

**AN INVESTIGATION OF PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
(NSPI) FOR NAMIBIAN SCHOOLS IN THE OHANGWENA REGION.**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

(Educational Leadership and Management)

of

RHODES UNIVERSITY

by

THOMAS KAMUSHEEFA JOHANNES

December 2009

ABSTRACT

The post independence Namibian education system has been characterised by many reform initiatives, aimed at eradicating inequity, poor performance, and inferior education provision inherited from a pre-independence education system. This legacy posed a serious challenge to Namibia when it set out to achieve a national goal, Vision 2030. Vision 2030 inspires Namibia to be among the developed countries in 2030.

In an attempt to achieve the goals outlined by the mission statement of Vision 2030, the Ministry of Education (MoE) introduced two national education initiatives: the Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP), and the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs). These would be implemented in Namibian schools as, respectively, the Ministry's strategic plan and its policy document.

The NSPIs were introduced to address the fragmentation of standards and inequity in regions and schools in Namibia, as they aimed to standardise the provision of equal, quality education across the country (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). The NSPI policy calls for schools to take quality assurance seriously, with particular emphasis on School Self-Evaluation (SSE), a process that encourages self-management (Namibia. MoE, 2007a, p. 3). Thus, the standards set out by the NSPIs became the yardstick by which internal and external school evaluators could assess whole school performance.

The purpose of this present study was to investigate the perceptions and experiences of principals in the Ohangwena Region following the implementation of the NSPIs. It is a case study involving two Inspectors of Education (IoEs), twelve principals, and four Heads of Department (HODs). Interviews, document analysis, questionnaires, and a focus group interview were used to collect the data.

The study found that principals acknowledge the importance of the NSPIs, and believe that they would succeed in improving the provision of quality education if they were fully implemented. The study found that schools implemented Performance Indicators 5.3 (School Administration) Aspect 5.3.2 (Storage and retrieval of information) in Key Area 5. However, the results of the study also showed that principals experienced many challenges in the implementation of the NSPIs. These included a lack of understanding among

principals and teachers of the NSPIs, a lack of understanding of contemporary leadership theories (that would otherwise help principals to implement change effectively), and a lack of support in terms of skills and resources from both the Regional Office in Ohangwena and the MoE itself.

The study found that the NSPIs have not yet improved school performance, and consequently that the pass rate remains the same as before the introduction of the NSPIs, four years ago. The SSE, which aims to help schools identify their strengths and weaknesses, and encourages them to establish and make use of a School Development Plan (SDP) to address weaknesses and sustain strengths, is characterised by a high degree of dishonesty. Thus, the information furnished by SSEs, SDPs, and Teachers Self-Evaluations (TSEs) is unreliable, lacks credibility, and has the further ill-effect of skewing schools' performance targets. Therefore, this problem could be addressed when the rationale of completing the SSE is clearly explained to principals and teachers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Above all, I praise God for taking care of me during my study period.

Furthermore, this study would not have been possible had it not been for my supervisor, Professor Hennie van der Mescht, who diligently and tirelessly nurtured me through the duration of my study.

I also want to offer my gratitude to Judy Cornwell, the librarian of the Rhodes University Education Department, who provided me unconditional assistance while gathering the relevant materials for my study.

I am indebted to my former Director of Education – Mr J.S. Udjombala, who encouraged me to take on this study – for the trust he had in me that I could complete it. Furthermore, I want to thank all my colleagues in the Ohangwena Region for allowing me to embark on this study. I would also like to thank Aina Josef, who volunteered to type out transcriptions of my research.

I want to thank my fellow prospective Masters of Education in Education Leadership and Management (ELM) graduates, Ponny Nghatanga, Lukas Kashikatu, Markus Mbambo and Pontianus Musore, for their sense of humour and for their encouragement.

Lastly, I owe a great deal to my family. Firstly, my dear wife Lucia Sarti Kaunandodo, who motivated me to take on this study, and resolved to shoulder the lonely burden of taking care of our family single-handedly during my absence. She is my inspiration. Secondly, my daughters Beata Vaivawa Tangi Etuna, Meameno Kandiwapa Tangeni, Tuyakula Penehafo and Shangeelao, who patiently missed my company during this study period. They gave me constant encouragement, and I am indebted to them for that. To my niece Ndemuposhali Emilia Kaunamwene Halaiwa, who sought out my company and support, I owe you more than I can say.

DECLARATION

I, Thomas Kamusheefa Johannes, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own work, and that it has not been previously submitted for any degree or examination at any University.

LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

| | |
|-------|---|
| AT | Advisory Teachers |
| BETD | Basic Education Teachers' Diploma |
| HoD | Head of Department |
| IoE | Inspector of Education |
| NESE | National External School Evaluation |
| RESE | Regional External School Evaluation |
| NSPIs | National Standards and Performance Indicators |
| SDP | School Development Plan |
| SSE | School Self-Evaluation |
| TSE | Teachers Self-Evaluation |

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| CHAPTER 1 | 1 |
| 1.1 INTRODUCTION..... | 1 |
| 1.2 CONTEXT | 1 |
| 1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY | 4 |
| 1.4 RESEARCH GOALS..... | 4 |
| 1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 5 |
| 1.6 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS..... | 6 |
| CHAPTER 2 | 7 |
| LITERATURE REVIEW | 7 |
| 2.1 INTRODUCTION..... | 7 |
| 2.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE NSPIs | 8 |
| 2.3 SEARCH FOR LEADERSHIP DEFINITION | 14 |
| 2.4 THE NOTION OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP | 17 |
| 2.5 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP | 23 |
| 2.6 THE NOTION OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION..... | 28 |
| 2.7 CONCLUSION | 34 |
| CHAPTER 3 | 36 |
| RESEARCH METHODOLOGY | 36 |
| 3.1 INTRODUCTION..... | 36 |
| 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN | 36 |
| 3.2.1RESEARCH ORIENTATION AND APPROACH..... | 36 |
| 3.2.2 RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES..... | 37 |
| 3.3 DATA COLLECTION | 38 |
| 3.4 DATA ANALYSIS..... | 41 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 3.5 VALIDITY | 42 |
| 3.6 ETHICAL ISSUES | 42 |
| 3.7 CONCLUSION | 43 |
| CHAPTER 4 | 44 |
| PRESENTATION OF DATA | 44 |
| 4.1 INTRODUCTION | 44 |
| 4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS | 45 |
| 4.2.1 GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE NSPI | 45 |
| 4.2.2 ROLES OF PRINCIPALS AND INSPECTORS OF EDUCATION | 48 |
| 4.2.3 TRAINING | 51 |
| 4.2.4 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND THE NSPI | 57 |
| 4.2.5 CHALLENGES | 60 |
| 4.2.6 CONCLUSION | 68 |
| CHAPTER 5 | 69 |
| DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS | 69 |
| 5.1 INTRODUCTION | 69 |
| 5.2. DISCUSSION | 70 |
| 5.2.1 THE SUPPORT OF THE INNOVATION: IS IT ENOUGH? | 70 |
| 5.2.2 DO THE NSPIs REQUIRE LEADERSHIP OR MANAGEMENT? | 72 |
| 5.2.3 READINESS | 77 |
| 5.2.4 EFFECTS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NSPIs AND POSSIBLE TENSIONS | 83 |
| 5.2.5 CONCLUSION | 94 |
| CHAPTER 6 | 95 |
| CONCLUSION | 95 |
| 6.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS | 95 |
| 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS | 99 |
| 6.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH | 101 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| 6.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY | 102 |
| 6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY | 103 |
| 6.6 CONCLUSION | 103 |
| REFERENCES | 105 |
| APPENDICES | 109 |
| APPENDIX A – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (Director) | 109 |
| APPENDIX B – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (From Director) | 110 |
| APPENDIX C | 111 |
| LETTER OF CONSENT | 111 |
| APPENDIX D | 112 |
| A. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS | 112 |
| B. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION | 112 |
| C. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP | 113 |
| APPENDIX E | 113 |
| QUESTIONNAIRE | 113 |

CHAPTER 1

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I shall present the rationale for this study, which investigates the perceptions and experiences of principals following the implementation of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) in Namibian schools. I shall begin by expounding on the context of the study, and I shall indicate my research goals. I shall highlight the methodology used in this study, and finally conclude the chapter by presenting the layout of the entire thesis.

1.2 CONTEXT

In 1999 the Office of the President in Namibia commissioned an investigation into the state of quality provision in the post-independence Education sector. One of the findings of the Presidential Commission was that the provision of quality education in Namibian schools had not been rapid enough. Thus, the goal of producing learners to empower Namibia, and enable her to develop a knowledge-based economy would be unrealisable unless a drastic step was taken to improve the sector (Namibia. The Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training, 1999, p. 5, p. 23; Namibia. Ministry of Education, 2007a, p. pp. 1-2). Therefore, the Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP), and the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia were introduced. These would function as the Ministry of Education's strategic plan and its policy document, respectively. The introduction of both ETSIP and NSPIs were a response to the call made by both the Presidential Commission on Education and the country's Vision 2030. The latter inspires Namibia to be among the developed countries by 2030.

The NSPIs were introduced to address the issues of fragmentation and inequity in regions and schools in Namibia, as they aimed to enhance common standards across the country, and thereby to increase the provision of quality education (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). The

policy laid out by the NSPIs calls for all schools to take quality assurance seriously, with particular emphasis on School Self-Evaluation (SSE), a process that encourages self-management (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 3). The policy of the NSPIs thus became the rubric which both internal and external school evaluators could use to assess 'whole school performance'.

In order to familiarise staff members with the NSPIs before their introduction into schools in 2006, selected Inspectors of Education (IoEs) and Advisory Teachers (ATs) from the Ohangwena region received NSPIs training in 2005. Thereafter, the cascade model of training was adopted for the rest of IoEs, ATs and principals.

While it remains true that policies formulated at National and Regional levels first pass through education bureaucracies before entering into the complex contexts of schools, it is also true that, in practical terms, it is the principals who find themselves "at the receiving end" (Sergiovanni, Kelleher, McCarthy & Wirt, 2004, p. 201) of new policy implementations. Since policies that are merely imposed from the top down are likely to be resisted by implementers, Busher (2002, p. 275) argues that principals have an important mediating role to play between the designer of the policy and its implementers, chiefly in helping implementers to understand and cope with the changes that the new policy entails. Equally, Wedell (2009, p. 39) argues that without a proper prior understanding of the planned changes, principals will find it difficult to know how to install them in the specific context of their schools.

For a policy like the NSPI to be successful, the support of the school community, and commitment from its implementers, is essential (Harris, 2002. p. 10; Theron, 2007, p. 195). Support of and commitment to policy implementation obviously requires a good understanding of the policy concerned. This implies that intensive training of all the policy's stakeholders has to precede its implementation (Theron, 2007, p. 195). More importantly, it seems that the success or failure of policy implementation depends on the meaning that school managers attach to it, and a resultant understanding of the leadership role that they need to play in the transformational process (Busher, 2002, p. 280). Contemporary leadership theory provides a useful framework for understanding this role.

Key characteristics of contemporary approaches to leadership include the desire to develop a shared vision and shared values among colleagues, and to distribute leadership to all organisational members by adopting a collegial, participative leadership style. Among contemporary theories, transformational leadership best embraces all of these principles. Transformational leadership assumes that leaders and staff have shared values and a common vision, and so decrees that decisions should be made collaboratively (Moloi, 2002, pp. 89-90; Bush, 2003, p. 78).

Bush (2003, p. 78) argues that the adoption of transformational leadership lessens the principals' burden, and promotes bonding among staff members. This is an important condition for effective policy implementation, and serves to motivate members "to take leaps into an often risky future" (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 37). Similarly, as Cheng (2002, p. 53) argues, educational leaders need to adopt a transformational leadership approach if they wish to facilitate the paradigm shifts required to overcome "contextual constraints, and create opportunities for new development for their schools".

The quest for common standards and quality in education is not unique to Namibia. Many countries' governments are searching for new policies and strategies to enhance the provision of quality education for their citizens. In South Africa, the introduction of Whole School Evaluation of the South African Department of Education is a good example of such measures (Westraad, 2006, pp. 1-2). The USA, particularly through the 2002 initiative known as 'No Child Left Behind', has become known for its dramatic change educational policy, brought about by concerns pertaining to national security and equity (Sergiovanni et al., 2004, pp. 281-285). In Britain there is a qualification that all those aspiring to become principals must possess, known as the National Professional Qualification for Headship (Bush, 2002, p. 15).

Policy implementation has in recent times become a popular subject of research. In South Africa, a study by Mazibuko (2007, p. i) looked at the implementation of the Whole School Evaluation policy. The findings point to a lamentable lack of training of principals at national and regional levels, and poor supervision and support of schools from circuit offices. Studies from further afield conducted by Hauwanga (2008) and Uugwanga (2007) investigated the implementation of the NSPI in Namibia. Importantly, two Namibian reports on the

evaluation of schools by the National External School Evaluation (NESE) teams were recently released by the directorate of Programmes and Quality Assurance. Some of the findings of these reports were that the performance of schools in Key Area 5 (viz. management and leadership) of the NSPIs was extremely poor, and that there are acute shortages of textbooks and other resources, sometimes as fundamental as a lack of suitable school buildings. Furthermore, the performance ratings yielded by School Self-Evaluations (SSEs) are consistently higher than those determined by the NESE, condemning the findings of the SSEs to suspicion (Namibia. MoE, 2008, pp. 5-13; Namibia. MoE, 2009, pp. 5-16). This is an important finding in the context of my research, since I plan to explore principals' perceptions of the leadership challenges following the implementation of the NSPIs.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

This research has potential value for school principals, Inspectors of Education and regional officers in Namibia, particularly in the Ohangwena area. Since the NSPIs were introduced in 2006, there have been signs of misunderstanding of them among their supposed implementers – that is to say, among principals and teachers in Namibian schools. This aroused my curiosity, and I set out to discover how the NSPIs could be effectively implemented. As I am one of the Inspectors of Education in the Ohangwena region, this research will be important in providing me with a sense of the principals' experiences and expectations of the NSPIs. With the knowledge gleaned from my research, I will be in a good position to provide help to schools both within my circuit and within other circuits of the region. The research may also contribute to the field of leadership in the education sector, as it relates to policy implementation.

1.4 RESEARCH GOALS

The aim of this research is to explore the perceptions and experiences of school principals in the Ohangwena region of Namibia, following the implementation of the National Standards

and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) in Namibian schools. In order to achieve this, I seek to answer the following questions:

- How do school principals experience the implementation of the NSPIs?
- How do school principals perceive their role in the NSPIs?
- How do principals perceive the impact of the NSPIs on school performance?
- How does NSPIs training impact on their (the principals') role?
- What are principals' perceptions of the role of inspectors in the NSPIs process?
- What challenges do school principals experience in managing the NSPIs?
- What are principals' perceptions of the implementation of School Self-Evaluation and School Development Plans?

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was a small-scale, qualitative case study. According to Yin (2003, p. 1), "case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' or 'why' questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context". Managing and leading the implementation of the NSPIs is indeed a contemporary issue, and the case in question – four clusters in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia – is certainly a real-life context. I selected these clusters because of their accessibility and convenience, and the close proximity of the schools in the area.

I used document analysis to strengthen and enrich the collected data. I conducted one-on-one interviews with seven principals and two Inspectors of Education, which was the lead data of my research. I also conducted focus group interviews as Patton (2002) argues: "in focus group participants get to hear each other's response and make additional comments beyond their own original responses, as they hear what other people have to say" (p. 386). I used a semi-structured interview question format, and asked open-ended questions. Semi-structured interviews helped me to explore the responses of the interviewees, which is

difficult to achieve when conducting a structured interview (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 354).

I used inductive analysis as a mode of inference during the interpretation of my data. I developed a “contextual interpretation” (Thomas, 2003, p. 95) of the data, which allowed me to move from the concrete, actual experiences of the participants to more abstract and general themes surrounding the issue.

In order to enhance the validity of my research, I collected data from different sources for triangulation purposes. According to Patton (2002) triangulating data sources means, “comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times by different means within qualitative methods” (p. 559). This was done to enhance the validity of the data collected.

Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, accorded the right to withdraw from the research, and their right to privacy and anonymity was honoured. Pseudonyms were used. Permission for recording interviews was sought and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research project. A letter of consent was signed by all of the participants. My research, therefore, was conducted with a thorough and responsible regard for methodology (Cohen et al., 2007). I elaborate on the research methodology I employed in Chapter 3. The following chapter comprises a review the existing literature on my research topic.

1.6 OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

This thesis is structured as follows. In the first Chapter I present the context of the study, its rationale, its research goals and its methodology. In Chapter Two I present the literature review in relation to policy implementation and contemporary leadership theories, with specific reference to transformational leadership and transactional leadership. In Chapter Three I present the methodology employed for data collection and analysis, and in Chapter Four I present the findings. In Chapter Five I discuss the findings that are published in Chapter Four. Chapter Six is the conclusion, where I present a summary of my findings, and offer recommendations of my own devising. I also discuss the limitations and significance of the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As I have mentioned, the purpose of my study is to investigate the principals' perceptions and experiences of the implementation of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) in Namibian schools, specifically in the Ohangwena Region.

The chapter is structured as follows. It starts with a general overview of the NSPIs, where I provide some information about their structure and what is expected from their implementers. Since one of the main interest-points of this study is the role of principals as leaders in the implementation of the NSPIs, an understanding of the concept of leadership is essential to my thesis. I present definitions of the concept of leadership, outline some notions of effective leadership, discuss transformational leadership, and introduce the concept of policy implementation. Hence, I briefly explore the meaning of leadership, as discussed by various researchers.

Next, I discuss the notion of effective leadership in educational environments as it is perceived by different researchers. This will provide guidelines for understanding the implementation of the NSPIs in Namibia, as in order for them to be successful they require effective principals to lead their implementation. In the fourth section, I present a framework of contemporary leadership theories, focussing specifically on transformational leadership and transactional leadership.

The implementation of the NSPIs signals a period of fundamental change. As Cunningham & Cordeiro caution:

Reform in education is a continuous process of improvement to meet the needs of dynamic society. Leaders in this new 'era of change' require the ability to envision an improved school and the spark to energize and lead staff to bring it about (2003, p. 137).

A crucial characteristic of effective transformational leaders is their ability to bridge the gap between policy and implementation. In the last section, I discuss the notion of policy

implementation with reference to schools. I make reference to the literature I have read to discuss the role principals could play in bridging the gap that exists between policy design and policy implementation. Taking into consideration all the factors which ordinarily impede the implementation of educational innovations, I present my view that the implementation of the NSPIs in Namibia is likely to fail if it is not handled effectively.

2.2 BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE NSPIs

The NSPIs were introduced to address the fragmentation of informal standards that existed in regions and schools in Namibia - these standards were not specifically defined (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). It aimed to enhance common standards across the country, and so to improve the quality of education at a national level (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). The dictums of the NSPIs call for all schools to take quality assurance seriously, with particular emphasis on School Self-Evaluation (SSE) – a process that encourages self-management (Namibia. MoE, 2007a, p. 3). The NSPIs are thus used by internal and external school evaluators to assess ‘whole school performance’. In order to familiarise staff members with the NSPIs, Inspectors of Education (IoEs) and Advisory Teachers (ATs) from the Ohangwena region received training in 2005, before the NSPIs were to be implemented in schools in 2006 (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 6). Thereafter, the cascade model of training was adopted for the remaining IoEs, ATs and principals.

The policy laid out by the NSPIs identifies seven Key Areas and 111 Themes (or Aspects) of school life, and provides evaluators with 29 Performance Indicators, known as PIs (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). Taken together, the 111 Themes are regarded as forming a holistic representation, and so the assumption is that everything traditionally associated with the concept of school life is covered by the NSPIs. Therefore, the conclusion drawn is that if schools implement the prescriptions contained in the NSPIs, school performance is likely to improve, and Namibia will be able to provide quality education for her citizens – the ultimate goal of the Ministry of Education (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1). Furthermore, it is believed that principals will benefit a great deal from the NSPIs, because they will be given

the means to review the work of their own school, to identify weaknesses and to rectify them (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1).

Similarly, the NSPIs are of value to external evaluators of schools. The PIs provide specific and common criteria for measuring school performance. According to the NSPI policy, “because both the school staff and those external to the school share the PIs, they should improve the focus and quality of dialogue between the various parties” (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1).

As I have already mentioned, the policy of the NSPIs identifies seven Key Areas of school life:

1. Provision of resources for the school
2. Curriculum and attainment
3. The teaching and learning process
4. The school as a social unit
5. Management and leadership of school and hostel
6. Links with parents and community
7. Links with other schools and the region

(Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1)

In every Key Area, there are a number of PIs, and each Performance Indicator is further broken down into a number of Themes (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 2). The number of Performance Indicators and Themes differs between the Key Areas (I have provided an outline of 7 Key Areas of the NSPIs at the end of this section to illustrate this point). The policy requires both internal and external evaluators to use a four-point scale when assessing themes. As the policy explains, “in each Performance Indicator illustrations are given in words of excellent performance (Level 4) in that part of the work of a school, and of a performance that shows more weaknesses than strengths” (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 2).

The four-point scale is explained as follows:

- Level 4: Excellent Strong in all or almost all Themes
- Level 3: Good More strengths than weaknesses
- Level 2: Fair More weaknesses than strengths
- Level 1: Weak Extensive weaknesses

(Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 2)

According to the policy, the responsibility lies with school management to plan and implement these quality assurance measures. The school leaders are therefore required to align the school's standards with a new common standards model, operating on a regional and national level in Namibia. This implies that management has to ensure both that quality assurance measures are installed in their schools, and that the performance standards they demand are maintained. Quality assurance in this context means:

- Being clear about what needs to be done (school aims and policies)
- Taking steps to ensure that the work is done well (school management)
- Taking steps to evaluate whether things are working as well as they should (school self-evaluation)
- Using the evaluation to make the necessary changes (school development planning)

(Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 2)

According to the NSPIs, all schools in Namibia are required to conduct an annual self-evaluation, starting on the 15th of October, and reaching completion before the middle of November (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 2). The framework of this evaluation is given by a National Standards tool, called School Self-Evaluation (SSE). The guidelines of the SSEs closely resemble that of the NSPIs, in that all Key Areas, PIs and Themes appear exactly as they do in the NSPI policy, but in a more detailed form. The SSE was designed as an instrument to be used by all schools in Namibia, as the MoE states:

All schools in Namibia need to aim to become a level 4 school according to the standards set in the National Standards and Performance Indicators. The SSE will assist management and the staff in evaluating the school's overall performance IMPROVEMENT over a period of one year (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 2).

According to the NSPI policy, teachers are also required to conduct self-evaluations, by using an instrument of similar design to the SSEs, known as Teacher Self-Evaluation, or TSE (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, pp. 10-13). The precepts of the TSE indicate what is expected of a teacher in Namibia, and they call on teachers to conduct self-evaluations in an honest manner. Other resources available to schools include the School Development Plan (SDP), the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI), and Classroom Observation for

promotional subjects, lower primary education and non-promotional subjects (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, pp. 10-11). Another apparatus worth mentioning at this point is that Namibian schools are required by the Education Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP) to set annual performance targets before the end of January each year. All of these tools, designed to aid in improving the overall quality of education in Namibian schools, are part of the implementation of the NSPIs, and so I will make reference to them during the course of my thesis.

The policy structure of the NSPIs is comprehensive and complex, and it makes principals chiefly responsible for the success of its implementation. For the policy to be effectively installed in schools, it requires significant managerial and leadership skills on the part of school principals. Therefore, the success of the NSPIs' policy in schools, in my view, depends on whether Namibian principals have developed the requisite leadership and management skills while at college or university, or during their in-service training.

The following table shows the 7 Key Areas, 29 PIs and 111 Themes (or Aspects) of the NSPIs. As one can see, the content covered by the policy of the NSPIs is comprehensive, and so familiarity with its Themes is essential both to its effective implementation, and to the way its implementation is perceived and experienced by school principals in Namibia.

| KEY AREA | PERFORMANCE INDICATORS | THEMES/ASPECTS |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PROVISION OF RESOURCES FOR SCHOOL AND HOSTEL | 1.1 Provision of human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of teaching staff • Provision of support staff |
| | 1.2 Provision of physical resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of basic services • Provision of basic communication facilities • Provision of a suitable school building with equipped classrooms, etc. • Provision of learning support materials and consumables |
| | 1.3 Provision of finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of finance from government • Collection of fees • Fund-raising by the school |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| | 1.4 Provision of resources for hostel | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequacy of human resources: supervisory staff • Provision of suitable accommodation • Condition of hostel buildings • Adequacy of essential supplies |
| 1. CURRICULUM AND ATTAINMENT | 2.1 Implementation of the curriculum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to and sound interpretation of national and regional policies • Quality of year plans / schemes of work • Quality of lesson plans • Quality of assessment plans • Priority to achievement of functional literacy, numeracy and life skills |
| | 2.2 extra-curricular activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole-child development through participation in sporting, environmental and cultural activities • Uptake by learners |
| | 2.3 Intellectual attainment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attainment of appropriate levels of literacy, numeracy and life skills • Attainment of planned knowledge and understanding, skills and competencies, in all subjects but particularly in English, Mathematics, Science, ICT and Arts |
| | 2.4 Personal and social development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of positive values and attitudes • Development of social skills • Attainment of life skills |
| 3. THE TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS | 3.1 Quality of the teaching process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range and appropriateness of teaching approaches • Teacher's exposition and explanations • Teacher-learner dialogue • Learner centred methods • Use of available teaching resources |
| | 3.2 Suitability to learners' needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pace of learning • Relevance to learners' interests and experience • Matching teaching to the learning styles of learners • Attention to those with special needs |
| | 3.3 Quality of the learning process | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation of learners • Progress in learning • Independent learning • Co-operative learning |
| | 3.4 Assessment and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of assessment and recording • Assessment as part of teaching and learning • Use of assessment information • Development of self-evaluation skills |
| 4 THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIAL UNIT | 4.1 Morale of the school | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of identity and pride in the school • Sense of security, equality and fairness • Quality of communication within the school • Sense of commitment to achieve well |
| | 4.2 Effective use of time | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance • Punctuality: School day • Punctuality: Lessons • Best use of time |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| | 4.3 Values and norms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High ethical standards • Mutual care, respect and tolerance • Self-discipline |
| | 4.4 Pastoral care and guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the background of the learners • Provision of the emotional, physical and social needs of learners • Guidance, support and supervision on personal and moral issues • Transfer of information about learners who change schools |
| | 4.5 Curricular and vocational guidance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information and advice in preparation for choice in education, training or employment • Accuracy and relevance of information and advice |
| | 4.6 School discipline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School rules on discipline • System for enforcing the rules • Operation of the disciplinary system |
| 5. Management and Leadership of school and hostel | 5.1 policy, planning and implementation | <p>Goals, objectives and policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-evaluation • school development planning • implementation of plans |
| | 5.2 curriculum and attainment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of relevant information to teachers • Effectiveness of time-tabling • curricular breadth, choice and equity • Action to promote attainment |
| | 5.3 Administration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lines of delegation and responsibility • Storage and retrieval of information • Compliance of government requirements • Management of absenteeism |
| | 5.4 Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professional competence, commitment and perceived quality • Ability to direct, inspire and motivate • inter-personal relationships and teamwork |
| | 5.5 Management of staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Precise definition of the school's staffing needs • Optimum allocation of staff to duties • Definition of the duties of all staff • Ensuring compliance • Monitoring of performance and identification of their needs • Staff development • Grievance procedures |
| | 5.6 Management of physical resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilisation of resources • Maintenance • Inventory control • Management of resources of teaching and learning |
| | 5.7 Management of finance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilisation of funds received • School Board involvement • Budgeting and accounting |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| 6. LINKS WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY | 6.1 links with parents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procedures for communicating with parents • Quality of information given • Co-responsibility of school and parents for learners' progress • Parental involvement in school activities • Parental contributions to the school |
| | 6.2 Links with the community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The functioning of the School Board • Action to secure community support • Assistance from the community for the school • Assistance from the school to the community |
| 7. LINKS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE REGION | 7.1 Provision of resources for work with cluster | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of staff time • Finance for travel and joint working • Support for the cluster |
| | 7.2 Effectiveness of cluster activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning of cluster activities • Co-ordination of programmes • Contribution of the school to the cluster • Use made of information from the cluster • Knowledge of work in other schools |
| | 7.3 Effectiveness of links with the region | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the structure and workings with the region of the regional office • Quality of communication in both directions • Quality of response |

Source: (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 8-10)

2.3 SEARCH FOR LEADERSHIP DEFINITION

Since the focus of this study is the role of principals as leaders in the implementation of the NSPIs, I feel it is important that an understanding of the concept of leadership is determined. This will enable me to differentiate effective leadership from non-leadership.

The field of leadership has been the subject of academic enquiry for over a hundred years. However, academics and theorists seem to have failed to construct a convincing, globally-accepted definition of the concept. This is borne out by the findings of many recent writers, such as Crowther & Olsen (1997, p. 6), who state that hundreds of definitions have been offered since research into leadership developed as a serious academic undertaking in the post-War period. Similarly, Ford argues that "Writing in the field continues to multiply, but

an acceptable universal definition of what leadership is continues to be problematic for both practitioners and academics” (2005, p. 237). Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (as quoted by Earley & Weindling, 2004) state that:

Leadership as a concept and a set of practices has been the subject of an enormous quantity of popular and academic literature ... Arguably, a great deal has been learned about leadership over the last century. But this has not depended on any clear, agreed definition of the concept, as essential as this would seem at first glance (p. 4)

It is controversially remarked that the rhetoric of these endeavours to define leadership can be seen not as a way to refine research into the concept, but rather as a means of exercising control over and seeking to regulate an individuals’ identity within a given organisation. These definitions would then seek to bind the individual to conformity with specific traits, competencies and behaviours within an organisation. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) criticise other writers for not attempting to define the concept of leadership. They state that:

The focus of 54 articles was on leadership, but no attempt was made to label the form or model of leadership in question. Some of these articles supported multiple perspectives on leadership, while others treated leadership as a generally understood phenomenon without specific discussion of its meaning. Each of 20 separate leadership concepts was assigned to one of six categories, referred to subsequently as ‘models’ (p. 7).

However, despite the absence of a universally-accepted definition of leadership, it is possible to discern elements of agreement about its features. Fidler (as quoted by Earley & Weindling, 2004) identifies “two key features associated with leadership”, namely

- A sense of purpose and confidence that is engendered in followers
- The followers are influenced towards goal or task achievement (p. 4).

Even the models (instructional, transformational, moral, participative, managerial and contingent leadership) that are attacked by Leithwood et al. (1999, p. 7) are useful to both practitioners and academics. They provide a language and a lexicon, without which it would

be difficult to talk about leadership at all. Bush and Glover (as quoted by Earley & Weindling, 2004) also contribute usefully to the discussion, when they state:

Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school are geared toward the achievement of this shared vision (p. 4).

Cunningham and Cordeiro support this notion, but couch it in terms of change within an organisation: “Leadership concentrates on vision; the direction an organization should take. It draws others into the active pursuit of the strategic goals. Leadership is about seeking adaptive and constructive change” (2003, p. 137). According to Lambert (2003, p. 429), how leadership is defined, the assumptions people hold about it, and how it is viewed within the framework of leadership capacity, all create a suggestive context for teacher leadership.

However, despite these (at times) disparate notions of the concept of leadership, two points are generally agreed on: firstly, that leadership is a group function requiring human interaction; and secondly, that leadership involves intentional influence on the behaviour of others (Crowther & Olsen, 1997, p. 6). It should be emphasised that many writers on leadership agree on the point that it is fundamentally the ability to influence others, to share a vision and concomitant values with others in an organisation, and to pursue the goals set out by that vision with integrity (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 137; Earley & Weindling, 2004, p. 61; Everard, Morrison & Wilson, 2004, p. 22; Barker, 2005, p. 21; MacBeath & Riley, 2003, p. 181). What is most important for the present study is that these features of leadership are reflected in the policy of the NSPIs.

Therefore, this study set out to see how the principals’ notions of and capacities for leadership affected the implementation of the NSPIs in schools. The NSPIs usher in a new policy at schools; hence, the motivation and development of teachers is a central aspect of their successful implementation. The Performance Indicator 5.5 (see above table) compels principals to provide staff development and support to teachers. This is why in this chapter, I attempt to argue that the effective implementation of the policy requires effective

principals. According to the NSPIs, an effective principal is one who has the ability to influence teachers to achieve specific performance targets (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 12).

2.4 THE NOTION OF EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

According to Bush & Middlewood, there is “convincing evidence that successful leaders focus most strongly on motivating and developing people rather than establishing and maintaining systems and culture” (2005, p. 10). They are of the opinion that culture, though important in schools, should be regarded as a second priority, less crucial than commitment to the development of the school. Bush and Middlewood (2005, p. 10) further contend that teachers and all members of the school demonstrate their commitment only if they are valued by principals and/or heads of department.

It is imperative for the leader to assess the capacities of the members of their organisation (in this case, the employees of the school), and to provide the support that is required to foster the personal development of these members (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 13). Harris (2002) agrees with this assertion, arguing that “in order for school improvement to occur school leaders need to know the strengths and weaknesses of staff and need to invest in their growth and development” (pp. 70-71). The NSPI policy, enforced by the mandatory SSEs under Key Area 5, PI 5.4, also calls for principals to create a spirit of collaboration among their staff and to provide them with advice (especially in the case of novice teachers). Furthermore, PI 5.5 requires them to allocate duties to staff according to their specific levels of ability (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, pp. 12-13).

It must be stressed at this point that an effective leader is one who not only values their followers, but who is also able to inspire improvement in their performances. The success of the NSPIs in schools, in my view, depends on the commitment of all the involved parties to their policy – however, principals take on a central role in inspiring this commitment among their staff. If principals embody good values and a sound work ethic, their teachers will respond to them with interest and commitment.

Another potential pitfall of leadership is the idea that people tend to buy into the implementation of a vision only if they were involved in its developmental phase (Bush &

Middlewood, 2005, p. 10). Hence, successful leaders are those who involve others not only in decision-making once a vision has been adopted, but in the genesis of the vision as well. Research has shown that it is pointless for the principal to merely pronounce their vision to teachers and other members of staff without their prior participation. Participation encourages members to work together, towards a common goal that is based on a shared vision.

Developing a common vision is only one aspect of the entire process. However, Bush & Middlewood (2005) contend that:

Even if leaders involve the school or college community in vision-building, this does not inevitably lead to effective leadership and management. It is just as important as to ensure successful implementation of that vision (p. 10).

Similarly, Harris (2002, p. 71) supports the theory that for leaders to be effective, vision alone is not enough, and also depends on all members within the school community rallying behind its objectives. The above quote seems to imply that vision is only meaningful if all stakeholders are involved in its development, and only if its implementation is effectively enforced and monitored. Moreover, the efficacy of vision development is contested by some authors, who point to the tension that arises when developing a school vision in a context governed by policies that are predetermined by government. Bush (2008) puts it as follows:

It is evident that the articulation of a clear vision has the potential to develop schools but the empirical evidence of its effectiveness remains mixed. A wider concern relates to whether school leaders are able to develop a specific vision for their schools, given government influence on many aspects of curriculum and management (p. 3).

Despite all these concerns, principals should have a vision that enables them to fine-tune 'top-down' or government-imposed policies to suit their specific contexts. Principals therefore play an important role in interpreting policies to suit the school environment, but this is only possible where a strong personal vision exists. In the implementation of the NSPIs, principals have a duty to interpret the policy for staff members, but this process may be shaped by existing visions within the school. Paradoxically, the NSPIs – despite a degree

of involvement on behalf of the school leaders – could be seen as imposed from above, by the Ministry of Education and others who prescribe what is to be done, and hence the vision outlined in their policy document may be seen as predetermined. This situation seems to pose a challenge to principals in developing their own school visions, which ideally are influenced by local factors as well national decrees.

According to MacBeath and Riley (2003, p. 173), leadership is regarded as that feature which promotes effectiveness in schools. This is why it has become a policy issue in many countries around the world. Policy developers regard leadership as the key to enhancing performance in schools, and so also to increasing the provision of quality education (MacBeath & Riley, 2003, p.173). This idea of leadership in schools being a matter of policy is also evinced by the NSPIs in Namibia, as they recognise that principals are the key to resolving school problems and enhancing quality assurance in schools. The School Self-Evaluations (SSEs) therefore stress that if a school fails to improve its performance, a serious question should be directed at the leadership of the principal of that school (Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p.2).

The fact that leadership is a policy issue in the educational environment points to the idea that quality leadership enhances quality performance in schools, and that it plays an important role in whole school development. Effective communication, participation of all members, the inspiration of staff and the nurturing of their personal growth are all key aspects in the development of any organisation. Furthermore, it can be argued that effective leadership is a necessary condition for the flourishing of these features (Namibian MoE, 2007b, pp. 10-13). Thus, the implementation of the NSPIs as an externally-initiated policy seems to require a principal in possession of all the skills mentioned above; a leader who is able to harness together diverse leadership qualities, and use them to maximise the capabilities of their staff. Key Area 6, PI 6.1, of the NSPIs' policy requires principals to involve parents and the wider school community in the development of the school, and it emphasises the use of a wide range of methods for communicating with parents. Similarly, Key Area 5, PI 5.4, calls for collaboration and teamwork, and encourages principals to enhance the performance of their school (Namibian MoE, 2007b, pp. 12-15). This is evidence that effective leadership is a policy issue in many countries, including Namibia. A further demonstration that leadership is viewed as a serious policy issue in Namibia is the

NSPIs' encouragement of teachers to take on leadership roles by participating or engaging in networking at cluster, circuit, regional and national levels, and its recommendation that they be given opportunities to show their expertise in this capacity (Lambert, 2003, p. 427).

Another important characteristic of an effective leader is that they are equipped with skills that allow them to treat every situation uniquely. And since the developmental capacity of each individual is different, an effective school leader is perceptive, and knows what actions to take in order to elicit the best possible performance from each staff member (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p, 166). Being perceptive in this instance involves being sensitive to the moods of others, as well as to their needs and priorities (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p, 166). Referring to a case study conducted in 2001 in England, Earley & Weindling say effective leaders are those who possess qualities such as "openness, accessibility, compassion, honesty, transparency, integrity, consistency, decisiveness, risk-taking and an awareness of others and their situations" (2004, p. 61). This view suggests the application of Fiedler's contingency model, and the Vroom-Yetton decision model. Harris (2002) also shares these views when she says:

Effective leaders must have the ability to read and adjust to the particular context or set of circumstances they face. In this respect, their leadership behaviour is contingent on the context and situation (p. 71).

The issue of risk-taking often places principals in a difficult situation, as it might involve the breaking of rules. Principals may be tempted to act against the outlined procedures governing the implementation of the NSPIs and other policies, thereby risking punitive action. It seems that the policy structures of the NSPIs, for example, leave little room for flexibility in the principals' decision-making processes.

It is also argued that effective leaders strive for the improvement of the school by enhancing a "learning environment for both staff and learners" (Harris, 2002, p. 73). Principals can promote a learning environment within schools in many ways. According to Harris (2002) "effective leadership for school improvement" involves leaders

- being clear in their vision for the school and communicating this to others;
- creating, maintaining and constantly monitoring relationships;
- being prepared to take risks in order to achieve goals;

- building capacity both inside and outside the school;
- managing ongoing tension and dilemmas (pp. 75-76).

Harris (as quoted in Bush, 2008, p. 7) stresses, “Effective leaders exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and the achievement of students”. According to Bush, the relationship between quality leadership and effectiveness is globally recognised (2004, p. 7). According to the Commonwealth Secretariat (as quoted by Bush 2008) says, “The head ... plays the most crucial role in ensuring school effectiveness” (p. 7). After emphasising the need for effective school leadership, Hopkins (quoted in Harris, 2002, p. 67) goes on to argue that “the prime function of leadership for authentic school improvement is to enhance the quality of teaching.” Additionally, Harris (2002) recognises four areas where leadership influences school improvement:

The first is through establishing and conveying the purpose and goals of the school. A second area of leadership influence is through the interplay between the school’s organisation and its social network. A third is through influence over people and the fourth is in relation to organisational culture (p. 66)

Drawing a link between the notions of good leadership and good management ability, MacBeath and Riley (2003) contend that:

The people with whom headteachers spend their time give telling insights into values, priorities, contexts and the underlying rationale for those choices. ... Analysis suggests that good headteachers are able to recognise how they spend their time, with whom and for what purposes, and then link their behaviour to their priorities (p. 182).

The SSEs, an integral aspect of the policy of the NSPIs, require principals to spend their time planning activities with the participation of staff members. These activities address issues such as the individual development of teachers, the setting of performance targets, timetabling, etc. (Namibian MoE, 2005a: 2; Namibian MoE, 2007b: 21). This shows that principals in Namibia are required to demonstrate managerial skills of the kind discussed in section 2.3 above. Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003) support the idea that effective leaders must combine leadership with sound management practices, when they say that

You can have strong leaders who are weak managers and vice versa. Strong administrators are good at both leadership and management . . . Leadership in this new 'era of change' requires the ability to envision an improved school and the spark to energize and lead staff to bring it about (p. 137).

It seems that good leadership and good management are inextricably linked, and it is no different in the case of the NSPIs in Namibia. The guidelines of Key Area 5, PIs 5.4 and 5.5 of the NSPI policy document, deal specifically with the management of schools and hostels (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 9, 25-29). Therefore, because principals in Namibia are required to be both strong leaders and good managers, it is appropriate at this point to delve into the concept of management.

Management can be defined as a hierarchical structure, where teachers are made accountable to principals, who possess legal power by virtue of their position as heads of their schools. Teachers are expected to work toward the achievement of aims set by the principal or a higher authority (Bush, 2002, p. 17). Responsibility for the carrying out of school activities is divided among staff members based on their expertise. To further clarify how management can be understood in the school environment Everard et al. (2004) identify the following essential features:

- (1) setting direction, aims and objectives;
- (2) planning how progress will be made or goals achieved;
- (3) organizing available resources (people, time, materials) so that the goal can be economically achieved in the planned way;
- (4) controlling the process (i.e. measuring achievement against the plan and taking corrective action where appropriate); and
- (5) setting and improving organizational standards (p. 4).

Furthermore, Everard et al. (2004, p.4) emphatically state, "More restrictive definitions of management argue that a manager must additionally 'direct' the work of others". In this way, the NSPIs 'force' principals to undertake managerial responsibilities when dealing with the following Performance Indicators (PIs):

- policy, planning and implementation

- curriculum and attainment
- administration
- management of staff
- management of physical resources
- management of finances

(Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 9, 24-30; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, pp. 10-14)

Therefore, it is plain to see that in order for principals to implement the NSPIs effectively, they must assume both leadership and managerial duties.

The NSPI is one of the policies introduced by the Namibian Ministry of Education to bring about transformation in the Education sector. Accordingly, transformational leadership – and the extent to which it has been, or could yet prove to be, helpful in the implementation of the NSPIs – is relevant to this study. A discussion of the concept of transformational leadership follows.

2.5 TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Everard et al. (2004) contribute to the leadership discourse by identifying two main categories, or models, of leadership: transformational leadership and transactional leadership. However, they admit to the usage of other “epithets, like invitational, distributed and charismatic [leadership]” (p.21).

Stoll & Fink (as cited in Everard et al., 2004, p.21) argue, “Transformational leadership is about the ability of an individual to envisage some new social condition and communicate this vision to followers”. Transactional leadership involves the exchange of benefits between the leaders and the led, while invitational leadership concerns the “humanistic side, mediated through interpersonal interaction, institutional policies and practices and values such as optimism, respect trust and care” (Everard et al., 2004, p.22). Furthermore, “Distributed leadership is characterised by widespread delegation of responsibility, encouraging leadership behaviour to emerge from below as well as above; any individual

will take the lead for a limited time and/or within a limited specialist field” (Everard et al., p. 22).

Leithwood et al. explain that “transformational leadership entails not only change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship, but an elevation of both – a change for the better” (1999, p. 28). Burns – like Stoll & Fink – also distinguishes between transactional and transformational leadership. He states that transactional leaders engage with subordinates in a benefits exchange, and hence that private interests may come to take precedence over those of the organisation. In contrast, transformational leaders are interested in converting people’s “self-centred, conflicting values and goals into an altruistic concern for a collective moral enterprise” (Barker, 2005, p.21).

Transformational leadership is based on three fundamental goals which drive the pursuit of a successful educational environment. According to Bush & Coleman (2000) these fundamental goals are:

1. Helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture;
2. Fostering teacher development, and
3. Helping them to solve problems together more effectively (p.23).

However, Bush & Coleman (2000, p.23) contest that in practice, there may be deviation from what they call the “idealised state of affairs” – that is, adherence to the abovementioned goals. This is because research conducted in Hong Kong, on professional development in the context of educational change, contradicted this claim of three fundamental goals mentioned above. The study revealed that its participants believe that teachers are hardly involved in their professional development. According to the majority of administrators questioned in the study, they feel that professional development planning is entirely the responsibility of principals and executive members of the school system (Bush & Coleman, 2000, p. 23). However, the policy informing the NSPIs conforms – at least in theory – to the fundamental goals as they are set out by Bush and Coleman (2000, p. 23). This is because although Key Area 5 and PI 5.4 require that principals plan for the professional development of teachers, the inclusion of Teacher Self-Evaluations (TSEs) in the

NSPI policy means that teachers are also given a stake in their personal development within the school system (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 27-28; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 13).

Nevertheless, I regard both transactional leadership and transformational leadership as apposite to my study, because a combination of both is observed in the implementation of the NSPIs' policy. This is because their implementation requires principals who are able to transform schools to adapt to change, while also making use of transactional leadership strategies when attending to the basic needs of teachers, learners and parents, monitoring performance, and maintaining policies and procedures (Leithwood et al., 1999, p.28; Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp.27-29).

It seems as if principals need to transform the beliefs, feelings, actions, and values of teachers and the members of their school's community, by using a combination of transformational and transactional leadership strategies. Principals "would do well to practice transformational leadership themselves, while seeking to distribute transactional leadership to all levels in their school organisation" recommend Everard et al (2004, p.22).

Bass (as cited in Leithwood et al. 1999, p.29) provides a different conception of contemporary leadership theories, when he claims in his 'two-factor theory' of leadership that the two approaches, transactional and transformational leadership, are actually interdependent. A 'two-factor theory' suggests that transformational leadership exists alongside transactional leadership, and it seeks to account for the ways in which an organisation is maintained in the normal course of events (Bush & Coleman, 2000, p.23). Therefore, I believe that effective implementation of the NSPIs would require principals to employ both transformational and transactional leadership strategies.

According to Barker (2005, p.21) and Bush & Coleman (2000, p.23), transactional leadership encourages a relationship based on an exchange of benefits between leaders and subordinates. These 'benefits' are usually designed as incentives to encourage hard work, and might include monetary rewards and promotions. However, such benefits are not necessarily in the interest of the school at large. Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003) go further, viewing transactional leadership as "based on defining needs, assigning clear tasks, rewarding congruent behavior, and having a command-and-control mentality" (p.167). Clearly, although people's interests need to be accommodated, a successful principal needs

to ensure that an individual's self-interest never outweighs the greater interest of the school. They should strike a balance if they wish to preserve the role of transactional leadership in the transformation process. Barker (2005) seems to articulate this notion, when he declares that

Leaders should provide meaning and challenge so that subordinates are inspired and motivated to pursue a shared vision. They should also listen carefully as they acknowledge each individual's need for achievement and growth and delegate responsibility as a means of developing potential (p.21).

In a case study conducted in America, it was reported that openly transformative principals performed better than their counterparts in a number of ways (Barker, 2005, p.22). Cheng (2002) argues that in transformational leadership:

The organisational goals and tasks are often ambiguous, outdated and not well defined, particularly in a changing environment. Therefore, both development of goals and the process of influencing members are necessary in institutions when facing challenge from rapidly changing local and global environments.

(p. 53)

Furthermore, Bass (as quoted by Cheng, 2002) states that:

A transformational leader in an educational institution is one who motivates people to do more than they are originally expected to do in any one of the following ways:

- Raising their level of awareness and consciousness about the importance and value of designated outcomes, and ways of reaching them.
- Getting them to transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team, organisation, or large polity.
- Altering their need level on Maslow's (1943) hierarchy or expanding their portfolio of needs and wants from low level to high level (p. 53).

Cheng (2002, p. 54) interprets these points as saying that transformational leadership not only influences the actions of members, but also their attitudes, values and beliefs. Furthermore, its influence affects not only individual members but the whole organisation, and is not only significant in terms of goal achievement, but also goal development and culture-building within the organisation. Similarly, Harris (2002) stresses that

“transformational leadership is people – rather than organisation – orientated, and requires a leadership approach that transforms the feelings, attitudes and beliefs of others” (p. 67). She further argues that transformational leadership concentrates on moral values and value-laden activities, and finds ways of exposing these to followers, so that the leader’s power comes from people without them necessarily being controlled (Harris, 2002, p. 670).

It can be argued that transformational leadership suits a situation of ambiguity and complexity (Cheng, 2002, p. 53). The implementation of the NSPIs involves a complex policy that could not be handled by one leadership approach. It calls for leaders who are able to practise both transformational and transactional strategies. Principals should prepare to transform the entire school’s structure and culture, and the beliefs, attitudes, and values of its members. Therefore, principals who are suited to this reform are both managers and leaders. Leadership and management in this context are inseparable. Although the NSPIs are being imposed from above, schools are required by law to abide by their dictums and to implement them, and thus principals have a duty to effect this change. Clearly, what is needed are transformational principals, who stimulate colleagues and followers to view their work with a new perspective, provide awareness of the vision to both members of staff and the school community, inspire teachers to higher levels of performance, and motivate members beyond their own interest, by emphasising the need for all members of the group to work towards a common goal (Bush & Coleman, 2000, p. 22; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, pp. 12-13).

Though principals are expected to use a transformational leadership approach, they are also cautioned about the disadvantages of that approach. There is a charismatic element associated with transformational leadership, and so Barker (2005, p. 21) warns leaders not to be tempted to use their power for personal gain, but rather to demonstrate good behaviour for followers to emulate. Allix (as cited in Bush and Middlewood, 2005, p. 11) is sceptical about the characteristics of transformational leadership, and says that “transformational leadership has the potential to become ‘despotic’ because of its strong heroic and charismatic features”.

Another contestable point surrounding transformational leadership is its ability to realise organisational vision, given governmental influence on school policies (see section 2.4

above). Principals are required to have a vision for their schools, to set goals and to achieve them, but ironically, some of the goals (like the NSPIs) are predetermined, and externally imposed. Therefore, it may be difficult for transformational principals to balance the pursuit of ‘parachuted’ goals with the pursuit of (internal) school goals.

In conclusion, Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003) stress that “Transformational leaders develop followers, help map new directions, mobilize resources, facilitate and support employees, and respond to organizational challenges” (p. 167). They see change as necessary and strive to bring it about. Given the challenge of the NSPIs in schools, principals play an important role in influencing members to cope with innovation – therefore, it is essential that they regard change as important for their schools (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 167). It seems that in most countries, schools have to endure the imposition of predetermined policies. Principals have to shoulder the duty of interpreting these policies, and help teachers cope with the innovations that they entail.

2.6 THE NOTION OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

As mentioned earlier, while it remains true that policies formulated at National and Regional levels first pass through education bureaucracies before entering into the complex contexts of schools, it is also true that, in practical terms, it is the principals who find themselves “at the receiving end” (Sergiovanni et al., 2004, p. 201) of new policy implementations. According to Fullan (as quoted by Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2002, p. 173), “It is only when bottom-up and top-down forces interact and are mediated in purposeful directions that improvement occurs” (p. 173), and it is the principal’s role to mediate this process.

The aim of change is always improvement. The introduction of the NSPIs by the Ministry of Education in Namibia is designed to improve the provision of quality education to learners in Namibia. Research provides detailed insight into the role of the principal in the change process, and Fullan (1992) offers the following ten guidelines as help:

- Avoid ‘if only’ statements, externalizing the blame
- Start small, think big: don’t overplan or overmanage
- Focus on something important like curriculum and instruction

- Focus on something fundamental like the professional culture of the school
- Practice fearlessness and other forms of risk-taking
- Empower others below you
- Build a vision relevant to both goals and change processes
- Decide what you are not going to do
- Build allies
- Know when to be cautious (pp. 87-88).

These guidelines are taken as necessary during a period of change. There remain, however, factors that impede the successful implementation of new initiatives. Unsurprisingly, the role of the principal is again stressed. Westraad (2005), for example, cautions, “The introduction of external (and obviously internal) initiatives must be supported by the school leadership and particularly, the principal” (p. 49). Berman and McLaughlin (as quoted by Westraad, 2005, p. 49) share this view that “projects having the active support of the principal were the most likely to fare well”.

Furthermore, innovations may fail because, according to Everard et al., developers tend to be “too rational” (2004, p. 239). The architects of innovation have in their minds a clear and coherent vision, and sometimes assume that all they have to do is to spell out the logic to implementers who will grasp it as they do. A further assumption is that everyone will be immediately motivated to follow their lead and appreciate the idea (Everard et al., 2004, pp. 239-240). It is therefore necessary to accept that people comprehend and perceive things differently, thus for the developers of the NSPIs to assume that implementers will understand the policy like they do, is naive. Therefore, Everard et al. (2004) warn that “the more vivid their mental picture of the goal, and the more conviction they have that it is the right goal, the more likely they are to stir up opposition, and the less successful they are likely to be in managing a process of change” (p. 240). Therefore, those whose positional power allows them to effect change should take into consideration the “feelings, values, ideas, and experiences of those affected by the change” (Everard et al., 2004, p. 241). Fullan (1991) is of the opinion that “what the principal should do specifically to manage change at school level is complex affair for which the principal has little preparation” (p. 77).

Fullan (as cited in Westraad, 2005, p. 49) also believes the principal’s role in innovation is a priority, but adds that principals are mostly not well prepared to facilitate change. This concern is shared by Washington and Hacker (2005, p. 409), who argue that proper

understanding of an innovation must be provided to implementers, and especially to leaders who have the responsibility to mediate the change. Their argument is drawn from the study they conducted in Botswana, where they found that managers who receive proper information about proposed change are highly likely to support it. Equally, Wedell (2009) also stresses that “first and obviously [principals] need to fully understand . . . the change aims, in order to identify what these mean for their organization, and to be able to help their staff understand and believe in them too” (p. 39). He argues that without that understanding, principals will find it difficult to know how to adjust the policy to fit their school’s context.

Fullan (1992, p. 83) makes an important point, when he says that the educational training of principals affects the implementation of change. Effective change calls for ‘open-mindedness’, and a readiness to understand the feelings and views of its implementers. Theron (2002, p. 183) states that the process of innovation adoption is characterised by five phases: the first phase entails creating awareness, the second phase is to search for more information about the change, the third is evaluation, the fourth is adoption of the innovation, and the fifth is its trial run .

Furthermore, Fullan (1991, p. 80) argues that technical support must be provided to implementers, in the form of materials, consultancy, and staff development. This is to encourage the participation of implementers in conforming to the change. He opposes one-off workshops provided before and during implementation, arguing that such an approach is not supportive in the long run (p. 85). Therefore, Fullan (1991, p. 85) concludes that:

No matter how much advance staff development occurs, it is when people actually try to implement new approaches and reforms that they have the most specific concerns and doubt. It is thus extremely important that people obtain some support at the early stages of attempted implementation.

The argument advanced is that no matter how intensive training sessions are in the period just prior to implementation, they may prove to be in vain and eventually be discarded during the implementation stage. Therefore, it is argued that only when pre-implementation training is coupled with ongoing in-service training will implementation be successful. Moreover, while teachers can be trained to be effective staff developers of other

teachers, it is found that some prefer outside assistance more than that of colleagues (Fullan, 1991, p. 85).

Importantly, Uugwanga (2007, p. 27), in his research of the Oshikoto Region in Namibia, voices concern about the level of training of principals in Namibia, relating to the effective implementation of the NSPIs. His concerns arise from the fact that some principals were (insufficiently) trained under the old South African apartheid system. Bush and Middlewood (2005), doubting the capacity of principals as main role players in the implementation of policies, refer to school vision saying, “When the heads and principals are reduced to implementing directives from national, regional or local government, they lack the scope to articulate school goals” (p. 5). Uugwanga (2007) presents his opinion on some of the factors that contribute to the failure of policies:

It seems that policies in Africa fail because policy outcomes do not fulfil the initial expectations, as policies are seemingly poorly implemented. Those who are to implement the policies are not adequately trained to thoroughly understand them and to be excited about the change. Furthermore, policies seem to be based more on assumptions than the reality of the practice on the ground (pp. 28-29).

As a researcher, I agree with Fullan (1992), Uugwanga (2007), Washington & Hacker (2005), Wedell (2009), Westraad (2005), and others who emphasise the necessity for policy implementers to be thoroughly prepared. My experience as an Inspector of Education shows that a major reason that principals in my region, and probably in other regions in Namibia, decided to retire was their inability to cope with innovations, due to the insufficient training they received. Furthermore, when I reflect back on the training conducted in 2005/2006 to introduce schools to the NSPIs, in which I personally participated in the Ohangwena Region, I feel it was not rigorous enough to effect smooth implementation.

Another point raised in the literature is the commitment of the implementers to the change they are charged with bringing about. For change to be effective, stakeholders must show commitment to it. Westraad (2005) stresses that “Schools are social organisations and without a majority commitment to the change purpose any change initiative is likely to fail” (p. 50). In addition, Wedell (2009, p. 29) argues that although teachers are most directly

affected by educational changes, “teachers’ experiences of the change implementation process will be influenced, for better or worse, by the behaviour of many others within their local educational environment.”

Since policies imposed from the top down are likely to be resisted by implementers, Busher (2002, p. 275) argues that principals have an important mediating role to play between the policy’s designers and its implementers, especially in helping the latter to understand and cope with the change. For a policy like the NSPI to be successful, the support of the school community and commitment from its implementers is essential (Harris, 2002, p. 10; Theron, 2007, p. 195).

The support of and commitment to policy implementation requires good understanding of the policy concerned. This implies that intensive training of all stakeholders, as mentioned above, has to precede implementation (Theron, 2007, p. 195; Washington & Hacker, 2005, pp. 408-409; Wedell, 2009, p. 17 and Westraad, 2005, p. 49). More importantly, the success of policy implementation depends on the meaning school principals attach to it, and an understanding of the leadership role they need to play in the process. Contemporary leadership theories, as they appear under sections 2.4 and 2.5, provide a framework for understanding this role. Therefore, during policy implementation principals are expected to be supportive of their staff members, but indeed, this is only possible if they have the capacity for and knowledge of contemporary leadership practices. Arcaro (1995, p. 56) argues that people become empowered when they are provided with the necessary skills to improve the manner in which they work.

In addition, the habitual cascade model of training is one of the factors that impede the successful implementation of policies and other innovations, particularly in government schools. As I have mentioned, the cascade model of training was used in Namibia in 2005/2006 prior to the implementation of the NSPIs. Bellis (2005) agrees with this view, arguing that:

The implementation of policy and the associated ‘training’ is often handled by the process, which has come to be known as ‘cascading’. Experience shows that with each subsequent level there is a reduction in the understanding of the

importance of the matter, in the actual understanding of the information, and a serious reduction in the acquisition of the skills necessary for implementation (p. 14).

Furthermore, “implementing change is not a question of defining an end and letting others get on with it, but it is a process of interaction, dialogue, feedback, modifying objectives, recycling plans, coping with mixed feelings and values, pragmatism, micropolitics, frustration, patience and muddle” (Everard et al., 2004, p. 240). The point is that rationality has to be applied not only to defining the end of change, but also to the means by which this end might be achieved. I tend to support the views of Bartlett (as quoted in Bellis, 2005, p. 14), when he outlines the tenets of what he calls “a decentralised, competent, confident training cadre”. Such an approach seems appropriate for the effective implementation of the NSPIs in Namibia.

Throughout this chapter, I have stressed that the success of the NSPI policy depends largely on the principals entrusted to implement it. Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003, p. 137) contend that “reform in education is a continuous process of improvement to meet the needs of dynamic society”, and they argue that “Leadership in this new ‘era of change’ requires the ability to envision an improved school and the spark to energize and lead staff to bring it about” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 137). Change is a process that needs to be managed and monitored, and the principal is the key figure around which all of the school’s activities revolve. The principal, therefore, to a large extent determines the school’s success or failure when change is implemented (Theron, 2002, p. 183).

Paradoxically, the implementation of a complex policy such as the NSPI also depends on the national educational system, as responsibility for the structure of the policy lies with the Ministry of Education in Namibia. I feel that all role players must seriously do their part, before merely blaming the schools and/or principals should the policy fail to deliver the desired results. Therefore, economic and political support is needed, and “this can only happen if governments ‘put educational investment’ beyond their own need for *political survival* [italics added]” (Fullan, 2009 as cited in Wedell, 2009, p. 18). This is indeed crucial in Namibia, a country which is still struggling to find a suitable remedy to the ills of its

education system, and which seems unable to produce graduates who might competently form the foundation of a knowledge-based economy.

The Ministry has the responsibility to provide resources to schools. It would be naive to blame principals if textbooks, classrooms, teachers, and other basic needs are not available to them. Attending to these needs is a prerequisite for the implementation process. Furthermore, Advisory Teachers or the Advisory Services section are accountable for providing staff development in the subject areas that teachers find difficult to grasp. Equally, Inspectors of Education have the responsibility of ensuring that things are running smoothly in schools. In other words, monitoring of schools and training of principals – especially in Key area 5 – is a crucial element in the successful implementation of the NSPIs. Parents also have a serious role to play in making sure that learners attend school regularly, and that they keep in constant contact with the teachers (Namibia. MoE., 2005a; Namibia. MoE., 2007b). Therefore, only blaming principals and teachers for the failure of the policy could force them to retreat to a ‘cocoon’ of resistance, as they try to reject unfair treatment. They could become undeserving targets in the entire system, even on issues that are beyond their jurisdiction (Learmonth, 2000, pp. 60-61).

In conclusion, the successful implementation of policies like the NSPI depends on the leadership and managerial capacities of principals. However, it is just as important that all of the policy’s stakeholders show commitment to the proposed transformational process.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I presented a brief overview of the NSPIs. I indicated that the NSPIs issue a comprehensive and complex policy for educational reform. I stated that the NSPIs were introduced to address iniquity and the fragmentation of standards in schools, factors which hampered the provision of quality education in Namibia. I then presented a review of literature dealing with the concept of leadership. I demonstrated how although there is no universally-accepted definition of the concept, there remains aspects of leadership that researchers generally agree on. These include: the leader should have a vision or shared

vision; the leader should be ethical and that they should possess values; and that the leader influences the behaviour of their followers.

I looked at the notion of effective leadership, drawing from different researchers' views. Although, again, there are no definitive definitions of an effective leader, the consensus is that effective leaders should possess a shared vision, practice shared leadership skills, encourage participation among followers, have a passion for learner's development, and take appropriate risks.

I also presented the approaches to leadership known as transformational and transactional leadership, highlighted the important role that principals play in this respect, and cautioned about the possible shortcomings of both approaches.

Finally, I presented a review of the notion of policy implementation. This section mainly focused on factors that contribute to the failure of innovations. Most theorists agree that policies will fail when their implementers are not sufficiently prepared, and do not possess the requisite knowledge or skills to effect the desired changes.

It was found that principals have an important role to play in the context of transformation in schools. They have to mediate between the designers of new policies and their implementers, but this is only possible if the principals themselves are well prepared and possess a clear understanding of the proposed changes.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to obtain an in-depth understanding of the perceptions and experiences of principals following the implementation of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) in Namibian schools. The study focused on the Ohangwena Region. In this chapter, I present the research methodology – that is, the strategies and tools used for data collection and the methods employed in analysing the data that was collected. I also indicate how ethical considerations were handled.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.2.1 RESEARCH ORIENTATION AND APPROACH

This is a qualitative, interpretive study. The ontological assumption underlying this study is that reality is constructed by people, who create their own meanings out of what they experience (van der Mescht, 2009). It is believed that people create their own meanings, and that ‘reality’ consists in how they view and interpret their world (van der Mescht, 2009). Thus, ‘reality’ is a fundamentally subjective phenomenon, and differs from person to person. It is for this reason that the interpreter’s ontology is said to be unstable, and not value-free. The epistemological consequence of this is that reality can only be known by interacting with people (van der Mescht, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, pp. 19-21). Furthermore, according to Merriam (2001, p. 6) “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is, how they make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world”. As this research was aimed at understanding principals’ perceptions and experiences following the implementation of the NSPIs, it was only through direct contact with the principals concerned that I was able to explore their experiences and perceptions. I was able to communicate with the principals

and I managed to garner some understanding of their world. An interpretive orientation was thus appropriate for this study.

3.2.2 RESEARCH METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The research is a small-scale, qualitative case study. According to Yin (2003) “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (p. 1). Furthermore, in case studies, the researcher is able to “probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit with a view to establishing generalizations about the wider population to which that unit belongs” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, pp. 106-107).

I decided that these descriptions matched the purpose of my study. Managing and leading the implementation of the NSPIs is indeed a contemporary issue, and the case in question - four clusters in the Ohangwena Region of Namibia – is certainly a real-life context, where the opinions of the principals involved might reveal important insights into the transformational process.

I selected clusters that were easily accessible and convenient for me to research. This way I was able to avoid travelling long distances, and to minimise travel expenses. I selected seven principals and six Heads of Department (HoDs), from a cluster of seven schools. These schools were representative of those in the Ohangwena Region. I decided to include principals and HoDs who had been part of the system since the introduction of the NSPIs in 2006, because I felt that they were experienced and knowledgeable when it came to the implementation of the NSPI policy, or at least that they could provide me with more information on the subject than novice principals or HoDs. It should be noted that during the course of my data collection, the number of principals I selected increased from 7 to 12 due to the fact that I added another tool for data collection. I elaborate on this below.

It was therefore relatively easy for me to meet participants at a central venue, without having to travel long distances. This was especially true with the focus group participants,

who were drawn from the same cluster of seven schools to which the seven principals belonged. Furthermore, I selected two Inspectors of Education to participate in the study. These two were also stationed close by, and they were selected on the grounds of their experience, having been in the service for a long time. Although the region has eight Inspectors of Education (IoEs), only five had been in the service of the Inspectorate since 2006. It must be noted that I am among the eight IoEs and so for ethical reasons, I did not conduct this research in my own circuit, as described below. Therefore, the case study can be regarded as typical of clusters in the region.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION

In a case study, different methods of data collection are used (van der Mescht, 2009). I conducted document analysis as the first step, to obtain a clear picture of what to concentrate on during the one-on-one and subsequent group interviews. Document analysis was used to provide information that was not obtainable during the one-on-one interviews, thus strengthening and enriching my data. The analysed documents included:

- reports on the progress of the NSPIs
- targets set by schools
- schools' self-evaluations, TSEs and SDPs
- school visit reports, both regional and national
- principal reports filed at the end of every term
- learners' results for the past four years (2005-2008).

During this exercise I realised that the documents had a minimal impact on the research question. Therefore, I decided to include questionnaires in my data collection project. I designed the questionnaires, which were submitted to five principals for completion. These principals were from three different clusters. The main purpose of including the questionnaires was to increase the volume of the data available to me, which is helpful for triangulation purposes, and ultimately served to enhance the validity of my findings.

I used semi-structured questions in the interviews. I designed interview schedules for principals, HoDs and IoEs. All respondents were asked the same questions (although the order in which the questions were asked varied). This was done in order to be consistent, and to minimise the subjectivity of the interviews. I used exploratory questions in an attempt to get as many unambiguous responses as possible. Questions were organised into three categories, one each for principals, HODs and IoEs. The interview schedule for the principals focused on aspects such as

- the role of principals,
- the role of IoEs,
- the experiences of principals,
- the impact of the NSPIs,
- the challenges facing principals,
- the training of principals prior to the implementation of the NSPIs and
- the principals' recommendations (see appendix D).

The questionnaires which the five principals completed asked questions pertaining to the implementation of the NSPIs, the role of principals and inspectors in the transformation process, the SSEs, TSEs and SDPs, training, and learner performance. Basically, the questions posed to all twelve principals, those whom I interviewed and those who completed the questionnaires, were of a similar nature (see appendix D). I provided guidance so that the questionnaires were not ambiguous.

I first conducted a pilot interview with one principal, in order to test whether I needed to amend the interview schedule. This proved to be a useful exercise, and I was encouraged to make some modifications to the questions (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 341). I also made a preliminary visit to the schools involved, to arrange the interview programs. It was during this period that I gave the letter of consent to participants, and provided them with a copy of my authorisation, granted by the Regional Director, to conduct interviews (appendix B).

As stated earlier, I conducted one-on-one interviews with seven principals, and this was the primary data of my research. A one-on-one interview is defined as a situation in which one person elicits information from another (Merriam, 2001, p. 71). It is interesting to note that I did not experience any problems relating to the appointments I made with principals. I conducted one-on-one interviews with two Inspectors of Education, who were likely to have a broader understanding of how the NSPIs' policy should be implemented. I conducted a focus group interview with four HoDs to help me strengthen the information I obtained from the one-on-one interviews and my document analysis. The initial, intended number for the focus group interview was six participants. However, two participants were forced to withdraw due to an emergency that required their urgent attention. The interview schedule for the focus group and the IoEs contained similar questions to those asked of the principals (appendix D).

Cohen et al., (2007) describe the focus group interview as:

A form of group interview, though not in the sense of a backwards and forwards between interviewer and group. Rather, the reliance is on the interaction within the group who discuss a topic supplied by the researcher, yielding a collective rather than an individual view. Hence, the participants interact with each other rather than an individual view (p. 376).

The reason why I chose to conduct a focus group interview was that in this interview format, participants are able to provide more information than in one-on-one interviews. There are advantages to focus groups, as Patton (2002) argues: "in focus group participants get to hear each other's response and make additional comments beyond their own original responses as they hear what other people have to say" (p. 386). Furthermore, the use of different methods of data collection helps to increase the richness of the data, and to minimise the risk of bias by enabling triangulation.

During the one-on-one interviews, I employed a semi-structured interview technique, where open-ended questions were asked. I used some of the information I obtained from my document analysis to formulate the interview questions. Merriam (2001, p. 74) argues that "in [semi-structured interviews] either all of the questions are more flexibly worded, or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions," and I found that this format was useful for probing the interviewees' responses (Cohen et al. 2007, p., 354). During this

process, I was able to fathom the perceptions and experiences of the principals and other interviewees.

I used a voice recorder in all of the interviews. The use of the voice recorder allowed me to concentrate on the interview; as opposed to taking notes while the interviewee was speaking, which can be distracting and disruptive to the interview process. I used open-ended questions because I was not testing a hypothesis. By eliciting richer information, open-ended questions allow the researcher a greater understanding of how people experience a specific phenomenon.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

I used inductive reasoning as a mode of inference during the interpretation of my data. I developed a “contextual interpretation” (Thomas, 2003, p. 95) of the data, which allowed me to move from the concrete, actual experiences of the participants to more abstract and general themes surrounding the issue. This is in accordance with Patton’s definition of the methodology, when he states, “inductive analysis begins with specific observations and builds toward general patterns” (2002, p.55). He further says, “Categories or dimensions of analysis emerge from open-ended observations as the inquirer comes to understand patterns that exist in the phenomenon being investigated” (Patton, 2002, p.56). Immediately after each interview, I transcribed the recordings and took the transcripts to the respondents for member checking. Member checking is done to ensure that what is transcribed represents the actual information given by the interviewee(s) (Cohen, et al. 2007, p. 142).

The data I collected was coded. According to Cohen et al. (2007 p. 492), “Coding is the process of disassembling and reassembling the data. Data is disassembled when it is broken apart into lines, paragraphs, or sections”. Disassembling is thus the first step in the data analysis process. The next step was to create themes, whereby the data was ‘reassembled’ into categories that addressed the research questions. My data analysis was an ongoing and protracted activity, thus I did not wait until all the data was collected, and instead began preliminary coding from the outset.

3.5 VALIDITY

As mentioned earlier, in order to enhance validity I collected data from a variety of sources for triangulation purposes. According to Patton (2002, p. 559) triangulating data sources means “comparing and cross-checking the consistency of information derived at different times by different means within qualitative methods”. Equally, Cohen et al. (2007) state that “triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative research” (p. 141). Interviewing principals alone was not enough, because the views they provided me could have been biased; therefore other sources (in this case documents, questionnaires, a focus group interview and interviews with Inspectors of Education) strengthened the data and allowed me to formulate a more substantive argument. Berg (2004) maintains that by combining several methods “researchers obtain a better, more substantive picture of reality, a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements” (p. 5).

As I mentioned in section 3.4, participants were accorded the opportunity to verify transcriptions of the interview as part of member checking. This is in line with Stake (1995, p. 115) who said, “The actor is asked to review the material for accuracy and palatability”. This process was necessary in order to ensure validity and for the purposes of triangulation.

I ensured that my data was stored safely, and was available for scrutiny by any interested party.

3.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

I tried hard to make sure that the ethical issues surrounding my research project were addressed. Participants were informed of the purpose of the research, were accorded the right to withdraw from the research, and their right to privacy and anonymity was honoured. Pseudonyms were used in place of the real names of both participants and their institutions. Permission for recording interviews was sought prior to the interview, and confidentiality was maintained throughout the research project. A letter of consent was signed by all participants (Cohen, et al., 2007, pp. 52-55).

My position as Inspector of Education might have made the other Inspectors I interviewed uncomfortable – perhaps they thought that I was investigating their work. I was also worried that the principals and Heads of Department that I interviewed might have had a similar misconception, thinking that I wanted to inspect and report on their work to their supervisor. Therefore, in an effort to create a relaxed atmosphere of mutual trust, I talked to the participants informally before the interviews began. Furthermore, I declared my interest and assured participants about the purpose of the study, which was simply to find out what their experiences were, and not to evaluate their work. In these circumstances, confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the exercise were key agreements (Cohen, et al., 2007, p. 52). As already mentioned for ethical reasons I did not make use of the circuit of my jurisdiction.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I explained my rationale for choosing a qualitative approach to my research. The methods I used for data collection are clearly detailed in this chapter, and consisted of document analysis, one-on-one interviews, a focus group interview, and questionnaires.

I indicated how I selected the participants and how my data analysis was carried out. I must state that this research study, like any other, is not free of shortcomings. Qualitative research projects, and more specifically, the results yielded by case studies, are known to be difficult to generalise. This is because of the subjectivity underlying the information provided by respondents and the small sample size. Furthermore, to study a case that is directly linked to my work posed a unique challenge, in that respondents might have concealed important information because of my position as Inspector of Education.

In the next chapter, the data I collected is presented and analysed.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this section, I present the data collected in my study. I identified four main categories used to present the perceptions and experiences of the principals of the implementation of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia.

In this research study, the participants and schools have been categorised or coded as follows:

- Mr Tala of school 4, Mr Kakonda of school 6, Mr Haikela of school 5, Mr Cluster of school 3, Ms Jackie of school 7, Ms Kapolo of school 2 and Mr Mwadina of school 1 are the pseudonyms assigned to the seven principals and their respective schools.
- Member 1, Member 2, Member 3 and Member 4 for the four Heads of Departments focus group
- P1 of school 8, P2 of school 9, P3 of school 10, P4 of school 11 and P5 of school 12 are codes for the five principals to whom questionnaires were issued and their respective schools)
- Mr Hailaula and Mr Helao are pseudonyms assigned to the two Inspectors of Education.

During the presentation, when referring to interview data from both the principals and Inspectors of Education, I use pseudonyms such as “Ms Jackie”. When I use the term ‘Member’ with a number (e.g. Member1, Member2, etc.) I am referring to focus group data. When I use the letter P and a number (e.g. P1, P2, etc.) I am referring to questionnaire data.

The leading data in the presentation is that obtained from the interviews with principals. The interview with the Inspectors of Education (IoEs), the focus group, questionnaires and document analysis is used as complementary data.

Because this is an interpretive study, I will use the narrative form as a way of portraying the perceptions and experiences of principals of the implementation of the NSPI. I allow their voices to be heard throughout by way of quotations so that the reader is able to experience their environment and context.

The following categories are presented in this chapter:

- General response to the NSPIs
- Roles of principals and IoEs in the implementation of the NSPIs
- Training
- School performance and the NSPIs
- Challenges of the NSPIs

4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.2.1 GENERAL RESPONSE TO THE NSPI

The data suggests mixed feelings on the part of the respondents with regard to the implementation of the NSPIs. Nearly all the respondents appreciate the NSPIs and see their value. They refer to the value of standardisation, the benefit principals gain in terms of their management of schools and the possibility of improving the performance of learners and schools. Responses varied but most acknowledged the importance of the NSPIs as a means to standardise the provision of quality education in the country. They acknowledged that the introduction of the NSPIs is a move in the right direction. They believed that if fully implemented, the NSPIs would strengthen the capacity of principals and teachers. Though principals welcomed the NSPIs, some perceived the NSPIs as ineffective in their schools citing the ill preparedness of implementers.

According to Mr Kakonda, “I heartily welcome the policy, first and foremost because it gives a clear direction as to what is expected of you firstly as a manager and of your colleagues, of learners and parents as well”. He elaborates by saying that the (NSPIs) provide guidance in self-evaluation, which was not the case before the introduction of the NSPIs. He argued that

the NSPIs helped them to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and gave them direction on areas on which to focus.

Ms Kapolo stated that she could not see the effectiveness of the NSPIs at her school. According to her, the documents on the policy were available but the implementation was not effective. She explained why this was so:

Because looking at the things that are supposed to be done according to the National Standards, some of the things are not yet done..., or we are not doing it at the school. Some we are doing without a very good understanding of what we are doing.

Mr Haikela gave a similar response to Ms Kapolo. He doubted whether he really implemented the policy at his school. Mr Tala viewed the NSPIs as a good initiative of the government to bring uniformity among schools in terms of performance. He said that the NSPIs aim at guiding schools on what is expected of them. He was convinced that should schools work according to the NSPIs, then improvement would be inevitable. However, he recognised that there were still some impediments to the full implementation of the NSPIs as “some other things are difficult to implement, we experience problems when it comes to certain resources that are required to be here but this point in time it is hard to get them”.

According to Mr Cluster, the implementation was good because at his school they follow the NSPIs and regard it as a guide, which consists of all that is required to run school life. He confidently stated that:

In my school, there is very good progress because it is like a guideline and people stick to it. All that you need is there; it consists of almost everything that has to do with the general administration of the school. Teachers are also clear as to what is expected from them, everybody not only teachers even the non-teaching staff they are clear as to what is expected from them.

Mr Cluster felt that they were progressing well with the implementation and they were also busy identifying the areas where they feel they are weak. His school tries to improve on those weaknesses when they draw up the School Development Plan (SDP) at the end of every year. According to him, they use the SDP to analyse what tasks were not implemented. He also acknowledged that they have trouble implementing the NSPIs policy especially with regard to the allocation of time, and said “. . . because of time there is still a

lot to do. Sometimes we don't really follow our SDP you can see that at the end when there are still some issues to be repeated in the SDP".

Ms Jackie said that when she transferred to her current school she found that "people were not quite familiar with the policy maybe due to the fact that . . . people were not so well informed at the beginning". As a result, she blamed people high up in the hierarchy of the system that "somewhere they have failed to properly address the issues at the grassroots level - the implementers". Ms Jackie attributed this as the one factor that prevented the proper implementation of the NSPIs at her school. However, she was hoping that the situation would improve as time went on. She said, "We are, so to say, making some headway in implementing the NSPI". She argued that conducting the SSE as part of the NSPIs would provide the yardstick against which to measure their improvement.

She indicated that the school came up with the School Development Plan (SDP) that was a joint responsibility of stakeholders. They drew up the SDP together showing a copy of the SDP "like this one on my table we did it together with the School Board members, the parent representatives, and teachers". She indicated that teachers had an internal subject policy and teacher files, which did not exist in the past. She stated that principals were clear on what to monitor, the roles were clearer than in the past. She argued that:

Because in the past I think, we were not quite aware of what to monitor at schools. Even the teachers themselves they did not know how important it was to monitor, as the classroom management itself was not taken seriously, because I think guidelines were not clear.

I asked Mr Mwadina his views on the implementation of the NSPIs in his school. He responded that the implementation was going well and that the NSPI was important in that it unifies schools and makes it easy for external evaluator/s to use the same tools for all schools.

According to Mr Helao, the implementation was received with mixed feelings "some feel it is just too much work because they do not feel the necessity. Some are trying to implement them". Mr Helao indicated that there were schools, which were trying to implement the NSPIs, and he gave an example of the filing system, which needed to be arranged according to the National Standards. Nevertheless, he felt the issue of follow-up on every teacher was

not happening because it seemed that people had no clear picture of what they really had to do.

I asked Mr Hailaula how his schools were coping with the implementation of the NSPIs. Mr Hailaula, like Mr Helao, stressed that schools were implementing the NSPIs differently as they did not have the capacity to implement them correctly. Mr Hailaula argued that:

Some are coping well, some are not. Some are implementing, and some may have only heard about the National Standards. They have the booklets, you go there you find the booklet and are filed properly in the file but they are never read.

In the focus group all four members were sceptical about the implementation of the NSPIs, which they felt, was done without proper preparation. They cited many factors that hindering its effective implementation. According to Member1, people were coping well though she cited some problems like teachers indicated that the NSPIs was forcing them to concentrate on administrative activities and as a result, they did little teaching.

P1-P5 indicated that the NSPIs are important basing their arguments on the following factors:

- Standardise all public schools
- Assist principals to manage their school effectively
- Stakeholders are able to recognise their roles in schools

4.2.2 ROLES OF PRINCIPALS AND INSPECTORS OF EDUCATION

When the question, “What would you say are your roles in the implementation of the NSPIs” was asked, respondents gave different responses. Some mentioned general roles while very few were able to provide detailed responses. They stated that their roles were to ensure the implementation of the NSPIs through supervision, monitoring, meetings, classroom observations, ensuring the implementation of the School Development Plan (SDP). All respondents recognised that they were at the centre of the successful implementation of the NSPIs; for some this was implicit but for others it was explicit. Furthermore, their perceptions varied on the IoE’s roles in the implementation of the NSPIs.

Among others, they felt the IoE's roles are to supervise and monitor principals to implement the NSPIs policy, ensure that principals understand the policy through training, induct principals, provide guidance to principals and teachers, and facilitate the provision of materials and resources to schools. Nevertheless, monitoring or supervising as a concept featured in the vocabulary of most of the respondents.

According to Mr Tala, "my role is to make sure that the work is done, what is supposed to be at school is there, whether it is me who can bring it or whether it is somebody else". He contended that the IoE is there to guide them in the implementation of the NSPIs policy. He felt their understanding of the NSPIs depends on the assistance they get from the IoE. Mr Kakonda viewed his role as follows:

As a school manager, I would say . . . my main role is to be a catalyst in the implementation of the National Standards, to be at the forefront, to assist my colleagues so that they really understand the focus of these standards and to ensure that it is fully implemented.

Ms Kapolo perceived her role as a facilitator at school level and at cluster level. She stated that she explained to her colleagues the issues they needed to look at when evaluating themselves and their school. "I think in my case it is to facilitate the implementation at the school level and where possible at the cluster level. It is also to explain to the colleagues . . . when we are evaluating ourselves . . ." According to Mr Haikela, his role "is to make sure that teachers are working according to the guidelines. As a supervisor I also guide them when they have a problem or misunderstanding". In addition, Mr Cluster provided details of his roles and he said:

My role is more to supervise and monitor continuously those activities and to involve the school board. It is also to inform the school board in meetings about the progress of the school in line with SDP. In addition, to convene meetings of different committees . . . and to speed up . . . to approve together with the financial committee . . . the money that is to be used. Overall is to see to it that the SDP is implemented.

Ms Jackie seemed unable to say much about her role, instead she generalised by saying "I can say we are the implementers [principals] the driving force behind our colleagues". Instead, she maintained that she was not well prepared for the implementation of the NSPIs

by the responsible authority as she found it difficult to provide tangible assistance to her staff.

Nevertheless, P1 stated that his roles were to monitor, conduct classroom observation, and meetings with both the school board and staff, and initiate new strategies. She regarded the IoE's role "to make sure that all schools receive the copy of the NSPIs, monitor the progress implementation [of the NSPI] and participate in Regional External School Evaluation (RESE) team before the National External School Evaluation (NESE)" visit.

P5 listed his roles in the implementation of the NSPI policy as "to facilitate, guide, monitor, evaluate at school level and give feedback to all stakeholders, initiate workshops within the cluster and circuit level". He felt IoEs have the responsibility of facilitating the implementation as well as to provide induction. He stressed that they (IoEs) are expected to provide regular training to principals and teachers. Equally, P3 stated that the IoEs' roles are to "organise workshop based on the NSPIs, motivate and render support to schools through principal's meetings and encourage school board members to be responsible for their schools". P4 regarded his role as to "monitor the implementation of the NSPIs at school level". He stated that the IoE and the Regional Office "should see to it that the NSPIs are implemented to all schools . . . as outlined in the guideline".

According to Mr Mwadina, one of his roles is to assist teachers and to oversee the implementation of the NSPIs and other policies at school level. He cited some examples and said:

This includes everything that is happening at the school, the link between the parents and the community, the implementation of the curriculum. We have to make sure that all the teachers have the necessary materials, if there are no materials we have to approach different offices and get relevant information so that we can bring materials to school for implementation . . .

It was quite interesting to note how one principal thought that it is the role of the IoE's to institute deductions from teachers for absenteeism. For example, P2 stated that the roles of IoEs are to "encourage the spirit of competition among clusters/schools, curb teachers' absenteeism, extend working hours for teachers . . ."

P4 indentified only one role when he stated, "My role is to monitor the implementation of the NSPIs at the school level". He was not able to comment

further on the roles he has to play in the implementation of the NSPIs. In the focus group interview, it was reported that IoEs should monitor, guide, and provide training to principals.

In short, respondents identified the roles of principals as follow:

- Monitor progress
- Do classroom observation
- Invite parents to meetings
- Conduct staff and school board meetings
- Initiate new strategies

Most of the principals interviewed and those who responded through questionnaires recognised that one of their roles in the implementation of the NSPIs was to monitor the implementation of the NSPIs, the stress being more on compliance, which is management not leadership. However, Mr Helao and Mr Hailaula agree that principals need to practise not only management but also leadership skills when referring to some principals in their circuits who did complain the National Standards caused too much work. Mr Helao said, “Which means you cannot expect that principal to influence or to inspire the teachers in his/her school to find out the use and the importance of the National Standards”.

4.2.3 TRAINING

4.2.3.1 LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

Nearly all respondents indicated that the training, which was provided to principals and teachers in 2006 to prepare them for the implementation of the NSPIs, was not effective because it failed to equip them with the required skills to implement the policy. As a result, teachers still lack an understanding of the policy. They said they could not implement the NSPIs as required though they did try to do so. They ascribed the ineffectiveness of the training to the two days set aside for the training, which they felt was too short considering the complexity of the NSPIs, the cascaded model of training, and the incompetency of the trainers. They indicated that the training could have been conducted over a longer period with a follow-up session as good training is a prerequisite for the effective implementation

of any policy/innovation. They argued that teachers did not understand the issues because the principals who should have trained them were also ill informed. Some indicated that teachers were trained for half a day. Most of the respondents indicated a need for further training. It was also revealed that most teachers familiarised themselves with the policy only when they prepared for interviews for promotion posts because they know the NSPIs policy features in the interview questionnaires.

Ms Jackie regarded the training that was given in 2006 as inadequate. She felt more training was needed to empower teachers. She opposed the cascade model of training “because when information is exchanged [transferred from one point to another] something went missing”. Therefore, she stressed that people needed to be provided with the primary information more especially principals and teachers who according to her are the “main players”. Interestingly, she suggested that “again when it comes to teacher training [institutions], I still feel more needs to be done in the colleges; apart from what they are receiving now . . .” She stated that including the NSPIs in the teacher college’s curriculum is important to equip the novice teachers with information on the NSPIs.

Mr Haikela did not regard his introduction to the NSPIs in 2006 as training; he said it was just information to introduce the policy. He said, “I don’t remember myself having been in a session as such where I had been trained as a principal to implement it [NSPIs]”. He maintained, “The thing that I remember is a kind of short informative introduction from our principals’ meeting, so I was not in a training that took a day or so of how to implement the NSPIs”. Nevertheless, he stated that the only session he could say was training was “held at Heros’ Primary School which took almost half a day. That one I can call training but the time was very short”. According to him, the presenters were knowledgeable but the time allocated was too brief. He maintained that the training was conducted after the NSPIs were already introduced. Despite that training, he felt he was not conversant with the policy. “I did not have very good understanding of it at the very beginning. I started with it while I did not have a thorough knowledge of what to do exactly. So far my role has been small because I also need assistance myself”. Mr Haikela added that in his opinion the IoEs also lack understanding on some aspects of the NSPIs as a result principals might feel awkward about asking the IoEs. He related one example and said “because my Inspector . . . when I

was listening to [her/him] is like I was not satisfied with what [he/she] told me and I did not ask further . . . he/she was not comfortable with it as well, so I left it”.

According to Mr Tala as principals, they should have been well prepared for the implementation of the NSPIs. He also felt the 2006 training was ineffective as it was too short. He wished “if it was two days and after that follow continuous training it could have been good”. Therefore, he suggested more training to minimise the lack of understanding. Mr Tala contended that if training is not given “it will take time we struggle, struggle, struggle . . . and this is difficult for us”. He said teachers complained constantly which is a sign of “lack of understanding”. He indicated that people implement things if they understood them well.

Ms Kapolo agreed that she and teachers were trained “but I can say it was not enough the training that was given for the implementation of the National Standards”. She emphasised that “to me honestly it was not effective because up to now people still have a problem implementing the National Standards, it shows that they did not get enough . . .”

According to Mr Cluster, training was helpful but what principals should have done for proper understanding was to read the policy again after the training. He said he attended “three days training with many intervals”. He noted, “The training was done on a cascade model”. He felt that cascaded training was the only viable option. Nevertheless, he acknowledged, “of course there are times when information down the line loses its originality, but in the case of a school it is okay because being a principal I understand it”.

Mr Hailaula and Mr Helao both confirmed that the training that was given in 2006 was not effective for principals. As one of those who trained principals, Mr Hailaula stated, “I remember I was one of those who trained the principals here. We only trained principals . . . two days only it was just to introduce them to the document [the NSPIs]. I think that training was not enough”. Equally, Mr Helao said “the lack of understanding I can ascribe it to the lack of proper training of the stakeholders I can say the principals or the teachers. You know when it was done it was mainly done in the cascade model”. As a member of the training team Mr Helao clarified that, “each region had focus people who came and trained the regional staff and later went down to Cluster Centre Principals (CCP) to principals and principals were supposed to train teachers”. Moreover, Mr Helao argued that:

In the process, either the training was not carried out properly or the importance of the National Standards was not carried over strongly for the people to see the necessity of knowing this one or there might be many reasons that one cannot think of. However, what I think the reason is that people do not understand fully the use of these National Standards.

P4, P5, and P2 indicated that the IoEs trained them for two days and in return they went on to train their staff members. P1 indicated that she was not trained “it was a form of briefing for a day conducted by an Inspector of Education. I trained my staff”. P1, P2, P4, and P5 described the training as ineffective mostly due to the limited number of days set aside for training. However, P3 contradicted the others and said, “I was trained for 5 days by the Inspector of Education. The training was successful because we were made aware of how to make use of the NSPIs . . . We were also entrusted with the duty of training our staff members”.

Member2 was disappointed that principals were “given everything in three hours”. He charged, “When you look for people [IoEs] went for a two weeks [training] and understand it nicely and you come and summarise it within three hours and expect the background [grassroots] to have all information”. He contended, “Grasping all those things within three hours, the moment they transfer that information to the teachers was going to be difficult and then you can’t really expect them to understand it nicely and to know what is expected”. Furthermore, M3 argued that they were not well prepared. She contended they held a workshop for a day at cluster level “but that it was not training. Definitely, even our managers [principals] who were there it seems they couldn’t really trace the picture where they were going to, with the reason that it was too much to be done in a single day”. Member3 said, “The trainers were not conversant with what they were doing”. Similarly, M4 and M1 agreed that the training was inadequate, the time was too short. Member 2 also felt the same and added that only those who attended promotional post interviews try to read on their own because some of the questions might ask about the NSPIs. He used himself as an example because he was appointed as an HOD late in 2008.

Equally, Mr Mwadina said he had undergone training for the implementation of the NSPIs but could not recall how long the training lasted. However, he indicated that the problem was “some of the teachers do not have good qualifications that enable them to understand

when teaching". Mr Hailaula argued that when he visited some schools, to monitor how they set targets for example, "some did not have a clue although they were given a training workshop". He concluded that "they are not doing it at the same level of understanding". Mr Hailaula gave an example of one of his principals who found it difficult to implement the NSPIs:

I remember I visited one of my schools, one gentleman cannot even set the targets he just does not understand them. May be he cannot understand the language although you give them workshops . . . but when I went there I saw nothing. When he went, he did not give the feedback to the staff members. Maybe it is because of his qualification because he has just finished the Basic Education Teaching Diploma (BETD) in-service training.

A number of respondents raised the issue of principals not able to adapt to change due to their qualifications. Mr Hailaula proposed that young graduates from colleges should become principals as they were likely to understand the policy better than the older staff. He felt the same applied to teachers, as the teachers who were trained prior to Namibia's independence could hardly understand the policy. He said that these are some of the factors that contributed to the ineffectiveness of the implementation of the NSPIs. Further, Member2 said, "If we could have principals who are well equipped we are also likely to know this policy". Equally, Mr Cluster said, "when you come you have that knowledge but by saying I don't understand it well I have to go back and ask again, teachers lose confidence. In return they also just say let me just hold on and see". Mr Helao took it further when he said that:

I am saying we have a lot of people whom we are entrusting to run the schools who were never ever trained in the management and leadership skills at all and you see in the management training is where one is exposed to the way of implementing things. We have very few principals who were exposed to the issue of leadership and management skills.

Mr Hailaula stressed this aspect when he said:

When it comes to this management and leadership, you need principals to understand the document, because you need to read also. You also need to direct the school and inspire them. Therefore, the qualification of principals is important. Especially, now we have the BETD in-service principals, if you give them the document they do not even understand them.

4.2.3.2 CONTINUOUS TRAINING

Many respondents cited a lack of understanding among principals and teachers in the implementation of the NSPIs in their respective schools and suggested that continuous training was the solution to the problem. Substantiating their claim, they cited an example of the training conducted by the IoE early in 2009. The training was conducted for a day for each cluster and it was meant for teachers. The training focused on Key Areas 2 and 3. Key Area 2 is about curriculum and attainment and Key Area 3 is the teaching and learning process. Respondents indicated that the training was helpful to teachers and they were able to understand those key areas because they were well discussed and explained. They alleged that most teachers and HODs were able to understand the NSPIs much better in 2009 after the training. However, they stressed that only if continuous training is conducted in all key areas will the NSPIs be implemented successfully.

According to Member2 “our IoE went around the clusters grouping them, then a specific day was selected for every cluster and all the teachers from all the schools came together and then key areas two and three were highlighted one by one”. He stated that when they went back to schools as managers, they had no problem with those key areas because teachers “already know at least a little bit of what to do”. Mr Tala, referring to the 2006 training said “but if it was two days followed by continuous training it could have been good”. He elaborated that “even this year we had training but it was meant for teachers”. The training was conducted at cluster level, and he showed an example of the materials that were used “that is why we have a document like this”. He stressed, “The NSPIs require continuous training for them to be effective”.

According to Member3, referring to the training of teacher in Key Areas 2 and 3 in 2009 she said, “Actually now people got the understanding of what really had to be done”. Ms Kapolo argued that despite the good training in 2009, “but there still needs to be more training to understand these things”.

Equally, Mr Haikela said, “this year the Inspector of Education invited all the teachers and again briefed them shortly on key areas and so on mostly that are more concerned with the classroom Key Areas 2 and 3, and it was just given briefly”. He continued, “at least teachers

had a view of what it is and after that again the IoE compiled a small booklet containing what we discussed in that meeting”. Mr Haikela emphasised that the NSPIs might work well “if we still have continuous training, continuous assistance, continuous support, it might help”.

Ms Jackie also argued that the implementation of the NSPIs would be successful if “continuous training” was conducted. She also stated, “In our circuit earlier this year, all the teachers were invited, they discussed with the Inspector of Education during training”. She said the training lasted a day “on Key Area 2 and 3”. The purpose of the training according to Ms Jackie was “just to make teachers become aware of their roles and how to implement it, just to explain more in detail”.

Similarly, Mr Kakonda felt continuous training of implementers was the right thing to do if the policy was to succeed. He stated that people need continuous training not only administered externally but internally as well by principals and the school management team. Mr Kakonda argued that the fact that his teachers had a better understanding of the policy was that “we have had an internal workshop at school level. We also have had some at the circuit level and you know it has been very interesting to teachers . . .” Therefore, respondents argued that continuous training or in-service training is crucial for the successful implementation.

4.2.4 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND THE NSPI

The NSPIs policy was introduced in 2006 with the expectation that school performance would improve, especially academically. However, looking at the past three years (2006-2008), respondents had mixed feelings about the impact of the NSPIs on school performance. Some could not see any change since the introduction of the policy while others said their performance either management-wise and the academic performance of their learners had improved because of the NSPIs. Nevertheless, nearly all respondents believed that the NSPIs have the potential to improve school performance and learner results.

According to Mr Tala, the NSPIs did not improve the school performance. However, he said that “it is my belief that the NSPIs will improve the performance for school but if the school itself is not serious then it will not make any meaning [progress]”. Mr Kakonda stated that in their school “to be specific the results have not improved as yet, and there are a lot of factors that have caused that”. However, he ascribed the poor performance to the lack of qualified teachers in some subjects and the departure of well-qualified teachers.

Similarly, Ms Kapolo stressed that since the introduction of the NSPIs she had not observed an improvement in the performance. She argued “to be honest, I cannot see the difference. I cannot see how it will improve performance if we are just talking about it but going down to the root [implementers] where it is to be implemented you will find those problems . . .”

P2 contended that target setting made them improve academically and SDP & PAAI equipped them with the necessary skills. However, P4 argued that he could not see any improvement because according to him the NSPIs are “more paper work for the teachers”. He agreed that the NSPIs in the future “will really improve management and leadership”.

Equally, P1 argued that improved performance is inevitable in schools if “more effort on the sides of the ministry, regions, and schools” was invested. She suggested that for effective implementation “principals could be excluded in staffing norms”. She stated that at some schools, principals had a full teaching load, which has a negative effect on their management and leadership roles. P5 along with other respondents argued that school performance is possible “depending on monitoring and evaluation” of managers on teachers.

Mr Haikela referred to the fact that the April 2009 pass rate was higher than the previous year. However, he said “I don’t know whether it is a result of the NSPIs. The only thing I can say we have compared ourselves with April last year. I think if the NSPIs were implemented effectively it will improve the performance of learners”.

Nonetheless, Mr Cluster contended, “the NSPIs improved my leadership role”. He argued that the fact that they discussed the implementation of the NSPIs and the fact that his teachers were in possession of the NSPIs booklets convinced him that the NSPIs “contribute a lot” to the performance of the school.

According to Mr Mwadina, the NSPIs improved the school performance in terms of the learners' results. He argued that the school only dropped in its performance in 2008. Furthermore, he felt the NSPIs enhanced school improvement. Member3 indicated that there were mixed feelings regarding school performance "because you may wonder a school might perform very well particularly if we use grade 10 and 12 results that are published nationally. A school could reach 80% this year but the following year is at 20% pass rate". Member4 had a similar view. She said "in my school administration wise we are getting there. However, we are just fluctuating between 30% - 34%" in terms of learner performance.

According to Member1, improvement was not visible at their school. She argued, "The NSP1 at the moment is only guiding perhaps managers but not improving performance yet". Administrative/management wise according to Member1, Member2, Member3, and Member4 had improved because during the class visit they know what to ask which was not the case was before. However, they felt that the issue of teachers teaching the subjects they are not trained for, which is common in many schools, affected the performance. Similarly, Mr Hailaula added that:

Although it was just implemented I can see when it comes to the management of the school, I think the schools are going in the right direction. I think the performance maybe we can see in the years to come but to measure it now, well I can see average somewhere. The school performs, but you don't know whether maybe it is due to the National Standards.

Equally, Mr Helao argued that:

I don't think the National Standards have made an impact on the results; I don't think so. I ascribe the performance on the way the principal of a particular school is carrying out his or her responsibility but I don't think it is the National Standards.

According to the document analysis, it is worth noting that schools that were performing well before the introduction of the NSPIs are the same schools that show an improvement. Thus, it cannot be argued that the NSPIs have affected the performance of schools. The only improvement the NSPIs seems to have effected is in the administrative work of principals and teachers. Comparing the respondents' views with the learners' results since 2005-2008, it shows that performance did not change significantly.

4.2.5 CHALLENGES

4.2.5.1 MONITORING/TOO MUCH WORK

Respondents stated that one of the major factors that impede the successful implementation of the NSPIs is that the NSPIs are considered a lot of extra work by the implementers. They complained of the added workload on top of what they had to do. Another aspect frequently raised by the respondents was the monitoring of the implementation of the NSPIs, which according to them does not take place. They state that neither principals, IoEs nor the Regional Director do monitoring which affects effective implementation. However, some ascribed their poor monitoring to the lack of additional staff members, for example support staff such as secretaries.

Mr Kakonda however was not in agreement that the IoE did not visit schools. He said, “The Inspector comes in to check how far we are with the implementation of the NSPIs”. Ms Kapolo stated that she was unable to perform her management and leadership role properly because “at my school I am the one who serves as a school principal and at the same time I am the secretary. I can say I am not doing what I was supposed to do”.

Member1 said, “If the principal is not at your shoulder ensuring that it will be implemented then that thing will not be implemented I think some of these things are resting on the shoulders of the Principals. They are not just monitoring”. Member2 and Member4 shared these views. Furthermore, Member1 doubted the capacity of some principals especially with regard to leadership and management; she felt they lack the capacity. She emphasised “but the problem is that the monitoring is not there, that there is monitoring lacking”. She went on to say that monitoring “whether it is between the Principal and the Inspector, or between the Inspector and the Director, monitoring is missing”. Member2 argued that “as learners need teachers to monitor them, teachers need the Principal and HOD to check on them, so be it with the principal” thus; the IoE needs to monitor them. Member1 warned “this thing is new but if you want to make sure we are taking it as it is, you have to monitor”.

Mr Tala agreed that monitoring in his school was not taking place. He explained that:

Let me be honest with you, the monitoring is not good. I always find myself with a lot of work. I am always trying to work more hard on that one. For example, when it comes to a class visit I do it but I am not doing it the way I am supposed to do because so far, I only visited one teacher and we are approaching the end of the term and I am supposed to class visit all teachers. However, the problem is that I always find myself to have a lot of work. I am teaching, I have two promotional subjects and I am the only person in the office.

Furthermore, Mr Tala indicated that he did not have an HOD or a school secretary. He experienced problems in observing all the teachers and the observation form was too long and difficult to complete in a day. Many respondents shared his sentiments.

Similarly, Mr Hailaula stressed, "Something that I want to say about continuous monitoring is that the principals are not doing it very well, they need to monitor, monitor". He further argued that "continuous monitoring is becoming a problem; people are not monitoring how the things are being implemented".

According to Mr Helao, some principals in his circuit did complain that the National Standards caused too much work. Therefore, he doubted whether such leaders had the ability to influence the staff members given their negative attitudes, "Which means you cannot expect that principal to influence or to inspire the teachers in his/her school to find out the use and the importance of the National Standards".

Mr Haikela indicated that he was unable to supervise teachers and help them to understand the NSPIs because of the pressure of work. Similarly, Mr Cluster felt the NSPIs requires a lot of time and that "the pressure is too much to be done" without investing more time and energy. He admitted, "Monitoring is not taking place as required because of time". He felt that the IoEs are in a better position to monitor, as they do not cover many schools.

Ms Jackie argued that she had not received a visit from an IoE since the introduction of the NSPIs. She felt that she needed assistance in the form of school visits by the IoE. P3 said teachers were complaining of too much work and P2 felt that proper monitoring of the implementation from the top management within the Ministry of Education was not taking place. Furthermore, respondents indicated that the demand for teaching files from teachers by the NSPIs was a problem as it was causing extra work.

4.2.5.2 HONESTY AND RELIABILITY

The NSPIs have tools in place that require schools to conduct a School Self-Evaluation (SSE) annually starting 15 October and ending in November. Schools are to develop a School Development Plan (SDP) as well as a Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI) to work out how to sustain strengths and improve weaknesses identified during the SSE exercise. In January and February, schools should set performance targets for the whole school and individual subjects. However, the exercise does not seem to address its intended objective. Almost all respondents revealed that their information was not reliable for the SSE, Targets, SDP, TSE, and PAAI. One aspect that hindered the reliability was the suspicion on behalf of the implementers these tools. A lack of understanding contributed to those perceptions.

According to Mr Haikela, “the problem is only that we are not honest with self evaluation”. He felt that they needed an understanding of the rationale of SSE and TSE (Teacher Self Evaluation) in order for it to be effective. Mr Haikela said one reason why they inflated their evaluation was that they “have a kind of fear for example if I may be rating this one number ‘one’ maybe someone might be angry with me. Sometimes you find yourself evaluating yourself high where you supposed to be at low”. Therefore, he concluded that the SSE information did not represent the realities on the ground. He stressed that people were not honest with target setting.

Similarly, Mr Kakonda stated that their SSE had been unrealistic because they had the feeling that “maybe here we are kind of reporting ourselves to the high offices . . .” Mr Kakonda said they only managed to portray the real figures in 2009 when they were visited by the Regional External School Evaluation (RESE) team. Therefore, he felt their SSE had been unreliable. However, P4 believed that at their school the SSE had been realistic. He revealed that TSE was not reliable and he found that when he did class visits with teachers, that the picture was contradictory with the teacher’s self-evaluation. He indicated that the SDP was influenced by the Regional Office’s inability to provide support especially in the aspects that needed to be fulfilled by the Regional Office. According to P3 the SSE, SDP, and TSE were reliable at his school.

Accordingly, P1 said the SSE and TSE were not reliable “because some colleagues might think if she/he says the truth they will be fired especially in Key area 3, they are afraid to have many failures”. She therefore emphasised fear as the central aspect of the unreliability of the SSE. She said targets were reliable, but she had a similar problem as P4 with the inability of the Regional Office to provide help in realising their SDP.

According to P5, the reliability and honesty of the SSE, TSE, Targets, and SDP had been “a process but not an event”. He said at the beginning the issue of understanding was crucial thus information on SSE was not reliable and lacked honesty. However, “in 2007 information was a bit real; we had more information and understanding than before”. He pointed out that their understanding came from the assistance they received from the National External School Evaluators (NESE) that visited their school in 2007. He said, “In 2008 this exercise represents the reality of the school, which means there is an improvement shown every year”. However, he specified that the TSE “does not reflect on the ground because 60% of most of the evaluation is actually not real when one makes a follow up”. According to P2, SSE is reliable however, TSE did not portray the reality of teachers, and targets were not achievable. Mr Tala explained that:

School Self Evaluation is there but honesty is lacking. They inflate the information. When doing self-evaluation they indicate that this is available but in reality, it is not. They always rate themselves high. Maybe they feared that if they rate themselves low somebody would come and blame them. I used to tell them to be honest and not be fearful of anything, but they always put themselves high which is not real. The same applies to Teacher Self Evaluation.

Ms Kapolo experienced similar problems to Mr Tala did when she referred to the SSE. She stressed, “That is why I say the understanding . . . they think if they rate [evaluate], what is more in teachers’ and parents’ mind . . . that the principal may not feel good about the rating.” According to Mr Cluster, SSE and targets were done realistically at his school, the information was reliable though “not one hundred percent”.

Ms Jackie said, “People are trying to paint pictures which are not true” when they do SSE, TSE, and set targets. She observed that honesty was lacking in the exercise: “they have some fear that maybe if they are not implementing it properly they will be fired from their

positions". She said that was common because "they don't want to be known as *fallible* [italics added] they want to be good, it is human nature".

Mr Mwadina stated that the exercise of SSE and TSE is reliable at his school. However, when pressed to show how he compared TSE and the classroom observation he admitted that what teachers report in their TSE was not reliable.

Mr Helao argued that the SSE and SDP did not represent the reality in a given school and most of his school did it unrealistically. He argued that:

However, if you look into their school development plan (SDP)] then you find something else not what the school self-evaluation (SSE) has exposed and teachers evaluate themselves. Sometimes teachers are trying to cover themselves may be they don't want to expose themselves. I can refer to the schools under my jurisdiction. I think is less than 5% who are really doing it realistically . . .

Interestingly, in the focus group Member2 and Member3 revealed that IoEs also practised unreliability and dishonesty. They argued that when there was a NESE or RESE visit to a one of the schools, the respective IoE prepares that school for the visit in order to impress the team. According to Member2 and Member3, the practice "portrays window-dressing". Member3 argued that, "Inspectors know if the school is found at level one the blame will also go to them".

Member1 argued that school management was also to blame for unreliability and dishonesty when teachers evaluate the school. She argued that:

I came to learn also that we give out the forms to teachers but we do not explain. So even this year we were having problems when we rated ourselves and even saying we are having this administration block but in reality it is not there. I think that with SSE what is needed is the proper supervision when people are doing that. You should explain to a person before answering. Because normally teachers are honest to answer but if a person does not understand what you are asking then a person will not give you the right answer.

She emphasised that since teachers lacked proper assistance in completing the SSE forms, they tended to fake information.

Member1-Member4 raised a surprising and important factor that caused teachers to provide false information when they evaluate their schools. They were emphatic in their claim that when principals conduct the SSE, they write the names of teachers on top of the SSE form for the respective teachers to see who evaluated at what level. Furthermore, principals instructed teachers not to rate the school at a lower level fearing that it would give the school a bad name because the information is published nationally. The point they advanced was that the SSE is influenced by principals; therefore there is no guarantee of reliability and honesty. Member3, on behalf of the others said, "There were some rumours that your diploma or degree will be licensed [to teach] like people are having driving licenses like the SADAC one. People are having that fear clacking in their mind and it is influencing everything".

The issue of reliability and honesty in evaluating the school is a contentious topic in this study. Some indicated that they rate their schools honestly but if one compares their SSE and the results of the past four years, there are many disparities. For comparison, one can examine Key Area 2 and 3, which in my view are more appropriately related to learner performance. Since the SSE is not reliable, the TSE is likely to have the same problem. According to the document analysis there is a high degree of artificial inflation of SSE results. The document analysis indicates that this tendency is common in the rating by both the teachers and principals/management.

4.2.5.3 POLICY AS "IMPOSED"

There was the perception among some respondents that some teachers and principals had the NSPIs policy imposed on their schools without their involvement at the development stage. This may account for the resistance implementers have towards the NSPIs.

Mr Tala referred to the teachers' lack of understanding of the implementation of the NSPIs saying, "Sometimes teachers had in their minds that the NSPIs were imposed on them". He said that this attitude led to them not understanding the importance of the NSPIs, which would explain the complaints. Ms Kapolo indicated that when teachers complain they were implying that the NSPIs "were imposed on people".

Mr Cluster ascribed the negative attitude toward the NSPIs to principals' perceptions. He felt principals were the ones who portray a negative attitude when they train their teachers. He said they did not show confidence and they alienated themselves from being part of the NSPIs. They did not want to have ownership; they described it as something that belonged to "other offices, they regard it as somebody else's document and people will not take it seriously anymore, it is something that is imposed on them".

Ms Jackie indicated that she did not regard the NSPI as something she had to implement; it was only something she needed to know about. She expressed the feeling that the NSPIs were imposed on them to implement, when she said:

I take it as things are happening at the high level [authority] starting with the top people, people at the top but I think somewhere they have failed to properly address the issues at the grassroots. If you are to be trained on something, you have not developed yourself but it is just something that is pushed on you to implement and you were not there at the initial stage.

4.2.5.4 RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Many respondents indicated that they were short of resources. The issue of human and physical resources dominated the discussion. Furthermore, the shortage of textbooks and other teaching aids is considered one of the impediments to the implementation of the NSPIs. However, some respondents felt that they had enough resources.

For example, Mr Kakonda said his school "at least had a considerable number of resources that we need, for example human resources, the school is properly staffed". However, he indicated that physical facilities were not sufficient, especially classrooms: "We are using makeshift classrooms [sheds], they have furniture and chalkboards and then for that we feel at least we are in a better position in comparison to other schools". According to my observation as a researcher, the school had an acute shortage of classrooms; there was no telephone or fax machine.

Ms Kapolo's main problem was that she did not have a school secretary and it prevented her from fulfilling most of her management and leadership roles because she had to concentrate on administrative tasks. With regard to text books she said, "on teaching and learning we got external support like provision of text books like at the end of last year there were a lot of text books". She further said, "The Inspector provides support like target setting and School Development Plan".

According to Mr Haikela, the school lacked chairs and tables for teachers and textbooks although they had sufficient writing materials. When I asked him if they received assistance externally, he said they did not. Another major problem was an absence of water and electricity.

Mr Cluster said they received external support from their IoE who was their immediate supervisor. He indicated that they had enough resources; however, he was disappointed that facilities at the hostel were deteriorating. He said the hostel needed renovation; space was limited and they had many more learners than its carrying capacity as the facility was designed for 384 learners but it carried 631. He related that the kitchens floors were damaged and requires major renovation. He further said, "We have very old equipment, pots not serviced for years and this is known by the Region but nothing coming forth". He revealed that the sewerage was often blocked no solution found.

Ms Jackie indicated that their school did not "have most of the resources e.g. water and electricity". However, they had just received new classrooms when I conducted this research. Furthermore, she said they had a shortage "of textbooks; our learners, they share textbooks, chairs are not enough, desks are enough now".

According to Mr Mwadina, they "receive support from the Inspector and Advisory Teachers". However, Mr Mwadina felt their schools were not well resourced in comparison with the schools in Windhoek. He attributed the ineffectiveness of the NSPIs to the shortage of resources. He suggested that for the successful implementation of the NSPIs the government should provide materials to all schools.

The issue of the lack of resources was a concern to Mr Helao who declared a special need for funding. IoEs do not visit schools due to the lack of transport. "Transport for the

Education Officers to go and visit schools is hampering the external support to the schools in implementing the National Standards". Member2 said that they lacked resources such as overhead projectors, electricity, proper classroom buildings. Member1 argued that:

Because we can talk of a school, which does not even have facilities, textbooks, but you really want to implement. So you place orders like maybe these photocopy papers but they are not just coming. In the remote areas where parents do not contribute to the SDF, things are really difficult . . . but with these limited resources, this is also hampering the implementation of the NSPIs.

Member3 was concerned whether the government was fully prepared for the introduction of the NSPIs. She said, "Maybe our country was not ready to implement this program, NSPIs. It requires a lot of funds". P1 was also concerned with the provision of resources to schools. She said:

The region or government ministry is not implementing it [NSPI] fully. Still, some learners are in shades [sheds] sit on sticks and stones, which is key area 1. Classes are overcrowded, most principals are teaching more than 30 periods. Some are class registers; learners are sharing textbooks four in one book and no stationeries.

The documents I analysed confirm an inequitable supply of human and physical resources at many schools. The allocation of funds is not sufficient to address school needs.

4.2.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I presented the findings of the data collected from different sources. As I indicated at the beginning of the chapter, the data covers the views of 12 principals, 2 IoEs, 4 HoDs and document analysis. I tried to achieve a balance in my presentation by reporting each respondent's views fairly. The quotations I used reflect the richness of the respondent's information. Furthermore, document analysis and observation strengthen validity of the findings.

In the next chapter, I discuss the findings.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I discuss my research findings in relation to the themes that were discussed in Chapter Four. I shall focus again on the perceptions of the respondents, and provide a theoretical contextualisation of these perceptions so they may be properly understood. I try to limit my interpretation of the data, in an attempt to let it speak for itself. However, as I both collected and analysed the data, some personal intervention was unavoidable. To aid my interpretation, I shall make reference to theories already presented in Chapter Two. I attempt to indicate how the data responds to the following research questions:

- How do school principals experience the implementation of the NSPIs?
- How do school principals perceive their roles following the implementation of the NSPIs?
- How do principals perceive the impact of the NSPIs on school performance?
- How has the training that principals received impacted on their role in the implementation of the NSPIs?
- What are their perceptions of the role of Inspectors in the NSPIs?
- What are the challenges school principals experiences in managing the NSPIs?
- What are principals' perceptions of the SSEs, TSEs, Targets and School Development Plans?

The data presented in Chapter Four revealed certain issues arising from the implementation of the NSPIs in Namibian schools. It transpires that principals are positive about the NSPIs, and believe that they are a valuable innovation. However, they expressed their disappointment at the ill-preparedness of the implementers during the introduction stage. Furthermore, they felt that, thus far, the support that was promised to aid the implementation of the NSPIs has not been forthcoming. Therefore, although they are

concerned that the NSPIs are not as yet achieving their intended objectives, they anticipate an improvement once schools begin to receive adequate support.

The discussions in this chapter are organised around the following questions, which will serve as themes to guide my interpretation:

- Are the NSPIs adequately appreciated and do they receive sufficient support?
- Do the demands placed on schools by the NSPIs call for leadership or management on the part of principals?
- Are schools well enough prepared prior to the implementation of the NSPIs?
- What have been the effects of the NSPIs thus far, and what tensions have emerged?

5.2. DISCUSSION

5.2.1 THE SUPPORT OF THE INNOVATION: IS IT ENOUGH?

The implementation of the NSPIs in schools requires that managers – and particularly principals – show support for the innovation. There is evidence that principals do endorse the introduction of the NSPIs in schools. The respondents' support of the NSPIs was expressed through their appreciation of the NSPIs' policy, and in their belief that the NSPIs might equip principals with the necessary skills to manage their schools effectively. According to the respondents, the NSPIs could successfully establish a much-needed set of common standards for schools in Namibia.

Further, some respondents believe that conducting the School Self-Evaluations (SSEs) provides them with the opportunity to identify their schools' strengths and weaknesses. When coupled with the creation of a School Development Plan (SDP), this knowledge can aid principals in their quest to improve the performance of their schools. In addition, the fact that IoEs testified to experiencing the implementation of the NSPIs in their dealings with principals, confirms that schools are making progress toward achieving the aims set out by the policy of the NSPIs. The respondents' perceptions seem to be in line with the

overarching objective of the NSPIs, namely to enhance the provision of quality education through standardisation (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1).

The data shows that principals acknowledge the importance of the NSPIs in schools. Common reasons given by the respondents when they say they are in favour of the introduction of the NSPIs include:

- Their support for the introduction of common standards in Namibian public schools
- Their belief that the NSPIs enable principals to lead and manage their schools well
- Their belief that the NSPIs serve to strengthen the principals' role of stakeholder in the running of their school
- Their belief that the NSPIs will improve the provision of quality education in Namibia
- Their appreciation of a means by which to evaluate schools and to identify weaknesses, and so to improve school performance
- Their perception of the strengthening of the management/leadership role of principals.

As I have argued in Chapter Two, the implementation of any policy depends on the support of its implementers. In the case of the NSPIs, the principals are crucial mediators, responsible for soliciting the support of their staff. In support of this claim, Westraad (2005) cautions that "the introduction of external (and obviously internal) initiatives must be supported by the school leadership and particularly, the principal" (p. 49). Furthermore, Berman and McLaughlin (as quoted by Westraad, 2005, p. 49) share the view that "projects having the active support of the principal were the most likely to fare well". According to Fullan (as quoted by Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2002, p. 173), "It is only when bottom-up and top-down forces interact and are mediated in purposeful directions that improvement occurs" (p. 173). As the leaders of their respective schools, it is up to principals to perform this mediation, and to motivate their teachers to affect the kinds of changes that will realise improved performance.

The fact that principals appreciate the introduction of the NSPIs could be regarded as a positive sign, as – according to the literature – the support of the relevant authority is a prerequisite for the implementation of any policy. The data shows that most of the respondents recognise the importance of the NSPIs, and this perception could be interpreted as an admission on the part of leadership of the necessity for change. It is therefore appropriate to return to Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003), where a good definition of transformational leaders can be found: “Transformational leaders develop followers, help map new directions, mobilize resources, facilitate and support employees, and respond to organizational challenges” (p. 167). Leaders play a critical role in helping followers cope with innovation. Therefore, principals need to regard the changes proposed by the policy of the NSPIs as important for their schools, and they need to ensure that the NSPIs are adequately supported and effectively implemented (Cunningham & Cordeiro 2003, p. 167).

5.2.2 DO THE NSPIs REQUIRE LEADERSHIP OR MANAGEMENT?

My research revealed that principals recognise their central role in the implementation of the NSPIs. However, there is no clear evidence in the data I collected that principals practise leadership in the implementation of the NSPIs. The data revealed that principals practise compliance to policies and directives, by making sure the teachers implement the NSPIs, but seem not to actually lead the process. This is in line with the sentiments expressed by Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003), when they claim that “principals tend to maintain the power during innovation, taking more directive approaches that inhibit them from creating more participative approach needed during implementation of school improvements” (p. 172). Such actions by principals are often caused by “fear of losing control and a lack of trust in teachers” (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 172).

However, it is my view that principals need to act more purposefully, as transformational leaders during the period of change. My view finds support in the policy of the NSPIs, as I will demonstrate later. Transformational leadership is grounded in four main elements, developed by Bass and widely recognised as essential to the concept:

- Individualised consideration (including leaders acting as coach or mentor to individuals in the institution)
- Intellectual stimulation
- Inspirational motivation
- Idealized influence (Bush & Coleman, 2000, p. 23; Bennet, Crawford & Cartwright, 2003, p. 32; Epitropaki, n.d.).

These elements are the pillars of transformational leadership. It is believed that in the context of a fast-changing world, transformational leadership holds the key to fast-tracking reform within an organisation.

However, the data shows that principals tend to focus on management rather than leadership; seeming either to lack the skills described by contemporary leadership theories, or to lack trust in their teachers, as Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003) state above. Key characteristics of contemporary leadership approaches include developing a shared vision, shared values, distributing leadership to all organisational members, and adopting a collegial, participative leadership style. Principals should create an environment of mutual trust rather than suspicion. They need to motivate teachers to be committed to the NSPIs' aims of improving the provision of quality education. According to Bush and Middlewood (2005, p. 27) "transformational leadership provides the potential to increase commitment to the aims of the organisation and to motivate staff to perform at their best for the sake of their pupils and colleagues". In an educational context, transformational leadership therefore concentrates not only on achieving school goals, but also on the personal growth and development of teachers and students.

According to the respondents, the principal's main role in the implementation of the NSPIs is that of a catalyst, to be at the forefront of assisting teachers in understanding the policy and ensuring its correct implementation. Furthermore, they see principals as having to supervise teachers to work according to the NSPIs' guidelines. According to the respondents, the implementation of the NSPIs means that principals are responsible for providing guidance to teachers as well as constantly monitoring their performances,

performing classroom observation, overseeing the implementation of the SDPs, conducting staff meetings and school board meetings, and providing training to staff.

Moreover, respondents do not seem to differentiate between the roles of principals and IoEs in the implementation of the NSPIs. According to them, the role of the IoEs is to facilitate, induct, guide, and provide training to both principals and teachers during the implementation of the NSPIs. Respondents used phrases such as 'make sure', 'see to it', 'ensure' – all of which suggest that they see principals and IoEs as enforcing adherence to the policy of the NSPIs. This seems to indicate that the perceived role of both principals and IoEs is more akin to management than leadership.

Principals practise management, or transactional leadership, when attending to the basic needs of teachers, learners and parents, when monitoring performance and maintaining policies (Leithwood et al., 1999, p. 22; Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 27-29). Policy implementation, however, requires more than just good management to be carried out effectively. In my view, any new policy requires the inspiration, vision selling, perceptiveness, and positive influence of a transformational leader to entrench its edicts within an organisation.

The Inspectors of Education were the only respondents to appreciate the need for leadership in the NSPI process. This issue came up when they told me that some principals in their circuits complained that the introduction of National Standards entailed too much work. The IoEs viewed the complainers as failing to see the importance of the NSPIs, and thus lacking the ability to positively influence their followers. It must be remembered that principals are expected to be, as Harris (as quoted by Bush, 2008, p. 7) stresses, "Effective leaders who exercise an indirect but powerful influence on the effectiveness of the school and the achievement of students".

I argued in Chapter Two that principals who are suited to transformation are both managers and leaders. That is to say, they are able to employ both transformational and transactional leadership strategies. In the context of transformation, leadership and management are inseparable, and so principals are clearly called to act as both managers and leaders in the implementation of the NSPIs.

According to the policy laid out NSPIs, principals should manage implementation by performing the following duties:

- providing a precise definition of the school's staffing needs;
- finding the optimum allocation of staff to duties;
- ensuring compliance;
- monitoring performance and identifying needs;
- developing staff;
- ensuring correct grievance procedures;
- utilising their resources; maintaining the school;
- controlling inventory;
- managing their resources for teaching and learning;
- responsibly using the funds their school has received;
- maximising their school board involvement (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 27-29).

Furthermore, the NSPIs require that principals act as leaders by insisting that they conform to the following descriptions:

- The school managers are seen to be persons of high competence and commitment; self-starters with a clear vision, the ability to communicate it, and determined to enhance the performance of the school.
- The school managers ensure that all staff know what is expected of them, that effort in their part is expected and worthwhile, and convince them to follow their lead.
- The school managers foster good inter-personal relations and promote teamwork among the staff. They have confidence in getting their support in doing their duty (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 27; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 12).

Principals, being agents of change, are able to transform their schools more effectively if they use both transactional and transformational leadership strategies. The former is chiefly useful in ensuring policy compliance. The latter is used to inspire staff to achieve a common school vision, and is achieved by valuing one's staff as individuals in whose personal development you are intimately involved, and including them in your decision-

making processes. Both approaches must be utilised if policy implementation is to be effective. In agreement with this view are Cunningham and Cordeiro (2003), who argue:

You can have strong leaders who are weak managers and vice versa. Strong administrators are good at both leadership and management . . . Leadership in this new 'era of change' requires the ability to envision an improved school and the spark to energize and lead staff to bring it about (p. 137).

Therefore, in my view, not only do the NSPIs require principals who can perform both managerial and leadership duties, but they require leaders who display the tenets of transformational leadership theory.

The fact that the principals in this study perceived their role in the implementation of the NSPIs more as that of a manager than that of a leader could be caused by a number of factors. It would be erroneous to assume that principals do not make use of contemporary leadership theories. Although they may never have been introduced to contemporary leadership theories during their professional and in-service training, this does not mean they do not use them in practice. They may also lack the necessary vocabulary to describe the leadership strategies they employ. Their potential leadership qualities may also have been stifled by a bureaucratic system that requires them to ensure compliance to rules and instructions imposed from above. Finally, my position as an IoE might have influenced their responses, as they tried to indicate that their schools complied with rules and regulations.

Nevertheless, when one interviews principals who are also meant to be leaders of their schools, one expects them to mention aspects of their role such as their influence upon others, their willingness to take risks, their ability to provide inspiration to staff and to strive for the achievement of a school vision. The absence of such descriptions from my conversations with the principals seems to suggest a disparity between theory and practice in the implementation of the NSPIs.

5.2.3 READINESS

All respondents in this study indicated that they received training for the implementation of the NSPIs prior to their introduction in 2006. Nearly all had attended workshops, which lasted for an average of two days. IoEs and Advisory Teachers (ATs) conducted the training for principals. Most of the principals who participated in this study felt that the training was inadequate and upon its completion still felt unprepared. This is unfortunate, as sufficiently preparing implementers can bring about what Wedell (2009) calls “shared consensus among such a large proportion of the population will provide a bedrock of support for all those actively involved, once the implementation stage begins” (p. 26).

Some principals experienced problems in giving proper assistance to their teachers during the implementation of the NSPIs. They blamed this on the poor training they received in 2006. The training was designed as a once-off workshop that lasted for two days, which seems to be insufficient when one considers the crucial mediating role principals are expected to play in policy implementation. The principals needed training that provided them with clear and unambiguous information; that enabled them to lead the implementation of the NSPIs. The confidence gained from effective training would have helped them to encourage and motivate teachers. Fullan (as cited in Westraad, 2005, p. 49) also believes that the principal’s role in innovation is a priority, but he adds that principals are, for the most part, not well enough prepared to facilitate change. This concern is shared by Washington and Hacker (2005, p. 409), who argue that a proper understanding of the innovation must be provided to implementers, and especially to those leaders who have the responsibility to mediate the change. Innovations, it is argued, should be accompanied by rigorous training for implementers and, more importantly, for principals (Harris, 2002, p. 10; Theron, 2007, p. 195; Washington & Hacker, 2005, pp. 408-409; Wedell, 2009, p. 17; Westraad, 2005, p. 49).

The data shows that even though the respondents received pre-implementation training, they believe that only when they are regularly assisted and trained (i.e. provided with continuous training), will they be able to effectively implement the NSPIs and direct their staff appropriately. Their plea is in agreement with Fullan (1991, p. 85), who claims that only

when pre-implementation training is coupled with ongoing in-service training, will the implementation be successful. It seems that the training which was meant to prepare implementers for the introduction of the NSPIs, did not achieve its intended objective. This is evidenced by the respondents' demands for ongoing training. Therefore, no matter how intensive pre-implementation training sessions are, they may prove to be futile and their lessons may be discarded during the implementation stage if they are not supplemented by continuous in-service training.

However, there are conflicting perceptions on the issue of the pre-implementation training. Some respondents indicated that the training was good, and that the introduction of the NSPIs changed their leadership for the better. Yet others insisted that the training did not help them much because they were still struggling to understand the NSPIs. There seem to be many contributing factors to the way the 2006 training was perceived and understood by the principals.

This assertion perhaps begs the argument that the professional qualifications of individual principals impact the way they understand and assimilate training. In support of these sentiments, the focus group indicated that some principals lack leadership and management skills. The focus group suggested that if the principals were well-equipped and had a good understanding of the NSPIs, they would have been likely to implement the NSPI policy in their schools effectively. Equally, some respondents saw the lack of understanding in some principals as a reason for teachers to lose confidence in them. The data further shows that there are a lot of principals in whom the region trusts to run the schools, but who never received training in management and leadership skills. It is in management training where one is exposed to methods of policy implementation.

The views expressed above seem to suggest that some of the principals who complain about inadequate training and find it hard to implement the NSPIs, lack the qualifications that might have previously exposed them to leadership and management skills. Thus, the level of training of principals seems to have an impact on the implementation and understanding of the NSPIs. Many respondents in this study raised this concern. In line with this view is Uugwanga (2007, p. 27), who voices a similar anxiety about the level of training of principals in Namibia in relation to effective implementation of the NSPIs. Uugwanga locates his

concern in the fact that some were trained under the old South African apartheid system. In addition, the Ministry of Education acknowledges this problem when it states, “the MoE does not require formal management training as a pre-condition for promoting teachers to become principals or heads of department. At present, opportunities for professional staff development of managers are insufficient” (Namibia. MoE, 2007a, p. 25).

Respondents see training in management and leadership roles as enabling principals to understand the policy documents (NSPIs) through personal reading. Further, sensitive reading of the NSPIs’ policy helps principals to direct and inspire teachers. Therefore, there seems to be a clear correlation between the qualifications principals possess and their ability to implement the NSPIs. Respondents, however, doubt the capacity of principals who are in possession of a BETD qualification obtained through in-service training, as they are not able to understand the NSPI policy document even after having read it. According to Adaramola (2009, unpagged) “from time immemorial, notable leaders have come to be known by their ability to inspire followership through their rich reservoir of knowledge which, in most cases, come from a life dedicated to reading.”

The data shows that some principals remain uninitiated into a culture of reading. This could be connected to the level of qualifications they possess. It is through reading that principals are able to understand contemporary leadership thinking, which is important for the effective implementation of the NSPIs. Thus, the lack of a culture of reading evinced by some principals seems to be one of the factors contributing to the ineffective implementation of the NSPIs at some schools.

Furthermore, it is argued that “things do not necessarily improve with the passage of time. Skills do not improve without practice and change initiatives do not succeed without effort and attention” (*Sustaining reading first*, 2007, unpagged). The implementation of the NSPIs requires principals who are able to appreciate change and transform the culture within a school: the main aim of school improvement (Harris, 2002, p. 70). Bush and Glover (as quoted by Earley & Weindling, 2004) state that:

Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy,

structures, and activities of the school are geared toward the achievement of this shared vision (p. 4).

The data indicates that the 2006 training was aimed at preparing principals, while the other implementers were to be trained using the cascade model. This agrees with my statement in Chapter Two, where I claimed that two representatives from each region were trained at the national level, and were then expected to impart the knowledge they acquired to other education officers in their respective regions. This notion was also attested to by one of the respondents.

Cascade training, when coupled with the short duration of the pre-implementation training, is an unacceptable approach given the complexity of the NSPIs. In Chapter Two I argued against the cascade model of training, which is common in public institutions, as I believe that it affects policy implementation negatively. Bellis (2005) as already quoted in Chapter 2 under section 2.6 supports my view.

The data shows that some respondents are similarly against the cascade model of training. Their opposition seem to be in agreement with Bellis (2005, p. 14), in that they believe that information loses its efficacy when it is communicated through many channels. However, others believe that even if in the cascade model information tends to lose its originality, they as principals have to ensure that during training they need to gain such an understanding of the material that they would be able to transmit the information to their staff without losing much of its originality. This latter view suggests that some principals possess confidence in their ability, and realise their responsibility to mediate change in their schools. We must remember that the success of policy implementation depends on the meaning school principals attach to it, and an understanding of the leadership role they need to play in its process (Theron, 2007, pp. 199).

Therefore, although during the policy implementation period principals are expected to be supportive of their staff members, this is only possible if they have the capacity for and knowledge of contemporary leadership practices. Principals, as leaders, are empowered when they are provided with the necessary tools (skills) to improve the ways in which they

work, thus enabling them to influence their staff to adapt to new policies (Arcaro, 1995, p. 56; Theron, 2007, p. 195; Wedell, 2009, p. 39).

The data further reveals that some of the regional trainers were seen to be incompetent, unable to provide the trainees with clear, unambiguous information. This is a serious problem, since now principals are expected to train their staff without having received accurate information themselves. Wedell (2009) cautions that “whether it [change] occurs, and what form it ultimately takes, depends on how people understand what is written down and how they behave in response to that understanding” (p. 17).

However, this problem might have originated in the national training and then been passed down to schools through the regional training principals received. Furthermore, it could be that the trainers were in fact competent or that some of the trainees were inept, like in the case of principals who by virtue of their lack of professional training (qualifications) were unable to comprehend the content. Nevertheless, it remains true that information loses its originality when passed through as many channels as it is with the cascade model of training.

It must be stated that if IoEs, ATs, and other regional staff lack understanding of the policy of the NSPIs, they tend to pass on limited instructions to its supposed implementers. They “have little choice but to pass on the ‘orders’ to the institutional leaders [principals], who, equally unclear, pass them on to teachers to implement” (Wedell, 2009, p. 46).

Whatever the case may be, principals, as leaders, should use their skills to read the policy documents well, and pass on a clear message to their staff. They should demonstrate that they are leaders who have been entrusted to lead their schools to greater heights. My research findings reveal that struggling principals were told to team up with other principals who understood the NSPIs. This is in line with Theron (2007, p. 199), who states that one of the principal’s roles in managing change is “contacting other principals who have already had experience of the proposed change”. Principals, as transformers of schools, should motivate their teachers and help them overcome the problems that rear in difficult, transformational times. Principals need to display “more enthusiasm and optimism” and communicate their belief in their staff by telling them, “I know you can do it”. This gives staff “confidence and inspires them to try harder” (Epitropaki, n.d.).

It is emphasised that effective principals are those who encourage their staff to cope with change, because they develop teachers and help map new directions for their schools (Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2003, p. 167). However, that is only possible if principals are engaged in personal and professional development. Some principals in my study seem to have received poor training, and so lack the skills that characterise contemporary leadership approaches.

In support of the above statement, the NESE reports for 2007 and 2008 show that principals require training that enables them to manage and lead schools well. The NESE reports are based on visits to schools – 30 in 2007, 29 in 2008 – to monitor the implementation of the NSPIs. The reports state that “Professional competence of managers and their ability to inspire and motivate were weak in around half of all schools” visited (Namibia. MoE, 2008, p. 9; Namibia. MoE, 2009, p. 11). Therefore, both reports recommend that there is an urgent need for a training programme to cover all aspects of school management. Furthermore, Udjombala (2006, p. 110), in his research study conducted in the former Ondangwa-East region of Namibia, found that Namibian school principals hardly undergo formal management training, but rather ascend to headship without acquiring the necessary skills. These findings further demonstrate how Namibian schools are short of well-qualified principals who are able to think in terms of contemporary leadership theories, such as transformational leadership.

It is, however interesting to note that the NESE’s recommendations stress that the management of schools be attended to, and is silent about the role of leadership in schools. This strikes me as paradoxical, as both leadership and management are equally important in the professional development of principals – and especially with regard to the effective implementation of the NSPIs. As I have already mentioned (in section 5.2.2), management and leadership are inextricably linked. Therefore, we need to think of leadership in schools in terms of the ‘two-factor theory’, which suggests that transformational leadership exists alongside transactional leadership. The assumption is that the two-factor theory accounts for the way in which an organisation is maintained in the normal course of events (Bush & Coleman, 2000, p. 23). The NSPIs are fully in support of this view, as I have argued in section 5.2.2 of this thesis. Therefore, for the effective implementation of the NSPIs, and in order to

bring about meaningful change in Namibian schools, principals need to employ both transformational and transactional leadership strategies.

5.2.4 EFFECTS OF THE INTRODUCTION OF THE NSPIs AND POSSIBLE TENSIONS

5.2.4.1 IS IT RESISTANCE?

There is evidence that the implementers themselves resisted the introduction of the NSPIs. The data indicated that teachers and principals complain about too much work being added to an already demanding workload. Since policies are likely to be resisted by implementers, Busher (2002, p. 275) argues that principals have an important mediating role to play between the policy's designers and its implementers, helping the latter to understand and cope with the proposed changes. For a policy like the NSPI to be successful, the support of the school community and commitment from its implementers is essential (Harris, 2002, p. 10; Theron, 2007, p. 195). In Chapter Two, section 2.4, I stated that effective principals are those who are able to mediate changes like the ones entailed by the implementation of the NSPIs.

The data also shows that the complaint of 'too much work' could be viewed from divergent perspectives. One interpretation is that principals complain because they may not be used to working under the sort of pressure that is imposed on them by the complexities of the NSPIs. This is in agreement with van der Westhuizen (2007, p. 225) who states, "Too much pressure at work is usually associated with change because new documents and regulations must be complied with", thus demanding a "lot of energy" from implementers (Wedell, 2009, p. 190). However, it is obvious that change is usually accompanied by anxiety. Therefore, responsibility lies with the principal to help teachers adapt to new reforms. It could be argued that IoEs have a similar role to play, supporting principals during the implementation of the NSPIs.

The second aspect of the respondents' complaints about too much work may relate to the inadequate training they received prior to the implementation of the NSPIs, which I discussed in the previous section. Any task might seem overwhelming if one does not

possess the requisite skills to master it. Some principals, then, lack the skills required to mediate reform, and thus perceive that their new workload is beyond them (van der Westhuizen, 2007, p. 225).

Nevertheless, according to the research that has been conducted into transformation in schools, school leaders must help teachers adapt to change. Furthermore, principals should be proactive and establish partnerships with other schools, to create opportunities for learning from each other. The NSPIs encourage partnerships such as this, and stress the importance of teamwork at cluster, regional and national levels. They even recommend that teachers be given opportunities to show their expertise in this capacity (Lambert, 2003, p. 427; Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 10, 32-33; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 16; Theron, 2007, pp. 198-199). It is also important that principals solicit assistance from their regional office during the transformation process. Wedell (2009) is in agreement with these assertions:

During the early years of an implementation process teachers (and institutional leaders and administrators) in a particular local or institutional context all need regular opportunities to interact with others in similar roles. Ideally, most of this interaction will be with colleagues having very similar change experiences in their shared institutional context, but ideally people also need chances to meet others trying to carry out the same change in other institutions (p. 37).

My research also discovered that some principals and teachers see the NSPIs as imposed upon them. They argue that they were not consulted at all while the policy of the NSPIs was developed, and only became involved during its implementation. If implementers are not involved in the developmental phase of a policy, the policy's designers risk the reform being resisted, and often abandoned before it yields its intended results. Literature confirms that policy developers tend to exclude implementers from the initial stages of policy design, and this phenomenon seems common in many countries (van der Westhuizen, 2007, p. 225; Wedell, 2009, p. 23).

The data also shows that some principals tend to distance themselves from the NSPIs when they train their teachers, referring to the policy of the NSPIs in detached terms, such as "It was said . . ." It is as if they are suggesting that the NSPIs are merely a set of instructions, enforced upon them by higher authorities. It is my belief that such attitudes implicitly speak of resistance and a lack of leadership, and are influenced by what van der Westhuizen

(2007, pp. 224-225) refers as a lack of skills and a misunderstanding of the reasons for change. Regrettably, it seems consultation was not properly undertaken during the developmental stage of the NSPIs, and that as a result, some of the respondents perceived the NSPIs' policy as an imposition on them; not as a collaborative venture aimed at increasing the provision of quality education in Namibia.

5.2.4.2 MONITORING WHAT?

My research found that, during the implementation of the NSPIs, principals experienced monitoring problems. It became evident that the monitoring of teachers by principals is not being effectively carried out. Some principals, in spite of acknowledging that this was one of their roles in the implementation of the NSPIs, even admitted that they did not perform monitoring duties. Others, along with the IoEs and the focus group respondents, emphatically revealed that monitoring was not taking place as expected. Some took the issue further, opining that monitoring did not exist at any level in the educational bureaucracy, from the regional office right down to the teacher in the classroom. This is a serious revelation, and an important finding of this study.

The IoEs implicitly confirmed the issue of a complete lack of monitoring in the region, when they cited that no transport was available to Education Officers to allow them to visit schools, and assist and monitor teachers and principals. The issue of a lack of transport for IoEs, ATs, and other regional staff is evident in the data, but it was only the IoEs who openly raised it.

However, respondents perceive monitoring as playing an important role in the implementation of the NSPIs. They feel that if monitoring is not taking place as required, the intended results of the NSPIs will not be achieved. For example, the focus group saw the NSPIs as a new innovation, and hence they cautioned to implement them only if they are strictly monitored.

Monitoring does not seem to be taking place, and this is in contradiction of the policy of the NSPIs. One of the dictums of the NSPIs is that principals conduct regular monitoring. The

NSPIs state that “principals and management need to know how are teachers coping and what can they do to support them. Classroom observation and continuous monitoring is essential in this regard” (Namibia. MoE, 2007c, p. 17).

At this point, it is important to bear in mind that the implementation of any policy will be successful only if implementers are given the support that they need. The data shows that there is little forthcoming support for principals from Regional Offices and the Namibian MoE. In the focus group interview, the respondents indicated that they felt unhappy about the lack of support. They stressed that there is a real need for financial support from the Ministry and Regional Offices, so that schools can buy enough materials. The data shows that the assistance provided by Advisory Services is really needed for teachers at schools, but there is no transport available to take these officials [ATs] to schools. The link between ATs and schools seems to have collapsed. Finally, the data showed that respondents expressed doubts about whether their country (Namibia) was in fact ready to implement programs such as the NSPIs, which require a lot of funding for proper implementation, and not funding which moves ‘at a snail’s pace’. In agreement with this is Wedell (2009, p. 27), who warns that if policy designers fail to commit to funding the change, it will encourage implementers to perceive the change as unimportant, and retreat from its demands.

The issue of a lack of monitoring becomes contentious in this study, as while it is evident that monitoring is not taking place at all levels, this study is ostensibly focused on principals. From the data, I have deduced a number of factors that could contribute to the lack of monitoring by principals. It seems as though some principals were struggling because their qualifications are suitable for teaching, not leading. Furthermore, some principals do not have secretaries or HoDs to assist them. Wedell (2009, p. 19) warned that if implementers are not supported “through the change process” – like with the provision of school secretaries, HODs and other resources – they regard the change as ‘an attack’ on their “key meaning”. There is evidence that the lack of HoDs at some schools placed principals in a difficult position with regard to conducting classroom observations. Either they were forced to leave their learners unattended while observing teachers, or they were only able to visit a few teachers in a term. This limits their full support to teachers, and goes against the policy of the NSPI, which requires that all teachers be visited in class at least twice per term

(Namibia. MoE, 2007c, pp. 17-18). Therefore, the provision of HoDs to schools that are in need of them is likely to enhance the effective implementation of the NSPIs.

Furthermore, the data reveals that some learners sit on the floor because of a shortage of classroom furniture. In addition, teaching and learning materials are insufficient or simply unavailable. It emerged that some learners are taught in sheds and not in classroom buildings. Some schools lack basic infrastructure such as running water, electricity, and telephones. This is contrary to Key Area 1 of the NSPIs' policy document, which requires that schools are furnished with enough materials, and have access to enough resources, to be conducive learning environments (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, pp. 8, 11-13).

The NESE reports for 2007 and 2008 on Key Area 1 (provision of resources) show that there was an "acute shortage of textbooks in over 90% of schools" visited, and they expressed "Serious concern over secondary school hostels' dilapidation, learner safety and inadequate sanitation" (Namibia. MoE, 2008, p. 8). Furthermore, it is reported that schools were short of school secretaries and cleaners (especially in primary schools), and adequate government funding (Namibia. MoE, 2009, p. 8). These problems could also contribute to the challenges faced by teachers and principals in the implementation of the NSPIs, as they may engender feelings of hopelessness.

In summary, my research found that principals experience many challenges in terms of receiving support from their Regional Offices and the MoE, and this has contributed to their implementing the NSPIs without a sense of excitement for their proposed changes. This lack of excitement seems to have translated into a disregard for proper monitoring in schools.

5.2.4.3 THE VALIDITY OF SELF-EVALUATION AND TARGETS. IS IT WORTHWHILE?

There is strong evidence in the data that the information provided by schools' target-settings, SSEs, TSEs, and SDPs is not reliable. The data indicates that the information is highly artificial, inflated to cover up weaknesses, and used to convey the pretence of an effectively-functioning school. Furthermore, the data shows that the inflation of performance statistics is caused by 'fear' on the part of schools, of national exposure of the

information they provide. One respondent, for example, indicated that most of his schools did not give real information in their SSEs and SDPs. He said that less than 5% of schools in his circuit were conducting them realistically. Therefore, the data shows that these evaluative exercises are fundamentally flawed. It is my belief, moreover, that their lack of honesty renders them self-defeating.

The NSPIs require schools to conduct SSEs, where they identify aspects in which the school is strong and others in which it is weak. The rationale is for schools to develop an SDP, aimed to sustain their strengths and find ways to address their weaknesses. In addition, teachers are expected to do TSEs and set targets for their respective subjects, as a means toward setting targets for the whole school's performance (Namibia: MoE, 2005a, p. 2; Namibia. MoE, 2007b, p. 2; Namibia. MoE, 2008).

The introduction of the NSPIs is intended to transform all schools into effective schools that provide quality education. According to the NSPIs, the good school knows:

- What it is aiming to do
- How well it is achieving its aims
- What aspects of the school need work to keep them at a good standard
- What aspects of the school need to be improved
- What action is planned
- Whether action currently under way is succeeding (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 2).

Schools are expected to ensure the provision of quality education, and to achieve this end they have been given an apparatus for self-management, in the form of the SSEs (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 3). However, the SSEs are useless if the information they contain is fallacious.

The chief reason gleaned from my interviews for the artificial inflation of school performance statistics, is the issue of the 'fear' felt by schools concerning their performances. The fact that the data shows that respondents are suspicious of the motives behind the evaluations demonstrates to me that principals and teachers have a mistaken understanding of the SSEs. Clearly, the SSEs' potential benefits were not explained to them

adequately. This is in line with Wedell (2009, p. 39), who claims that principals “first and obviously themselves need to fully understand (and hopefully also believe in the value of) the change aims, in order to identify what these mean for their organization, and to be able to help their staff understand and believe in them too”.

Paradoxically, the data reveals that some principals are the ones who ‘force’ teachers to supply artificial information. It is indicated that principals instruct their teachers to balance their rating between the 2nd and 4th levels (where level 1 is Weak, 2 is Fair, 3 is Good and 4 is Excellent), saying that they do not want to be regarded as fallible. These actions seem tantamount to immorality. Transformational leaders do not condone immorality because they strive to influence good values in teachers, as Bass indicates when he grounds the concept in the following three aspects:

- The moral character of the leader.
- The ethical values embedded in the leader’s vision, articulation, and program (which followers either embrace or reject).
- The morality of the processes of social ethical choice and action that leaders and followers engage in and collectively pursue (Transformational leadership, n.d).

In section 5.2.2, I mentioned that leaders need to take risks and occasionally break institutional rules, but only if it serves the greater interest of their organisation. Rozycki (1993) clarifies that point by stating that:

Leadership is stimulated by providing incentives to rule-breaking. However, such rule-breaking . . . must be justified as done to achieve a superordinate good, if only from the perspective of the immediate group to which one belongs (unpaged).

Dishonesty and the obfuscation of truth will always impede school growth. Thus, artificially inflating the SSEs, TSEs, and other performance evaluations, is stripping schools of all the educational benefits that might otherwise have been forthcoming from the installation of self-management practices.

Although the overarching aim of the NSPIs is to increase the provision of quality education in Namibian schools, since their implementation in 2006 there has been no clear evidence of improvement in learners' performances (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 1; Namibia. MoE, 2007a, p. 1). The data shows that in the last four years, the pass rate has not improved at many schools, and if it has, the improvement is inconsistent and fluctuates unpredictably.

Dishonesty, again, seems to have influenced the performance of learners. Taking the information furnished by the SSEs from 2006-2008 and comparing it with the learner pass rate from 2005-2008 as part of my document analysis, it became evident that improvement was minimal and insignificant at many schools. In order to put the findings to perspective, and for accuracy and reliability in terms of the pass rate comparison, I confined my analysis to the results of grade 10 learners. The reason for this was that the grade 10 results are reliable insofar as the examinations are set and marked nationally, unlike in grades 1-9 and 11, which are locally administered. Furthermore, I excluded grade 12 results because there was only one school that offered grade 12 participating in the study. The results from grade 1-10 are available in table B (below) as evidence for further analysis.

This inherent dishonesty of the SSEs is clearly demonstrated in the specific example of School 1. In the SSE rating for Key Areas 3 and 5 in the tables A and B below, there is a rating of 3, which reflects a good performance (more strengths than weaknesses). But, the pass rate in grade 10 over the last four years (2005-2008) is 54%, 18%, 40%, and 38% respectively. One would expect an SSE rating of 3 in Key Areas 3 and 5 to achieve a pass rate of over 60%. There are numerous cases like this to be found in the tables below.

One can deduce from the data that there is no relationship between the SSEs and an improvement in learners' pass rates or performances. If the school performs well in Key Areas 3 and 5, obviously, the pass rate should be high. Thus, the SSEs, TSEs, SDPs, and school performance targets are orchestrated to portray a fake picture of success. I deliberately made use of results dating back to 2005 to indicate the school's performance before and after the advent of the NSPIs, and to show the discrepancy between learners' pass rates and the evaluations given by the SSEs.

The data begs the interesting question: if a school's performance is good in grades 1-9, why is it all of a sudden so difficult to maintain this performance in grade 10? Furthermore, table

A shows how the rating is not only high for staff but for management as well (management meaning principals and HoDs). The over-rating, unreliability and dishonesty implicit in the SSEs are not unique to the Ohangwena Region, but seem to be prevalent in many schools in Namibia. Both NESE reports of 2007 and 2008 show that the performance ratings of the SSEs, with the exception of Key Area 1, were higher in all Key Areas than the NESE team's rating (Namibia. MoE, 2008, p. 13; Namibia. MoE, 2009, p. 13).

As I stated above, the objective of the SSEs is self-improvement within individual schools. If a school conducts the SSEs as it is meant to, it needs to know:

- What is actually happening in the school. That in turn requires:
 - A systematic approach to cover all important aspects
 - Examination of evidence, not just hearsay
- How what is happening measures up against a national standard
- Where in the school the strengths lie, which need to be preserved
- Where effort is needed to keep things at a good standard (e.g. where changes have been made in a syllabus)
- Where there are weaknesses that need to be remedied (Namibia. MoE, 2005a, p. 3).

Therefore, because of rife dishonesty, schools seem to be doing the opposite of what the NSPIs recommend. This poses the question of whether the target settings, SSEs and other evaluative exercises have any value for schools in Namibia.

However, although it seems that there have been no improvements with regard to learners' performances, this does not necessarily mean there has been no progress at all. We must remember that the NSPIs entail a complex and 'titanic' reform, and that their effect might yet to be seen. Fullan (as cited in Wedell, 2009, p. 18) postulates that large-scale change, of the sort proposed by the policy of the NSPIs, takes 5-10 years before it is achieved.

TABLE A

SCHOOL SEL-EVALUATION (SSE) FROM 2006-2008

| | | Key area 1 | | Key Area 2 | | Key Area 3 | | Key Area 4 | | Key Area 5 | | Key Area 6 | | Key Area 7 | |
|--------|------|------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|-------|
| | | Provision of Resources | | Curriculum & attainment | | Teaching & Learning | | School as a Social Unit | | Management and Leadership | | Links with Parents | | Links with Other Schools and Region | |
| SCHOOL | YEAR | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff |
| 1 | 2006 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 1 | 2007 | 1.9 | 1.8 | 2.2 | 2 | 2.2 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.6 | 3 | 4 | 3.7 | 2.2 | 2.5 |
| 1 | 2008 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 2 | 2006 | 1.5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2 | 2 |
| 2 | 2007 | 0 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.7 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3.4 | 2.7 | 3.2 | 2 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 2.3 |
| 2 | 2008 | 1.6 | 1.4 | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.6 | 2 | 2.7 |
| 3 | 2006 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2.5 |
| 3 | 2007 | 2.9 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.2 | 2.4 | 2.7 |
| 3 | 2008 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.7 | 3.4 | 3.8 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 3 |
| 4 | 2006 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2.5 |
| 4 | 2007 | 1.7 | 1.2 | 2 | 2.7 | 2.2 | 3.6 | 3 | 3.2 | 2.8 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 1.6 | 2 |
| 4 | 2008 | 1.8 | 1.9 | 3.2 | 3.1 | 3 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.3 | 3 | 3.1 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 1.7 | 2.3 |
| 5 | 2006 | 1.5 | 1 | 2 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 2.5 | 2.6 | 3.5 | 2.8 | 2 | 2.1 |
| 5 | 2007 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 1.4 | 2.8 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 2 |
| 5 | 2008 | 1.9 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 6 | 2006 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 6 | 2007 | 3 | 2.6 | 2.5 | 2.7 | 4 | 3.6 | 3.1 | 3 | 3.8 | 3.4 | 4 | 3.8 | 2 | 2.3 |
| 6 | 2008 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 3 | 2.4 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.2 | 3 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 4 | 3.9 | 2.6 | 2.7 |
| 7 | 2006 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 2.7 | 2.7 | 2.8 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 3.1 | 3.3 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 2.3 | 2.2 |
| 7 | 2007 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 7 | 2008 | 1.8 | 1.3 | 3 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 3.4 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.8 | 2 | 3.4 |
| 8 | 2006 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3 | 3.4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3.2 |
| 8 | 2007 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 3.5 | 3 | 3 |
| 8 | 2008 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.5 | 2.8 | 3 |
| 9 | 2006 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| 9 | 2007 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 |
| 9 | 2008 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| 10 | 2006 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 10 | 2007 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| 10 | 2008 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4 |
| 11 | 2006 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.9 | 2.3 | 2.9 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 3.1 | 2.8 | 2.3 | 2.6 |
| 11 | 2007 | 1.6 | 2 | 2.3 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.3 | 3 | 3.1 | 3 | 3.4 | 4 | 3.6 | 2.7 | 2.9 |
| 11 | 2008 | 2.1 | 1.6 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.6 | 3.6 | 4 | 3.8 | 3 | 3 |
| 12 | 2006 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| 12 | 2007 | 2.7 | 2.6 | 2.7 | 2.3 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 3.4 | 3.4 | 3 | 2.9 | 2.8 | 2.7 |
| 12 | 2008 | 2.1 | 2.3 | 2.4 | 2.9 | 2.1 | 2.8 | 2.8 | 3.3 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 2.8 | 2.9 |

KEYS:

Man=Management

TABLE B

PASS RATE FROM 2005-2008 IN % FOR GRADE 1-10 FOR SCHOOL 1-12

| G | 1 | | | | 2 | | | | 3 | | | | 4 | | | | 5 | | | | 6 | | | | 7 | | | | 8 | | | | 9 | | | | 10 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|------|--|--|-----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|-----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|-----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|----|------|--|--|
| 1 | 94 | 2005 | | | 89 | 2005 | | | 93 | 2005 | | | 78 | 2005 | | | 68 | 2005 | | | 88 | 2005 | | | 80 | 2005 | | | 74 | 2005 | | | 67 | 2005 | | | 57 | 2005 | | | 59 | 2005 | | | 54 | 2005 | | | | | | |
| 2 | 88 | 2006 | | | 83 | 2006 | | | 92 | 2006 | | | 75 | 2006 | | | 83 | 2006 | | | 81 | 2006 | | | 77 | 2006 | | | 74 | 2006 | | | 54 | 2006 | | | 80 | 2006 | | | 76 | 2006 | | | 51 | 2006 | | | 18 | 2006 | | |
| 3 | 89 | 2007 | | | 87 | 2007 | | | 93 | 2007 | | | 71 | 2007 | | | 89 | 2007 | | | 85 | 2007 | | | 76 | 2007 | | | 78 | 2007 | | | 58 | 2007 | | | 42 | 2007 | | | 80 | 2007 | | | 76 | 2007 | | | 50 | 2007 | | |
| 4 | 79 | 2008 | | | 86 | 2008 | | | 91 | 2008 | | | 92 | 2008 | | | 86 | 2008 | | | 89 | 2008 | | | 70 | 2008 | | | 94 | 2008 | | | 87 | 2008 | | | 42 | 2008 | | | 51 | 2008 | | | 50 | 2008 | | | 38 | 2008 | | |
| 5 | 68 | | | | 100 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 80 | | | | 55 | | | | 63 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 85 | | | | 88 | | | | 88 | | | | | | | |
| 6 | 95 | | | | 100 | | | | 88 | | | | 87 | | | | 80 | | | | 43 | | | | 48 | | | | 43 | | | | 54 | | | | 64 | | | | 38 | | | | 31 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | 76 | | | | 82 | | | | 77 | | | | 82 | | | | 82 | | | | 27 | | | | 37 | | | | 33 | | | | 54 | | | | 66 | | | | 56 | | | | 35 | | | | | | | |
| 8 | 85 | | | | 100 | | | | 89 | | | | 89 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 46 | | | | 70 | | | | 42 | | | | 64 | | | | 34 | | | | 37 | | | | | | | |
| 9 | 77 | | | | 89 | | | | 88 | | | | 88 | | | | 84 | | | | N/A | | | | 59 | | | | 42 | | | | 37 | | | | 100 | | | | 51 | | | | 29 | | | | | | | |
| 10 | 82 | | | | 88 | | | | 88 | | | | 86 | | | | 86 | | | | 57 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| 11 | 78 | | | | 82 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| 12 | 84 | | | | 89 | | | | 88 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 73 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | 88 | | | | 92 | | | | 61 | | | | | | | |
| | 79 | | | | 85 | | | | 89 | | | | 87 | | | | 84 | | | | 60 | | | | 43 | | | | 42 | | | | 42 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

5.2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I attempted to make sense of the data presented in Chapter Four. I used the literature I reviewed as a lens to interpret the principals' perceptions and experiences following the implementation of the NSPIs.

Participants indicated that they support the implementation of the NSPIs as an attempt to standardise the provision of quality education in Namibia. Respondents affirmed the important role principals play in this implementation, but felt that the training they received was inadequate, and that the absence of monitoring led to ineffective policy implementation.

My study found that there are many challenges posed to the implementation process. These include the incompetence of principals and teachers, and the lack of both human and physical resources available to schools.

My research also showed that the SSEs, TSEs, SDPs and school target settings are not authentic. A number of factors contribute to the flawed SSEs, and there is a prevailing sense that there is no real improvement in Namibian schools following the implementation of the NSPIs.

In the following chapter, I summarise my main findings, indicate the potential value of my study, and offer recommendations.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

The study revealed that there is a fundamental understanding of the importance of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia among the respondents. Common reasons given by the respondents when they say they are in favour of the introduction of the NSPIs include:

- Their support for the introduction of common standards in Namibian public schools
- Their belief that the NSPIs enable principals to lead and manage their schools well
- Their belief that the NSPIs serve to strengthen the principals' role of stakeholder in the running of their school
- Their belief that the NSPIs will improve the provision of quality education in Namibia
- Their appreciation of a means by which to evaluate schools and to identify weaknesses, and so to improve school performance
- Their perception of the strengthening of the management/leadership role of principals.

The fact that principals see the importance of the introduction of the NSPIs is a positive sign, because only when leadership is in support of a new innovation can its objectives be realised. Thus, the introduction of any educational initiative must be supported by the principal. This is in line with Berman and McLaughlin (as quoted by Westraad, 2005, p. 49), who claim that "Projects having the active support of the principal were likely to fare well". However, the principals' support of the NSPIs is meaningful only if they understand how the policy works. A lack of proper understanding of the policy can equate to a lack of support for it.

However, the study further reveals that principals, even though they state they are in support of the NSPIs, seem not to perform a leadership role during their implementation. Rather than leadership, what was stressed was the managerial role of principals and IoEs in the implementation of the NSPIs, as respondents made reference to the importance of monitoring, supervising, guiding, observing, inducting, etc. Furthermore, the respondents emphasised phrases such as 'make sure' and 'see to it', suggesting that they act as enforcers of adherence to the policy. Thus, it seems that the principals I interviewed perceive their role in the implementation of the NSPIs more as that of a manager than that of a leader.

While principals seem to be in line with the NSPIs when it comes to their managerial roles, they seem to only partially implement the policy of the NSPIs in their schools. This is because, as I have argued throughout this thesis, the NSPIs implicitly call for principals to be both managers and leaders. Furthermore, the research found that the principals selected for this research study lack an understanding of contemporary leadership thinking, and lack leadership qualities such as the ability to influence, motivate, and inspire their staff. As I have stressed, the contemporary theory known as transformational leadership expounds these leadership qualities. Consequently, I believe that Namibian principals would do well to familiarise themselves with the concept of transformational leadership.

Principals who are suited to this reform process (the implementation of the NSPIs) are both managers and leaders, or those who are able to practise both transformational leadership and transactional leadership. Principals, being agents of change, are able to transform their schools more effectively if they use both transactional and transformational leadership strategies. The former is chiefly useful in ensuring policy compliance. The latter is used to inspire staff to achieve a common school vision, and is achieved by valuing one's staff as individuals in whose personal development you are intimately involved, and including them in your decision-making processes. However, only the Inspectors of Education (IoEs) among my respondents acknowledged the need for principals to display leadership as well as managerial skills when implementing the NSPIs.

The study shows that the training given to principals in 2006, which was designed to prepare them for the introduction of the NSPIs, was inadequate and ineffective. As a result, principals experienced problems in giving proper assistance to their teachers. They viewed

the training as poorly conducted. The factors that contributed to the ineffectiveness of the training are the fact that it lasted only two days that the cascade model of training was used, that there was a lack of competency on the part of both trainees and trainers, and that some principals were under-qualified and ill-equipped to assimilate the training. The study found that only when pre-implementation training is coupled with continuous in-service training will the NSPIs will be successful, and I believe that the IoEs need to assist principals in this regard.

Very few principals in this study see the training they received in 2006 as effective in improving their leadership. However, the study shows that some principals lack a proper understanding of the NSPIs, because they lack the qualifications that might have exposed them to contemporary leadership and management theories such as transformational leadership and transactional leadership. The respondents agreed that principals need to have a clear understanding of the NSPIs if the policy is to be effectively implemented in their schools.

The study established that the majority of principals are holders of the BETD qualification, which qualifies them for teaching but not for leading and managing schools. In my view, the effective implementation of the NSPIs is at stake unless this situation changes. The study further reveals that the greatest difficulty in understanding the NSPIs is experienced by principals who were trained under the apartheid education system.

This study established that the system of promoting teachers to become HoDs and principals does not require teachers to have formal management and leadership training. Furthermore, it is indicated that opportunities for training principals in management and leadership in Namibia are very limited (Namibia. MoE, 2007a, p. 25). Therefore, substandard qualifications, coupled with the lack of a culture of reading, impede the effective implementation of the NSPIs. What the study revealed is that principals failed to team up with other principals, who understood the NSPIs, even though they were advised to do so. They also failed to seek assistance from their Regional Office. Such attitudes contribute to the ineffective implementation of the NSPIs in Namibia.

The study also found that implementers (teachers and principals) resisted the NSPIs, citing that they were not consulted during the development stage of the policy. It is established in

this study that this resistance was caused by a number of factors. For example, principals see the lack of support from the MoE, in terms of both physical and human resources, as an incapacitating burden placed on them. This is evident when some schools complain that they are without HoDs, school secretaries, enough textbooks and writing materials for learners, furniture for learners and teachers, classroom buildings, running water, electricity, sanitation, computers, funds, etc. They feel the MoE is not doing enough to support schools.

My research further indicated that monitoring is not taking place as required. Even the Regional Office was cited for not performing its monitoring duties due to the shortage of transport for Education Officers, who are meant to be able to visit schools and provide assistance to implementers. Some principals fail to monitor the implementation of the NSPIs because, without HoDs and secretaries to assist them, they are overloaded with teaching and administrative duties. Others simply lack the capacity due to their inadequate level of training. It appears that there is a feeling among some principals that the NSPIs are unimportant, because – even though principals are considered crucial to the effective implementation of the NSPIs – the MoE has failed to support them with the required physical and human resources. It is also found that principals complain about ‘too much work’ being entailed by the introduction of the NSPIs.

The study reveals that the information provided by schools’ target-settings, SSEs, TSEs, and SDPs is not reliable. The study found that the information is highly artificial, inflated to cover up weaknesses, and used to convey the pretence of an effectively-functioning school. Furthermore, my research shows that the inflation of performance statistics is caused by ‘fear’ on the part of schools, of national exposure of the information they provide. In some instances there is evidence that principals deliberately skew their ratings when they conduct the SSEs, and instruct their teachers to balance their rating between the 2nd and 4th performance levels. This is because they do not want to be regarded as fallible. This disturbing phenomenon is illustrated in table A, on page 92.

During the course of my research, I also discovered that the introduction of the NSPIs has not yet improved the performance of schools. There is no existing evidence that the NSPIs positively influence the pass rate of learners (see tables A and B on pages 92-93).

Therefore, the conclusion that must be drawn from this study is that the implementation of the NSPIs has not succeeded in improving school performance in terms of learners' pass rates. However, with regard to administration there is a degree of improvement, despite the fact that principals and teachers complain about 'too much' administrative work being given to them.

In summary the study found that:

- There is good progress in the implementation of the NSPIs in a few schools.
- There is a lack of understanding of the NSPIs among principals and teachers.
- SSEs, TSEs, SDPs, and target-settings conducted by schools almost always supply unreliable information.
- There is a gap between the ideals set out by the NSPIs' policy and its practical implementation in schools.
- There is inequitable distribution of resources to schools by the MoE.
- Implementers were not effectively prepared for the introduction of the NSPIs.
- There is a need for continuous training of principals, teachers and parents pertaining to the implementation of the NSPIs.
- There is a lack of monitoring in schools.
- Professional support (staff development) at schools is lacking.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is not the first to be conducted in Namibia to recommend possible improvements in respect of educational change. While principals play an important role in mediating transformation in schools, and while they are expected to be supportive of their staff members, this is only possible when they are provided with the necessary skills to improve the quality of their input (Arcaro, 1995, p. 56; Wedell, 2009, p. 39). In this case, the

Ohangwena Directorate Region should provide support to principals to equip them with the necessary skills to effectively implement change. Proper understanding of the NSPIs must be provided to implementers, and especially to those leaders who have the responsibility to mediate the implementation of the NSPIs. Therefore, I recommend intensive training for all principals, Heads of Department, teachers, and School Board members.

It is argued that no matter how intensive pre-implementation training sessions are, they may prove to be futile and their lessons may be discarded during the implementation stage if they are not supplemented by continuous in-service training (Fullan, 1991, p. 85). Therefore, it is my opinion that the Ohangwena Directorate Region should provide continuous training to principals. IoEs, ATs and special education officials should take the lead in providing this training.

Monitoring of the implementation is as important as giving support to it. It is reported in this study that schools are not regularly visited, and so monitoring seems to have fallen by the wayside. Therefore, Inspectors of Education, Advisory Teachers, and special education officials should spend more time visiting schools and providing assistance to ensure the effective implementation of the NSPIs. The Regional Office should provide transport to officials so that they are able to visit schools regularly. In addition, principals should conduct monitoring as prescribed in the Guidelines for subject management in schools, and should solicit assistance from the IoEs and ATs when the need arises.

According to the Guidelines for School Principals in Namibia, principals are required to take the lead in creating a School Development Plan, and are accountable for its full implementation (Namibia. MoE, 2005b, pp. 3-4). However, this study found that the SSEs, TSEs, SDPs, and target-settings conducted by schools lacked credibility. Therefore, I recommend that the Ohangwena Regional Directorate embark upon a vigorous awareness campaign directed at school leaders, to explain the benefits of an honest School Self-Evaluation.

The implementation of the NSPIs requires the investment of a great deal of time and the support of a large number of individuals. Inspectors of Education should also try to reach out to schools to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses, and provide constructive advice especially at the beginning of the academic year.

Wedell (2009, p. 27) warned that if policy initiators do not fulfil their commitment to the funding of the change, it will encourage implementers to perceive the change as unimportant. Therefore, adequate funding should be an aspect that is thoroughly considered prior to the implementation of a policy. This study reveals that many schools are under-resourced. For example, principals find it difficult to observe their teachers in the classroom because principals also have many periods to teach, and they have to perform administrative duties. Therefore, this study recommends that the Ohangwena Regional Directorate appoint Heads of Department and schools secretaries to the schools that are currently without them. Further, this study recommends the immediate construction of classroom buildings and the provision of furniture to all the schools in the Ohangwena Region that currently fall short of the mark of being 'conducive learning environments'. There is a desperate need to provide adequate funding to schools, and I believe that the Ohangwena Regional Directorate and the MoE should resolve to provide these funds.

It is reported in this study that some principals need to learn leadership skills to help them implement the NSPIs. The Ohangwena Regional Directorate should identify principals who need leadership development, and seek help from the Ministry to provide training. Furthermore, I urge the Ministry of Education to implement the recommendations made by Udjombala, who suggested a need for standards in training programmes (Udjombala, 2006, p. 109).

This issue, the lack of leadership and management skills on the part of school leaders, needs to be addressed. Otherwise, all that will happen is that teachers, HoDs and principals will end up investing time, energy and money into entrenching unsuitable leadership practices, which will negatively affect the provision of quality education.

6.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The policy of the NSPIs is comprised of seven Key Areas – namely, provision of resources for the school, curriculum and attainment, the teaching and learning process, the school as a social unit, management and leadership of school and hostel, links with parents and community, and links with other schools and the region. Therefore, in order to have a

broader understanding of the implementation of the NSPIs in schools, further research needs to focus on these specific Key Areas. Furthermore, this study found that leadership skills seem lacking in many principals when implementing the NSPIs; therefore, there is a need for greater research into this subject.

6.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research has potential value for school principals, Inspectors of Education, and the Regional Officers in the Ohangwena region in particular, and Namibia in general. As I am one of the Inspectors of Education in the Ohangwena region, this research will provide me with a sense of the principals' experiences and expectations. I will now be able to understand the principals' experiences, and I will be in a better position to help them implement the NSPIs effectively.

This research is useful to principals in the Ohangwena region because they can use its findings to improve their implementation of the NSPIs and other policies. The Ohangwena IoEs could use this research to strengthen their support of principals in their respective circuits. For example, IoEs could use my research to improve their assistance to schools by focusing on the following strategies:

- Providing continuous training of school leadership
- Assisting principals to cope with change
- Identifying the key areas in which training is needed
- Explaining the importance of School Self-Evaluations, and why honesty is necessary

Since the implementation of the NSPIs is an important and ongoing process, the Regional Office could use my findings to strengthen the capacity of school leadership and management in the whole region. The MoE may also benefit from the recommendations of this study when designing future policies. For example, as I have stressed, intensive training needs to be given to implementers before the implementation stage of any innovation.

The research may also contribute to the field of leadership in policy implementation, in institutions of higher learning.

6.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

A study of the NSPIs, which is a valuable policy aimed at standardisation and increased provision of quality education, would be more useful if the sampling covered many schools. Case studies have natural limitations since they “can oversimplify or exaggerate a situation, leading the reader to distorted or erroneous conclusions about the actual state of affairs, as distinct from the report itself” (Winegardner. n.d.).

As this is a specific case study of limited scope, it might be considered erroneous to extrapolate or generalise its findings. However, the data triangulation techniques that I employed assisted me to minimise the above-mentioned concern. Therefore, I believe that this study could be generalised, based on Winegardner’s argument that:

It is considered legitimate to generalize based on the degree to which a case is representative of some larger population. It is not merely a question of how many units but rather what kind of unit is under study; it is the nature of the phenomenon that is the true gauge of the population to which one seeks to generalize (n.d.).

Another possible limitation of the study is the fact that my job as one of the Inspectors of Education of the Ohangwena Region might have influenced the responses of my interviewees. It is possible that responses were given that are not representative of the true situation. However, the fact that I did not conduct any research in schools belonging to my own circuit strengthens the validity of my study (see chapter 3 for more information concerning the ethical issues surrounding my research).

6.6 CONCLUSION

The introduction of the NSPIs is one of the best policy initiatives in the history of the Namibian MoE. Its importance lies in that the standards it demands are aimed at the

provision of uniform quality education in all schools in Namibia. If the challenges that are impeding its effective implementation are fully addressed, then I have no doubt Namibia will be able to reach her national goal of Vision 2030. Therefore, it is imperative that all stakeholders invest their time and energy into the effective implementation of the NSPIs in all schools. This thesis has attempted to suggest ways in which such investments may be undertaken responsibly and successfully.

REFERENCES

- Adaramola, T. (2009). *Our political leaders and reading culture*. Retrieved November 5, 2009, from <http://allafrica.com/stories/200903230558.html>
- Arcaro, J. S. (1995). *Quality in education: An implementation handbook*. Delray Beach, Florida: St. Lucie Press.
- Barker, B. (2005). *Transforming schools: Illusion or reality*. Oakhill: Trentham Books.
- Bellis, I. (2005). Sustaining project developments in the long run: How is this achieved¹. In Westraad, S. & duPlooy, P. (Eds.), *Sustaining education development projects: 2004 Forum Proceedings* (pp. 10-22). Port Elizabeth: GM South Africa Foundation.
- Bennett, N., Crawford, M., & Cartwright, M. (2003). *Effective educational leadership: Leading and managing for effective education*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Berg, B. L. (2004). *Qualitative research methods for social sciences* (5th ed.). Boston: Pearson.
- Bush, T. (2002). Educational management: Theory and practice. In Bush, T. & Bell, L. (Eds.), *The principles and practice of educational management* (pp. 15-33). London: Paul Chapman.
- Bush, T. (2003). *Theories of educational leadership and management* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications.
- Bush, T. (2008). *Leadership and management development in education*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Bush, T., & Coleman, M. (2000). *Leadership and strategic management in education*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Bush, T., & Middlewood, D. (2005). *Leading and managing people in education*. London: Sage Publications.
- Busher, H. (2002). Managing change to improve learning. In Bush, T. & Bell, L. (Eds.), *The principles and practice of educational management* (pp. 275-290). London: Paul Chapman.
- Cheng, Y. C. (2002). Leadership and strategy. In Bush, T. & Bell, L. (Eds.), *The principles and practice of educational management* (pp. 51-69). London: Paul Chapman.
- Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th). London: Routledge.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research methods in education* (6th ed.). London: Routledge.

- Crowther, F., & Olsen, P. (1997). Teachers as leaders: An exploratory framework. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 11(1), 6-13.
- Cunningham, W. C., & Cordeiro, P. A. (2002). *Educational administration: A problem-based approach*. Boston: Pearson Education.
- Cunningham, W., & Cordeiro, P. A. (2003). *Educational leadership: A problem-based approach* (2nd ed.). Boston: Pearson Education.
- Davidoff, S., & Lazarus, S. (2002). *The learning school: An organisation development approach* (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Juta.
- Earley, P., & Weindling, D. (2004). *Understanding school leadership*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Epitropaki, O. (N.D.). *What is? Transformational leadership*. Retrieved October 26, 2009, from O.Epitropaki@sheffield.ac.uk
- Everard, K. B., Morrison, G., & Wilson, I. (2004). *Effective school management* (4th ed.). London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Ford, J. (2005). Examining leadership through critical feminist readings. *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 19(3), 236-251.
- Fullan, M. (1992). *Successful school improvement: Modern education thought*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Fullan, M. (1991). *The new meaning of educational change* (2nd ed.). London: Cassell.
- Harris, A. (2002). *School improvement: What's in it for schools*. London: Routledge Falmer.
- Hauwanga, S. P. (2008). *Implementation of National Standards Education at primary schools in Ohangwena region, Namibia*. Unpublished master's thesis, Tshwane University of Technology, Pretoria.
- Lambert, L. (2003). Leadership redefined: An evocative context for teacher leadership. *School Leadership & Management*, 23(4), 421-430.
- Learmonth, J. (2000). *Inspection: What's in it for schools?* London: Routledge Falmer.
- Leithwood, K., Jantzi, D., & Steinbach, R. (1999). *Changing leadership for changing times: Change education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- MacBeath, J., & Riley, K. (2003). Effective leaders and effective schools. In Bennett, N. Crawford, M. & Cartwright, M. (Eds.), *Effective educational leadership: Leading and managing for effective education* (pp. 173-185). London: Paul Chapman.

- Mazibuko, S.P. (2007). *The managerial role of the principal in Whole-School Evaluation in the context of disadvantaged schools in Kwazulu-Natal*. Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of South Africa, Pretoria.
- Merriam, S. B. (2001). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education: Revised and expanded from case study research in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Moloi, K.C. (2002). *The school as a learning organisation: reconceptualising school practices in South Africa* (2nd ed.). Pretoria: van Schaik Publishers.
- Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (1999). Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training. Report Vol. 1. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2005a). *National standards and performance indicators for schools in Namibia*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2005b). *Guidelines for school principals*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2007a). *Education and training sector improvement programme (ETSIP)*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2007b). *School Self-Evaluation instrument*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2007c). *Guidelines for subject management in the school*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2008). *National External School Evaluation report 2007*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Namibia. Ministry of Education. (2009). *National External School Evaluation report 2008*. Windhoek: Government Printer.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). New York: Sage.
- Rozycki, E. G. (1993). *Is moral leadership possible?* Retrieved October 27, 2009, from http://www.ed.uiuc.edu/EPS/PES-Yearbook/93_docs/ROZYCKI.HTM
- Sergiovanni, T. J., Kelleher, P., McCarthy, M. M., & Wirt, F. M. (2004). *Educational governance and administration* (5th ed.). New York: Pearson.
- Sustaining reading first: Developing effective reading leadership*. Sustainability series, number 2, September 2007. Retrieved November 5, 2009, from <http://www.ed.gov/programs/readingfirst/support/leadershipbrief-lowres.pdf>
- Stake, R.E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Theron, A. M. C. (2002). Change in educational organisations. In P. C. van der Westhuizen (Ed.), *Schools as organisations* (pp. 181-215). Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Theron, A. M. C. (2007). Change in educational organisations. In P. C. van der Westhuizen (Ed.), *Schools as organisations* (3rd ed.) (pp. 182-217). Pretoria: Van Schaik .
- Thomas, M. R. (2003). *Blending qualitative research methods in theses and dissertations*. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.
- Udjombala, J. S. (2006). *An investigation into the perceived effects of a school management/leadership training programme in the Ondangwa East Education Region of Namibia*. Unpublished master's thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Uugwanga, N.N. (2007). *The professional preparedness of the primary school principals in the Oshikoto region of Northern Namibia to implement the policy on the National Standards for school leadership and management*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of the Western Cape, Bellville.
- Van der Mescht, H. (2009). (Introduction to research orientations). Master's lecture notes, Rhodes University, Education Department, Grahamstown
- van der Westhuizen, P.C. (2007). Resistance to change in education. In P.C. van der Westhuizen (Ed.), *Schools as organisations* (3rd ed.) (pp. 218-243). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Washington, M., & Hacker, M. (2005). Why change fails: Knowledge counts. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 26(5), 400-411.
- Wedell, M. (2009). *Planning for educational change: Putting people and their contexts first*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Westraad, S. (2005). Sustaining school development from within –a complex challenge. In Westraad, S. & duPlooy, P. (Eds.), *Sustaining education development projects: 2004 Forum Proceedings* (pp. 47-55). Port Elizabeth: GM South Africa Foundation.
- Westraad, S. F. (2006). *An investigation of the key mechanisms that promote whole school development in secondary school pilot project context*. Unpublished Doctoral thesis, Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Winegardner, K. E. (n.d.) *The case study method of scholarly research*. The Graduate School of America. Retrieved November 2, 2009, from https://uascentral.uas.alaska.edu/onlinelib/Summer-2007/PADM635-JD1/Winegardner___case_study__research.pdf
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (Director)



RHODES UNIVERSITY

Grabamstown • 6140 • South Africa

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Tel: (046) 603 8383/4 • Fax: (046) 622 8028 • e-mail: education@ru.ac.za

18 June 2009

Mr Josia Udjombala
Regional Director of Education
Ohangwena Region

Dear Josia

Permission for Messr Lukas Kashikatu and TK Johannes to conduct research in your region

Greetings! I trust all is well in your part of the world and you are working as hard as ever coordinating education in the Ohangwena Region.

The purpose of this letter is to obtain your permission for two of my students - Lukas Kashikatu (student number 07k3001) and TK Johannes (student number 09J4050) to conduct research in your region. They are both full-time Masters students of mine and both have successfully completed the coursework section of the programme. They now need to conduct their research and, as you know, we prefer our students to investigate an issue in their own countries.

Lukas wants to conduct an OD intervention in two schools in the region. He has been in touch with the principals of the schools but obviously he needs your permission first. TK wants to investigate principals' leadership role in implementing the NSPI in schools. I am sure their work will be of value to the schools in question and the region as a whole. May I take this opportunity of asking you to support them in any way possible. Doing research is no easy matter – as you know – and our students need all the help they can get.

Thank you very much Josia, and keep well.

Regards

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hennie'.

(Prof) Hennie van der Mescht
(Course Coordinator)

APPENDIX B – PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH (From Director)



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION: OHANGWENA EDUCATION DIRECTORATE

Private Bag 2028, Ondangwa. Tel. 264 65 281 903, Fax. 264 65 240 190

Enq: Josia S Udjombala
E-mail: tatemadala@yahoo.com
Ref: SP

Prof Hennie van der Mescht
Education Department
Rhodes University
Fax. 00 27 46 622 8028

June 23, 2009

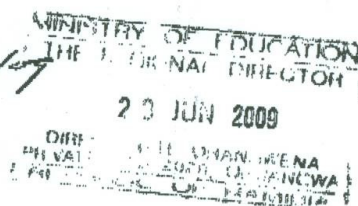
Dear Prof Van der Mescht

RE: PERMISSION FOR MESSRS LUKAS KASHIKATU AND T K JOHANNES TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN OHANGWENA REGION

1. I write to refer to your letter (through fax) of this morning with regard to the above subject matter.
2. Permission is hereby granted to Messrs Lukas Kashikatu and T K Johannes to conduct research in our region, at schools of their choice. Permission is granted on condition that:
 - participation by individual teachers/learners is voluntary;
 - school academic programmes are in no way to be disrupted;
 - Once completed, a copy of their respective research findings are to be deposited with our regional library, or teachers resource centre.
3. I would like to wish Messrs Kashikatu and Johannes every success in their studies, and look forward to the findings and possible recommendations of their research.

Yours sincerely

Josia S Udjombala
23/6/09
JOSIA S UDJOMBALA
DIRECTOR: MoE
OHANGWENA REGION



APPENDIX C

LETTER OF CONSENT

.....
.....
.....

I understand that this research is to explore the perceptions and experience of school principals in the Ohangwena Region, Namibia of the implementation of the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia.

I also understand that the information collected will be used to contribute to the understanding of problems experienced by principals by the researcher in his study of perceptions and experiences of principals concerning the implementation of the NSPIs. The information will be used for the study of a Masters degree.

I undertake to participate in this exercise on voluntary basis and that I have the right to withdraw at any time. I understand that the information (discussion) will be voice recorded, however it remains confidential. My personal identity will remain anonymous as well as the name of my school. The information will be used only for study purpose as it will appear in the thesis that will be produced at the end of the study.

If I have any question about my rights as participant or I am dissatisfied at any time with any aspect of the study, I may contact Mr TK Johannes (researcher) at +264812503147 Or email tkjohannes@yahoo.com

I agree to participate in this study and also agree for the interview to be voice recorded.

Name:

Institution:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX D

A. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR PRINCIPALS

1. How do you view/see the implementation of the NSPI in your school?
2. What do you say are your roles in the implementation of the NSPI?
3. What are your comments on the implementation of key area 5 in your school?
4. What are you say are the effectiveness of the NSPI and SSE in your school?
(performance improved, SSE and targets results reliable, leadership role, work, etc)
5. What challenges did you experience when implementing the NSPI?
6. Do you get external assistance for the implementation of the NSPI?
7. Were you trained for the implementation of the NSPI? (who, where, alone from school, view on training, improve self)
8. What do you recommend for the smooth implementation of the NSPI?

B. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR INSPECTOR OF EDUCATION

1. How do schools cope with implementation of the NSPI?
2. How do you regional office assists school to implement the NSPI?
3. How do principals implement key area 5 as stated in the policy?
4. In your view, how do schools implement the SSE and SDP? Do you think they did it honestly?
5. How do you view the training given to schools to implement the NSPI?
6. How did the NSPI change schools' performance?
7. What do you recommend for smooth implementation of policy?

C. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP

1. How do you see view the implementation of the NSPI?
2. What are you say are the effectiveness of the NSPI? (performance improved, SSE and targets results reliable, leadership role, work, etc)
3. Would you say your school implement key area 5 as stated in the policy?
9. Were you trained for the policy implementation? (who, where, alone from school, view on training, improve self)
4. Do you get external support for the implementation of the NSPI?
5. What do you recommend for future implementation?

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions as you can. Don't indicate your name please.

1. Does your school implement the NSPI (National Standards and Performance Indicators)? **Use a tick (✓) for your selection.**

Yes No

- 1.1 If your answer is yes/no above, explain why by providing examples:

- 2 What are your roles in the implementation of the NSPI?

3. What are you say are the roles of the Inspector of Education and the Regional office in the implementation of the NSPI?

4. Does your school complete the SSE? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

4.1 What was the score?

| YEAR | Key area 1 | | Key Area 2 | | Key Area 3 | | Key Area 4 | | Key Area 5 | | Key Area 6 | | Key Area 7 | |
|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|-----------------|-------|-------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| | Resources | | Curriculum | | Teaching & Lear | | Social Unit | | Management | | Parents | | Other Schools | |
| | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff | Man | Staff |
| 20067 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2007 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2008 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

5. Do your teachers complete Teacher Self-Evaluation (TSE)? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

6. Do you think the information your school provides during SSE exercise represents the reality at of the school? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

6.1 If your answer is no above provide reasons why.

7. Do you think the information your teachers provide in the TSE form represents their reality/potentiality/capacity? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

7.1 If your answer is no provide reasons why.

8. Do you think the information you provide in the SDP form represents the reality? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

8.1 If your answer is yes or no provide reasons why you say so.

9. Do you think the information your teachers provide in setting the Targets is achievable? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

9.1 If your answer is ye or no provide reasons why.

10. Make a circle for Key Area your school implements with easy?

Key Area/s 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Why is it easy? Give reasons

11. Make a circle/s for Key Area/s the school is struggling to implement?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

11.1 Give reasons why:

.....

.....

.....

12. In your views do you think schools implement fully the NSPI? What are the reasons?

.....

.....

.....

.....

13. Do you think the introduction of the NSPI improved the learners' performance; management and leadership performance of principals?

Learners performance.....

Management and leadership

14. What was the results of your learners in 2005, 2006, 2007and 2008?

| YEAR | GRD 1 | GRD 2 | GRD 3 | GRD 4 | GRD 5 | GRD 6 | GRD 7 | GRD 8 | GRD 9 | GRD 10 |
|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|
| 2005 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2006 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2007 | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2008 | | | | | | | | | | |

15. What are the challenges you experience when implementing the NSPI?

.....

16. When the NSPI introduced in 2006 were you trained on how to implement it (the NSPI)? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

Yes No

17. How long was the training? **Use a tick (v) for your selection.**

- 1 day
- 2 days
- 3 days
- 4 days
- 5 days
- More than 8 days
- More than 10 days

18. Who trained you (the occupation) do not mention the name?

.....

19. How do you view that training?

.....
.....

20. Who trained your staff members (don't mention the name)?

.....

21. In general, is the NSPI worthwhile? **Use a tick (✓) for your selection.**

Yes No

21.1 Why you think so?

.....
.....
.....
.....

22. What do you recommend for the smooth implementation of the NSPI and other policies?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for responding to all the questions.