is to investigate how such resistance may be reduced in order to implement strategic action in schools to offset the impact of loss of initiative funding and changing educational priorities.

Data from across the data collection methods are triangulated to present different findings. The discussion draws together findings from this and the preceding chapter. The chapter is structured around the research guiding this research and the different perspectives of the same issues held by the stakeholder groups: principals, coordinators and focus groups across and within all three schools. The tensions experienced by the three groups that made up the TDI in each school will become more evident throughout this chapter where the data findings revealed different perspectives held by each participant group.

Different perspectives

The findings from the data revealed that there are many issues that created conflict or contradiction among stakeholders. The issues mentioned in Chapter Four's conclusion, need to be addressed at various times during the implementation of an initiative if an effective collaborative organisation is to be realised. In the same way issues around initiatives need to be addressed if long-term sustainability is to be aligned with school improvement.

Key points evident in each school

The different roles and issues of participants revealed in the data are displayed in Table 5.1 on the following page. The table shows the focus of the different roles carried out by the three different participant groups in the research.

Table 5.1 Roles and issues of participant groups

| Focus | Principals | Coordinators | Focus Groups/Teachers |
|--------------------------|--|---|--|
| Student achievement | School improvement | Impact on students | Classroom practice Impact on students |
| Organisational structure | Restructuring of staffing | | |
| Organisational structure | | Consultative role | |
| Student achievement | | | Classroom practice |
| Sustainability | Perceptions of teacher ownership | Perceptions of teacher ownership | The issues of ownership |
| Sustainability | Collaborative management | Collaborative decision making | Collaborative decision making |
| Sustainability | Professional development (involvement in learning) | Professional development (and the issue of induction) | Professional development (and the issue of induction) Initiative overload |
| Sustainability | | Sustainability (issues and tensions) | Sustainability (issues and tensions) Initiative overload |

The changes made in each school, in order to implement a TDI, were made more difficult at times because issues that could have been faced were buried. Perhaps this was done in an attempt to get-the-job-done rather than teachers' voicing their opinions with a possibility of increasing their workload. Or on the other hand participants might not have been aware of any other option

to take. Issues can be buried unintentionally and are revealed by the different perspectives held by the different participant groups of the TDI. However the data indicated that once knowledge had been gained then teachers would have liked to have been listened to by management and have had their input considered.

In some instances the data revealed that what a principal or coordinator might have perceived to have occurred was viewed differently by staff who were implementing the programmes into their classroom practice. For example one principal gave staff what was considered to be sufficient time to reflect and implement an initiative by providing more release time out of the classroom for teachers. However from the teachers' point of view across all focus groups, 30 out of 30 teachers commented that they would have preferred to have been in their classroom as time outside of it meant missing the hands-on teaching experiences involved in their students' learning. Five out of 30 teachers commented that some relief teachers were not capable of attending appropriately to student learning in their absence. It is the complexities of leadership that are being highlighted here as opposed to participant groups being perceived as right or wrong in their situation.

Perceptions of an issue are often interpreted differently according to the role a person plays within the organisation. If such perceptions are not discussed openly and productively then there is the likelihood of dilemmas occurring. If dilemmas are not handled sensitively and skillfully a principal risks organisational upheaval. According to Barr-Greenfield (1975) the work of a principal carries the justification of the larger social order, since he/she works to link day-to-day activity in an organisation to that strategic plan or social order. Bolman and Deal (2003) mention how "communications in an organisation are rarely candid or timely" (p. 30) because where a member stands in the hierarchy of the organisation determines how they will play and interpret their part and what perspective they might construct. For this research the teachers had the responsibility of implementing a TDI initiative into their classroom practice. Therefore teachers might have felt obliged to make as little conflict or contradiction as possible towards change practices administered by management. With many other tasks to attend to and initiative overload being an existing issue, teachers possibly felt they wanted to get on with the job rather

than raise more issues and avoid the possibility of an increased workload through time spent in conflict.

Initiative overload

Where too much professional development was offered at the same time, teachers saw this as work overload even though they saw professional development as critical to developing their knowledge and skill-base in relation to the TDI. Professional development was also raised as an issue with regard to the induction programme of new members joining an existing staff. In one school staff induction was a formalised programme. In two other schools induction was carried out through osmosis and learning from other staff as members went along. The issue of no formalised TDI induction in two schools may have been an attempt by management to reduce professional development and the possibility of an increased workload for teachers. Due to an increased workload, according to the teachers, time restraints were causing work intensification over and above the core curriculum requirements outlined by the MoE (2008). The New Zealand curriculum specifies eight learning areas: “English, the arts, health and physical education, learning languages, mathematics and statistics, science, and technology. The learning associated with each area is part of a broad, general education and lays a foundation for later specialization” (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 2008, p. 14). There was no discussion from the principals or the coordinators about issues of work overload and the intensification that teachers experienced. All 30 teachers either directly or indirectly, by agreeing with other participants, highlighted work overload as something that hindered the in-depth implementation of the TDI initiative.

In one school the principal intentionally planned to develop new initiatives so that they would be embedded across the curriculum rather than stand in isolation. This was in an attempt to reduce the teacher’s workload while at the same time embedding several initiatives at one time. Because teachers’ needed to understand each initiative before it might be effectively transferred into classroom practice, they found that by trying to merge initiatives that their workload was not lessened. Each initiative needed to stand alone and be understood before it might be embedded. All 30 teachers experienced a lack of economy of time and workload when embedding several initiatives across the curriculum at the same time. While aspects of different initiatives might

entwine with ease, each initiative has its own identity and level of work associated with it which could not be easily entwined. One principal and one coordinator thought that by pre-empting the inter-weaving of different initiatives together then the teachers' work overload might be reduced. Yet 30 teachers' responses across the three schools indicated that each initiative brought with it its own workload and that by inter-weaving initiatives their workload intensified rather than reduced.

From a different perspective one principal commented that new initiatives didn't impact on teachers and thought that they made work easier which is why their staff operated out of passive acceptance. Another principal felt that they gave teachers the time to reflect and implement the TDI initiative through their model of collaborative team work. Teachers were given time to think and reflect on the initiative together. Yet 22 out of 30 teachers said that they didn't have reflection time. Eight out of 30 teachers felt that they were given directives by the coordinators and their principals rather than reflection time. Due to workload pressures some teachers did not regard that being directed in what to do was negative. Rather it helped to alleviate their workload situation and was viewed as being helpful. The data also revealed that where teachers had become more knowledgeable through their TDI professional development programme they might have preferred to have greater reflection time to use their own knowledge when implementing the TDI into their classroom pedagogy and possibly in contributing to the school-wide TDI programmes.

Due to a sense of initiative overload amongst teachers, time restraints both inside and outside of the classroom became heightened. The spin-off effect of initiative overload for classroom teachers is that there is a need for prioritisation and rescheduling of timeframes within classroom planning in order for teachers to manage their increased workload. At times teachers felt that this impinged on teaching and learning time of core curriculum subjects where time was cribbed in an attempt to make time to imbed the new learning of the TDI initiative into classroom practice.

Work overload without sufficient support contributed to 26 out of 30 teachers to experience frustration towards the TDI. Hannan (1980) points out that "conflict or disagreement is interpreted as deviation from the task prompted by emotional reaction rather than the opposition

of those who define the task of the school [or initiative implementation and its sustainability] differently” (p. 6). Hargreaves (2004) reasons that “...purposes impeded by poor support, inadequate resources, insufficient time...can and do lead to immense frustration” (p. 296). Although all three coordinators felt that they had provided sufficient support through the professional development programme, three teachers experienced frustration through a lack of hands-on support back in the classroom to deal with G&T teaching and learning strategies. Teachers did not always feel that they had the capacity to transfer professional development theory back into classroom practice.

Timeframes outside of teaching hours are as Cardno (2006) highlights times that “principals and their teams appear to be swamped with initiatives” (p. 468). Unless an issue is viewed as a priority it is unlikely that a principal will “embark on leading a ...cycle of action research” (p. 469) to facilitate change. At whatever level initiatives are being implemented or not into schools, Thrupp and Willmott (2003) go further than alluding to a school context based curriculum delivery by stating that “in recent times the school improvement literature, particularly in England, has mostly been marked by extraordinarily close interrelationship with government policy” (p. 92). Initiative implementation is biased by the MoE’s funding attached to each initiative. Several authors, Newmann, Smith, Allensworth and Bryk (2001, as cited in Robinson, 2007) support principals’ decisions to take on-board new initiatives by stating that: “With so many demands, principals feel unable to refuse programmes [initiatives] and reason that diverse programmes will somehow complement one another. They continue to adopt pilot programmes but do little to establish a strength of coordination and coherence among them” (p. 13). Perhaps the coordinators and principals of the TDI performed the tasks mandated by the MoE to implement a TDI into a school’s curriculum yet did not have the capacity to sustain the tasks long-term.

Work overload or intensification as referred to by Apple (1983) suggests that “teachers are confronted by increasing and diverse workloads which destroy sociability and reduce leisure and self-direction” (as cited in Ball, 1987, p. 269). Time spent on administering the new pedagogy requires new skills being acquired through professional development and paper work associated with student data. The overload experienced by teachers might then become less educational and

more of an administrative exercise taking away time from the preparation of hands-on learning activities for the students. Ball (1987) points out that what appears in one respect to be professional enhancement may actually serve to obscure a general worsening of working conditions” (p. 269). Although the work of the initiative is positive in an attempt to improve student achievement, there is too much of it at once considering the other initiatives being implemented at the same time resulting in work overload.

According to Robinson (2007) “the importance of being strategic about the procurement and allocation of resources is apparent from studies of the effectiveness and sustainability of school reform initiatives” (p. 12). Leadership has a tendency to gather additional resources through initiatives funded by the MoE with seemingly little regard for “the coherence and strategic alignment of resulting activities” (Bryk, Sebring, Kerbow, Rollow and Easton, 1998 as cited in Robinson, 2007, p. 13). If too many initiatives contribute to the work overload of staff and detract from their school improvement efforts then the initiatives are likely to be seen negatively. Robinson (2007) asserts that the extra resources are likely to be negatively rather than positively related to gains in student achievement.

Perhaps work intensification experienced by teachers was a result of all three principals gathering funding across different initiatives in an attempt to sustain the TDI and other initiative post-external funding. All three principals had strategically linked their TDI learning goals to their schools’ strategic plan and were therefore able to make greater use of the available funding resources from other linked initiatives. In this way principals held the responsibility for focussing the TDI development and resourcing funds from other inter-linked initiatives post MoE funding. Inter-weaving resources from other Ministry funded initiatives had enabled financial sustainability across all three schools post the MoE’s three year TDI funding.

Impact on students

A positive effect of the TDI mentioned by coordinators and teachers was the way in which teachers, since the TDI’s inception, now value their students in a more holistic manner. Although several initiatives have been implemented at one time into each of the three schools, the impact of the TDI on students has had a positive effect by the valuing students in open and practical

ways. This has occurred as the professional development has enlightened teachers' in their pedagogy, coordinators in their management of a TDI and principals in their staff restructuring in an attempt to sustain a TDI long-term. In some instances resources over and above building a professional development knowledge-base, such as creating new work spaces for G&T students, and the employment of expertise to carry out G&T learning and teaching, have provided a sense of students feeling more valued as their specific learning needs are being addressed. Another spin-off effect of students' feeling valued might also transfer to learning and teaching models across other initiatives at the same time.

When initiative overload intensifies then time is perhaps taken from core curriculum areas to provide time for new initiative implementation. Robinson (2007) goes on to mention that one reason why extra initiatives can have detrimental effects on student learning is that "multiple simultaneous initiatives can reduce the coherence of a teaching programme" (p. 13). Coherency includes a common framework for: staff induction, strategies for teaching and learning aligned to school-wide goals, appraisal systems professional development and assessment procedures. Her research cites the Chicago primary school study of Newmann et al., (2001, as cited in Robinson, 2007) finding that schools with more coherent teaching programmes had larger achievement gains than those with less coherent programmes. Therefore where multiple initiatives are implemented into a school's curriculum at one time consideration of their alignment with strategic goals and current programmes is critical when deciding what ones to take on board.

Professional development

One principal in this research made the comment that they independently decided upon the appropriate professional development to implement in their school according to the need at the time. There was possibly a greater ownership of the TDI's professional development programme by principals where they had previously decided on the forms that professional development might take. In this research where a principal had direct involvement and ownership of the TDI's implementation they were more able to prioritise the appropriate professional development strategies to put in place. The more a principal was involved in the TDI professional development the more they were able to model commitment to the implementation

and development of a TDI with a focus to sustainability post-MoE funding. Evidence from teachers in the findings from the data suggested that the effectiveness of the professional development within all three schools is possibly related to the level and depth of leadership involved in both initiative implementation and its long-term sustainability. How the sharing and co-constructing of knowledge around a TDI was being carried out in each school depended heavily upon the skill-base that each principal and coordinator worked from.

The findings from the data revealed one school where the professional development appraisal was linked directly to the TDI's implementation into the classroom. All ten teachers who participated in the same school's focus groups commented positively to varying degrees about their development of G&T learning and teaching pedagogy in the classroom. Where the professional development appraisal of a TDI was not a requirement in two schools, evidence of classroom G&T practice was mentioned by teachers in two senior and one middle syndicate. It was mentioned that a TDI was a classroom teaching and learning expectation yet it was not evident school wide. The majority of G&T teaching in these two schools was also left to the coordinator and the facilitators of the TDI withdrawal programmes. One teacher mentioned how professional development was useful in learning how to identify certain characteristics of a gifted student in your class but would have appreciated more assistance from a coordinator when embedding a programme for a student into the classroom. This highlights again whether or not the coordinator had the required knowledge and capacity to do so.

In her research about establishing effective criteria for effective professional development Piggot-Irvine (2006) mentions that a principal has a significant impact on the climate for development in a school, referring to professional development as the sharing and co-constructing of knowledge. According to Piggot-Irvine (2006) to, "broadly determine the culture for development where collaboration and collegiality are the norm" (p. 480) is a role more effectively played out by principals where they are involved in the learning themselves. In research undertaken by Robinson (2007) around identifying dimensions of leadership that make the biggest difference to students' learning outcomes she backs up Piggot-Irvine's (2006) comment when she identifies that:

Leaders who participate with teachers learn more about what their staff are up against, and thus provide them with more real support in making the changes required to embed their learning in their daily practice. By participating with staff, leaders are likely to have a much more detailed appreciation of the changes ...and time allowances that will help staff change their practice. They will also more likely have a much deeper appreciation of the likely stage and duration of the change process. (p. 16)

Due to an increasing number of initiatives being implemented into New Zealand's education system other countries, the US and United Kingdom, according to Fullan and Mascall (2000) "...are now using professional development as a key mechanism in bringing about educational change" (p. 32). In order to change peoples' thinking and actions through professional development there is a huge cost required to purchase the necessary resources to do so. Several authors; Piggot-Irvine (2007), Baldwin (2005), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (1998) & Fletcher, (2003) agree that the principal is also a resource distributor and effective professional development requires substantive financial and time resources. In this way schools like other learning workplaces, are becoming organised and structured to accommodate the necessary professional learning and development to implement the initiative changes.

Research to support the notion that professional development is more likely to be sustained when it is linked to a school's appraisal system was difficult to find. However the importance of support for teachers when implementing a TDI at a classroom level was supported by several authors: Young (1971a), Hargreaves (1994) and Bolman and Deal (2003). Although the TDI initiative was externally mandated Young (1971a) explains that when initiatives are implemented into the classroom they can be analysed as being too restrictive. A classroom teacher requires support in, as Hargreaves (1994) explains, "...striking at the heart of how children learn and teachers teach" (p. 11). It is good having the knowledge through professional development but transferring knowledge into effective practice in the classroom often requires a different set of skills. If the participants who are involved in the implementation of an initiative and its sustainability focus, do not see the whole picture then according to Bolman and Deal (2003) they

can continue to play their part blindly unaware of any other option. In a sense they become what Hopkins (1996) and Wilson (1999) refer to as ‘passive objects of control’ focussed on getting a job done. The job is often interpreted in a teacher’s own way when support from coordinators or facilitators is not offered at a classroom level.

The restrictive view of policy initiatives once transferred into the classroom is backed up by Hargreaves (1994) in agreement with Bolman and Deal (2003) in saying that change can look impressive when represented in boxes and arrows of administrator’s overheads but they are superficial. “They do not strike at the heart of how children learn and teachers teach. They achieve little more than trivial changes in practice” (p. 11). All 30 of the teachers in his research agreed that time restraints due to work overload made in-depth initiative implementation of a TDI more difficult to achieve, if it was achieved at all.

The issue of induction

Induction programmes providing TDI professional development for new staff were referred to by two principals and three coordinators and some staff across the three schools. All three principals acknowledged the need for induction of new staff. It was understood by all principals that the facilitation of a TDI induction programme was a part of the coordinators’ role. To some extent the involvement of a principal in the induction processes of new staff was conditioned by the size of a school and the delegation of induction duties to other staff. It is therefore difficult to generalise about how a principal’s participation in an induction programme might work as one-size-fits-all does not necessarily transfer to all schools.

All three coordinators implemented induction programmes into their schools in different ways. One coordinator mentioned the role that she performed during her classroom release time in consulting with staff which also worked as an induction programme for new staff. It was not a formalised induction programme per se. Another school’s junior staff didn’t understand or realise that an induction process was place, nor did the junior classes of a third school. In School Two all staff were aware of their school’s formalised induction processes relating to the TDI and other initiatives. Professional development was provided during holiday call-back days, as a part

of Beginning Teacher (BT) release time with an appointed Tutor Teacher (TT). Professional development was also an on-going programme with the rest of the staff during whole-school staff meetings, parent evenings and syndicate meetings. New staff members might not have had the same knowledge-base to work from as did existing staff and therefore a need for induction of new staff became evident from the teachers' points of view. Six teachers at another school didn't recognise any formalised induction programmes for new staff in place although induction was occurring in an informal manner.

Induction of new staff was not a formalised procedure in two schools. New teachers of the existing staff were unsure of the TDI's expectations of them. However all 30 teachers did mention that they were aware of TDI taking place in the senior and some middle classes of their schools. If they wanted to know more, they all felt that they could ask to be informed. In one school the conditions for sustainability were strengthened by the implementation of an induction process for new staff through all stages of an initiative's implementation. Where induction conditions were not intentionally considered in schools during the professional development programme there was a reflection from some teachers from two different schools and one principal, that induction was missing at the end of the TDI's implementation and that it needed to be addressed. Research in one school revealed that where induction of the TDI initiative for new staff was not a priority, those teachers felt left-out-of-the-loop and did not have a clear understanding about TDI. In one of the three research schools effective induction procedures for new staff, particularly beginning teachers with their TT (mentor) followed a collaborative process in a generalised way. Two of the three principals commented that the induction programmes at their school were important they but did not elaborate as to how they were implemented.

The findings from the data also revealed that the coordinators were central figures in ensuring the effectiveness of the induction process. Two principals commented that more emphasis was needed on formalising induction for new teachers in the junior and middle syndicates of the school. One teacher who had been away from a school for two years and had returned to the same staff mentioned how valued she felt by being part of the induction programme. As Breaux and Wong (2003) reiterate, induction sends a message to teachers that they are valued.

As well as teachers feeling a sense of being valued through induction programmes, Timperley et al., (2007) reinforce the need for induction programmes in their research by considering that sustainability conditions, including induction of staff, are set in place as much during as after the professional development learning. Odell (1990c) advocates that new experienced staff require induction to pathways of both the current and previous professional development. In-turn the induction might give new members a sense of ownership of the initiative sooner than if there had not been an induction programme in place. Considering that this research was carried out within one year of a TDI initiative's MoE funding, the level of sustainability for staff who were not involved in TDI induction programme will become more evident over a longer timeframe.

Judgment about the quality of learning that accrues from the professional development for new staff can be made in terms of developing one's understanding of the situation and according to Tickle (2000) "in terms of its value for improving professional practice" (p. 187). For members new to a staff professional practice is difficult to improve upon if a member does not have the prior knowledge or guidance that the existing staff does. Collaboration during teacher induction according to Veenman (1984) enables teachers to understand and then to be guided towards deeper stages of initiative implementation. However deeper learning might become evident where leadership had the capacity to guide the deeper learning required for effective induction purposes.

The precise role and day-to-day functions of a principal are very complex and induction might be viewed as minor to a school-wide leader. Yet from a new teacher's perspective and as a result of Tickle's (2000) research around induction he found that "induction probably represents the most important part of headship" (p. 141). Variations in school size and the uniqueness of each school's context and personnel according to Tickle (2000) "that it is even more necessary for principals to adopt an enquiring stance towards the conduct of their induction responsibilities" (p. 141). Perhaps the designation of non-teaching time, provided through classroom release, might be protected from the routines of marking and planning, and used for goal orientated professional development for all new staff. At present one day per week of release time is used

by BT's specifically for educational enquiry and goal-orientated professional development as they are mentored by their assigned TT.

Though principals might play a supportive role in the initiative induction of new teachers, their time demands and other responsibilities did not allow for such tasks as the: monitoring of progress; professional development; well-rounded feedback and practical performance that constitute effective induction practice. In this respect Tickle (2000) espouses that: "... the role of an experienced colleague acting as induction coordinator for the initiative is the pivot of success" (p.42). Therefore effective collaborative teamwork through the re-distribution of responsibilities and collegial learning provides a way to be more inclusive of new staff members both professionally and collegially in an attempt to sustain the new learning embedded into a school's curriculum.

Some of the conditions of induction are likely to be made possible post-external funding if funding is allocated for a designated person to carry out an induction programme according to Tickle (2000). Funding for a coordinator at each school was available during the MoE-funded three year TDI contract. The restructuring of staff responsibilities by all three principals has ensured that the role of a TDI coordinator is sustained within the school post external-funding.

Restructuring and managing for sustainability

All three principals restructured their school's organisation in an attempt to sustain and provide resources for the TDI initiative post-funding. They found it more conducive to distribute leadership and view the initiative through those in positions of leadership. One principal mentioned the need to restructure the positions of some staff members, not solely the coordinator's position, in light of the TDI.

Leadership of the TDI was located in the centre of a school with the coordinators rather than the top, although the principal retained overall leadership of the school. Feist (2008) mentions that middle-leadership "requires leaders to be knowledgeable about that work in the contexts of the

diverse contextual realities of their day-to-day work” (p. 68). Coordinators were given the task of researching, understanding and distributing TDI knowledge specific to their local school context.

The findings from the data revealed that the professionals’ development was decided upon by the principals and aligned through the coordinators. The initiative might have been more easily embedded if staff had been encouraged according to Esland (1996) to “reverse [their] previously held beliefs” (p. 102) that a principal facilitates initiative change. In this way classroom teachers might have realised they had to “develop new loyalties” (p. 102) with their coordinator and colleagues during the professional development processes.

Not only is a principal’s skill-base important for effective initiative implementation and its long-term sustainability but also the ability of a principal to stand back and enable others to lead as espoused by Robinson (2007). The loyalty of classroom teachers at all three schools appeared to easily transfer from a principal’s leadership to that of the coordinator both during and post a TDI’s implementation. Even though all three principals were fully involved in the professional learning, which provided motivation of all staff, the learning knowledge and change facilitation of the TDI was in the hands of the coordinators.

Job restructuring might have advanced the cause of some groups in the findings from the data and disadvantaged other groups. For example the emphasis on G&T programmes in the senior levels in two of the schools could have led to the lack of such provision for the middle and junior levels of the school. Initiative implementation is rarely neutral. Ball (1987) goes on to say that “they [initiatives] tend to advance or enhance the position of certain groups and disadvantage or damage the position of others” (p. 32). This might have been caused by job restructuring, which all three principals did in an attempt to sustain the TDI post external-funding. Hargreaves (1994) mentions that restructuring “is not an end to our problems but a beginning” (p.261). Restructuring of staff is a chance to set new rules for new purposes. There is no one-size-fits-all to restructuring as “there are some practices that suit some contexts more than others” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 261). Although the restructuring of staff might have taken place in the three schools it is not a guarantee that a TDI will be sustained long-term.

Shared leadership, viewed as a response to work intensification is explained by Gronn (2003a) as collaboration in education teams. Gronn (2003a) mentions that teachers are becoming more dependent on their colleagues to “contribute their specialist expertise in mandated reforms [changes]” (p. 116). As a result of restructuring one school now has their TDI coordinator as the school’s Deputy Principal using resources and funding from the new job description in order to align with goals of sustaining the TDI contract focus. Two schools provided classroom release for teachers by using the MoE’s financial remuneration units introduced into primary schools in 2008, in an effort to coordinate the TDI contract and oversee its continued implementation.

All three principals considered alternative forms of organisation, endorsed by Ball (1987) in an attempt to sustain a TDI. The alternative forms presented their own tensions such as ‘transformational change’ (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005) referred to in Chapter Two. In relation to transformational change (Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005) some staff members experienced a condition during restructuring referred to as an ‘implementation dip’ according to Fullan and Miles (1992). The implementation dip is caused by those in management who unintentionally have miscalculated the “amount of time and energy needed to achieve meaningful and sustained change, and the amount of resistance such a process engenders” (Conley, 1993, p. 318). The restructuring and redistributing of leadership of a TDI in this research provided an alternative way for all principals to organise and self-fund the TDI initiative post-contract in an economical and effective way.

All three principals played a vital role in restructuring staff responsibilities in an attempt to make a TDI sustainable in the classroom after the external-funding had ceased. The principals’ own involvement in the professional development acted as a model in an attempt to motivate teachers to develop their own professional learning with a focus of sustainability. Research data revealed that work intensification is experienced by all participating teachers and was due to the following findings: a sense of initiative overload caused by too many initiatives going on at one time; a lack of professional knowledge to carry out the work expected at that particular time, and restrictive timeframes to fit everything in.

The issue of ownership

In this research the MoE, school principals and their management teams established the goals for the TDI of which classroom teachers had the task of interpreting into classroom practice. Some teachers experienced input to the goal setting while others did not experience this. Comments made by 15 of the 30 teacher participants in this research revealed that when a teacher felt valued and listened to then they were less likely to become resistant to change even when their ideas were not those put into practice. However the findings from the data also discovered that a principal might think that they have listened to a teacher yet the teacher by the principal's actions might not necessarily feel or think that they have been listened to.

The findings from the data revealed that when teachers felt valued and listened to they appeared to have developed a greater ownership of the TDI. Where teachers felt they didn't have input of the initiative during the beginning stages they experienced greater resistance or passivity towards the TDI. In a few cases some teachers mentioned that they did not mind not being given opportunities for their input because they did not have the knowledge base to implement ideas or goals of a TDI in the beginning stages of its implementation. Because tasks are mandated by their school's management and external agencies then teachers often considered that they were given little say in their part to play in the TDI's implementation. In essence some teachers felt that they had no voice which resulted in a lack of ownership which might have a negative impact on the effective implementation of the TDI long-term.

Although 20 out of 30 teachers felt that they were not listened to during the initial stages of the TDI's implementation both coordinators and principals felt that they had listened to the teachers. Teachers felt that they had been told or directed by management what to do in their classrooms without them having a say about how it would be implemented in practice. The coordinators acted as go-betweens or conduits in an attempt to support both staff and the principal at the same time. The data shows that coordinators similar to Feist's (2008) research on the roles of faculty heads' in secondary schools took on a principals' perspective rather than a teachers' even though in one school the coordinator was also a classroom teacher who had been released to carry out the TDI coordinator responsibilities. However as classroom teachers gained a greater

understanding of the TDI professional development it seemed that they also appreciated being given a greater say in the ownership and collaborative decision making processes of the contract.

Three out of the 30 teachers mentioned that they had experienced fulfilling purposes during the TDI which led to satisfaction, pride and pleasure responses. These same three teachers had also been a part of an effective TDI induction programme as they were all new staff members. They were also BT's who were released one day per week and assigned to a TT who mentored them. Hargreaves (2004) supports this finding by stating that "positive emotional responses to mandated change are few and far between...They are most likely to be experienced and expressed by female teachers...who are sometimes in the early stages of their career..." (p. 298). All three BT's were given more time to embed the initiative outside of classroom teaching hours than the experienced teachers on the staff. By collaborating with others about concerns Veenman (1984) suggests that this will help to alleviate negative feelings and guidance from existing staff will help a new staff member to prioritise effective teaching practice.

By providing opportunities for collective practice such as professional discussions engaging in openness, trust and transparency over time it seems that there will be a greater likelihood of ownership by stakeholders as a result. Darling-Hammond (as cited in Crooks, 2006) states that: "Bureaucratic solutions to problems of practice will almost always fail because effective teaching is not routine, students are not passive, and questions of practice are not simple, predictable or standardized" (p. 67). It seems that there might be a possibility of a management system posing its own pitfalls particularly when relationships break down and failure to enlist teacher ownership exists.

Change around a new initiative is sometimes imposed and developed in a context where teachers have been given little credit for changing themselves, and for possessing their own wisdom to distinguish what reasonably can be changed and what cannot. Hargreaves (1994) goes on to say that "in this political rush to bring about reform [change] teachers' voices have been largely neglected, their opinions overridden and their concerns dismissed" (p. 6). The lack of voice given to some teachers by those in management may have contributed to the passive acceptance revealed by the data. Yet the findings from the data revealed that the intention of the change

processes by principals and coordinators was to provide staff with opportunities that encouraged ownership of the TDI initiative so that the systems and resources put in place during the three year MoE funded contract might continue long-term after the external funding had ceased.

The data revealed that staff were more engaged during initiative change when they were given time and on-going opportunities to be consulted as well as opportunities to provide feedback and engage in collective practices regarding the pending changes. The level of ownership of the TDI experienced by teachers varied due to the complexities of the implementation issues which caused conflict and contradiction as well as professional fulfilment for some participants at the same time.

The three principals and one coordinator also assumed that they had given teachers time to propose programmes around the new initiative. Another coordinator felt that an opportunity for greater ownership by all staff was achieved where some staff had their stories listened to. As teachers and ancillary staff in one school had their 'folk knowledge' acknowledged they felt valued and more encouraged to be a part of the TDI programmes outside of the classroom. In two of the schools, nine teachers commented that the TDI involvement of students in the junior and middle areas of the school (five-nine year olds) had largely been neglected which created some resistance by staff in those teaching areas towards the TDI implementation. Due to the neglect of more specific teacher TDI professional development by management in the junior and middle areas of the school, teachers did not see the TDI as being of value in these areas for their students. Teachers in the middle and junior levels (Y0-4) experienced greater resistance because the TDI did not involve them to the same extent as the senior teachers. In the school where TDI was holistic and across all levels of the school all teachers experienced ownership yet experienced some resistance due to work overload and time restraint issues at the same time.

The findings from the data revealed that the TDI appeared to be more sustainable in the senior rather than middle and junior levels of two schools. This might be due to the level of ownership gained by senior-level classroom teachers being listened to regarding the strategies used to embed TDI into classroom practice. Sustainability might appear to be more effective at the senior levels if these same teachers had experienced more TDI professional development than

the junior teachers did. Three out of five junior teachers in one school were new to the staff and had not received TDI induction training. Seven out of eight senior teachers at the same school had been through the TDI implementation professional development process with the existing staff.

When staff understood that their leader is empathetic towards their change processes then there is a greater likelihood that staff will work through the change processes in a more collaborative and positive manner. In this way staff might be more likely to take on the ownership of the initiative rather than resisting it and consequently hindering its implementation and sustainability processes. A classroom teacher goes through change processes both personally and professionally in order to implement the TDI initiative into their classroom pedagogy. These findings align with the findings from the data findings of O'Donoghue and Dimmock (1998) where teachers who had input into the initiative had more of a sense of ownership than those who had no input and consequently less commitment to it. The findings from the data revealed that although some teachers experienced resistance, rather than oppose those who were perceived to experience ownership, they became passive and accepting of the situation and didn't attempt to openly challenge the status-quo. Their passivity might have been a form of non-voiced resistance.

The belief system held by individual teachers is, according to Ball (1987), what causes people to act in their own best interests. People might not perceive their behaviour as being resistant rather, acting in terms "according to their own beliefs and principles" (p. 21). In this way staff might be more likely to take on the ownership of the initiative rather than resisting it and consequently hindering its implementation and sustainability processes.

Collaborative practices and decision-making

Syndicate meetings, staff meetings and professional development programmes were methods used in all three schools to allow teachers a formal opportunity to voice any issues or concerns regarding the TDI. However this was not always the case and passivity of some teachers has played a role in the compliant acceptance of the TDI initiative. Ball (1987) in his research around

micro-politics in schools suggests that “staff meeting discussions [and other TDI meetings] are typically initiated and controlled by the head-teacher [principal or coordinators in this research]. The staff more often than not finding themselves in a passive role” (p. 238). What might seem like discussion is in fact “a linear structure of one-to-one exchanges between the head and individual contributors” (p. 238). The passive acceptance by some teachers might act out over time as a form of resistance because agreement to the changes asked of them has never been realised.

Although three principals reported that they were collaborative in their decision making around changes made for staff around TDI issues, data from one of the coordinators was in contrast to this. One coordinator mentioned that staff were compliant and felt comfortable with the management team making decisions for them. Because the majority of collaborative decision making by staff is done outside of school teaching hours and by its nature is time consuming, I suggest that the decisions reached were made by exhausted professionals. They had used up their energy resources prior to the meetings and perhaps were often not concerned about the level of ownership that they had in the final decision. Staff members were then likely to act out of defensiveness or passive compliance.

All three coordinators fed information and issues that they were aware of back to their principals and in turn all three principals did what they considered appropriate for each situation. It appeared that the teachers did not voice what their real underlying issues were to their coordinator or principal during the initiative’s implementation nor thereafter. Issues that all 30 teachers struggled with to some degree included: work intensification, lack of junior and middle school induction, buy-in and ownership of the initiative.

Strategies were put in place in an attempt to bring about team effectiveness by all three principals in an effort to sustain the TDI long-term in a collaborative manner. The cohesiveness of team work varied across the three different schools. The data revealed that one school with a school-wide induction programme appeared to have achieved a high level of whole staff cohesiveness. Two other schools without formalised school-wide induction programmes displayed cohesiveness among teams rather than as a whole-school. Cardno (2006) suggests that a cohesive

team has shared perceptions, “shared purpose, agreed procedures, commitment, cooperation and the ability to resolve disagreements in open discussion” (p. 215). All three schools demonstrated four out of Cardno’s (2006) effective team functioning characteristics to some degree. One characteristic not evidenced was where members were given the opportunity to learn the skills in order to solve disagreements in a productive and open manner. Rather, new information was delivered and discussed in relation to its implementation into a classroom setting. Issues that arose such as: work overload, time restraints and senior level focus of TDI rather than a school-wide focus, appeared to have been buried under the pile of other tasks to attend to.

A deeper level of ownership of the initiative by all teachers perhaps might have been realised if collaborative practices such as the employment of the test of expertise or capacity of members had been employed (Owens, 2004). The employment of productive dialogue skills also might have allowed teachers the opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns in a non-threatening and non-emotive environment while at the same time using information provided by members with expertise. Several authors (Argyris, 1977; Cardno, 1988a & 2007; Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005; Senge et al., 2000) refer to productive discussion as productive dialogue which when employed effectively works to reduce opposition or conflicts of interest by allowing participants to voice their concerns in a non-emotional manner. The aim is to reach a decision about a way forward where both parties can agree on a mutually decided upon resolution of the issue. Capacity building requires different policy tools according to Darling-Hammond (1995) and different approaches to producing, sharing and using knowledge. The three decision-making tests of jurisdiction, relevance, and expertise (Owens, 2004) would have been useful in building such capacity around collaborative decision-making during the implementation of the TDI in the three schools. In this way decisions would have been made beyond what leadership thought but might have provided in-depth information by considering what the teachers thought at the same time.

With reference to short-sighted decision making Owens (2004) observed that school administration often demanded that there was a temptation for leaders to make decisions quickly and often bureaucratically realising the perceived need for economy of time. On the other hand “healthy organisations characteristically find strength in opening up participation in decision making and empowering people to participate in important decisions [which is] highly

motivating for them” (p. 286). There is a possibility that the passive compliance among teachers to accept TDI practice as it is offered to them might also be a form of unvoiced resistance.

In this research the level of expertise that was brought into the decision making processes at each school was depended upon the principal’s skill-base, to carry out the decision making processes (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Cardno (1998a) supports this claim when she mentions that leaders must recognise the implications of collaborative strategic management before they work with others. Where teachers were not a part of a strategic decision making process, the data revealed that due to increased workload conditions some teachers were happy for decisions to be made for them by management, as previously discussed.

Being able to see someone else’s perspective is what Hall and Wallace (1996) advocate as being ideal during a collaborative decision making process. This research has revealed that all participants in the findings from the data (principals, coordinators and teachers) held their own perspectives of the impact of the initiative’s implementation and its focus of long-term sustainability. At the time that my research was conducted, the data did not reveal that all stakeholders viewed change processes from their own perspectives. There was some cross-over between principals and coordinators, a little between the coordinators and teachers and less between principals and teachers. These findings revealed the complexities inherent in leadership and the need for leaders to have an ability to recognise implications of collaborative strategic management before and during working with others. In this way a collective synergy for collaborative decision-making purposes might be achieved among members. The data has revealed that where a member is placed in the hierarchy of the school determines how they will likely perceive the organisational learning constructed around them.

The complexities of sustainability

Classroom teachers had the role of interpreting TDI professional development into classroom practice that aligned with the MoE’s (2005) TDI requirements which were outlined in Chapter One. The data revealed that teachers played a more instrumentalist role, charged with the implementation of policy which has been defined at a distance (Gunter, 2005). Teachers used

their discretionary judgment to translate new learning as best they knew into classroom pedagogy. All three schools had coordinators who managed the change processes with teachers to ensure that curriculum design, and implementation of the TDI were being taught inclusively to all students. The data highlighted that while coordinators supported all teachers in their classroom role the amount of other initiatives being embedded at the same time caused the issues around work intensification and the impact on student learning. Teachers commented that they would have appreciated more assistance by coordinators in their classrooms when implementing TDI professional development theory into practice.

The data revealed that teachers viewed their role of initiative implementation from a classroom teaching perspective. Robinson (2007) goes on to address the issues of teachers and collaborative management by mentioning how sustainability is dependent on the level and flexibility of the learning of teachers as well as where teachers have “learned to inquire accurately into the impact of their teaching on students” (p.17). Where teachers have embedded the professional development into effective classroom practice they felt positive towards the initiative.

Different roles that a leader might adopt according to Timperley et al., (2007) include: “managing a professional learning environment, promoting a culture of learning within the school, developing the leadership of others in relation to curriculum or pedagogy and developing a vision of how teaching might impact on student outcomes” (p. 196). All roles combined make the role of leadership fraught with tensions and perceptions that are not necessarily experienced by others, such as teachers, in the same organisation. This is because a teacher’s perspective is viewed from the role of a classroom teacher and the impact of learning and initiative intensification on student achievement more so than in the context of whole-school leadership and management.

The effectiveness of the implementation of an initiative is possibly sustained according to the depth and knowledge of the skill-base used by a principal (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Principals require a wide and in-depth skill-base in order to manage changes successfully. This is because there are many variables that surface when the comfort-zone of a member is challenged during a change process. A principal and their staff might benefit by looking through different

frameworks or lenses of leadership simultaneously in order to address issues that arise effectively.

Evidence from the literature regarding positive problem solving (Cardno, 1998a) and developing innovative pedagogical practice (Darling Hammond, 1997) reflect the value placed on the faculty head's [coordinators] role as a "conduit" (Feist, 2008, p. 61). According to Feist (2008) "shared work practices and building a professional culture is an important leadership role" (p. 62) which was undertaken by all three coordinators in the findings from the data. The distributed leadership, as evident in a coordinator's middle-leadership role, is viewed as a more collegial form of leadership where the management structure has been flattened (Gunter, 2005).

Collegial leadership is perceived by stakeholders as positive in light of initiative sustainability in that it "values the sharing of leadership and fosters participation and teamwork" (Feist, 2008, p. 62). Staff in the findings from the data learned to form loyalties with the coordinators in their roles as leaders of the initiative as well as realising that the principal remains the school leader at the same time. Coordinators have been referred to as either a 'go-between' (Feist, 2008) or a 'boundary spanner' (Timperley, 2005) being someone who spans the boundaries between two different groups. The coordinators in this research played a role similar to that of faculty heads in a secondary school as described by Feist (2008) in her research, with requirements to manage other managers, coordinate the work of others and represent others through their role as a conduit. Juggling such roles simultaneously highlights the tensions experienced by a coordinator. Although a coordinator's role was largely consultative in an attempt to develop a collegial approach to leading the TDI it also presented a need for what Gunter (2005) refers to as power sharing. All three coordinators had to manage the leadership of other staff who took on G&T learning and teaching programmes for, identified groups of students. Four classroom teachers from different focus groups volunteered their services to facilitate G&T specialist groups in an attempt towards gaining a greater ownership and perhaps long-term sustainability of the project.

The sustainability of an initiative long-term is fraught with many complex issues which arise and need to be considered. Many contributing factors such as: the intensification of work overload, ownership and hindrances of initiative change, productive dialogue, emotional responses to

change, professional development, leaders' participation in change processes, professional learning and change and perceptions of change management across participant groups, all play a role in the initiative's long-term sustainability. Much depends upon how management deals with such issues, mentioned previously, as they arise and in a timely manner.

Summary

Organisational structures are contextual and constantly interpreted and reinterpreted by the people who work in them according to Greenfield (1975). Feist (2008) goes on to say that "the way people behave in organisations is an essential component of understanding the way organisations are formed" (p. 61). In this way the perspectives held by the different participants of a TDI group within the same school will form the social and organisational structures that an initiative functions out of.

The findings from the data have revealed that the sustainability of an initiative is a complex issue. It is not a matter of a principal's perceptions being right and the staff or coordinator's perceptions being wrong. Rather the data has revealed the complexities of leadership in the context of a principal's role being both a leader of learning and as a manager of people and resources. These two roles are inter-related and produce unexpected demands for those in leadership. How one group interprets the actions of another group and how such actions are constructed into perceptions is the essence of what makes sustainability such a complex issue.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Introduction

As a small scale research project the findings of this research attempted to gain an understanding of the complexities of sustaining a TDI contract post-external funding. This final chapter outlines the findings relating to the conclusions from the data questions which were discussed in Chapters Four and Five in relation to the initial research objectives:

1. To analyse what informs perspectives held by groups of stakeholders when an externally funded initiative is implemented with a focus of long-term sustainability.
2. To describe the practice used to sustain practice related to an external initiative once funding has ceased.

The issues and complexities involving the change processes that a staff addressed when implementing a new initiative are presented. The implications for the long-term sustainability post-MoE funding are discussed, recommendations for achieving ownership of an initiative by all stakeholders are included. Strengths and limitations of the findings from the data process are also discussed before outlining the transferability of findings and recommendations for future practice and research.

Summary of specific findings

All three schools became complex professional learning systems which were organised and structured to encourage professional development for teachers, so that the learning became a spontaneous part of their work both during and after a TDI initiative had been implemented. The various responses of each group, principals, coordinators and classroom teachers across the three schools were represented in the findings from the data by their different group perspectives. Each group interpreted and constructed a coordinated set of ideas and actions to deal with issues that arose during the TDI's implementation with a focus towards sustainability.

Complexities of leadership and sustainability

There was evidence of tensions in the teachers' views on the implementation of the TDI into classroom practice. Although the tension was often unspoken it was implied underneath the data through the recurring themes of work intensification and time restraints of the teachers' work conditions. Despite such tensions some teachers experienced ownership of the initiative whilst others experienced resistance at the same time. Some teachers felt that they were listened to which gave them a sense of buy-in and ownership towards the initiative. In contrast others felt that their TDI professional development was more directed by management and they consequently implemented the initiative in a passive manner. This passivity may have been a form of resistance towards the initiative which might hinder further sustainability in the long-term.

All 30 teachers found that they needed to understand each initiative in isolation from other initiatives, being either implemented or embedded into a school's curriculum, before they could transfer their learning into classroom practice. In this way, the enmeshing of a number of initiatives at one time as suggested by three principals meant that work for teachers was increased rather than reduced as the three principals had hoped. According to Lazarus (1991), and Slegers (2001), one of the key factors that shapes and drives people's emotions is the extent to which they can fulfil or are prevented from fulfilling their goals. Due to the teachers in the findings from the data being required to implement too many different initiatives at the same time they encountered frustration by not being able to give enough time to develop an in-depth implementation of the TDI in their classrooms. The frustration hindered the ownership of the initiative for several teachers.

The complexities of sustaining a TDI post-contract funding varied according to where a staff member was situated in their school management and structure. Different perspectives added to the complexities of leadership when initiative ownership was trying to be achieved. Complexities such as the different interpretations of collaborative practice and the differing degrees of ownership by participants; the effectiveness of professional development including induction programmes, and the impact of initiative overload were factors that required modification with a focus towards long-term sustainability of a TDI. The differing assumptions of members

regarding such complexities caused tensions that although unspoken, underpinned the data of principals, coordinators and teachers. The principals' role as a designated school leader while supporting the coordinators' leadership of the initiative was to restructure staffing roles with a focus of sustainability post Ministry funding. Tensions experienced by principals such as those felt between managing and leading, demands and resources, being a leader yet being dependent on others are the general factors that contribute to the complexities and stresses of a principal's job (Evans, 1996). Evans (1996) goes on to mention that the complexities of leadership are heightened with a focus on initiative implementation, requiring high levels of creativity and personal initiative on one hand and parts of traditional forms of school relationship on the other. Both are "set against the changing demands of a turbulent contemporary environment" (Ball, 1987, p. 164). Yet the teachers' and coordinators' interpretations of change are viewed in the way that resources are redistributed, job allocations are restructured and lines of information flow are redirected. Initiative implementation may require that those involved seek to work together in what Gronn (2003b) refers to as "concertive action" (p. 35). The findings from the data revealed that such changes in participants' loyalties to synergise and work collaboratively were more easily put in place when they had been given a voice in the associated decision making processes. When teachers became aware that they were valued and listened to by those in management roles, the change process, success and longevity of initiative implementation appeared to increase.

Collaborative decision-making, when restructuring staffing roles by principals, was not carried out collaboratively. Decisions were arrived at according to how the principal saw the needs necessary to sustain the TDI. Teachers did not have input into the decision making processes at the beginning of the TDI's implementation. Once knowledge from professional development had been gained by the teachers some recognised that their ideas and suggestions had been listened to by those in management. However there was no evidence to suggest that staff had the capacity to continue with TDI practices with a focus of sustaining an effective in-depth TDI programme long-term. The jurisdiction of capacity of existing staff was considered for the coordinators and their roles. Yet the consideration of classroom teachers' capacity to sustain the TDI was minimal considering the lack of voice given to teachers both during and after the TDI's implementation.

An initiative can be dropped into the schools' curriculum by enthusiastic leaders from the MoE who have the expectation that anyone can recognise its obvious merits and will adapt their behaviour accordingly. Teachers however, as revealed by the data in this research, make their own judgments on how to respond to an initiative and in varying degrees elect to either own or hinder the necessary strategies for its implementation and its long-term sustainability. If teachers do not have the capacity to sustain an initiative then it is likely that the initiative will be short-lived after external funding has ceased. According to two coordinators the six teachers who mentioned that they did not voice what they thought or felt at the time of initiative implementation, appeared to be 'fine' with management making decisions for them. However in time, dissension due to a passive acceptance of the initiative might work against initiative sustainability, and its need of staff ownership to ensure its success long-term (Ball, 1987)

The research data revealed that principals identified change processes required to implement an initiative into the school's curriculum in a variety of ways. All three principals, due to their existing workload requirements employed a coordinator using external funding for the first three years to coordinate change processes involving the principal, management teams and classroom teachers. The three coordinators acted between the teachers and the principals often negotiating between the two as issues arose. These issues included: change and sustainability; managing change and professional development; collaborative decision-making; intensification of work and ownership and resistance. These issues were either addressed during the three year funded implementation processes or have remained post-contract and require attention if long-term sustainability is to be effectively realised. The sustainability of a TDI has depended on how the management in each school dealt with or perhaps did not deal with these issues as they arose.

Due to time restraints classroom teachers have realised other issues that presented themselves during the initiative's implementation. These issues have remained unresolved post-external funding and have the potential to hinder aspects of the initiative's focus on sustainability. Such issues included: emotional responses to change being frustration and guilt where time restraints have limited some classroom teachers' ability to give the in-depth focus to TDI pedagogy; resistance to change where some teachers did not share the same belief system of the contract as

other staff might; a lack of formal induction of new staff across all school levels and opportunities to engage in non-threatening professional dialogue as and when issues surfaced.

Decision making processes and ownership

When it came time for professional development relating to TDI implementation during syndicate and whole-staff meeting sessions, that were held outside of classroom hours, the teachers had already accumulated tiredness from the rigours of their daily classroom practice. In essence the teachers' exhaustiveness affected their levels of ownership during decision-making practice, creating some defensiveness rather than ownership of the final decisions. New tasks became another 'thing to throw onto the pile' because of the teachers' professional exhaustiveness. This action in-turn resulted in negative emotional responses of teachers' feeling guilty because they felt that they did not have the time to embed new ideas effectively into their classroom practice.

This research has found that by teachers having an input into initiative implementation, once a knowledge base has been established, then a greater sense of ownership might be experienced. However there was evidence that ownership existed where some teachers were given an opportunity to submit their ideas for a TDI withdrawal programme and undertook to facilitate it. The teachers appreciated the quality and relevance of the professional development programmes that promoted the inclusiveness of G&T teaching and learning in classrooms. However it would seem that ownership might have increased if the coordinators had helped to transfer the learning back into classroom practice alongside with the teachers.

The in-depth flexibility of learning for some participating teachers provided a greater level of ownership. The findings from the data suggest that positive ownership of an initiative is a key to its long-term sustainability. Teachers in the findings from the data did not voice what they thought at the time; rather they appeared to be fine with the management (coordinators and principals) making the decisions for them. Decision making procedures are often focused on autonomy and personal initiative while realising that in doing so it is the relational side of team-work which can suffer (Bottery, 2004). This is a daunting task for one individual to orchestrate particularly when it would seem from the findings from the data that the activities needed to

bring about effective change need to be relatively unstructured and power is decentralised so that all participants might gain a sense of ownership in an attempt to achieve long-term sustainability of an initiative.

However where ownership did exist, it was presumed by the leaders to be a motivating factor for long-term sustainability of a TDI, “motivation through professional development does not necessarily translate into action” (Van Groenewoud, 2009, p.102). For example increasing the level of ownership might not necessarily lead to desired outcomes because of the competing demands on teachers’ time concerned with other initiative implementation programmes running often simultaneously. Also the relative importance of some factors over others in giving ownership is not yet known. By incorporating such strategies as making collaborative decision connected and on-going Darling-Hammond (2000, cited in Crooks, 2006) suggests that effective professional development and learning programmes may be achieved and maintained.

Had the decision-making tests of relevance and expertise to determine the participation of the stakeholders (Owens, 2004) been employed during collaborative decision-making procedures then staff might have had the capacity to continue in more meaningful ways to the TDI and its sustainability. With such tests in place the opportunity to go-deeper beyond what leadership thought and into what teachers thought is a strong implication for leaders to consider when managing change and the sustainability of an initiative.

Professional development

Teachers might not experience an initiative’s implementation in the same manner as principals or coordinators do because their roles are very different. The effectiveness of the professional learning and development within a school is possibly related to the level and depth of leadership involvement in both initiative implementation and its long-term sustainability. This research reveals that all three schools engaged in effective professional development to varying degrees with a focus of long-term sustainability.

The one school in this research that had a strong focus on new teacher induction related to the initiative showed less hindrance or resistance from those teachers when the time came to embed

the initiative into their classroom programmes compared to new teachers at the other two schools. Crooks (2006) suggests that effective professional development and learning programmes may be achieved if professional development had not been one-size-fits-all but is cognizant of the induction needs of new teachers. Professional development related to an initiative cannot be separated from induction.

Initiative overload

The most important outcome desired by all stakeholders: principals, coordinators and teachers from all three schools was that the implementation of a TDI would lead to school improvement and specifically to improvements in the identification and meeting the learning needs of G&T students. For improvements in G&T teaching and learning to occur a major emphasis on professional development occurred school-wide. In itself the TDI professional development was well received by staff and teachers made comment that the professional development increased their knowledge-base in an attempt to understand TDI strategies and their implications for classroom pedagogy. However teachers experienced initiative overload as other initiatives such as Literacy, ICT and Numeracy were being either implemented or sustained at the same time. With so many initiatives being embedded into the curriculum simultaneously, teachers experienced time restraints imposed upon them due to work overload and intensification. This was evidenced through teachers' focus group comments indicating that there is too much going on at once in order to give in-depth and reflective attention to embedding a TDI into the curriculum. The TDI's implementation was perceived to be an additional workload on already busy schedules. A lack of time by teachers had appeared to result in minimalist approaches, particularly where induction of new staff had not been an integrated procedure across two of the schools in the research. To embed an initiative into sustained practices, schools must take stock of how many initiatives they are embedding at the same time.

Leaders need to be cognizant of the complexities of sustainability when implementing an initiative into a school's curriculum. Figure 6.1 illustrates the complexities or forces at work when sustaining an initiative post-external funding. Operating together these forces illustrate the complexities of sustaining an initiative long-term post-external funding revealed in the findings from the data.

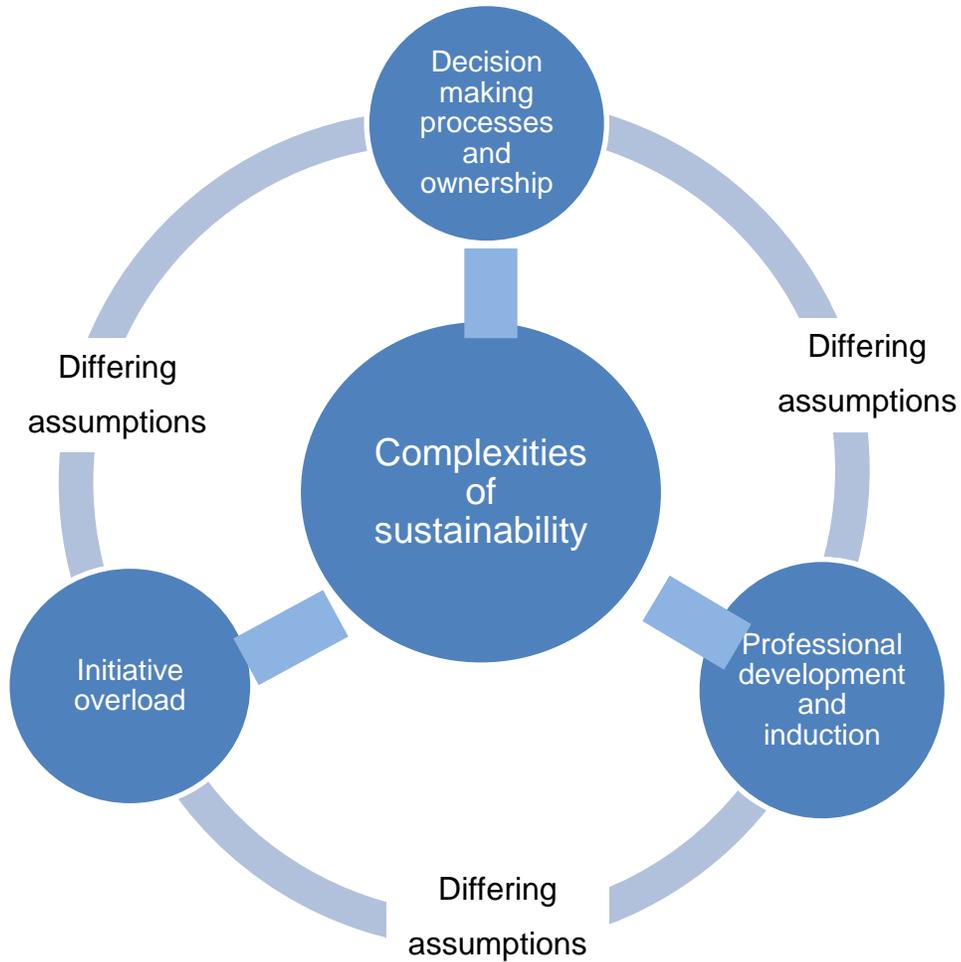


Figure 6.1 Complexities evident in sustainability

Implications

In a small study like this findings can only be indicative of what the participants in this small scale research revealed; the implications may not be generalised to other schools though there would be a degree of transferability of issues related to an overload of national initiatives. I have found that initiatives can be undertaken in a well-intentioned but non-strategic manner for resources and according to Robinson (2007) can have negative consequences for staff and students.

One implication from the findings from the data was that principals as leaders of an initiative needed to draw from staff capacity and expertise in order to embed the initiative successfully and sustainably into a curriculum both during the three years of external-funding and once external funding had ceased. The restructuring of staffing roles alone does not guarantee that a TDI will be sustained long-term. Some practices suit some contexts more than others because one-size-does-not-fit all contexts when fitting new roles to new purposes (Hargreaves, 1994).

A second implication from the findings from the data is that because all three principals were actively involved in a TDI's school-wide professional development programme they were possibly more likely to have a much deeper appreciation of the likely stage and duration of the change process for their teachers and coordinators. However having principals motivated and involved is not enough as motivation alone does not guarantee that learning is transferred into classroom practice (Van Groenewoud, 2009). A coordinator's role might further benefit student achievement by implementing skilled classroom appraisal with relation to G&T learning and teaching programmes.

Another implication from the findings from the data revealed that induction of new staff is also an essential aspect of effective change because it acts as a bridge, linking the professional development of new staff to that of the existing staff. Induction needs to be on-going and intentional as it sits with other issues and it assists teachers in feeling valued. Where a formalised induction programme appeared to be absent for the teachers new to a staff, they appeared to more likely resist changes in their teaching pedagogy to embed a TDI because of their lack of knowledge regarding the initiative. In this way the long-term sustainability of a TDI might be hindered even though other issues such as restructuring have been addressed.

A fourth implication is that by participants being passive, they might benefit by engaging in productive dialogue where their voice is listened to in a non-threatening manner by those managing the change processes. Passivity from some teacher participants is the silence that indicates dilemma management practices are not there yet. Theory by several authors, Argyris (1993), Cardno (1998a) and Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005) suggests that in genuine collaborative decision making, that productive dialogue that engenders double-loop learning

(Argyris, 1977) should be there. Due to this mismatch, consideration needs to be given to whether the absence of dialogue as a part of collaborative practices is affecting the ability of teachers to voice their concerns when issues of work intensification and time restraints arise. The exhaustiveness that teachers operate out of might also be positively addressed by the employment of professional dialogue practices. However dialogue requires effort and professional training and learning as espoused by Piggot-Irvine and Cardno (2005). Although in this research all participating groups agreed that discussion around TDI professional development was beneficial, collegial, supportive and therefore productive at all levels of a school's structure the data did not reveal that productive dialogue (Cardno, 2006) between participants and stakeholder groups had taken place. Yet had it been implemented it might have helped each group to realise each others' perspectives in a more open and less passive manner.

Within an initiative the implementation and sustainability process is about testing new ways of doing things. According to Tickle (2000) "problems arising from the execution of a professional plan can also be solved as evidence begins to accumulate" (p. 187). Action that positively addresses such issues and dilemmas has been outlined in Chapter Two. Through dialogue, team members can better understand each other by inquiring into one another's beliefs and values (Cardno, 2006). In this way individuals learn to suspend judgment as they listen to another's point of view.

By reshaping the on-going action, a dilemma resolution process is allowed to provide double-loop learning (Argyris, 1977) which produces values such as inclusiveness, positive ownership, honesty and a sharing of control and actions. According to Cardno (2007) by generating valid information and reflecting "whilst in the throes of action will allow defensive strategies to be recognised and stopped in action" (p. 46). Valid information is generated and conflict is allowed to surface and to be dealt with openly. Argyris (1977) suggests that the best way to generate double-loop learning is for management to do it.

Recommendations

The findings and implementation of this research have highlighted some areas where practice might be improved. Lack of time and competing priorities is the single most important factor for

teachers that will continue to preclude effective long-term sustainability of the TDI. As learning takes time to be embedded and requires a high level of commitment for anything more than superficial change, in order to provide quality time for effective initiative implementation, it would be important to consider the number of new initiatives and changes that place further demands on teachers' time. On the other hand teachers are likely to commit time to a process they value and have ownership of but only if they have the capacity to do so.

One way perhaps of sustaining the post-funding focus of TDI in schools would be to align the external expectations of the contract with internal priorities according to the school's strategic plan. This process might offer schools, according to Thrupp and Willmott (2003) a way of reconciling the competing demands and tensions in their current sustainability of a project post-funding. This might be achieved by allowing more time for effective implementation and continuing with the associated policy changes, struggles, subversions and so forth, after the funding has ceased. Building on what has begun, rather than beginning a new politically engineered initiative or attempting to take the existing initiative further, by creating a cultural commitment to any given initiative might serve to realise a cost-effective and sustainable proposition. It is not clear to what degree these critical findings by Thrupp and Willmott (2003) are transferrable to the NZ primary school context. Hopkins (1996) suggests that what is clear is that 'this process is rarely of interest to politicians because of its lengthy timeline' (p. 33). Levin (2001) points out that announcing new policies [initiatives] has much more political mileage.

Collaborative management and dialogue

Leaders or coordinators employing collaborative management practices from the beginning of an initiative's implementation can benefit stakeholders to possibly achieve a greater level of ownership of the initiative and its related change processes. Although coordinators were not aware of the issues facing teachers, because they not voiced openly, consideration needs to be given to whether the absence of collaborative management skills affect the level of buy-in and subsequent ownership of the initiative long-term for all staff. Training, particularly for coordinators might have been beneficial so that they learn to deal with issues in a manner that counters passivity. Cardno (2006) reiterates that support is necessary in relation to providing participants with resources to engage in critical and productive collaborative dialogue as a

foundation for understanding the sources of problems. Issues arise when participants do not want to take on the necessary learning to do so, creating resistance and lessening the likelihood of an initiative's long-term sustainability.

Increase initiative implementation time-frame

A further recommendation might be to consider that the external funding of initiatives move from a three year period to perhaps a five plus period. In this way resources and funding might be available to employ such professional development as dilemma management practices which require specific skill-building and training for those implementing them. The need for such practice is evident in the passivity and levels of resistance revealed in this research which have perhaps lessened the level of ownership experienced by some teachers.

Induction of new staff

A principal or TDI coordinator might also benefit by assigning an existing staff member to a new staff member in an effort to guide the induction process making it meaningful for new staff. A principal among many other managerial and leading learning roles simply does not have the time to take on the induction programme as a one-to-one mentoring basis for new staff.

Limitations and transferability of findings

The research was carried out within the first year of post-Ministry contract funding. Although sustainability of the contract has been a focus for all three schools during the three years while MoE funding was available, the findings from the data results might be a reflection of sustainability while the effects of funding were still being felt. It would be interesting to consider the long-term effectiveness of sustainability, for example, five years after the funding had ceased. The results might reflect the long-term effectiveness of changes made or the short-lived effect of such changes.

When schools come out of the TDI contract consideration should be given to the possible transferability of the findings of this research as a database for making judgements to other schools in either a similar or a different context. Because qualitative research entails the

intensive interpretive study of a small group or individuals sharing certain characteristics (depth rather than breadth) Bryman (2008) identifies that: “qualitative findings tend to be oriented to the contextual uniqueness ...of the aspect of the social world being studied” (p. 378). Lincoln (1985) goes on to say that, “whether findings hold in some other context, or even in the same context at some other time, is an empirical issue” (p. 316). Further similar observations would need to take place in other schools for this to be identified as the findings being transferable. However the findings of this research do highlight the importance of building the capacity of staff; collaborative management, professional development (including induction) , initiative overload and the assumptions that staff have surrounding these issues. This research has also found that the change processes involved in addressing such issues take time and are complex.

Suggestions for future research

Principals play a powerful role in shaping a culture of expectation which develops around roles and structures (Hannay et al., 2001). Therefore understanding the factors that motivate principals to take on so many new initiatives often within a similar timeframe is an area where further research would be beneficial. With the issue of work intensification being predominant among teaching staff then further research on the impact of initiative overload upon teachers would provide additional data to my research to either support or contradict the data around the effective sustainability of an initiative.

Conclusion

The key issues that have surrounded the three year implementation of a TDI and its long-term sustainability post-contract funding across three similar primary schools include: ownership opportunities for all stakeholders in decision making and collaborative practices; professional development that encourages reform (including induction for new staff); initiative overload and intensification that affects social policy in the way that teachers in the findings from the data viewed their jobs. The differing assumptions held separately by the three principals, three TDI coordinators and thirty teachers across five focus groups has been identified as the unspoken tension underlying the data of this research. Different group assumptions were not discussed openly within each school nor were groups aware of each other's assumptions. There was some

cross-over between principals and coordinators, a little between the coordinators and teachers and less between principals and teachers. Perhaps if there had been opportunities for open, non-threatening discussion, then insight for all stakeholders might have been provided if productive dialogue was a practice where teachers according to Gunter (2005) might “ask more of themselves than how best to implement reform [an initiative] and to do more about their situation through the exercise of professional courage in ways that are social and socializing” (p. xi). Effective leadership can produce a high level of employee dedication which according to Cross and Parker (2004) “must be achieved before any long-term economic and cultural renaissance can occur” (p. 11). They also mention that in the US there is an assertion that ...‘excellent’ [effectively led] companies possess certain cultural qualities that ensure their success. Likewise teaching staff “by distilling their own maxim for building a successful culture” (p. 11) could maximise collaborative teamwork in an effective learning organisation by caring for others, focusing on quality and so on.

There is a shortage of evidence about the extent to which schools manage to sustain improvement and focus post MoE contract funding. There is an assumption amongst participants in the findings from the data that the sustainability of an initiative assists in realising school improvement. Multiple outcomes of sustaining an initiative post-external funding have revealed the complexities of change management and leadership within a school when embedding an initiative with a focus to sustainability.

Sustaining an initiative long-term is challenging considering that work is carried out in environments where increased work intensification and the allocation of time (Ingvarson et al., 2005) is a recurring theme. At one level it could appear that initiatives serve to increase funding and resources for a school because external funds are available for their initial implementation. However it is all too easy to get the job done in the shortest amount of time to make room for the next task rather than going in-depth with pedagogy related to a new initiative. However if the work is not questioned the process of sustaining an initiative long-term is a never ending one, which strips teachers of their agency and their work of its meaning (Gunter, 2005). She goes on to state that, “questioning should not be read as oppositional but as an example of dialogue and a case for more dialogue” (p. ix). Issues of sustaining a TDI contract post-external funding are

complex and have further implications for those leading learning within their schools. The test of staff capacity needs to be considered by leadership to ensure that the effectiveness of initiative implementation might be sustained long-term. How one group interprets the actions of another group and how they are constructed into perceptions and assumptions is the essence of what makes sustainability such a complex issue.

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APPENDIX A

SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Principals and Coordinators: P&C (principal and coordinator)

1. What are the expectations of the TDI contract?

School improvement

2. Describe how you align expectations of the TDI contract: (e.g. changing understanding of giftedness; developing a deeper and more sensitive awareness of what it means to learning to be a gifted child; development of innovative approaches in gifted education) with internal school context priorities i.e. building on what has begun rather than beginning a new politically engineered initiative or attempting to take an initiative further.

3. Describe how you see the implementation of the TDI having contributed to your student achievement?

4. Are there any other areas of improvement in the school due to the implementation of the TDI?

P

5. How are educational priorities decided upon for your school?

6. Why does your school discontinue, adapt or even transform changes that they make over time?

P&C: Change

7. Identify the complexities of sustaining a professional learning model for teachers post-MoE funding.

8. How do you manage change in your school in order to sustain a focus of sustainability of the TDI contract?

9. In what ways does your role in the TDI influence your decisions and actions when managing change in order to sustain the TDI long-term?

10. How can you be sure that changes at the management level of the school will bring changes to the classroom that are authentic and real as opposed to 'quick fix short term responses' to appease MoE policy?
11. How has the TDI aligned to your school goals in relation to student achievement?
12. What strategies do you use to ensure that teachers can see how the change will assist them in the delivery of education?
13. Describe ways that teachers have been allocated time to reflect and develop their practice of the TDI with the intention that sustainability results.

P & C: Culture

14. What do you consider motivates staff to contribute to or hinder their ownership of the TDI?
15. How might hindrances be reduced in order to implement strategic action (to lessen resistance) and offset the impact of the loss of initiative funding and changing educational priorities?
16. On the contrary, what do you consider enables ownership of the TDI for teachers?

P

17. What skill-base do you use to orchestrate change that an initiative requires for it to be implemented both meaningfully and therefore successfully for all stakeholders i.e. MoE, teachers, management, staff?

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Classroom Teachers

Question 1

- i) Remember when you first began to identify gifted and talented behavioural characteristics in a child in your class. Describe what you recognised.
- ii) What did you do to provide for the learning needs of this child differently from the mainstream childrens' needs?

Question 2

- i) How were you prepared by management or those in TDI coordinator positions to implement T&G teaching and learning in your classroom? (e.g. professional readings, workshops, staff discussion, identifying what cultural giftedness means in our school).
- ii) Describe what in-put (if any) you had to the implementation of TDI at your school (e.g. were your suggestions listened to, put into practice? How might this have been done?).

Question 3

- i) What types (variety) of professional development have made the most effective impact on your understanding of talented and giftedness in student behaviours (include an ethnic cultural focus). Describe the effects/changes that this has made on your classroom teaching and learning pedagogy.
- ii) The Ministry of Education has driven the need for school improvement and change by stating that from 2005 (NAG 1) it will be mandatory for all state schools to demonstrate how they are meeting the needs of their gifted and talented learners. However external policy cannot mandate what happens in the classroom (because it is not proximal enough to the classroom). Therefore describe what changes you have had to make in order to give depth and width to provide for effective T&G learning and teaching in your classroom?
- iii) In what ways have you been able to apply what you have learnt from the TDI implementation into a classroom context?

iv) Describe the ways that you have been given time to change policy, struggle with and modify the TDI initiative to allow it to align with your school's context during the formative stages (2006-2008).

Question 4

i) All things considered, suppose you had 1 minute to talk to the MoE what would you say regarding the change processes a classroom teacher must go through in order to implement an initiative into their classroom and then realise that there is no external funding to further develop the initiative (or is money required after three years of initiative implementation, is it sustained and embedded by the end of the three year contract?).

ii) Summary: Interviewer to give two-three minutes summary of previous questions discussion

Ask participants about the adequacy of the summary.

Did I correctly describe what was said?

How well does this capture what was said here?

iii) Final insurance question:

The MoE has funded the TDI initiative for 3 years and then the funding ceases. Describe the effects/changes that this has made in your classroom teaching and learning pedagogy.

APPENDIX C

ABBREVIATIONS for REFERENCES

| Abbreviation | Full form |
|---------------------|---|
| BOT | Board of Trustees |
| BT | Beginning Teacher (teacher in the first two years of teaching practice) |
| Codes | P- Principal (of schools 1, 2 or 3) C- TDI Coordinator (of schools 1, 2 or 3) FG- Focus Group (schools 1A & 1B, 2A & 2B, 3) |
| DP | Deputy Principal |
| G&T | Gifted and Talented |
| ICT | Information Communication Technology |
| MoE | Ministry of Education |
| NAG | National Achievement Guidelines |
| PAT | Portable Appliance Test |
| TDI | Talent Development Initiative |
| TT | Tutor Teacher (assigned as a mentor to a Beginning Teacher) |