

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This research study investigated the use of Outcome-Based Education (O.B.E.) ideas by educators in the New South Wales Department of School Education (N.S.W. D.S.E.) before March, 1995.

Methodological triangulation, the use of two or more methods of data collection within a single study as suggested by Duffy in Leedy (1993:143), was the basis of the design of this research. Duffy's blending of methodological approaches in research reinforces the "grounded theory" concepts developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), in which multiple comparison groups, a denial of a clash between quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and the integration of theory was stressed. As in many sociological studies researching structures undergoing continuous change, O.B.E. is an area of educational innovation undergoing continual adjustment. O.B.E. paradigms can be seen as epitomising the Glaser and Strauss (1967:235) opinion that "older structures frequently take on new dimensions before highly rigorous research can be accomplished". From the information provided in the literature review, it was apparent that O.B.E. approaches to education were continually being adapted and expanded, encompassing related ideas from both educational and business sources. The nature of the research questions asked were intended to elicit "rich" information to identify the origin of O.B.E. ideas used in N.S.W. public schools before March, 1995.

The study has used a qualitative approach, in which information was collected using phone and personal interviews, and through the distribution of a questionnaire. The

questions in the interview and questionnaire components of the research were structured similarly, so that a comparative analysis of the findings emerging from the data could then take place with some validity. The letters of permission to conduct this study are provided in Appendix I of this thesis. Copies of the interview questions and questionnaire format are provided in Appendix 2 of this thesis.

Research Design

This research study, entitled "Outcome-Based Education: Origins, Development and Impact on the Management of N.S.W. Public Schools" was designed to fulfil expected outcomes of the study. In an O.B.E. approach to planning in educational contexts, "expected outcomes" are first established and then action is "designed down" from the outcomes established. Similarly, this research set specific outcomes for the study in June, 1994 before the research questions were developed, and the interviews and questionnaire formats were designed. The study

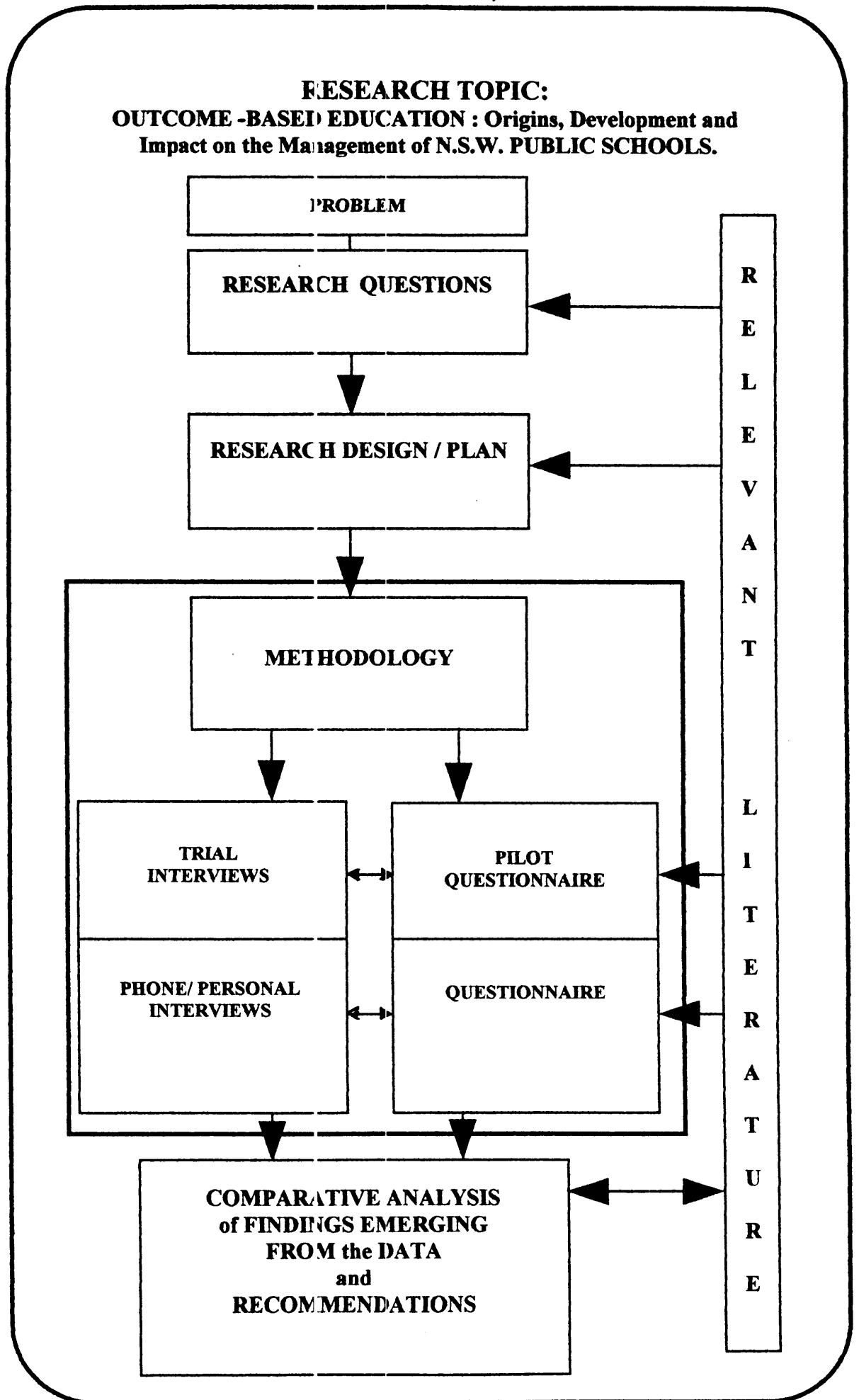
-will provide a comprehensive and critical review of literature on Outcome-Based Education (O.B.E.).

-will detail and analyse phone interviews of 'key actors' involved in Outcome Based Education (O.B.E.) change processes within the N.S.W. Department of School Education.

-will survey current processes which facilitate or hinder comprehensive O.B.E. implementation in N.S.W. public schools.

The research was then structured to facilitate triangulation of the data collected. An overview of the research design is provided overleaf in Figure 1.

Figure 1: RESEARCH DESIGN



Research Questions

The four questions which guided this study are

Research Question 1: "How are Outcome-Based Education strategies being implemented in N.S.W. public schools?"

Research Question 2: "How does the organization of O.B.E. change processes in N.S.W. differ from the strategies devised originally in the U.S.A.?"

Research Question 3: "What are the effects on regions, cluster of schools, school managers and teaching staff of O.B.E. policy approaches determined at a state level?"

Research Question 4: "What is the nature of current training provision for school managers and teachers in being able to effectively deal with the application of O.B.E. ideas within school, cluster and regional contexts?"

This research study provides some "empirical" evidence, in the sense that it is based on a recording of actual events as perceived by respondents and informants involved. This study constitutes the deriving of knowledge from experience, through the recording of aspects of O.B.E. influencing beliefs and educational management within the N.S.W. D.S.E. as perceived by "key actors" involved in facilitating change processes.

The methods used in this research exemplify the nature of qualitative research, in that data were collected by conducting interviews and distributing a questionnaire to "key actors" in order to document the first hand experiences of O.B.E. practitioners within the N.S.W. public school system. However, the inclusion of some numerical data

was made possible through the types of responses to some questions. These quantitative responses were tabulated to inform the analysis of interviews and questionnaires.

Research Procedures

The changing or dynamic nature of reality, is subjectively interpreted by educational practitioners depending on the knowledge base possessed, the nature of the context in which the practitioner operates and the internal control processes of the individual. As the very philosophic base of Outcome-Based Education deals specifically with establishing positive modes of managing staff, students and community members through the communication and delivery styles used, it is necessary in the methodology selected for this study to investigate the meaning that persons attach to events in their environment.

Strategies to minimise potential researcher bias to the "modus operandi" of the O.B.E. practitioners involved in this research study were considered. The strategies used included the selection of a formal approach to the phone or personal interviews, in which there was no variation to the order of questions between interviews. In addition, the purpose of formal interviews was explained to the respondents briefly before the interviews began, so that requests for clarification of questions by respondents could be minimised, reducing the "colouring" of the information by this researcher. The validity of this research was intended to be maximised by this researcher, through the removal of opportunities to manipulate the nature of information given by respondents and informants, as can occur within informal interviews. Open-ended responses to elicit "richer" information than that which may be provided for in a survey was intended to maximise researcher objectivity. In this, the researcher was guided by the approach of Isaac and Michael (1980). Open-ended questions give the respondent:

a frame of reference with which to react, without placing any constraint on the reaction. (It) allows flexibility, depth, clarification, and probing. (It) enables the interviewer to assess responder's degree of... knowledge. (It) allows unexpected responses which may reveal significant information. (Isaac et al., 1980:98)

Consideration of Variables

In the design of this research study, the variables that may affect data collected were considered. Variables may be classified into three categories according to Isaac and Michael (1980) as independent, dependant or control variables. A fourth possible category are the:

conceptual states within the organism (or the) intervening variables (higher order constraints). These cannot be directly observed or measured and are hypothetical conceptions intended to explain processes between the stimulus and response. Such concepts as learning, intelligence, perception, motivation, need, self, personality, trait, and feeling illustrate this category. (Isaac et al., 1980:16)

This fourth possible category of variables is of particular relevance to a study of O.B.E. For example, the Outcomes-Driven Developmental Model (ODDM) involves the affective domain to foster intrinsic or extrinsic motivation in the participants of the schooling process. The choice of open-ended responses to questions, the deliberate seeking of perceptions, opinions and professional experience as constituting the knowledge base about O.B.E., is embedded in this fourth realm of variable options considered by this researcher. In the ODDM Johnson City Schools' District (New York State, U.S.A.) approach, the administrative and teaching staff use Glasser's Control Theory/ Reality Therapy /Quality Management (C.T./R.T./Q.M.) strategies as a means ensuring effective communication and interpersonal relationships.

Tuckman (1972) appears to incorporate the wide range of possible variables to be considered in a more holistic manner. Tuckman selects the independent, moderator and control variables, which combine to form the intervening variables (conceptualizations that intervene between operationally stated causes and operationally stated effects), and which then in turn impact on the dependant variables representing the effects (Tuckman, 1972:88).

The effect of independent variables, for example policy decisions effected between the N.S.W. Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs, Curriculum Directorate and the

Board of Studies, are beyond the parameters of this research on O.B.E. Independent variables are the "presumed cause of any change in the outcome... It may be manipulated or measured." (Tuckman, 1972:78). Some of the "inputs, manipulated situations or stimulus variables" were recognized as having general importance to the incorporation of O.B.E. ideas in the N.S.W. D.S.E., and are referred to by the "key actors" participating in this research study. The informants and respondents were operating within the constraints placed on them the N.S.W. Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" focus and D.S.E. priorities, in a blended centralised/ decentralised state system of education. The "key actors" were identified by this researcher through access to O.B.E. conference attendance listings, ODDM training participant listings and O.B.E. network membership listings, such as the O.B.E. Network that operates within the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA).

The selection of "key actors" as the sources of information in this research study can be related to dependant variables. According to Tuckman (1972:78), dependant variables are concerned with the:

observed aspect of the behaviour of an organism that has been stimulated. The dependant variable is that factor that is observed and measured to determine the effect of the independent variable.

In this particular research, the behaviour of the "key actors" had been stimulated to act partially by policy decisions made at a state level by the Ministry of Education, Curriculum Branch, the Board of Studies or regional, cluster and school activities. In addition, the independent choices to pursue information or training in O.B.E. made by the "key actors", can be seen to constitute other independent variables which may affect the findings of this research.

A moderating variable was the preparedness of the selected "key actors" to devote valuable personal or professional time to be involved in the phone or personal interviews, or respond to the questionnaires. Another moderating variable which can affect the extent to which respondents share personal or professional experiences in

open-ended questions is the degree of trust in the researcher, or the researcher's mode of communication in either the written or aural form.

Consideration of control variables relating to this research study occurred in the design and conduct of the formal interviews and questionnaire and the selection of respondents and informants. The 'key actors' had training and practical experience in O.B.E.- related activities, and were perceived by this researcher to possess a substantial knowledge base about O.B.E. in the N.S.W. public school context. This group of educators then replied to open-ended questions, with minimal interviewer prompts or interaction.

Other control variables can be seen to be the similar ordering of questions across the interview and questionnaire components of this research study. Another important control variable considered by this researcher was the timing of interviews and questionnaires. A sense of urgency was perceived as necessary to complete these stages of the research before the rumoured state election in N.S.W. in March 1995. An election was perceived by this researcher as possibly significantly affecting the context for educational policy in N.S.W. if a change of the party in governmental power took place. Accordingly, the interviews were conducted in November 1994 and the questionnaires distributed during Term 1 of the school year, in February 1995. This time-line proved to be opportune as a state election in March 1995 did result in a change of government and subsequent policy changes.

Selection of Key Interview Informants and Questionnaire Respondents

Deliberate restrictions were placed by this researcher on the choice of respondents to participate in the interviews and questionnaires. The current knowledge base about Outcome-Based Education, particularly its origins and the range of strategic planning implications within O.B.E. concepts tends to be restricted to D.S.E. personnel who had attended O.B.E. related conferences or training programs. However, comprehensive training programs in specific O.B.E. strategies such as the ODDM model or O.B.E.

related programs such as Glasser's C.T./ R.T./Q.M. approach were largely sponsored by private sector consultative groups. Attendance at these kinds of training programs that have a commercially- sponsored origin by D.S.E. personnel was either personally funded, partially or fully funded through the individual actively seeking funding through school, cluster or regional sources. These individuals were targeted to participate in this research, and as such cannot be claimed to be a representative group of teaching personnel as would be the case in a study which uses random selection to assist in validating the research.

Comparative analysis of the issues emerging from the formal interviews with open-ended questions and the questionnaire with similar questions is presented in the final chapter of this research study. The questions have been identically ordered within interviews and the questionnaire. This connection strengthened when trial interviews were conducted, the decision to remain committed to a structured, formal interview strategy was made, the potential problems or advantages of the intervening time period between interviews and questionnaire distribution were considered, and the subsequent decisions about questionnaire format were made.

Time as a Possible Variable

As the interviews and survey were not conducted concurrently, time variables could be considered to invalidate comparative analysis of the issues that emerged from the interviews and questionnaire. However, the deliberate selection of November and December 1994 as the period of time to conduct interviews proved convenient for the informants and this researcher, after the completion of annual student assessment processes in schools. A deliberate choice to target the first term of a new school year was to distribute the questionnaire, as respondents would be refreshed after the Christmas vacation period. In N.S.W. schools, the timing of requests for input from teaching personnel is crucial in maximising the number of potential respondents, an opinion based on the professional experiences of this researcher as both a teacher and a

faculty head. The second, third and fourth school terms are fully occupied with demands for student assessment, long-term planning of curriculum and budget provisions for the next school year in addition to the everyday class programming and resource organization tasks. The advantages of the selected time periods to both the "key actors" and this researcher were seen in this particular context to obviate the potential problems of the intervening time variable affecting the information obtained. The only intervening event that was perceived to be of considerable risk to the research findings was an early election being held before March 1995.

Interview Methodology

In order to elicit codifiable responses to the four focus questions of this research, "key-informant" interviews with a formal structure allowing for open-ended responses to the majority of questions were conducted. Most interviews were conducted over a 30- 45 minute time frame. The selection of key informants for interview took a stratified approach, in order to gain a cross-section of experience, opinions and some sense of the contextual factors impacting on each informant's approach to the incorporation of O.B.E. concepts in the workplace.

Purposeful selection of educators already applying O.B.E. concepts in their workplace occurred for reasons detailed earlier in this chapter, in 'Selection of Key Informants for Interview and Respondents for Questionnaire'. Invitations to participate in the research study and letters of authorisation for the study to be conducted in the N.S.W. public school system were posted to 20 key informants. Copies of these documents can be found in Appendix 1. Sixteen educators were subsequently interviewed, as more fully explained in Chapter 4 of this research study. One Assistant Director-General, four regional personnel, four Directors of Schools with responsibility for clusters of schools, three principals (one primary, two secondary schools), and four D.S.E. employees with responsibility for staff development in schools participated.

This researcher selected a structured approach to the interviews in order to maximise the validity of the predominantly qualitative research, and to minimise possible researcher bias affecting the responses given. In the interview component of this research, a standard set of procedures was adopted. A formal, structured interview approach was followed, with the predominant use of questions that allowed more open-ended answers on the part of the informant. A strategy that elicited open-ended answers as much as possible was deemed by this researcher to offer the best possible means of facilitating "richer" information upon which to base generalizations that might take place. The data given by informants and respondents determined the nature of the issues and themes which emerged from this research study, and was the basis for recommendations made in the final chapter.

Three trial interviews were conducted to pretest and revise the phrasing of the questions, in order to eliminate ambiguities and inadequate wording. The trial interviews were conducted with three D.S.E. personnel working at regional, cluster and school levels within the system. Interviewer prompts occurred only when specifically requested during the trial interviews, when the multi-barrelled nature of two questions caused difficulty for the key informants in two of the three trial interviews conducted. These two respondents requested repetition of the question, and clarification of intent. A rephrasing of these questions before subsequent phone and personal interviews took place was considered, by redrafting the two multi-barrelled questions. However, most of the informants preferred to speak in general terms about the question, as each of the question elements such as school management, teaching and learning were seen as closely inter-related in school contexts. In constructing and conducting the interviews, this researcher was mindful of Ancerson and Burns (1989:117) advice:

All researchers using standardized prompts are required to use the same prompts and ask the same questions in exactly the same order and in precisely the same way regardless of the respondents. Further, questions may neither be added or deleted.

The use of both a recording device and written summaries of interview responses occurred in order to maximise accuracy of transcripts. This approach proved efficient, as the planned interviews were occasionally interrupted. Interviews were conducted while the informants were at work. On one occasion, an interruption during the interview resulted in the remainder of the interview not being recorded through interviewer error, so there was a reliance on summary notes made in developing the transcript. On another occasion, the informant being interviewed spoke at considerable speed and in great depth. The notes and the recording proved essential in producing an accurate transcript. Copies of the transcripts were subsequently sent to informants in order to check accuracy, with no requests for amendments or comments being received by this researcher.

Questionnaire Methodology

The questionnaire was distributed after the interviews were completed. The interviews informed the structure of the pilot questionnaire. The pilot questionnaire was distributed to six educators during the second week of December 1994, as fully described later in this chapter. The questionnaire was evaluated and adjusted by reducing the number of sub-questions as suggested by the pilot survey participants. Distribution of the final questionnaire to fifty potential respondents then occurred during the first week of March 1995.

The questionnaire format complemented the formal interview structure, and was designed to enable comparative analysis with the structured interview data, in that questions were ordered and phrased similarly. The inclusion of a base data component within the questionnaire was added, to assist in identifying the position held by participating educators. The reasons for each of the research questions were clearly stated in terms of expected outcomes the purpose for each of the questionnaire sections. For educators who were conversant with an O.B.E. manner of "designing down" from

the expected outcomes, it was hoped this approach would maximise the number of responses, and absolve possible misinterpretation of question intent.

The seeking of predominantly open-ended responses within the questionnaire was more demanding for the respondent and for the researcher to evaluate than "check-list" survey approach. However, this researcher followed Isaac and Michael's advice (1980:96) that a:

well-defined structure resembling the format of an objective questionnaire, allowing clarification within narrow limits. These tend to be factually oriented, aimed at specific information and relatively brief.

The possible weakness of using the open-ended response approach was considered by this researcher. Concern has been expressed by some research experts, such as Galton (in Anderson and Burns, 1989) that open-ended responses may be:

unrelated to the overall purpose of the study (and that) open-ended responses are not the most usable form of data. Lengthy written responses must be read and re-read to search out those elements or themes that are relevant to the study being conducted.

However, to glean "richer" information through which identification of themes or the research findings could occur, open-ended questions within a structured format was perceived by this researcher to be an efficient way to operate. The use of data analysis formats (see Appendix 3) proved to be a useful tool to aid research analysis and management of information. This researcher found these formats, particularly for analysing long interviews, were an efficient way of finding similar groupings of information and identifying emerging themes. An example of the way in which data was recorded on the formats is also provided in Appendix 3.

The questionnaire was pretested through a pilot study to gauge the effectiveness of format and phrasing of questions before wider distribution during the first week of March, 1995. Six educators were approached to respond to the questionnaire draft, with an additional request to evaluate the type of language used, the clarity of intent in the questionnaire format and the ease of response to particular questions. Possible

ambiguity, imprecise expression, objectivity, relevance, suitability to the problem situation and probability of favourable reception and return were considered to be factors that needed to be addressed in the evaluation (Leedy, 1993:188).

Of the six questionnaires distributed in the pilot study, three were returned. Of the three not returned, one had been sent to a school principal who had recently moved to a different school. Of the other two questionnaires not returned, the time factor of distribution was an apparent problem. Distribution at the end of the school year, with inevitable excessive demands on educators' professional and personal time, apparently resulted in lack of response to the questionnaire by a Relieving Principal and Relieving Deputy Principal. Good intentions had been expressed in participating in the questionnaire by both. These circumstances reinforced the intention by this researcher to distribute the questionnaire after the start of the new school year, and before the state election that might result in strategic changes to a state-based education system.

The three questionnaires returned completed came from three Faculty Head Teachers, who had participated in school-initiated O.B.E. training courses over the preceding months. These respondents indicated some minor changes were needed in the length of the questionnaire, particularly in the second group of questions. No problems were apparent with the layout of the questionnaire. The three respondents were unable to distinguish any difference between a mission and a vision statement, so this researcher decided to combine the first six questions to form three questions that were similar in intent, these questions being 2:1, 2:1:1 and 2:1:2.

A problem within the third group of questions was apparent, in that the respondents either answered very briefly or provided no response at all to a question that had been separated into three parts, asking for responses to school uniqueness in O.B.E. approaches to curriculum, student welfare and strategic planning. This researcher decided to present the question in its original, multi-barrelled form as used in the phone and personal interviews where more positive, extensive responses were given. With these two readjustments to question formats, the questionnaire was effectively shortened. In addition, requests to "Please describe why" in a section four question

dealing with accessibility of information and professional reading were deleted, as respondents in the pilot questionnaire had refrained from answering this prompt in two out of three cases. Specific responses to an evaluation of the questionnaire included, "It does take time and clear thinking (These are) a couple of rare commodities", that it "depends on their workload and familiarity with O.B.E." and further that "Yes, (the questionnaire) would get a better response if it were shorter". These comments prompted the move to shorten the questionnaire, yet retaining the question order and content to be identical to the interviews to assist in comparative analysis between two different related research techniques.

Two other areas of concern to the three respondents were expressed, these being "There are different definitions given to O.B.E. What are we really referring to?" and "I was concerned as to whether I was giving the material you wanted, and if I knew enough about it to help or hinder'. These comments were similar to a few responses received during the personal and telephone interviews. However, the stating of a specific definition for O.B.E. within the interviews or questionnaires was considered by this researcher to be inappropriate, as the data may have been compromised in doing so.

Analysis of Research Data

The analysis of the interview and questionnaire data can be found in Chapters 4 and 5. The findings emerging from the two separate activities are comparatively analysed in the final chapter, in order to identify common themes and inform the recommendations made for future practice. The intent of this researcher was to be "data-driven", so that the research could be thoroughly "grounded" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), and undertake analysis in an objective manner.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS OF INTERVIEW DATA

This chapter records and analyses the information given by educators in the interview component of this research project. Access to twenty "key actors" involved in the implementation of Outcome-Based Education (O.B.E.) ideas in N.S.W. was proposed. During late November and early December 1994, 16 telephone and personal interviews were recorded by this researcher with D.S.E. employees. These educators were working at three different levels of responsibility within the public school education system. A formal interview approach was used, to minimise potential researcher bias. Interviews were both mechanically and hand-recorded, to ensure that the resulting transcripts were accurate. The data obtained was comprehensive, descriptive and illuminated the answers sought.

Interview Analysis Procedure

The analysis of telephone and personal interviews was undertaken by initially coding the interviews into three distinct groups. These three groups were N.S.W. D.S.E. employees who were working at a Regional level before March 1995, Directors of Schools who had responsibility for clusters of schools, and school-based educators. This information was colour-coded in the interview transcripts. Key statements made by informants were then recorded on data analysis formats devised by this researcher. A

copy of the data analysis format is included in Appendix 3. The data analysis formats were similar to those used by some Quality Assurance teams who conducted reviews in N.S.W. schools during 1994 and 1995. This researcher found the proformas to be an efficient way to summarise the transcripts, and identify key themes or concepts arising from the data. The key themes arising from each question were then analysed further in order to inform and identify the findings arising from the data. The interview findings are included at the end of each question's analysis. A comparative analysis of the findings arising from the interviews and questionnaire is undertaken in the final chapter.

Interview Data Analysis- Research Question 1

To answer **Research Question 1: "How are Outcome-Based Education strategies being implemented in New South Wales public schools?"**, two sub-questions 1(a) and 1(b) were seen as necessary by this researcher.

Data Analysis: Research Question 1(a)

Research Question 1 (a) asked "What position do you hold within the New South Wales Department of School Education?" The nature of an educators position was seen by this researcher as possibly having an influence on the nature of information given.

Twenty responses were sought from N.S.W. D.S.E. personnel employed predominantly at three levels within the profession, with a resultant 16 phone or personal interviews being conducted. five responses from a Regional level were recorded, one from an Assistant Director General of a Region, three responses from Regional Directors of Teaching and Learning, and one response from a Principal

Education Officer co-ordinating regional training and development courses. At a cluster of schools level, the second level from which responses were sought, four responses were recorded, from Directors of Schools in four different regions of administration within the N.S.W. D.S.E. From the third level of responses sought, seven interviews with school based educators were recorded. These included two responses from Principals, one being based in a Primary School managing Years K to 6, and another being based in a High School managing Years 7 to 12. In addition, three responses from educators at the Deputy or Leading Teacher level were obtained, one being located in a Primary School and another two located in secondary schools. With the inclusion of an interview of a Head Teacher located in a Secondary school, the views of these four educators, from three different regions within the N.S.W. D.S.E. were sought as they are directly responsible for managing the professional development which took place in their schools.

Four educators invited to participate in the interviews, from a field of 20 invited, declined to participate or did not respond to the invitation. One Regional Assistant Director General delegated responsibility to another regional based educator who had already been invited to participate, and three principals of schools chose not respond to the invitation.

The majority of these educators were selected by this researcher for interview as "key actors" on the basis of their access to or use of O.B.E. ideas directly from American O.B.E. models. These "key actors" were in substantive administrative positions at a range of levels within the D.S.E., and involved with the selection and adaptation of O.B.E. model components to the particular contexts in which they worked. Through the interviews, the degree of impact that O.B.E. models from American contexts had on some N.S.W. educators, in contrast to "official" policy statements from N.S.W. D.S.E. or Board of Studies sources, was investigated.

The nature of the informant's employment position within the D.S.E., can be seen to be related to perceptions about educational issues, depth of the knowledge base possesses, access to information and ability to effect certain educational initiatives. In

addition, the location of the informants in specific D.S.E. regions can be seen as having influenced the employee's perceptions and actions. These regions existed through the D.S.E. structure mandated by the Liberal-National Party Coalition Government in N.S.W. before March 1995.

When seeking "key actors" from conference or training course participants lists, this researcher found that the N.S.W. D.S.E. personnel most willing to participate in the research interview and questionnaire process were located in regions, clusters of schools or schools in the larger country cities or rural areas. Expressed preferences not to be involved, or non-response to letters of invitation came dominantly from central metropolitan areas around Sydney. The reasons for this reluctance are not clear.

This researcher's perception of these circumstances can be seen from two divergent points of view. The majority of N.S.W. D.S.E. personnel who agreed to participate in the research interview and survey; had prior contact with this researcher at O.B.E. training courses or through the Australian Curriculum Studies Association (ACSA) Outcome-Based Education Network. It is possible that the informal and formal O.B.E. networks of educators that operate on the East Coast of Australia had established a measure of trust in each other, spoke a common language and were motivated to participate in O.B.E.-related activities for their own personal or professional reasons.

A possible reason for the reticence of some educators to participate in this research may have been related to the nature of the person's official position, their length of tenure in that position, their degree of authority and perceived ability to comment openly on policy and practices within the N.S.W. D.S.E. Professional and personal considerations, such as avoidance of involvement in any activity which may enhance or threaten the public employee's image or position within the D.S.E., could have also contributed to their reticence to be involved, even though the assurance of anonymity and privacy had been provided by the researcher.

Data Analysis: Research Question 1 (b)

Research Question 1 (b) asked "How has your (school or cluster or region) implemented Outcome-Based Education approaches to management, teaching, learning and student welfare?" Responses made during the personal and phone interviews provided "rich data", and were grouped in areas of similarity and difference in the analysis to form possible categories. The interview responses were categorized further to reflect four areas crucial in answering Research Question 1(b). These four areas were management, teaching, learning and student welfare.

The Management Dimension -Research Question 1(b) Analysis

Informants during interview provided a range of opinions that reveal varied approaches to O.B.E. concept incorporation in different locations. Before March 1995, the "climate" was perceived by some educators interviewed as being "right", and that some schools were "keen to get on with the job" (Informant 10).

One regional informant perceived that management within the N.S.W. D.S.E. revealed a more "transactional" approach (Sergiovanni, 1992), rather than "transformational" leadership (Vickery, 1985; Alessi, 1991; Spady, 1991). Informant 1 said, "There is a need to be aware of different levels of outcomes. N.S.W. is talking about transactional outcomes, not transformational ones."

The same informant was concerned that this question was usually asked of school based personnel, which was a response common with some educators at Director of Schools level. Not all regional and cluster personnel, however, possessed a common opinion as to the degree of appropriateness for "intervention" in the management processes.

For example, three regional informants indicated that they had made major attempts to prompt schools in their regions to concentrate on an O.B.E. approach to management, rather than simply a "curriculum outcome" viewpoint. Informant 8 stated:

What we have endeavoured to do is not transplant the typical Spady model of Outcome-Based Education in N.S.W., but to get the whole of the 202 schools (regional) concentrating on outcomes and get them to define exit outcomes and (focus) on curriculum. To that extent, Outcome-Based Education has been of great impact.

Another regional informant started in 1992 to support schools in a "shift to an outcomes focus" on teaching and learning practices. This approach may be regarded as a purely Outcome-Based Instructional (O.B.I.) approach. An O.B.I. approach can be interpreted as "traditional" O.B.E. (Spady et al., 1991), where "futures-driven" exit outcomes are not yet the driving force for curriculum design and delivery. Informant 10 stated:

What we've done is to consolidate the thinking about Outcomes(sic)-Based Education to the point where many schools have a basic understanding of what Outcomes(sic)-Based Education is, and that within the N.S.W. public school system, that... we're looking at O.B.E in a standards framework.

Only half a dozen schools, according to informant No. 11, are "real movers in the direction", and that there has been a perceived difficulty in "moving people as quickly as hoped". This circumstance, from this researcher's point of view, could be related to the nature of policy decisions made at a state level, the mode of communication of these policies to schools and the training base for teachers.

In one other Regional Management Plan, there appears to have been some effort to ensure alignment of regional planning functions. To ensure the preferred outcomes were achieved, Informant 15 said:

The indicators to show if they're successful or not (were put in place.) I would say the management plan is the basis for the introduction and implementation of Outcome-Based Education.

Three divergent ways of implementing an "outcomes" approach were described in responses given by regional educators. One region had attempted to develop an "outcomes" approach from a purely "curriculum point of view" (Informant 10). Another region had designed and developed their own comprehensive strategies to initiate

O.B.E. from a more "transformational" stance incorporating regional management functions, teaching and learning (Informant 11). The third region had been pursuing what resembled an ODDM approach through the initial training of Principals in Glasser's C.T./R.T./Q.M. and quality schools beliefs (Informant 15). The apparent divergence of approaches, can be seen to reflect the conditions of particular regional contexts or reflected the beliefs, perceptions or preferences of educators in senior management positions.

Similarly, Directors of Schools showed a range of responses to the management dimension ranging from "alignment" of O.B.E. initiatives with regional level, initiatives at the cluster level only, to restricted degrees of acceptance of O.B.E approaches. For example, Informant 9 stated:

Management plans are now drawn up with a view to "What do we want to achieve, what have we got, and how are we going to get there", so that broadly speaking, schools are much more aware of the conceptual frame of an Outcomes (sic) Based approach, and they understand that we need to start with the big picture and then do our planning towards the achievement of the desired outcomes.

A different approach, which could be interpreted as a more "traditional" approach to educational management, suggested a focus on "outcomes" was occurring through:

the introduction of performance management... through detailed school management plans, in which specific outcomes are expected... Outcomes can be measured up against the reality of what actually occurred... All the official documents keep referring to outcomes as being the base of future actions, and measuring the work of the project and allocating resources according to outcomes. (Informant 2)

This informant's feedback was perhaps the most revealing in relation to state policy approaches to "outcomes" in educational management. This approach could be termed "traditional", in the sense that specified exit outcomes for students had not been the driving force for planning. Nonetheless, some N.S.W. D.S.E. processes appear to have encouraged school managers to focus on expected outcomes as a starting point.

Although the perceptions of Directors of Schools appeared to vary significantly in relation to their role as change agent, as shown in the different responses to Question

1(b), all the Directors interviewed were very conscious of the need to expand the knowledge base of their schools in some way.

For example, Informant 7 mentioned the need for whole school identification of required student outcomes. Through Principal workshops, this Director had been explaining the differences between a "broad" O.B.E model and a curriculum outcome approach to educators. One Director, Informant 9, had endeavoured to make his schools aware of the concepts of bench-marking and alignment.

Informant 13, had gone further as a facilitator of O.B.E, by fostering a general agreement amongst cluster Principals in regard to the development of exit outcomes. The effects on schools in this cluster were seen as substantial. Informant 13 described a school that had reorganized the whole curriculum in terms of the cluster-negotiated, school-endorsed set of exit outcomes, dispensing with the Board of Studies approach to "tacking on" outcomes to existing syllabuses. Most school management in this cluster of schools was being aligned to the achievement of the stated exit outcomes.

Apparent from these three varied approaches was a sensitivity to particular locations with specific needs to address or abilities inherent in educators working at these locations. Certainly, a perceived autonomy existed to some extent for Directors to guide their clusters in either "traditional", "transitional" or "transformational" O.B.E modes before March 1995.

School-based informants expressed a range of opinions, from the positive to the negative ends of the spectrum. Two major groups of opinion were identified in the information given during interview; one group actively using O.B.E. ideas in schools and the other group managing schools in a mode that did not go beyond the parameters set by the D.S.E.

The first type of response is typified by Informant 3, who reported that an "amorphous and growing" approach had been undertaken in the school. This had occurred through the establishment of a school vision, exit outcomes and alignment strategies. Informants 4 and 5 expressed similar views that some schools were going to work backwards from exit outcomes. Informant No. 5 said:

What I'd like to see happen is that when our exit outcomes are clearly defined and widely accepted, ...they become the basis upon which decisions are made and judged, right across the school in all areas.

Informant 12's school had already developed their belief statement, using the Johnson City Schools' ODDM model as an example. However, this school had developed the statement in their own language through a lead- management approach. Collaborative decision-making and staff responsibility through delegation had become the current practice in this school.

Informant 4 was critical of D.S.E. practice, stating that a "top-down" model was in place, and foreshadowed "check-lists to make sure that teachers are performing." with the state system specifying the outcomes. Informant 6 stated that the school's approach had "been in line with Department of School Education requirements", indicating some reservation to go beyond existing accepted practice.

The second group of responses demonstrated more of a "Prevalent Practice Paradigm" or "traditional" (Spady, 1988) approach to O.B.E development in schools. Informant 16's opinion was that the school had not looked at management in an O.B.E. manner, which can be considered reflective of schools provided with minimal access to O.B.E. information. Informant 16 said "we haven't really identified specific outcomes". However, this informant was aware of the purpose of mission and long-term goals as part of the whole strategic planning within the school.

The Teaching Dimension- Research Question 1(b) Analysis

The responses to Question 1(b), sought to identify the O.B.E. ideas that may have impacted on teaching practices, with responses being given by regional personnel, Directors of Schools and school-based educators.

Regional responses to the teaching component included the following elements. Informant 1 thought that there had been a concentration on teaching and learning rather than O.B.E. approaches to management. "Co-operative" teaching was perceived as an

area of success, and the development of "collaborative cultures" in the classroom had been an area of focus (Informants 1 & 4). Informant 10 was of the opinion that a "shift needed to occur in teachers' thinking", linking the O.B.E. approach to learning practices. Other elements suggested were that O.B.E. provided a framework for teachers to assess and report student outcomes, and that the purpose of O.B.E. was to improve teaching practice (Informants 4 and 10).

Within the responses given, there was no acknowledgement made of Mastery Learning strategies that underlie O.B.I. approaches in the U.S.A. The N.S.W. D.S.E.'s "outcomes in a standards framework" had apparently not considered O.B.I. teaching practices as a means of facilitating "curriculum outcomes".

A common perception held by informants was that Primary schools were ahead of Secondary schools in the implementation of a curriculum outcomes approach, because of efforts by teachers in relation to the new English syllabus. Informant 10 stated:

Regrettably, because we haven't had the outcomes or profiles incorporated into the secondary syllabuses, we have lost some momentum, and that momentum has to be rekindled.

One suggestion by Informant 15 was that links (alignment) should be formed between outcome strategies with indicators and teaching practices. Informant 11 said that to assist N.S.W. educators, there is a need to:

suggest to people that if you are trying to understand curriculum outcomes, (and) you understand it best if you understand the totality of what the school's on about in terms of its beliefs and exit outcomes.

The nature of the comments made by educators in positions at a Director of Schools level, during the phone and personal interviews conducted as part of this research project, were somewhat different to the types of comments received from regional sources. As Directors of Schools had the opportunity to be in schools regularly, it is

possible that the nature of the information communicated to or perceived by the Directors was different to that occurring at a regional level.

Director of Schools responses included Informant 2's observation that networks of teachers were operating, working collegially to consider how O.B.E. ideas apply to teaching. However, Informant 2 considered that:

until teachers have a firm grasp of the concepts of Outcome-Based Education... the application or the introduction to the classroom will be a slower process. (However) many teachers are now introducing it into the classroom (by saying to students) ...at the end of this unit, you will be expected... you will be able to do this.

Other Directors of Schools observed that a number of teachers were using O.B.E. ideas to drive classroom planning, and that pedagogy was heavily influenced by quality teaching programs (Informant 7). Appropriate styles of programming, teaching and alignment of what was actually being taught with a student outcomes approach was one area of concern expressed by some informants. (Informants 9 and 13).

Some Directors of Schools recognized the problems of teachers in changing long-term classroom practices, but were concerned that the D.S.E.'s "enhanced student learning outcomes" (Boston, 1992) and Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" approach had restricted impact at the classroom teaching practice level.

At the school level, responses included observations that schools were in an awareness-raising phase with O.B.E. teaching practices (Informant 3). Comments by educators tended to be concerned and quite critical in tone, and these were associated with the Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" implementation. Informant 4 observed:

Teachers are over-whelmed by the number of outcomes that are being specified by syllabus committees, because everyone thinks that their subject is the most important, and the whole idea of inter-relation of subject areas is still frustrated.

This informant was also concerned that "traditional" teachers would not give up the "Sermon on the Mount " approach, and needed to realise the differences between

"mastery teaching" in comparison with "mystery teaching". Some school-based educators also expressed the need to "align" teaching practices with assessment, to deal with the "range of enthusiasms to change" and a lack of O.B.E. knowledge related to teaching concerns. Informant 16 stated:

Some faculties are further down the path in trying to look at programs to develop outcomes from the syllabuses, and adapting... teaching methodology.

In some schools, two years of 'fairly intensive effort' had occurred to support the inclusion of quality teaching strategies in classrooms. Reported were some attempts to adapt teaching practice in terms of school exit outcomes and syllabus outcomes (Informant 5). In one Primary school, staff discussion about O.B.E. research available and use of the Johnson City (ODDM) Instructional Process video had led to a positive impact on teaching practices and programming (Informant 12).

The Learning Dimension-Research Question 1 b) Analysis

The responses from Regional and cluster -based informants were generally in line with the D.S.E. "outcomes in a standards framework" approach within the N.S.W. public school system before March 1995.

Regional educators perceived that there had been "more concentration on teaching and learning implications rather than the management area" (Informant 1). Informant 11 stated that in N.S.W., at a regional level, the emphasis is to "suggest to people that you are trying to understand curriculum outcomes". Another regional informant highlighted the "curriculum outcomes" focus that had developed. For example, Informant 10 said:

The purpose of O.B.E. (was) to improve student learning, and to improve the practice of teaching which leads to that learning... At this stage, there is probable uncertainty to the approaches linking O.B.E to what we might term assessment and reporting... and the measurement of the outcomes being achieved. (In) the N.S.W. system... we're looking at O.B.E in a standards framework, which is the link between the standards and the outcomes we want students to achieve.

Directors of Schools responses to the teaching and learning dimension can be grouped in three varied, but related areas. The first group of responses from Directors of Schools can be viewed as reflecting the state "outcomes in a standards framework" approach. For example, the D.S.E.s priorities for 1994 were a strong driving force for action in the teaching and learning areas (Informant 2). Pedagogy had been heavily influenced by quality learning programs offered within Training and Development courses (Informant 7).

A second group of responses was somewhat different in nature to regional responses, with O.B.E. ideas apparently exerting more influence at the cluster of schools level in the system. The issue of Mastery Learning techniques had been considered in one cluster of schools. Teaching programs consistent with O.B.E. approaches to learning had been organized, particularly in some Primary schools, but also with success in some secondary school faculties as well (Informant 13). Informant 5 noted the positive impact on learning that can occur through exit outcomes.

A further group of responses from Directors of Schools focused on assessment, perhaps reflective of D.S.E. to introduce National Curriculum "profiles" and appropriate assessment strategies in 1994. Some teachers were becoming more aware of the indivisible links between teaching, learning and assessment (Informant 7). Some schools were beginning the framework of assessment before March 1995, considering what was going to be assessed and how assessment was going to operate (Informant 9).

Regional educators and Directors of Schools interviewed rarely mentioned students in responses to Question 1 of this research study. However, one school based educator demonstrated a responsiveness to student need. Informant 4 stated:

We don't know what the consequences for children will be because, if we do it well, and children succeed... we don't know what the spread of ideas can be.

Other comments made by school-based educators can be grouped around action in trialling new approaches in practices associated with learning, and the alignment of assessment and reporting practices with learning practices (Informant 4). In one school, outcome statements and student portfolios were used to assist reporting to parents. However, Informant 4 further reported that "One of the problems is that teachers don't understand it". The school's exit outcomes developed in relation to syllabus outcomes, and the adaptation of learning and assessment strategies to that concerned Informant 5. A considerable amount of work in relation to the learning styles area, with half the staff having attended Accelerative Learning courses and Julia Atkin's Integral Learning model workshops were noted by Informant 12. This same school had developed a heavy emphasis on child-centred learning, through collaborative groupings for learning, and the pursuit of investigation, technology, thinking and research skills for students. One secondary school had formed links between preferred school vision, faculty policies, teaching and learning programs.

During the course of analysis, it was interesting to note that responses from informants to the learning and student welfare aspect of Research Question 1 were brief, in comparison to information given about management and teaching.

One possible reason for this could be the "multi-barrelled" nature of the question. However, two out of the three educators consulted in the trial interviews answered the question by "melding" references to management, teaching, learning and student welfare. The great majority of informants were able to perceive the purpose of the "multi-barrelled" question without any difficulty, as educators deal constantly with all four areas in the natural course of their duty as classroom practitioners and school managers.

The second possible reason for the briefer responses to the learning and student welfare dimensions could also be that little change had occurred in these areas within N.S.W. public schools. The "filtering-down" process of a shift towards an O.B.E. approach to management and teaching practices appeared to have had little significant

impact on student learning and student welfare practices in some schools involved in this research study.

The Student Welfare Dimension- Research Question 1 (b) Analysis

This researcher recorded a larger number of responses in this area from school based personnel, fewer from the cluster level that were significant and very few from regional levels. The one statement made at a regional level that perhaps indicated the prevailing situation was "there is probable uncertainty to the approaches linking O.B.E to student welfare" (Informant 10). However, no interviews were recorded with regional personnel working directly in the student welfare area, and this can be seen as a variable that partly accounts for minimal comments.

The Directors of Schools responses were more extensive, and tended to support the one regional observation quoted. Informant 2 was concerned that it is made:

clear to students that they are responsible for ...(the) outcomes of their conduct. Relatively little has been done with an Outcome-Based approach to student welfare that I'm aware of.

Informant 13 commented that there had not been a great deal of impact, except that the student welfare policy had been reworded in an O.B.E manner. One comment indicative of current student welfare practice was Informant 7's response that the cluster welfare committee suggested "courses to achieve outcomes; for example, mechanisms re preventative rather than punitive measures".

School based responses revealed some awareness of relationships between student self-esteem, teachers being student-oriented in their practices and student welfare. For example, Informant 5 reported that student welfare plans had been developed to achieve exit outcomes. Similarly, Informant 4's stated:

Student welfare is meant to align with school outcomes, but it is more amorphous at the moment, particularly in the specification of outcomes in the affective domain. I question whether it might be useful.

Findings that Emerged from Interview Data- Research Question 1

The following findings, deemed to be important by the researcher, emerge from the data relating to Research Question 1:

-O.B.E. models and ideas from the U.S.A. had an extensive impact on the management approaches of most N.S.W. D.S.E. educators interviewed in this study.

-Before March 1995, the "climate" or context for inclusion of O.B.E. ideas was perceived as being conducive to innovation. The structures that had existed within the D.S.E. were perceived as providing opportunities for O.B.E. initiatives at regional, cluster of schools and individual school levels within the public school system.

-The O.B.E. initiatives that had occurred prior to March 1995 can be called "transitional" or "transformational" (Spady et al., 1991; Sergiovanni, 1992) in nature, and can be seen as different by degree to "traditional" (Spady) management approaches occurring within the N.S.W. public school system.

-A significant impact of O.B.E. ideas on teaching pedagogy had begun to occur before the N.S.W. state elections of March 1995 within certain regions, some clusters of schools and some individual schools. Apparent from this research data is that teachers were aware of programming in terms of outcomes, but sufficient alignment with management, learning and student welfare had not occurred in schools in which Informants were located.

-Teacher practices in the classroom had not changed significantly in relation to the resources placed in this area through Training and Development programs.

-O.B.E. practices such as Mastery Learning and O.B.I. were seen by some educators participating in this research study to be effective alternatives to "traditional" practices.

-Little impact of O.B.E. ideas was apparent on student learning outcomes before March 1995. Informants perceived that the changes that had occurred were more significant in Primary Schools than in Secondary Schools. However, the learning dimension was one in which significant efforts had been made by educators in some N.S.W. public schools.

-Minimal impact of O.B.E. ideas had occurred in the area of student welfare management. The impact of O.B.E. ideas were perceived by Informants as having had more impact on management, teaching and learning practices.

O.B.E. alignment strategies had been found useful in some N.S.W. public schools. The alignment that can occur within O.B.E. models linking management, teaching and learning practices with student welfare provision was seen as an area to be addressed from a systems policy level to the school practice level by some educators.

Interview Data Analysis- Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked "How does the organization of O.B.E. change processes in N.S.W. schools, clusters of schools or regions differ from strategies devised originally in the U.S.A.?" This research question sought to identify the components of O.B.E. models originating in the U.S.A. that may have been in use by public school system educators in the period of time before the state election in March, 1995. In order to answer this question, 11 sub-questions were seen as necessary by this researcher. The

11 sub-questions represent elements considered important in O.B.E. strategic planning as described in available literature on O.B.E. in U.S.A. contexts.

Included in the elements that were investigated were mission statements guiding strategic planning, clearly defined visions within the organization, identification of the groups involved in developing the vision, student exit outcomes, and management, teaching and learning practice changes attributable to the establishment of exit outcomes. In addition, information sought included: alignment of school strategic planning components, such as the student- oriented outcome approaches within Key Learning Area (K.L.A.) curricula, classroom practices and the links established between curriculum and the stated mission/ vision.

Other factors related to O.B.E. classroom practice investigated were the alignment that may have occurred between K.L.A. syllabus outcomes and student assessment, the modification of teaching practices to achieve expected student outcomes, and links that may have been established between student learning outcomes, student welfare and student discipline procedures.

Missions

In response to **Research Question 2(a), "Does the (school, cluster, region) possess a mission statement?"**, the majority of the educators interviewed, located in regional and school positions, answered in the affirmative. Most cluster directors interviewed perceived that the establishment of mission and vision statements were more appropriately negotiated within school communities at a local level. Most school-based educators involved in this research indicated mission statements had been established in their schools. Table 1 overleaf gives a breakdown of the responses provided.

Table 1

Missicn Statements Established

	Yes	No	Total
Regiona.	5	0	5
Cluster	1	3	4
School	6	1	7
Interviews	12	4	16

Visions

Research Question 2 (b) asked "Does the school, cluster or region possess a clearly defined vision?". This question sought to identify the existence of negotiated O.B.E. style vision statements that may have been developed at particular sites. Three different groups of responses were identified. The majority of the informants interviewed (13) stated that vision statements had been established. Another informant stated that an agreement to "four principles guiding school visions" had been established in a cluster, and the remaining two informants stated that visions had not been formalised. Table 2 overleaf shows the breakdown of the responses provided.

Table 2

Vision Statements Established

	Yes	No	Total
Regional	5	0	5
Cluster	2	2	4
School	6	1	7
Interviews	13	3	16

The information provided in interview relating to the establishment of negotiated vision statements revealed substantial variety in the content of the visions. The majority of regions and schools who participated in this research had established a number of statements within the one vision (8 informants).

Regional statements included statements such as "the vision is clearly defined in the regional document 1994 -1995" (Informant 1), and that the "vision permeates all of our management strategies, and drives the agenda in terms of the priorities that are set" (Informant 10). Some visions revealed awareness of an O.B.E. approach that uses "futures" literature to guide school communities in "vision-setting". For example, Informant 10 said that "The A.D.G. has an emerging vision based on 21st Century life", and asked "What is quality learning, what is quality teaching, quality outcomes, how do we get there and ensure every kid gets there?".

One cluster of schools possessed a five point vision (Informant 9). In another cluster, "There is no group collusion. That's why the cluster doesn't have a separate vision.(This) should be done at a school level" (Informant 13).

Two of the school based informants interviewed stated that the school principal possesses the vision at this stage. 'The Principal has clearly defined it ' (Informant 14), and "(This) Principal does... I have articulated a passion" (Informant 4).

The two informants who revealed that a vision has not been established stated that it is "not documented because we are part of (the) regional/ state level" (Informant 2) and "I think that we know what we've achieved" (Informant 16).

Vision Statement Contents

Research Question 2 (c) asked "Please state the vision". This question investigated the nature and content of vision statements negotiated at regional, cluster of schools or school level. The most common statements related to striving, achieving or pursuing excellence (5 Informants). Other visions related to high quality education (3 Informants). The language used in the remaining vision statements was very varied. Three Informants did not supply details of the content of vision statements, in contrast to the other 13 educators interviewed who offered very comprehensive details.

The statements related to vision may be grouped into four related areas or themes, including management statements, style of management and communication, student oriented statements and the nature of education. Included in the management statements are references to self-governing schools, self-managing schools, marketing, promotion of the school, preferred future, accountability, alignment with student outcomes, modelling of expectations and the fostering of a learning community. Ideals expressed in statements related to the style of management and communication included references to "no collusion" and "no coercion" in order to build a sense of trust, and that "communication will occur between the school and its community".

Student-oriented statements revealed the most variety, and this may be the result of a perceived shift towards student outcomes as a driving force for planning within the N.S.W. D.S.E. in the period before March 1995. The language used to express the aspirations of regions and schools included "quality schools where all students succeed

and achieve success", the "active participation of every child in their education", "student participation in school decision-making processes", and that "all students are assisted to achieve their personal best".

In the area of expected or desired behaviours in students, the qualities expressed were comprehensive. The student qualities included positive self-image, self-esteem, self-discipline, self-directed learners, co-operation, leadership, respect and care, support, consideration for others, student competence with technology, and that student intellectual, social and emotional needs are catered for. The nature of education, that is "vital, dynamic, enjoyable, less work and more fun", and that a "balance is achieved between innovation and tradition" were the focus of other statements made in educational visions negotiated at a school or regional level.

Groups Responsible for Visions

Research Question 2 (d) asked "Which groups were responsible for developing the vision?". Considerable differences in the composition of groups who assisted in developing regional visions, and the groups involved in establishing visions at a school level were apparent. At a regional level, three regions involved school principals and senior regional management (including the Directors of Schools), three involved community or parent groups, one involved consultants and only one region involved teacher representatives or volunteer school staff.

A greater divergence of opinion emerged at the Director of Schools level in the appropriateness of developing visions. Two of the Directors of Schools interviewed made interesting statements that reveal their philosophical or practical stance on the matter. For example, "(There is) no documented cluster vision. (The) principals (are) from a wide geographic area ... Collegiate, cohesive spirit development (is) a challenge" (Informant 2) and "The school community is the proper place for the development of a vision" (Informant 13). However, two clusters of schools had developed a vision for the

cluster, one involving Principals only and the other involving the principals of cluster schools, school volunteer staff or teachers and parent representatives (Informant 9).

At a school level, four schools involved community groups or parent representatives in the development of their vision s, four involved the School Council, three involved the student representative council, three schools involved the school staff or teacher representatives, two schools involved executive staff, two schools involved the school principal and senior school executive. Only one school referred visionary matters to a school committee (curriculum committee), though a different school had set up a planning group to develop the statement, with the intent of involving all the school community in 1995.

Exit Outcomes

Research Question 2 (e) asked "**Has the school, cluster or region developed exit outcomes for students?**" The initial impression when analysing this data was that minimal action had occurred in this area, usually associated in O.B.E. approaches as the starting point or the driving force for development in schools to enhance student outcomes.

The answers that Informants gave to the question revealed two diverging opinions about the appropriateness of developing exit outcomes for students at particular levels within the system. One regional educator had established a working party to establish desired student characteristics, in a manner that resembled O.B.E. activities in states, school districts or individual schools in the United States (Informant 11). This regional initiative was undertaken to model the concept of schools developing their own exit outcomes for students, based on predicted future needs of students in their adult working and private lives. Another educator indicated that exit outcomes had not been formalised, but expectations for student learning had been established (Informant 15).

In contrast, another group of Regional personnel (Informant 3) and Directors of Schools (Informant 4) interviewed considered that exit outcomes were not appropriate

at a regional or cluster level. Two Directors suggested that exit outcomes were more appropriately developed at a school level (Informants 9 and 13), and were not the function of a cluster.

At the school level, however, there is evidence to suggest that some schools (5 Informants) were interested in developing, or had already established, exit outcomes for students. Two school-based educators interviewed stated that exit outcomes had not formalised, but similar student expectations had been established. One school indicated that nothing had been done in this area. Table 3 below shows responses to the establishment of exit outcomes for students.

Table 3

Exit Outcomes for Students

	Yes	No	In Progress	Similar	Total
Regional	1	2	0	1	4
Cluster	1	4	0	0	5
School	3	1	2	1	7
Total	5	7	2	2	16

Changes in Practice Resulting from Exit Outcomes

Research Questions 2 (f) asked "Please describe the changes in management, teaching and learning practices as a result of the exit outcomes being implemented.". Opinions expressed in the interviews to this question elicited some "rich" data. It appears that the educators interviewed had been giving this area

considerable thought, and had been concerned with the notion of how to align educational practices with stated missions or visions. The concept of alignment of all of the elements of planning with expected student outcomes in an O.B.E. approach was an area of interest and challenge for some school managers.

Regional responses to this question indicated that minimal change had occurred as a result of exit outcomes (Informants 1, 8, 11 and 15). The development of exit outcomes had not been seen as a function of regions. Most Informants discussed changes to teaching and learning, but these were not attributed to the establishment of exit outcomes.

Directors of Schools interviewed tended to give two types of responses. One group of responses indicated minimal change in practice (Informants 2, 7 and 9). For example, Informant 9 said that "we haven't come to terms with how to translate exit outcomes into action programs". In contrast, one Director of Schools indicated that extensive change had occurred in one cluster of schools as a result of school principals working in the area of exit outcomes. Informant 13 stated:

There have been big changes in terms of assessment, recording and reporting to parents ...The acceptance of the notion that all children can succeed has led to changes in teaching and learning practices (and that one Secondary) school stopped operating as eight Key Learning Areas. Every K.L.A. is making a contribution to the overall exit outcomes.

Similarly, the responses of school-based educators interviewed can be grouped together in two broad areas. The first group indicated that little or no change in practice had occurred. Responses included comments that exit outcomes were not yet implemented (Informants 5 and 6), that management, teaching and learning alignment had yet to occur (Informant 3), and no exit outcomes or impact had occurred (Informant 16).

The second group of responses indicated some practice changes had occurred. Informant 4's school had not as yet negotiated exit outcomes, but practices had changed through teachers coming out of Quality Assurance team experiences. Positive responses included exit outcomes providing more focus for management (Informant 12), teaching

and learning varying from classroom to classroom (Informant 12), and that some teachers having a clearer vision of what they were trying to achieve in their classes (Informant 12). Informant 14 stated that teaching programs had been impacted (year 7, 1994), and that exit outcomes and unit outcomes were closely related. However, "anecdotal evidence only" existed that teachers had changed practice (Informant 14), that teachers were "set in their ways", and that "implementation hasn't changed much" (Informant 12).

At this point, it is appropriate to mention that an O.B.E. approach was not a mandatory requirement of public schools in the N.S.W. D.S.E. However, missions, visions (futures-oriented or otherwise) and exit outcomes that had been established can be viewed as individual or group efforts to shift the beliefs, values and attitudes inherent in existing management, teaching and learning practices within the teaching service. As such, the use of O.B.E. ideas can be seen to be related to a general "shift" toward the development of a student-oriented outcome approach, initially in the area of curriculum provision.

Expectations of Key Learning Areas (K.L.A.'s)

Research Question 2 (g) sought to answer "**What has the (school, cluster, region) expected of Key Learning Areas in the implementation of a student-oriented approach?**". The range of responses given during interview by educators to this question were comprehensive, with considerable similarity in opinion between those located within regional, cluster or school positions.

Regional responses included Informant 1's opinion that "curriculum or enabling outcomes should be aligned with exit outcomes". Informant 11 considered that the "big picture" of O.B.E, with exit outcomes and contributing outcomes should first be established, pointing out:

There are a lot (of teachers) out there who are either wilfully or innocently confused about the outcomes and profiles, and have a block to do with outcomes ...only 20 or so schools (in the region) have effectively internalised the message.

Two other regional responses were more cautious, with Informant 8 explaining that the K.L.A.'s provide clear statements of outcomes, when translated into student expectations. The support of supporting teachers in the move towards programming of outcomes, assessment and reporting was of more importance to Informant 15.

Some of the responses from regional levels included the linking of an O.B.E. approach with the National Profiles and Board of Studies documents (Informant 15). This approach is quite different to O.B.E. approaches in the U.S.A, and reflects N.S.W. D.S.E. efforts to develop an "outcomes in a standards framework" approach. Informant 10 was mindful of the O.B.E. benchmarking link, with the focus to be on assessment and reporting (before March 1995) This Informant stated that:

The early learning (K-1) profiles allow teachers to determine student outcome levels.... inform teaching practice (and) profiles is just a framework for outcomes.

One obstacle detected by Informant 11 was in determining how K.L.A. outcomes might relate to exit outcomes. This concern was similar to issues some regional educators and Directors of Schools had been attempting to resolve at the local level. Individual and group initiatives had attempted to take the O.B.E paradigm further in their regions or local areas than was officially mandated at a state policy level. This was seen as one of the advantages in a state system of education that saw greater devolution of responsibility to individual schools in the late 1980's and early 1990's.

The range of responses from the Director of School level tended to show varying degrees of consideration about a student-oriented outcome approach in the K.L.A.'s. Included was Informant 2's observation that "often teachers do not take it on board until they see it coming close to their daily area of work". It was hoped the use of school based courses, or "modules" designed by the D.S.E. in 1994, would assist in informing teachers about the "outcome" approach to education (Informant 2). Informant 7 said that

"schools will use the K.L.A. syllabuses to drive teaching and learning programs", through specifying outcomes and the student performance measurement.

A more autonomous approach was demonstrated by Informant 13, through statements such as "our problem is to use the K.L.A. curriculum to achieve our outcomes." Here the intention was to use locally- developed exit outcomes, not state K.L.A. curriculum outcomes, as the organizing principle.

School-based responses included K.L.A. programs and policies being aligned to an O.B.E. school expectations approach or future school exit outcomes (Informants 3 and 4). Informant 4 also considered the co-ordination of K.L.A. syllabi with exit outcomes, though the number of outcomes in Board of Studies documents were perceived as a problem. Informant 4 also was of the opinion that "We need somebody who is going to have a true Outcome-Based approach towards syllabus construction".

Similar concerns were expressed by other school-based educators, with the emphasis on the profiles in syllabi causing problems in terms of a "student-oriented outcomes approach" (Informant 5). Informant 5 was also concerned that the pre-occupation with:

determining levels hasn't got much to do with O.B.E (and) ...some educators have confused (the two). ...In Key Learning Areas, in terms of syllabus committees, they're really looking at Outcome-Based Instruction... The thing that was frightening me was the great disparity of expectations in draft syllabuses, ranging from outcomes that were extremely specific, to almost trivial to very much broader, generally stated ones in different subject areas... There doesn't seem to be any coherence... I suppose what the school has to do is develop that coherence, and possibly ask teachers and Head Teachers to be selective in the outcomes they emphasise, that reflect the school exit outcomes, rather than giving all syllabus outcomes equal weighting.

The demands on school managers to strategically set the conditions for effective K.L.A. syllabus implementation were embodied in Informant 5's statement. Other school-based educators were concerned with building the familiarity of staff in the use of student profiles and outcomes, and their use in assessment and reporting (Informant 6) before March 1995.

Another group of school-based educators considered that the K.L.A. syllabuses had provided clearer outcomes and better direction (Informant 12), that the K.L.A. syllabuses had prompted a curriculum review plan in faculties built into the 1995 school plan, and that Faculty reprogramming had driven the whole outcomes approach (Informant 14). Informant 16 anticipated that teachers in the school (secondary) would adjust teaching practices to achieve a student oriented outcomes approach through student centred learning. In this school, programs were to be changed "in the light of the outcome statements in the syllabuses".

Apparent from the school-based responses were two general approaches. One group of informants, who could be classed as possessing the "big picture" in terms of the implications for O.B.E., saw the need to interpret K.L.A. syllabus outcome statements in terms of the school's exit outcomes. The second group of school-based educators focused purely on the K.L.A. syllabus outcome statements, from more of an O.B.I. approach. Minimal references to the strategic implications of O.B.E in the use of exit outcomes as the driving force for curriculum were made by this group of informants.

Alignment of KLA Outcomes and Vision

Research Question 2 (h) asked "How are the expected student outcomes at a Key Learning Area level linked to the stated (school or cluster or regional) mission/ vision?". This question sought to establish whether attempts had been made by educators in N.S.W. public school system to align the elements of planning in schools in an O.B.E. manner.

Some regional responses indicated that this had not happened at a regional level, but would more appropriately happen at a school level (Informant 1). In addition, state priorities impacted on exit outcomes at a school level, according to Informant 1. This perception was quite different from the educators who had already developed exit outcomes at the school level.

Informant 8 was of the opinion that realistic outcomes for all students were needed.

Informant 10 expressed a similar concern that:

I don't think they are linked in any direct way, because the syllabuses... are Board developed, and we've not had specific input into what the statements might be, except through small opportunities to comment... However, ...if you look at the outcomes ...in each of the K.L.A.'s, clearly the mission statement of the region will incorporate that, because it talks about ensuring success for all students... We are also focused on achieving life-long learning outcomes, and exit outcomes are about that.

The brief responses of some Directors of Schools interviewed can be seen as reflective of the nature of their role in the D.S.E. However, statements made were similar to the range of statements made at regional levels. Included was an observations that K.L.A. outcomes vary in their degree of specificity (Informant 2).

Informant 13 considered that K.L.A. curriculum outcomes need to be viewed as "lower-level, contributing or enabling outcomes". Informant 13 also considered that the K.L.A. syllabuses in years K-6 contain too many expected student outcomes to be achieved in 7 years of Primary School, and that this "constitutes a less than satisfactory curriculum".

An underlying dissatisfaction with the mode of incorporation of student learning outcomes within the Board syllabuses can be detected within Informant statements. Informants expressed concerns about the manner in which outcomes had been "tacked on to syllabuses". The Directors of Schools interviewed appeared to vary in their degree of confidence as to how K.L.A. outcomes might be linked to mission/ vision statements.

School-based educators interviewed offered a range of opinions in regard to how the links might be established. Informant 3 thought that change and re-assessment was constantly needed if student outcomes were to be aligned. The simplification of the scope and sequence of mandatory K.L.A. documents was seen as necessary. In Informant 4's opinion, there was a need to:

flag the specific, important... outcomes so that teachers can have their vision uncluttered...(the) linking (of the mission to student outcomes is in the implementation in the classroom, but once again, the system is frustrating that.

Similar statements were made by other informants. For example, Informant 5 said that the "school mission, vision or exit outcomes (should be) linked to specified student instructional outcomes". In Informant 12's school, staff had restated syllabus outcomes "in terms that are intelligible to students and parents, becoming goals for students, and are linked to the school mission and vision". Informant 14's faculty had attempted to "drive some of our own outcomes (and achieve) a balance of outcomes that address (both) exit outcomes and new draft syllabus outcomes.

Student Assessment Alignment

Research Question 2 (i) asked "Has student assessment been linked to K.L.A. syllabus outcomes? If so, please describe how." Responses at three levels within the N.S.W. D.S.E. varied between "yes", "no" and "increasingly so".

Responses from educators working at Regional levels included the observation that some schools had worked on this link, through detailed programming (Informant 8). Informant 10 had observed that preliminary work linking assessment with syllabus outcomes, though only a small number of schools were "playing with the concepts". An overall impression of opinions at the regional level was expressed succinctly by Informant 1, who stated:

This is the key thing that has to happen...The main change that needs to occur is towards criterion-based assessment. Inclusiveness with the curriculum will be a major development. This is starting to happen, but a small proportion at this stage.

Criticism of D.S.E. approaches to the end of 1994 were associated with the introduction of the use of profiles as an assessment approach (Informant 10). Informant 11 was concerned that the system hadn't promoted assessment as an integral part of teaching and learning, evidenced by the fact that:

the documents and modules on assessment have come much later in the process of development. We have modelled, in the system, a division between assessment and learning... I think that is a very weak area systemically.

Informant 15 pointed out that, as part of the Enterprise Agreement between the Teachers' Federation and the D.S.E., teachers had to assess and report in terms of outcomes. However, responses from regional levels revealed considerable thought and debate had occurred around the apparent isolation of elements of practice, and in some cases, the concept of alignment of exit outcomes, management, teaching, learning and assessment was seen as an alternative.

Directors of Schools responses included the observation that "explicit student outcomes require schools to rethink how assessment and reporting programs are conducted" (Informant 11). A major problem for secondary schools was predicted (Informants 7 and 9). Informant 9 stated:

The concept of student outcomes (is) quite explicit, requir(ing) schools to rethink how they conduct their assessment and their reporting programs. The danger at the moment is that through the curriculum outcomes approach teachers will become "bogged down" with thousands of pointers for each outcome statement ...in the '70s style behavioural objectives tick-box approach.

Strategies used by Directors of Schools included keeping schools focused on "outcome big issues", and using the curriculum statements as a framework for reporting in "broader outcome terms" (Informant 9). Informant 13 had observed that a wide variety of assessment approaches were being used in schools, ranging from the experiential level to formal (traditional) testing.

Three positive responses from schools educators in answering this question were recorded in the interviews. For example, Years 3 and 4 in one Primary school possessed an achievement folder (similar to portfolio assessment ideas), and descriptive reports in outcome terms were in use (Informant 12). A new assessment and reporting process under review in the school was mentioned by Informant 6. Informant 14 stated that the process of developing new programs had led to an evaluation of student assessment and reporting consequences.

Other school-based educators interviewed expressed concerns including an opinion that assessment based on descriptors had been "tacked on", and could foresee problems with "reporting and assessing how students meet syllabus-implicit descriptors"

(Informant 3). Informant 4 reported that changes had not been made, but "put on the back-burner". Similar responses were also recorded from Informants 5 and 16.

Modification of Teaching Practices

Research Question 2 (j) asked "In what way have teaching practices been modified in order to achieve the expected student outcomes".

Three regional educators interviewed were of the opinion that some regions had moved significantly further in the teaching practices area than with assessment (Informants 15, 11 and 10). Informants 10 and 11 had observed a change in teaching practices and strategies by using the "outcomes approach". In adjusting teaching practices, the hope was expressed that students would be provided with a multiplicity of opportunities to demonstrate outcomes (Informant 11). Informant 11 also said that teachers were "cottoning-on" to "success breeds success", enabling students to succeed. An observation made by Informant 15 was that variations between schools could be seen as a "continuum" moving towards O.B.E. This continuum revealed use of Spady and Mamary ideas, and in those schools, significant changes to teaching practices had occurred. An example of significant change was given by Informant 15, who stated that some kindergarten children are able to explain "This is what I'm working at, these are the things I need to do".

Directors of Schools interviewed gave responses that ranged from collegial teacher groups having rewritten programs in terms of more specific outcomes (Informant 2), to teaching having become far more student-centred rather than teacher/task-centred (Informant 7). Similarly, Informant 9 said a "quiet revolution is occurring in teaching practices, with a need to work across key modalities in order to consider the range of student learning improvements". A "visionary" approach was also revealed by Informant 13, who was concerned that to ensure every student developed higher-order thinking skills, radical teaching practice changes and an O.B.E. approach to assessment practices were required.

School-based educational practitioners interviewed spoke from practical experience, rather than a policy or visionary viewpoint, which can be seen to be the case with regional and cluster of schools opinions expressed. Informant 3 said:

Outcome-Based teaching practices are about individualised learning, co-operative learning. Like the chicken and the egg, (its) difficult to say which one has been the driving force.

Other comments by school-based educators revealed the emergent elements in teaching practices considered necessary for an O.B.E. focus in N.S.W. public schools. These elements were: a clarified structure to set outcomes (Informants 4 and 5), a change in teacher attitudes to class management and practices (Informants 4 and 14), authentic assessment strategies (Informant 5), teachers experimenting with Outcome-Based units (Informant 6), clear expression of expected outcomes to students (Informant 12), and consideration of how students learn and self-motivated learners (Informant 14). One response was critical, with Informant 16 being concerned that system change:

stopped at the classroom door, that modification has been fairly minimal and a great deal of resistance to change has been shown.

Among the elements of changed teaching practice specifically mentioned by educators interviewed from three levels in the N.S.W. public school system were different learning styles, different learning strategies, including co-operative learning, Accelerative Learning, Integral learning, Bernice McCarthy's 4-Mat ideas, and brain/quadrant theory.(Informants 9, 8, 4, 11 and 14). Some commonalities in comments (Informants 4, 8 and 10) support the impression that teaching practice was an area in which there had been considerable focus. This can be perhaps attributed to the focus of Training and Development courses in this area, and teachers accessibility to the vast knowledge base in this area. Specific mention was made of rates of learning (fast track learners compared with those who need more time), catering for individual needs (Informants 10 and 4) and pupil based approaches to teaching (Informant 8), change

having occurred more in Primary schools than secondary schools (Informant 8), and the broadening range of abilities in classes (Informant 4).

Alignment for Student Benefit

Research Question 2 (k) sought to establish "How have links been established between student learning outcomes, student welfare and student discipline procedures?"

Regional responses to this question can be put into two groups. One group referred to elements that directly relate to an O.B.E. alignment approach. The other group responded to the question using language that could be seen as more representative of existing patterns of management, rather than an O.B.E. approach in any "transformational" sense.

Informant 1 emphasised that the linkage was happening in some schools, with Informants 10 and 11 pointing out that schools were recognizing an O.B.E. approach could assist in reducing student discipline concerns, if students could achieve success through the school. Informants 11 and 15 saw the need to link the three areas of student welfare, student learning, and student discipline. Informant 10 emphasised that "close alignment to student individual needs enables learning to occur to a greater extent", and "those are the links I would see being established in a total Outcome-Based Learning package".

The second group of responses mentioned factors used to demonstrate students had achieved the expected outcomes, such as Basic Skills Tests, attendance patterns and playground behaviour (Informant 15). Informant 15 also stressed the need for change to be based on research on student learning, student welfare and student discipline. Informant 10 noted that schools were focusing on positive reinforcement, rather than negative or punitive measures.

Directors of Schools made more cautious claims about alignment of student learning, student welfare and discipline procedure. Informant 7 stated that "looking at

outcomes has not affected approach to student welfare." With a similar opinion, Informant 9 stated that this Director was:

not sure that teachers are making this link explicitly as yet, (there are) still a lot of teachers in the system puzzled by the logical connection... (and that) in the best classrooms, in the best schools, the connection is quite explicit.

School-based educators responses indicated that notable efforts were being made in some schools. Once again, the responses can be divided into at least two groups, those schools where significant effort to align learning, welfare and discipline measure was occurring, and those schools where change appeared slower.

Informant 3 considered that all three areas were "bound together through the school mission". School culture and tradition changes were underway, with a "variety of understandings being demonstrated amongst teachers" (Informant 4). Other positive measures were mentioned by Informant 5, with the links "being established as staff are becoming better trained" in O.B.E model components such as ODDM and Glasser's Control Theory/ Reality Therapy. At this school, the links were perceived to be occurring through increased staff understanding. Informant 12 had also noted that an ODDM and Glasser approach to student welfare had "encouraged taking of responsibility for actions and learning".

Opinions more reflective of "traditional" approaches to the management of student learning, student welfare and student discipline, were also expressed by school-based educators (Informants 6, 14 and 16) A continuing belief amongst educators, pointed out by Informant 16, was a major link between self-esteem and student learning.

Findings that Emerged from Interview Data- Research Question 2

The following findings, deemed to be important by the researcher, emerge from the data relating to Research Question 2:

-Mission and vision statements were seen as desirable and useful tools to focusing educational management processes.

-A student-oriented and inclusive approach had become common in the language of vision statements, commensurate with O.B.E. ideas.

-The inclusion of a broad range of groups associated with the N.S.W. public school system in the development of vision statements had become common practice.

-O.B.E.-style exit outcomes for students had been found to be a useful means of linking the D.S.E. "outcomes in a standards framework" approach, the Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" approach with locally determined priorities for students.

-Changes in educational practices as a result of exit outcomes being established had begun in some schools. However, widespread impact was not apparent.

-Some educators, particularly at the school level, were attempting to link K.L.A. syllabus outcomes to school missions, visions or exit outcomes.

-Considerable thought, debate and some efforts to link K.L.A. syllabus outcomes with appropriate assessment strategies had occurred.

-The development of K.L.A. syllabi incorporating learning outcomes in N.S.W. initiated some of the motivation for educators to begin considering a greater focus on learning outcomes, and consideration of the implications for teaching practice. However, the shift of focus towards learning outcomes in curriculum in N.S.W. can be viewed as different in intent to the strategic implications of O.B.E. models from the U.S.A.

-Changes in teaching practices in order to achieve expected student outcomes were perceived to be minimal. The effectiveness of Training and Development programs, in fulfilling expected system outcomes can be alluded to.

-Two schools of thought existed among N.S.W. public school teachers. One belief was that behaviour was the result of student problems, with the second belief being that behaviour was related to teaching practices motivating students.

-Some links between student learning outcomes, student welfare and discipline procedures had been established at the school level.

Interview Data Analysis- Research Question 3

Research Question 3 sought to determine "What are the effects on regions, clusters of schools, school managers and teaching staff of O.B.E. policy approaches determined at a state level?". Three sub-questions were asked during interviews to investigate this question.

Influence of Department of School Education

Research Question 3a) asked, 'What Department of School Education policy changes have had a direct bearing on O.B.E. developments in your (school or cluster or region)?'

Regional responses tended to fall into three categories, those responses that attributed O.B.E developments in N.S.W. schools to changes in D.S.E. policies, responses that reflected a more independent approach having been made in a particular region and

responses that were supportive of the D.S.E., but did not make specific references to O.B.E approaches.

Some regional responses attributed O.B.E. style changes to the D.S.E., with state 1994 priorities focusing on student outcomes being compatible with O.B.E ideas. Informant 8 pointed out that the region was supporting a modified O.B.E. approach, but that in teaching practice a "success breeds success" (Spady-style) baseline existed. Informant 10 stated:

There has been a strong emphasis on O.B.E in every area of policy (with an Outcome-Based approach to teaching and learning. So, in a sense, the whole focus of the Education Department in the last two years (1993, 1994) has changed toward an Outcome-Based direction, and that has had a ripple effect right across schools and into classrooms. It's also been... a cultural change. ...We really haven't measured outcomes in that sense... We are questioning more in a policy sense, the benefit of certain resources,... and what it is the programs are achieving... We must be sure to... place resources strategically.

Informant 11's response was quite different, in that a more independent approach to the inclusion of O.B.E ideas within regional contexts was expressed. Informant 11 said:

Region has looked to centre for opportunities to continue what we are doing, encouraging schools to work from an outcomes approach (and)... nobody at centre vaguely uses language of an Outcome-Based approach.

However, the great majority of responses from educators located in regional positions were in line with D.S.E. approaches. These responses included references to the N.S.W. D.S.E.'s strategic plan. This "was the starting point in encouragement in big terms about outcomes rather than just profiles" (Informant 11). Another comment supportive of the D.S.E. as O.B.E. initiator was that self-management responsibility devolved to schools within the state system had given schools "a greater flexibility to look at their outcomes", through the Schools' Renewal process (Informant 15).

Directors of Schools interviewed also attributed O.B.E developments to D.S.E. policy changes. However, Informant 2 explained that the D.S.E. approach "doesn't go under (an O.B.E) banner defined in academic circles". Informant 7 saw the policy to incorporate profiles as the initiator of changes. The impact of curriculum outcome

statements, primary syllabus and support materials, assessment and reporting documents, curriculum consultants, profiles and pointers were seen by Informant 9 as the driving forces. However, Informant 9 mentioned a 1994 talk by the Director of Curriculum at the time (Dr. Lesl e Lynch) which for the first time acknowledged a broad-based O.B.E model at the state level.

One Director, Informant 13, criticized the "shift to outcomes", the overuse of the term "outcomes", and complained about Enterprise Agreements taking "away from schools their role in establishing their own priorities". This informant expressed concern about the manner in which changes had been introduced, with the D.S.E. "insist(ing) we had to introduce profiles/ teaching practice in a certain way" (Informant 10). Informant 10 saw this position as "coercive" with "top-down policies imposed", and felt that a "lack of O.B.E understanding" existed at the central level, through the process of "mandating outcomes from the centre". Informant 10 was concerned that the term O.B.E. was used too loosely, and in a "twenty-year old mode" compared with some locations in the USA.

Some school-based educators interviewed also responded in a critical manner (Informants 3, 4 and 16). This group made statements which included references to teacher O.B.E. training and development not being initiated by the D.S.E., that some regions only were taking action and that "the implementation of profiles shows retarded D.S.E. thinking" (Informant 3). This educator had devoted time to sending submissions to the D.S.E., but had encountered rejection of suggestions made. Informant 4 was also concerned that the D.S.E.:

have used the term 'outcome', but there hasn't been a recognition of what O.B.E actually is... Teachers are confused because of the 'cut and paste' approach... Teachers just don't acquire skills on their own ...(with) wishy- washy, unclear syllabus outcomes.

The second group of opinions were more supportive of the D.S.E. Two very divergent opinions were expressed by Informant 5 and Informant 6. Informant 5 felt that the D.S.E. was making "some sort of commitment to Outcome-Based Instruction, but

not O.B.E.". In contrast Informant 6 considered that D.S.E. policy supported O.B.E and was "sure the drive didn't come from schools". Informant 12 saw some of the priorities in the D.S.E. Strategic Plan as the "starting point of encouragement in big terms about the outcomes, rather than just profiles." Informant 14 was also supportive of the idea of the D.S.E. as the initiator, as "we have been given the opportunity to become self-managing schools and follow up different approaches". Informant 16 found the use of O.B.E terminology in the N.S.W. D.S.E. context "awkward", and was concerned that the D.S.E. was giving "mixed messages about where we're going".

Board of Studies Influence

In answer to **Research Question 3b), "How has the Board of Studies influenced O.B.E developments in your (school or cluster or region)?"**, educators in Regional positions gave the following responses.

Most responses from the regional level were critical of the Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" approach (Informants 1, 8 and 11). A key issue was identified by Informant 10, who said:

The Regional Curriculum Committee and Board of Studies are constantly assisting with advice re O.B.E. There is a hiatus between training and development (on) profiles and outcomes, and concrete examples in the syllabuses.

Similarly, Informant 1 considered that the Board of Studies had "slowed the process", perceived that a "variety of different agendas" were in existence, and was concerned that there had been 'no clarification (of) Outcome-Based Learning". Informant 11 explained further that the Board of Studies "confused it (and a) cynical attitude towards outcomes (has been) caused by Board of Studies documents (since) 1991".

However, some statements indicated that Board of Studies developments offered positive improvement over past efforts. For example, Informant 11 was of the opinion that "some Board of Studies materials in the last 12 months (since 1993) are more

Outcome-Based congruent". A similar response from Informant 15 suggested that "once (schools) have access to syllabuses where the outcome statements are included, the Board will have greater impact and greater influence than at the moment".

It appeared to this researcher that some Regional D.S.E. personnel assume that O.B.E and the Board of Studies "curriculum outcomes" approach are synonymous. The degree of criticism of the Board of Studies curriculum outcomes approach, expressed by some educators interviewed at a regional level, was extensive.

Directors of Schools interviewed answered in positive terms in only one case. Informant 2 mentioned that "direct consultation, ...reviewing proposed documentation to be sent statewide" had occurred only in the Board of Studies management of curriculum outcomes.

Most of the responses from the Director of Schools level were critical, in modes similar to those expressed during interview by educators at regional levels. For example, "The minimal number of syllabi (yet) with outcomes" concerned Informant 7. Even though "outcome statements", trial units of work, booklets, pamphlets and syllabus materials had been produced by the Board, there was "no evidence of any interest in an O.B.E approach by the Board of Studies" (Informant 9). This informant was also concerned that the Board of Studies "assumes the curriculum is an amalgamation of separate syllabuses", inferring that the alignment or linking of "centrally" specified curriculum outcomes with locally-determined school priorities can be seen as a problem.

This researcher was not permitted to include a copy of the policy information document on Learning Outcomes (1991) by a D.S.E. employee in the thesis appendix. This document would have been very useful in demonstrating one of the sources of the problems, and supporting Informant 13's opinion that the "Board of Studies haven't understood the issues,... they've confused them".

It was suggested by some knowledgeable that the research information upon which the Board of Studies policy on curriculum outcomes was developed was restricted in scope, and relied on pre-1984 sources of O.B.E. information. Some N.S.W. educators

were already accessing O.B.E. information from current journals to pursue local initiatives, shown in Question 4 responses to this research study. The inference which can be made here is that the Board of Studies was pursuing a restricted agenda different by degree to O.B.E. approaches in the U.S.A.

Some school-based educators interviewed tended to be less critical of the Board of Studies, with recognition of the influence of syllabi containing "curriculum outcomes" on teacher programming (Informants 5, 6 and 14). For example, Informant 12 said that "we're quite comfortable". However, from data recorded in other questions for this Informant, a considerable amount of work had been done by the Principal and staff to develop an O.B.E.-related climate in management, teaching and learning in this school. These changes had occurred before the Board of Studies introduction of Early Learning profiles. Perhaps this circumstance could have had a bearing on the "comfort zone" in this particular school.

However, another group of educators were critical of the Board of Studies approach (Informants 3, 4, 5 and 16). For example, concern was expressed that "changes have influenced documents rather than practice" (Informant 5) and that the Board of Studies approach with "outcomes 'tagged on' was a wrong view of O.B.E and a setback" (Informant 3). Similarly, Informant 4 was concerned that "outcomes (had been) thrown all over the place (with a) huge number of outcomes (that) nobody really understands".

Uniqueness

Research Question 3c) sought to establish "In what ways is your (region/ cluster/ school) unique in the interpretation of O.B.E approaches to management of curriculum, student welfare and strategic planning?"

Some Regional educator responses indicated that uniqueness in approaches to O.B.E. implementation in particular locations had existed before March, 1995. Four country regions had undertaken major O.B.E initiatives, and the perception existed that these initiatives had been more advanced than in Metropolitan Regions. Informant 1 also

mentioned that the Directors of Teaching and Learning for the state system during 1994 developed an O.B.E definition for the N.S.W. public school system, which can be summarised as "outcomes in a standards framework".

The region in which Informant 3 was located was using a "modified O.B.E approach as Total Management tool". In another region there had been a growth of emphasis on O.B.E, with visiting O.B.E speakers and a strategic decision during 1993 and 1994 to focus O.B.E. training on middle management. This educator perceived that the region, because of its compact size, "can have a greater influence because (Regional personnel) know the Principals and teachers well" (Informant 10).

One regional educator interviewed considered this question difficult to answer without full knowledge of how all 10 regions in the D.S.E. were managing O.B.E. ideas (Informant 11). In contrast, Informant 15 answered in a comprehensive manner:

We have attempted (region) to promote O.B.E in a variety of ways, one of which has been to bring out key speakers from overseas, (such as) Mamary, people involved in the Glasser approaches, (and) people from Curriculum Corporation. What we are trying to do is expose our people to the widest range of research and current thought,... and allow them to look at own circumstances, and to choose from research theories and practices that they felt were best suited to the personnel in their schools, and the needs of their students and their school community need.

In two Director of Schools' interview responses, no claim to uniqueness was noted (Informants 2 and 7). Informant 9 also made no claim for uniqueness, but perceived a difference in some other clusters in the N.S.W. D.S.E. Informant 9 said:

Before we started... on the whole Outcomes(sic)-Based journey, we started with a broader based training program on Outcome-Based Education, so that the philosophy of an O.B.E approach is put in place before we start to look at curriculum outcomes.

Another cluster of schools had used O.B.E. ideas at the local level to a considerable extent. For example, Informant 13 observed:

Some (ideas) are unique. ...We've stolen liberally from both (O.B.E. and ODDM). We've made a conscious effort.. to translate O.B.E approaches in this cluster to the context in which we work. We have a centralised curriculum (and) a particular approach to assessment in N.S.W. We've been interested to try to work T.Q.M. into

O.B.E, (using) the Mamary diagram of exit outcomes, based on knowledge, needs and beliefs. ...The process that drives that structure... is a simple P.D.S.A. cycle from Total Quality Management. We go A.P.D.S., ...because the A means for us to assess, (using) three questions: 'What is quality education and to answer in terms of exit outcomes? What do we need in order to do to get what we want? Is what we're doing getting us what we want?'

The incorporation of O.B.E., T.Q.M. and ODDM ideas in school management in this cluster had been extensive, with selection of O.B.E. elements suited to the local context by the Director of Schools and cluster principals.

School-based educators during interview gave responses that could be divided into two groups. Informant 6 felt that "all schools are in much the same situation". Informant 4 said that teachers "end up going back to the things they were taught at school." Such comments reflect the difficulty in changing long-term teaching and learning practices in N.S.W. public schools.

Most responses laid claim to success in developing uniqueness. Five school-based informants made affirmative responses (Informants 3, 4, 5, 12 and 14). For example, Informant 5's school had made a "conscientious and solid attempt, defin(ing) exit outcomes which will influence all the decisions and practices in the school". Similarly, Informant 12 had developed a workable O.B.E model in the school through the use of Spady, ODDM, Glasser's C.T./R.T. and Quality School ideas, while in Informant 14's school, "a body of people at the school are further down path thinking in terms of O.B.E."

Findings that Emerged from Interview Data- Research Question 3

The following findings, deemed to be important by the researcher, emerge from the data relating to Research Question 3:

-The divergent viewpoints amongst Directors and school-based educators reveal inherent problems in the manner of introduction of O.B.E. related changes within the D.S.E.

-The interpretation of an "outcomes" approach at a State level is different to educators who have gleaned their ideas from journals originating overseas and visiting O.B.E consultants from overseas.

-Confusion between the "outcomes in a standards framework" of the D.S.E. with the intent of O.B.E. models from the U.S.A. can be seen to have existed at all levels within the N.S.W. D.S.E.

-At least two divergent opinions existed about the part played by the D.S.E. in the use of O.B.E. ideas in some N.S.W. public schools. One group of educators attributed O.B.E. initiatives to the D.S.E. The second group perceived that O.B.E. changes occurred through individual educator initiative, and D.S.E. policies were seen as "inhibitors" to autonomous O.B.E. approaches at the local level.

-Further confusion about O.B.E. had occurred within the N.S.W. D.S.E. at the three levels accessed within this research study. The confusion can be attributed partly to the varied interpretations that existed, between the D.S.E.'s "outcomes in a standards framework", the Board of Studies "plethora" of curriculum outcomes, the knowledge base about O.B.E. that some educators had acquired through independent means and the perceived restricted access classroom practitioners had to relevant training courses.

-The degree of autonomy possible in a state-wide "outcomes in a standards" framework approach, was seen variably as either inhibiting or facilitating the use of O.B.E. by some educators.

-The Board of Studies release of "curriculum outcome" documents without adequate D.S.E. Training and Development provision had resulted in confusion, criticism and a

dichotomy of opinion about the use of O.B.E. ideas among N.S.W. public school educators.

-The inclusion of "curriculum outcomes" in existing syllabuses, the number of outcomes added to syllabuses and the restricted participation of teachers in the development of the Board of Studies syllabuses was criticised by some N.S.W. public school educators.

-Two divergent groups of opinion existed about the Board of Studies influence on O.B.E. developments in some regions, clusters of schools and individual schools in the N.S.W public school system. One group of educators acknowledged the role played by the Board, in developing "outcomes" attached to syllabi, in stimulating O.B.E.-related changes in teaching practices in some schools. However, the other group of educators were either critical of the forms of support provided for teachers implementing "curriculum outcome" changes or saw the focus on "curriculum outcomes" as a narrow and inadequate interpretation of O.B.E.

-Responses to the question about uniqueness can be categorised into two groups. One group of educators did not make a claim for uniqueness, even though O.B.E. ideas borrowed directly from American O.B.E. models were being used at the local level. Another group of educators made strong claims for uniqueness, particularly in the manner in which O.B.E. ideas had been interpreted at the local level.

Interview Data Analysis- Research Question 4

Research Question 4 asked "What is the nature of current training provisions for school managers and teachers in being able to effectively deal with the application of O.B.E. ideas within (school/ cluster/ regional) contexts?". Five sub-questions were seen as necessary to answer this question.

Sources of Information

Research Question 4a) asked "How did you become aware of Outcome-Based Education?". From the data gleaned from the interviews conducted, distinct patterns in the sources of O.B.E. information were apparent.

The most common sources of relevant information about O.B.E. appeared to have been independent, personal investigations of the subject through attendance at consultancy seminars or professional reading. Specific sources of information on O.B.E. included journal articles and unpublished papers on the Johnson City/ Marny approach (ODDM) and the Spady approach (H.S.P.-O.B.E.). The importance of local contacts and collegial activities appeared to have figured highly in the diffusion of O.B.E. ideas. D.S.E. and Board of Studies materials provided minimal information about O.B.E., according to the educators interviewed. See Table 4 overleaf.

Table 4
Sources of O.B.E Information

	Region	Cluster	School	Total
Spady	4	1	0	5
ODDM, Mamary	2	2	1	5
Prof. Reading	3	2	2	7
Local Contacts	1	1	2	4
Education Ass.	0	2	0	2
Tertiary Studies	0	1	0	1
D.S.E.	0	2	1	3
Board of Studies	0	0	1	1

Initial Reaction to O.B.E.

Research Question 4 b) sought to investigate "What were your initial reactions to O.B.E on a professional level?"

Regional informants indicated a positive initial reaction to O.B.E (Informants 1, 10 11 and 15). O.B.E. was seen as offering the potential to improve the overall level of student performance, to provide a strong focus on student welfare and learning, provide a conceptual framework that could be understood by teachers in the classroom and put ideas about education in an integrated context. For Informant 11, the initial reaction was extremely positive, and that O.B.E.:

made sense of a whole lot of disparate ideas... We've got to get the big picture right-fiddling around with the components is not going to enhance learning for kids".

The initial reactions of some Directors of Schools were phrased in quite different terms to these regional responses. Informant 2 saw the "differences in applying and translating rhetoric into action, (and a) focus on outcomes means resources allocated according to the outcomes". The dominant concerns of Informant 7 were that the:

- i) chunks of material kids being measures against becoming very small- Students may lose the ability to synthesize materials across a range of outcomes, and ii) emphasis on measurement and teacher time (may be a problem).

Two other responses were more positive in nature (Informant 9 and 13). For example, Informant 13's initial reaction was "absolutely intuitive. O.B.E provides a way of improving schools (and I had a) recognition of the potential".

The reactions of the school-based educators were similar to the Directors of Schools. Informant 3 identified two initial reactions, one of enthusiasm and the other reaction was concern that O.B.E. could become similar to the narrow British competencies approach. Common with some other initial reactions held by school-based educators, Informant 5 thought "not another fad!", but subsequently developed a different opinion. Initially, Informant 6 had little interest, thinking "here we have America trying to impose business practices on a school".

In the main, most Informants reported a very positive initial reactions to O.B.E. (Informants 4, 5, 8, 12, 14 and 16) For example, Informant 4 said "O.B.E. seeded my approach towards children and education", while for Informant 12, O.B.E had a

big impact... Mamary... matched my beliefs, (and it's) one of the key factors of significance in my professional development. (O.B.E)... clarified and gave a whole lot of background".

Minimal references were made to the D.S.E. and Board of Studies in the responses to this question from all three areas. Fourteen positive comments were made, with eight Informants mentioning the teaching and learning dimension, or enthusiasm, intuition and inquisitiveness to know more. Negative reactions accounted for five comments by Informants, where educators interviewed were critical of the D.S.E. or Board of Studies interpretation of "outcomes". Concerns expressed included measurement of outcomes,

concern if N.S.W. outcomes were linked with narrow British competencies, the links to business practices and passing trends or "fads".

Nature of Training Received

Research Question 4 c) asked "Describe O.B.E. training you have received through inservice courses, attendances at conferences, school development days or (school/ cluster/ regional) workshops and meetings?"

It was apparent that regional educators had a considerable degree of access to training in O.B.E.-related areas. Access was dependent on the individual choosing to access the kinds of training courses, seminars and workshops available. Some of these forms of training had been regionally sponsored. However, a great deal of training had been provided by visiting O.B.E consultants, such as Mamary in 1992 and 1993, Spady in 1992, and Rowe in 1994.

For example, Informant 1 gleaned O.B.E information from the Rowe and Mamary workshops. Informant 8 developed an understanding of O.B.E philosophy through regional workshops and a visit by Mamary. One of the Directors of Schools had shared extensive information from the Spady consultancy and others with this regional educator. Informant 10 received and delivered O.B.E. training through a range of courses, such as talks by overseas speakers, D.S.E. forums, papers delivered at School Development Days, Principal and curriculum conferences, and working with individual teachers. A colleague in same position in another region also assisted in a cross-fertilization of the concepts and issues of O.B.E for Informant 10 in a collegial manner. Attendance at several conferences, including those conducted by Mamary and the Texas Spady H.S.P.-O.B.E. Network conference assisted Informant 11's training. This educator "spent a fair bit of time interviewing people... at the cutting edge... in O.B.E (and) looking at the literature" for an O.B.E.-related Doctoral research project. For Informant 5, the sources of information were different, occurring largely through regional emphasis on Total Quality Education and on Glasser's concepts.

Some Directors of Schools responses were similar to educators located in regional positions. D.S.E. courses and visiting speakers were the sources of information for Informants 2 and 7. In contrast, another group of Directors had pursued O.B.E training on a personal basis (Informants 9 and 13), through professional reading, intensive training with Mamary, Rowe H.S.P. seminars and in one case, and a three week USA tour investigating O.B.E concepts.

School-based educators interviewed had apparently not had the same degree of access to the forms of O.B.E training described by regional educators and Directors of Schools. This circumstance may be related to the nature of position held, where access to Training and Development funds in schools can be seen as restricted, with a small pool of financial resources to draw upon.

O.B.E. forms of training specifically mentioned by school-based educators included regional courses at Principal level (Informants 5 and 16), Spady or Rowe H.S.P. seminars (Informants 5 and 6), Glasser's C.T./R.T. training (Informants 5 and 12), and an Education Resource Centre (ERC) five stage O.B.E. course (Informant 6). Informant 6 was also critical of lack of access to visiting experts, such as Mamary, at the local level. Similarly, Informant 14 was concerned that inadequate training of teachers was "contaminating the whole process (with) no inservice outside school (and) not enough O.B.E. systemic training".

In interview responses to the question about O.B.E.- related training, 12 different sources of information and a range of attitudes were found. These can be grouped in three areas.

The first major grouping of sources for O.B.E training were found to be expert consultants from the USA, such as Spady and Rowe (6 Informants), Glasser's C.T./R.T. (3 Informants), and Mamary's 7 day ODDM training (1 Informant), a one day Mamary workshop (4 Informants) and 2 day Mamary conferences (4 Informants). A restricted degree of access to these forms of training was perceived by school-based educators, in comparison to some Regional educators and Directors of Schools

Training in O.B.E.-related ideas through more "official" D.S.E. training included conferences at a State level (2 Informants), Regional level conferences (4 Informants), Cluster level meetings or courses, including Principals' Councils (3 Informants), and various courses which general in nature but related to O.B.E. (4 Informants).

The third category of responses suggested that educators had relied on O.B.E. information gleaned directly from overseas sources or contacts at a local level, rather than D.S.E. initiatives. Included in this group were educators who had pursued O.B.E. ideas on an individual basis (8 Informants), personal and professional reading (3 Informants), personal American visits (2 Informants), informal collegial groups (4 Informants), a visit to another "expert" cluster (1 Informant), and School Development Days/ staff meetings (2 Informants).

Accessibility of the O.B.E. Knowledge Base

Research Question 4 d) sought to investigate "How accessible is information and professional reading on Outcome-Based Education, the Outcomes-Driven Developmental Model (Mamary), the High Success Program (Spady) or Outcome-Based Instructional techniques?"

For Regional educators, information was accessible and varied in its sources. Informant 1 had developed a file of O.B.E. articles (personal), but was concerned that more material for school use should be available. For Informant 8, information was quite accessible with one Director of Schools responsible for the distribution of O.B.E. information across the region. Information was fully accessible, with "a lot of teachers now accessing Spady/ Mamary material (and)... broad-based opportunities for teachers to read about O.B.E" (Informant 10). In another region, information was "as accessible as a telephone call", with a Regional library information service set up to access annotated material (Informant 11). Informant 15 also stressed that it "depends on what you want" in regard to information, and had found the D.S.E. library in Sydney "good in terms of (information on) outcomes, quality, Spady and Mamary". Informant 15 also

mentioned that this region, as well as using Spady, Mamary, Glasser ideas, and Principal and Professional Association networks, was also "going to use the International Advisory Council's recommendation that we promote all schools as learning communities".

At the Directors of Schools level, information was accessible through professional journals and regional publications (2 Informants). The ODDM model was being promoted strongly through one region, with Spady literature in an ERC, and accessible if wanted by educators (Informant 7). "I've gone looking", was the response of Informant 9, with "programs I've been involved with" and access to an O.B.E network being other sources to access information. For Informant 13, the major source of accessible information had been "Educational Leadership" journal, and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (A.S.C.D.) books.

For school-based educators, accessibility to information had been a perceived problem. Informant 3 was concerned that information was not very accessible, except through professional journals. This informant was also concerned with the "Department approach (of) "big hits (with) no professional follow-up to clarify paradigm". Similarly, Informant 4 was concerned that "If you don't do it yourself, then it won't be done". For this informant, O.B.E. knowledge had been accessible only "by word of mouth, (with) no commitment (and) lack of understanding at the top". For Informant 5, information had been accessible through the Leading Teacher, who is "very resourceful and aware... Information is not accessible unless you have access to someone with that knowledge". A lack of information about ODDM or H.S.P. through the D.S.E. or local ERC had been experienced by Informant 5. For Informant 6, information also was not very accessible, with no professional reading available in the school. Information for Informant 16 had been inaccessible, with access to Al Mamary's visits restricted to a "select few" by the region. This educator perceived restricted access for most teachers.

Circumstances for Informant 12 were different from most school-based educators. Information was "very accessible", with a "huge amount of information" being collected at courses. This information had been pursued through the initiative of the individual

concerned. Informant 12 also mentioned that the local ERC had bought the ODDM video tapes and a lot of books on O.B.E.-related matters. Informant 14 also perceived that the "information was there and coming into the school", as this Informant had responsibility for professional development articles being passed on to staff. The Principal of this school was "quite open to discussion", and there had been access to Al. Rowe for this educator.

The accessibility of literature when analysed showed that the following sources of information were accessible to Regional educators, Directors of Schools and individual school educators to varying degrees. Sources of information about O.B.E. included Regional files (1 Informant), the D.S.E. library in Sydney (1 Informant), personal "outcome" files (2 Informants), conferences (3 Informants), and professional journals such as "Educational Leadership". Professional journal sources of information included articles about Spady, Mamary and Glasser (7 Informants). In addition, regional publications (1 Informant), videos (1 Informant), visiting experts (2 Informants) and an onsite expert (2 Informants) were sources of O.B.E. information.

Some educators interviewed were critical of the D.S.E.'s "big hit" approach (3 Informants), were supportive of the D.S.E.'s framework (1 Informant), criticised an apparent lack of accessibility (3 Informants) and claimed accessibility through means other than D.S.E. sources of information (14 Informants). Most of these informants had deliberately sought out information through personal initiative.

Training Provision

Research Question 4 e) asked, "Please describe needs in training provisions within your school/ cluster/ region or at a state level in regard to acquiring an effective working knowledge of O.B.E concepts?"

Regional educators interviewed were specific when describing training needs in the D.S.E. to gain working knowledge of O.B.E. (Informants 1, 8, 10 and 11). Informant 1 expressed what can be considered to be a key statement:

The whole state has to work out what it wants to achieve through O.B.E. (There are individuals going off in interesting directions. We need to qualify what O.B.E means (and) how we can use American experience".

Informant 10 was concerned with access to training in areas such as change management, overseas experts, the linking of curriculum outcomes to school outcomes, O.B.E. learning practices and the assessment and reporting of student outcomes. Informant 11 was concerned that training provisions to foster appropriate school practices were "going to be a hard slog in terms of reading the readiness of people in schools, and to be able to have people in schools facilitating (change)".

Directors of Schools interviewed had already considered, and in some cases were well underway, personally-initiated and designed training strategies for cluster schools. Their comments revealed that the inspiration for these training courses had been based on components of American O.B.E models, rather than D.S.E. materials.

Informants 2, 8 and 13 were working on a need to expand understanding at the school level. Similarly, Informant 9 had developed comprehensive O.B.E. training courses for his cluster of schools. O.B.E. training, initially using C.T./R.T./Q.M. or the Rowe (H.S.P.-O.B.E. consultant) approach using T.Q.E. as a management tool, was proposed. The second level of training developed in this cluster was:

to work with schools in a pragmatic way, (investigate) the principles of benchmarking and alignment... set up an action research cycle and define very specific outcomes, then take (schools) through a cycle of Outcome-Based processes.

The third level planned by Informant 9 was to work with school Principals to developing exit outcomes, action statements and the Spady concept of "outcomes of significance":

so that we move away from the fragmented approach of syllabus and curriculum outcomes to a broader level of outcomes, where we're talking about an understanding of outcomes of significance.

School-based educator responses were similar to some Directors of Schools opinions, with direct provision of resources for teacher training and development in

O.B.E. emerging as a dominant concern. Informant 5 considered that insufficient financial resources for appropriate training had been a problem. Informant 12 said:

Change takes time. (The) older teaching staff are set in their ways... Change needs to account for these factors, (and) provide stimulus, back-up and resources to the process.

Informant 3 considered needs existed in two areas, in establishing:

a common understanding (and) support for ongoing collegial discussion, (answering) questions and techniques for an Outcome-Based approach. Teachers need at one level the theory, which is which is then related to good practice. There needs to be a working knowledge of O.B.E, but we also need to see how it works in the classroom, with collegial groups working over a period of time. The Department of School Education needs to show they have a commitment.

Findings that Emerged from Interview Data- Research Question 4

The following findings, deemed to be important by the researcher, emerge from the data relating to Research Question 4:

-Most informants had experienced positive initial reactions to O.B.E. ideas gleaned from visiting American consultants or imported journals. These contacts clarified beliefs about teaching and learning, and stimulated enthusiasm to expand the "knowledge base" about O.B.E. within the N.S.W. public school system.

-Three sources of O.B.E. training had been experienced. The dominant form of training was through workshops and courses conducted by overseas consultants. The second main form of training had been through professional reading of journals or articles from overseas sources. D.S.E. training courses were perceived by educators interviewed to have had minimal influence on the development of O.B.E. expertise.

-A perception existed that a restricted degree information about O.B.E. had been made available by the D.S.E. to teaching staff in N.S.W. public schools. O.B.E. elements implemented in N.S.W. public schools had occurred largely through initiative at the regional, cluster of Schools or individual school levels.

-As public school system educators attempted to implement a "curriculum outcomes" approach to teaching and learning for student benefit, the issue of training provision had become paramount before March 1995.

-Informants perceived training needs as i) expansion of the knowledge base about O.B.E., ii) access for classroom teachers to O.B.E. training courses, with increased Training and Development resources within schools to facilitate response to local need, and iii) creation of conditions in the public school system conducive to acceptance of the need for changed practices in relation to O.B.E.

Conclusion

The educators occupying regional positions, Directors of Schools and school-based educators who were interviewed for this research study expressed a variety of opinions that were analysed and categorized. These responses were analysed under the original questions posed in this study.

Central findings emerging from the interview data were also clearly identified. A comparative analysis based on the findings emerging from the interview analysis (in this chapter) and the questionnaire analysis (to be undertaken in the next chapter) will be done in the final chapter. This comparative analysis of issues would inform the nature and substance of recommendations the researcher would make in the conclusion.