

**RHODES UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**An investigation into the principals' leadership roles in selected
schools in the Ohangwena Region in Namibia: Case study**

Submitted by

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Abstract

School leadership in Namibia over past centuries was characterized by ‘top down’ administration and typically proceeded without participation of those involved other than the principals who were the sole decision makers. The notion of school leadership through teamwork (team leadership) in Namibia was formalized after the advent of democracy in 1990 and the subsequent reorganization of the education system. The notion of team leadership is embedded in theories that stress participation, teamwork and distributed leadership. It is against this background that this study sought to investigate the current understandings of school leadership and application of team leadership among principals in selected schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia.

The study is an interpretive case study of two secondary schools in the above-mentioned region in Namibia. The research utilized three quantitative data gathering techniques, namely semi-structured interviews, observation and document analysis. The research participants were two principals, two teachers and two school board members from each research school.

The main findings of this study revealed that the notion of participation of all stakeholders in education is seen as a fundamental aspect of the current leadership thinking. However, the respondents’ vision of leadership is limited and quite traditional in many ways. There is emphasis on the need to control, monitor, and delegate rather than team leadership. Furthermore, where consultation is mentioned it seems the respondents think of the passing down of information – a cascade model - as consultation, a view that is narrow and inaccurate in terms of contemporary leadership theories.

While there was an appreciation of the benefits derived from team leadership, challenges facing such leadership pervaded responses. These included lack of understanding of government policies such as ETSIP and NSPIs, resistance to change and implementation of policy.

The study recommends that leadership and management programs and teacher leadership development programs be established in Namibia. Finally, the study recommends further research to include Learner Representative Council and Heads of Department. These stakeholders in education may provide new insights into the current school leadership thinking.

Dedication

This study is dedicated to my lovely mother, Ms Elisia Kukuulunhu Haiduwa, who inspired me to walk this extra mile in my life.

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List of Acronyms used

CCP Cluster Centre Principal

CDPC Cluster Development Program Committee

ETSIP Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme

HOD Head of Department

IoEs Inspector of Education

LRC Learners' Representatives Council

MoE Ministry of Education

NSPIs National Standards and Performance Indicators

PGDE Post Graduates Diploma in Education

PQA Program for Quality Assurance

SCM Students' Christian Movement

SMT School Management Team

TLDPs Teacher Leadership Development Programmes

UNAM University of Namibia

Declaration

I, **Silas Shituleipo Shitana**, 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 and that all the sources quoted have been acknowledged by complete references.

Signed.....

December 2011

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Chapter 1

Introducing my research study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces my research to the reader. It seeks to clarify how and why I developed an interest in the phenomenon under investigation: the principals' leadership role in selected schools in the Ohangwena region. I elaborate on the context of the study and present the research goal and research questions. Furthermore, I also highlight the methods used in this study. Finally, I provide an outline of how the thesis is structured.

1.2 My research interest

My interest in the phenomenon of the investigation of principal's leadership role emerged from my 11 years of teaching experience and more specifically during the last four years after I became a Head of Department. On numerous occasions during that period I was placed in the role of acting school principal, where I encountered the numerous challenges and problems that arose from leading a school. These difficulties posed significant challenges that I thought worthy of investigation.

Furthermore, as a member of the teaching profession for a number of years, I became aware that school principals often present a façade of democratic leadership. While vision and mission statements may be in place, there is a pretense at shared leadership. School principals often claim that other stakeholders, such as parents, are involved in decision-making, but in actual fact there is limited involvement, a fact borne out by research (Prew, 2006, p. 7).

Recent researchers Johannes (2009) and Kashikatu (2009) suggest that principals have not fully embraced the principle of decentralization. Many leaders of schools in Namibia seem to still be operating in a bureaucratic, non-participatory manner and are apparently unprepared for their new role as change agents, despite new educational policies being in place

(Kashikatu, 2009, p. 1). An example of this was identified in research conducted by Johannes (2009, p. ii), who found that “school principals in Namibia are experiencing challenges in the implementation of the National Standard and Performance Indicators for schools in Namibia” (NSPIs). He argues “that their difficulty stems from their lack of understanding of contemporary leadership thinking” [theories] (p. 96) namely transformational leadership, distributed leadership, shared leadership, participative leadership among others and the nature of organisational change.

It is against this background that I feel a study of leadership at the two schools chosen in the Oshana Region in Namibia is necessary and potentially valuable. The decision to focus almost exclusively on the principal’s leadership role helps to focus the study in terms of scope and also acknowledges that the principal’s leadership seems to be the determining factor in school effectiveness.

1.3 Context

Historically in Namibia and South Africa leadership has been extremely authoritarian (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002, p. 170). School leadership was solely the responsibility of the school principals; therefore leadership was often viewed as being ineffective. Teachers and parents were less involved in the leadership of the school as they would be uncertain of their role in this regard.

After independence, Namibia like many post-colonial African countries made it a priority to restructure and transform its education system in line with its new education philosophy of access, equity, quality and democracy. The tendency to regard school principals “as solely responsible for leadership of school is replaced by the notion that leadership is the prerogative of many, if not all, stakeholders in education” (South Africa. Department of Education, 1996, p. 19). One of the developmental initiatives adopted in Namibia was the decentralization policy. According to the Ministry of Education and Culture (1993, p. 168), “decentralizing both responsibility and authority is the key to upgrade the quality of school and to maximize the local contribution to the whole education system”. This policy involved the transfer of decision-making powers, administration, authority and responsibility from central government to

localized levels of institutions including schools, with a view to improving the quality of education. Transformation of this kind needs to reach all levels - national, regional and at school level in order to succeed. However, this study will focus on the level of school management and leadership, since this is where my experience lies.

In line with trends toward decentralisation, school principals are expected to transform their leadership by promoting staff development, being change agents and maintaining a collaborative, professional school culture fostering teacher development (Leithwood & Poplin, 1992, p. 2). This leadership approach is best described as 'transformational', a word that is commonly accepted to indicate leadership that involves deep personal and organisational values rather than task accomplishment only. The consensus among theorists is that "transformational leaders are most effective in adopting and sustaining innovation in schools" (Prew, 2006, p. 7). Equally, Davidoff & Lazarus (2002) claim that "what is needed is an approach to leadership which recognizes the need for effectiveness within a culture of negotiation, and commitment towards building empowerment for all participants" (p. 170).

The notion of 'transformational' leadership breaks with traditional theories which view leadership as either task or person-oriented. Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach, (1999, p. 9) define transformational leadership as follows:

This form of leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the commitments and capacities of organizational members. High levels of personal commitment to organizational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals are assumed to result in extra effort and greater productivity (p. 396).

Furthermore, leaders are expected to inspire followers to commit to personal and shared visions and goals for an organization. Leaders challenge members to be innovative problem-solvers and seek to develop followers' leadership capacity via coaching, mentoring and role modeling.

Other contemporary leadership theories – such as servant leadership, distributed leadership and participative leadership - build on transformational leadership and generally stress holistic

personal involvement and development, with an emphasis on participation and involvement of all stakeholders. Bush (2003a, 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 leadership. Thus, principals need to develop both theoretical and practical knowledge of transformational leadership approaches to turn the policy of decentralization into reality.

The move toward decentralization in South Africa and other African countries reflect current leadership theories. Bush’s (2003a, p. 64) collegial models, for example, emphasise that “power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organization”.

The search for quality education is not unique to Namibia. Many governments in Africa are searching for effective leaders in schools and strategies to improve the provision of quality education for their citizens (Johannes, 2009, p. 3). In South Africa, the introduction of a South African Standard for School Leadership that fully defines the role of principal and key aspects of professionalism and expertise required is a good example of such measures (South Africa. Department of Education, 2006, p. 1). Similarly, the Ministry of Education in Namibia introduced the National Standards and Performance Indicators (NSPIs) for schools in Namibia and other educational policy documents.

School leadership has in recent times become a popular subject of research. In South Africa, a study by Nongauza (2004) looked at the role of the principal in an academically successful farm school. The study found that “the principal is considered to be fairly autocratic in her leadership, which is a departure from the current leadership thinking” (p. ii). Studies from further afield conducted by Tjivikua (2006) and Kawana (2007) investigated the principals’ leadership role in successful rural schools in Namibia. These studies revealed that principals were both person and task-oriented leaders, and closely resembled the ideals of transformational leadership. Importantly, the recent research conducted by Johannes (2009) investigated the implementation of NSPIs in Namibia. Some of the findings of this study were that principals lacked an understanding of contemporary leadership theories and leadership qualities as stated earlier. This is an important finding in the context of my research, since I

planned to explore principals' leadership roles in selected schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia.

1.4 Research goal and research questions

The goal of my research is to investigate the leadership of the school principals of two schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia. In particular, the research focuses on how principals are responding to challenges brought about by decentralization and the need for transformation. To be able to achieve the goal of my study, I focused on the following research questions:

- What are the principals' understandings of school leadership? How do they see their role and how does this compare with contemporary (transformational) leadership theory?
- How do other members of the organization – teachers and parents – experience the principals' leadership? How does the principal involve them in management and leadership?
- How and to what extent do principals promote shared leadership in their schools?
- What are the challenges in the implementation and promotion of transformational (non-traditional) leadership approaches?

1.5 Research methodology

The research is located in the interpretive paradigm and it was a small, qualitative case study, since I wanted to gain insight into how principals and other stakeholders understand their leadership roles. According to Yin (2003, p. 13), a case study is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context". The interpretive paradigm unpacks how people understand their experiences, seeking to describe and

understand an aspect of human behavior as it happens in its natural setting (Merriam, 2009, p. 23).

The sample for my research consists of two principals, two teachers and two members of the school board from each of the selected secondary schools in Ohangwena Region in Namibia. The sampling procedure employed is a purposive sampling technique which is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to understand, discover and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt (Merriam, 2009, p. 77; and Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 115).

The multiple data collection methods are used. The main data collection methods in this research are semi-structured interviews and observation. Document analysis was the secondary data collection method. The methods I used were chosen for their ability to reveal information from differing perspectives and together would provide rich and sufficient data for this research.

I use inductive reasoning as a mode of inference during the interpretation of my data. I developed a “contextual interpretation” (Merriam, 2009, p. 176) of the data, which allowed me to move from the concrete, actual experiences of the participants to more abstract and general themes surrounding the issues. In order to enhance the validity of my research, I collect data from different sources for triangulation purpose. The full details of the research methods are presented in chapter three.

1.6 Outline of the thesis

This thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter one introduces the reader to the phenomenon of the investigation of the principals’ leadership role in selected schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia. I begin with the reasons why this phenomenon first interested me, followed by the research context, research goals and research questions and finally the methodology in which the research is oriented.

Chapter two looks at the theoretical framework underpinning my study, developed through a review of literature related to the concept of leadership. I present a brief overview of school leadership in Namibia and also discuss the roles of principals as policy implementers within the Namibian perspective. I also look at leadership with regards to being person and task-oriented, with specific references to contemporary leadership theories, along with some of the post-transformational leadership theories. Finally, I present a section on effective leadership in the school environment.

Chapter three describes the methodology adopted in this study. Here I give a description of the research paradigm I used and the methods and techniques employed in data collection. I also highlight the data analysis method like coding, the ethical consideration of the research participants and the site.

In Chapter four, I present the findings from the data. Here the data are presented as drawn from all techniques used during the research. In chapter five, I discuss the research findings that are published in chapter four through the lens of the literature. Chapter six is the conclusion, where I present a summary of my findings and offer my own personal recommendations. I also offer suggestions for further research and look at the significance of the study and finally, at the study's limitations.

Chapter 2

Literature review

We are more likely to learn something from people who disagree with us than we are from people who agree. But we tend to hang around with and over listen to people who agree with us and we prefer to avoid and under listen to those who don't (Fullan, 2001, p. 41).

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present literature related to the investigation into the principals' leadership role in selected schools in the Ohangwena Region in Namibia. In order to carry out my study successfully, an overview of the particular aspects that will guide my study is necessary.

This chapter is presented in a number of sections. The first section deals with the concept of leadership. Since the main interest point of this study is the principal's leadership role of the school, an understanding of the concept of leadership is important to this thesis. Despite leadership and management being inextricably linked, I will only concentrate on leadership because it is the phenomenon that I want to explore.

Next I look briefly at the history of school leadership in Namibia which is also important to this study. The third section deals with the role of principals as policy implementers in the Namibian context. This will provide guidelines on how the principals manage change specifically in the Namibian context.

In the next section, I present an overview of the current leadership thinking with emphasis on task or person-orientation. Next I discuss the two inter-dependent contemporary leadership theories (transactional and transformational) and post-transformational leadership theories which are closely aligned with collegial models of educational leadership and management.

The second-last section deals with effective leadership in the school environment. The last section concludes this chapter and is a summing up of the main views raised in this chapter.

I begin by looking at how different authors define leadership before I discuss the brief overview of the history of leadership in Namibia.

2.2 The concept of leadership

Since the focus of this study is the principal's role as a leader of a school, it is imperative to have an overview of the concept of leadership. This will assist me in exploring more about this phenomenon. Due to the fact that leadership is the main issue in this study I will only concentrate on the concept of leadership as I mentioned in section 2.1.

According to Johannes (2009, p. 15) "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 concrete, worldwide accepted definition of the concept" (p. 15). This is linked to the findings of many recent writers, such as Leithwood, Jantz, & Steinbach (2003, p. 6) who say, "like all constructs in social sciences, the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than others, but there is no 'correct' definition" (p. 6).

In the same vein, Van Seters and Field (1990, p. 29) have almost the same concerns as Leithwood et al. (2003) when they say, "leadership is one of the most complex and multifaceted phenomena to which organizational and psychological research has been applied".

Given the above, it seems that researchers usually defined leadership according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of the phenomenon of most interest to them. For example Leithwood et al. (2003a, p. 6) argue that "leadership is a concept or a term used frequently in conversations both inside and outside organization". Therefore leadership can be expressed in many different ways. Broadly speaking it can be viewed as the ability to influence others by persuasion.

Hesburg, as cited in Johns & Moser, (2001) gave an inspiring definition of leadership:

The mystique of leadership, be it educational, political, religious, commercial, or whatever, is next to impossible to describe, but wherever it exists, moral flourishes, people pull together toward common goals, spirits soar, order is maintained, not as an end in itself, but as a means to move forward together (p. 115).

From this definition, one is able to argue that leadership always has a moral as well as an intellectual dimension and it requires courage as well as wisdom. Therefore I can conclude that leadership is a relationship in which followers gain moral and spiritual support.

Some authors define leadership as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal. For example Earley and Weindling (2004, p. 4) defines leadership as a “process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purpose”. One can thus argue that leadership involves inspiring and supporting others (teachers, learners etc) to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of school goals and vision in a given situation.

This opinion is reiterated by Gardener (2008) who defines leadership:

As the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership, teams) induces a group to pursue objectives held by leadership or shared by the leader and his/her followers (p. 7).

To add to this, in any established group individuals fill different roles and one of the roles is that of leader. Such a leader is expected to influence the activities of an organized group toward goal achievement.

York-Barr & Duke (2004, p. 262) echoes this sentiment when they say “leadership is not vested in one person who is high up in the hierarchy and assigned to a formal position of power and authority”. To them, leadership is viewed within an organizational context as involving a socially influential process “whereby intentional actions influence the activities and relationship in a group or organization” (p. 262).

Despite all of these differing viewpoints regarding the definition and concept of leadership, the definitions agree in these two areas: firstly, that leadership is about motivating people and

giving a sense of purpose to an organisation/school and their role in achieving it and secondly, that leadership is not perceived as simply a trait of an individual; that it is an inclusive leadership and one that is distributed throughout the organization/school. In essence, leadership is a process whereby one individual inspires (influence, guides) others to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of an organization/school's goals in a given situation.

Since this study focuses on the principal's leadership role in the school as a complex organization, I felt that it was imperative to give a brief overview of the historical background of school leadership in Namibia which is addressed in the next section.

2.3 Brief overview of school leadership in Namibia.

School leadership is complex and diverse and the history of school leadership in Namibia is no exception, dating back to the past centuries, first during the missionaries under the German colonial administration (1884-1914) and later under the *apartheid regime* of South Africa (1915-1989). During these various colonial periods/regimes school leadership was viewed as ineffective and superfluous. During the *apartheid regime*, the leadership of schools was characterized by 'top-down' administration, "typically proceeding without the consultation or participation of those involved, for example the principal was the sole decision maker" (Namibia. Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 4).

Since 1990, a significant development in the Namibian education system has been the move towards site-based management and its associated leadership approaches, mainly those that stress participation and sharing. The tendency to regard school principals "as solely responsible for the leadership of the school is replaced by the notion that leadership is the prerogative of many, if not all, stakeholders in education" (South Africa. Department of Education, 1996, p. 19). For example, the Ministry of Education (MoE) in Namibia has published a number of documents that describe specific education policies, plans and programmes (Namibia. Ministry of Education, 2002, p. 31).

This is evident in the extent of policy documents ranging from the Namibian Education Act 2001, Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia (NSPI) to mention only a few. Recently the Namibian Cabinet made recommendations based on the National Conference on Education that was held in Namibia from 27 June-1 July 2011. One of those recommendations was that:

Leaders and managers in education must be held accountable for delivery of relevant and quality education and developing innovative leadership to the current practice of non-implementation of policies and work plans (Namibia. Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 2).

This clearly demonstrates that there is significant evidence to support the notion that hierarchical, top-down structures are not appropriate for school leadership today because of the decentralization process.

Owen, (2001) also shares these views when he says:

Top down exercise of power and centralized control have demonstrably failed to produce the organization results the advocate of tradition organizational theory claimed it would (p. 327).

In the same vein, leadership theories have moved away from the notion of the single 'heroic' leader to participative leadership which recognizes the voices of all the stakeholders in education.

It is against this background that this study sought to explore the principals' leadership role in selected schools in Namibia particularly the Ohangwena region. The role of the principal is complex and, I will only concentrate on how they effect change in the schools, particularly with regard to policy implementation. This leads to the next topic: the role of principals as policy implementers in the Namibian perspective.

2.4 The role of principals as policy implementers in Namibian perspectives

According to Namukwambi, Rengura, Araes, Shitana, Muronga and Nauyoma (2011, p. 1) "every country went through the process of change and managing the system to the better. Managing change can be achieved or accomplished in an educational leadership situation".

In support of this quote I feel that one of the responsibilities of a leader is to manage change: principals are expected to arrange events and teachers to make this vision a reality, so that improvement can occur. It is the principal's role to mediate this process.

The publication of a number of various documents that describe specific educational policies, plans and other programmes by the Ministry of Education in Namibia are "designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning" (Namibia. MoE, 2002, p. 31).

The policies adopted by the Ministry of Education in Namibia are complex and some are difficult to interpret and implement. It would require significant leadership skill on the part of school principals for the policies to be effectively implemented in schools. Therefore principals are "expected to have a vision that enables them to polish up top-down / government-imposed policies to suit their specific contexts" (Johannes, 2009, p. 19). That is why principals play an important role in interpreting policies to suit the school environment. This only becomes possible where a leader with a clear vision exists.

Principals also need to be aware that some of the policies they (policy) are implementing are often formulated with a political purpose in mind, "therefore they (policy) might have unintended consequences which do not fulfill the initial expectation" (Uuwanga, 2009, p. 28).

An example of this is the pregnancy policy for schools which was introduced in recent years in Namibia. This policy allows pregnant learners to stay in school until the pregnancy becomes visible. According to the current information released by the Ministry of Education at the National Conference on Education held this year in Namibia, there are "unacceptably high figures of 1493 girls dropping out of school due to pregnancy in 2010 and 107 pregnant school girls in Ohangwena alone in June/July 2011" (Namibia. MoE, 2011, p. 7). This clearly indicates that this policy did not fulfill its initial expectation of reducing the numbers of girls leaving school due to pregnancy.

Policies imposed from the top-down are likely to be resisted by implementers, in this case principals and teachers. Bush (2002, p. 275) "argues that principals have an important mediating role to play between the policy's designers and its implementers, especially in

helping to understand and cope with change”. Change often results in resistance and “schools and teachers are notoriously resistant to change in the entire the world and usually for reason, particularly as the intent behind change and the actual impact are often at variance” (Fertig, as cited in Prew, 2006, p. 4). Therefore, principals as school leaders are cautioned to explain the policies in detail to the teachers and other stakeholders in education.

Fullan (2001) also has the same concerns as Prew (2006) when he says we need to respect resisters for two reasons:

- They sometimes have ideas that we might have missed, especially in situations of diversity or complexity or in the tackling of problems for which the answer is unknown.
- Resisters are crucial when it comes to the policies implementation, because people resist change for what they view as good reason (p. 42).

Therefore, it seems that in the democratic school, being alert to differences of opinion is absolutely vital to acknowledging resistance to change in schools, because if the principal ignores it, this would contribute to the failure of policy implementation. Fullan (2001) further argues “in even the most tightly controlled authority-bound organization, it is so easy to sabotage new direction during the implementation” (p. 42). Therefore for such resistance to be avoided “there needs to be open lines of communication, participation and involvement of all stakeholders. For these reasons, successful principals or school leaders do not go with only like-minded innovators, they deliberately build in differences” (South Africa. DoE, 2006, p. 18).

The success of policy implementation calls for open-mindedness and a readiness to understand the feelings and positions of others. It also depends on the professionalism and the quality of the leadership and management of the schools. Therefore during the policies implementation “principals are expected to be supportive of the staff members, but indeed, this is only possible if they have the capacity for and knowledge of contemporary leadership practice” (Johannes, 2009, p. 33).

It was against this background that this study focuses on investigation into the principals' leadership role in selected schools in Namibia, because they are the change agent at local school level. Policies have become a main issue in education around the world as well as in Namibia. Educational leaders are expected to not only focus on the task to be undertaken but also on the people involved in implementing the task. This is explained in detail in the next section.

2.5 Leadership in person and task orientation

Since the focus of this study is the role of principals as leaders of the school, which is a complex organisation, I feel it is important to have an understanding of the leadership that is task and person-oriented. This will enable me to differentiate between the leader who focuses on the task or on the person and the leader who focus on both (task and person).

According to Stone and Patterson (2005, p. 13) "the Industrial Revolution in America steered a change in how leaders viewed and treated their followers. It created a paradigm shift to a new theory of leadership in which common people gained power by virtue of their skills" (p.13).

Bush (2007) also supported these arguments when he says:

During the apartheid time bureaucratic organizations were characterized by top-down authority, authoritarian and inaccessible leadership styles' and that the principal's authority is perceived to be God-given and juridical (p. 395).

Although Stone and Patterson (2005) and Bush (2007) are comparing leadership with the scientific management of Taylor in the past centuries which was mainly hierarchical in nature and focused on the task rather than on the person, I feel that such types of leadership do not include the concept of vision, which is central to most leadership models and is suitable for school leaders working in a centralized system.

Stone and Patterson (2005, p. 3) argue that "effective leaders are the ones who moves away from the earlier concepts of the classical and scientific management theories that treated workers as machines". I tend to agree with them and found a connection between their views

and the theories of behavioural scientists in the 1960s, which suggest that leaders' behaviour is "concerned with tension between 'structures' (task) and 'consideration' (person) orientation" (Tjivikua, 2006, p. 17). Therefore the principal's interaction and relationship with the teachers is expected to be a supportive relationship, so that all the teachers in the school feel the school's objectives and their achievement are of personal importance to them.

As approaches to leadership which emphasise group rather than individual input, such as current leadership thinking, are very important to school principals, I decided to include a section on the contemporary leadership theories which have dominated the 21st century and which are also relevant to this study.

2.6 The contemporary leadership theories

As I have mentioned in the introduction, in this section I present two interdependent leadership theories (transactional and transformational) which are closely linked to political and collegial models of educational leadership and management. However, management is not a focus of this study. I will also touch on the transformational leadership theory and later on, on some of the post-transformational leadership theories which are important to this study and that will help me to understand the data.

2.6.1 Transactional leadership

According to Miller and Miller (as cited in Bush 2007, p. 398) transactional leadership "is a leadership in which relationships with teachers are based upon an exchange for some values resources". To the teacher, "interaction between administrators and teachers is usually episodic, short-lived and limited to the exchange" (p. 398).

Stone, Russell and Patterson (2004, p. 350) and Stone and Patterson (2005, p. 6) also have the same definition when they say "transactional leadership is leadership that occurs when leaders exchange promises of rewards and benefits to subordinates for the subordinates' fulfillment of agreement with the leader".

By looking at the definition of Miller and Miller (as quoted by Bush, 2007), Stone et al., (2004) and Stone and Patterson (2005) their definitions refer to transaction as an exchange process. Principals as school leaders have inherited power from their position as recognized leaders of their schools. However, principals require the cooperation of teachers to secure the effective leadership of the school. Therefore an exchange may secure benefits for both teachers and principal.

However, the new policies on education in Namibia require the participation of all the stakeholders in decision-making. In the transactional leadership theory, the interaction between principal and teachers is limited to the exchange process.

Leithwood et al., (2003, p. 28) further argue that “transactional leadership does not engage staff beyond the immediate gains arising from the transaction”. The benefits involved in the transaction process are not necessarily in the interest of the school at large and “those who are involved are not bound together in any continuing mutual pursuit” (p. 28).

As I have argued earlier that transactional leadership theory based on exchange process, exchange is an established political strategy for members of organizations. Principals possess authority arising from their positions as the formal leaders of their schools. However, the head requires the cooperation of educators to secure the effective leadership of the school. As a result “exchange may secure benefits for both parties to the arrangement” (Bush, 2007, p. 398).

Leithwood et al., (2003, p. 29) go further argue that “transactional leadership theory focuses on the specific interactions between leaders and followers”. However, these transactions are method by which an individual gains influence and sustains it over time. As a result the process is based on reciprocity. Principals as schools’ leader are not only influence teachers, but are under their influence as well. Thus, principal (leader) earns influence by adjusting to the expectations (Stone & Patterson, 2005, p. 6). Transactional leadership work only when both leaders and followers understand and are in agreement about which task are important. Stone & Patterson (2005, p. 6) echo the same sentiment when they say “transactional interactions comprise the bulk of relationship between leaders and followers”.

This study focuses on the principal's leadership role in a school where principals are expected to have an understanding of the leadership theories such as this one. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that this theory does not fully account for the phenomenon I want to explore, "because it does not build long term commitment to organizational objectives, values and mission being promoted by school leaders" (Steward, 2006, p. 3). Furthermore, it does not focus on identifying the school's goals and how teachers can work toward and increase their academic performance in alignment with these goals.

However, "transactional leadership focuses on ways to maintain the status quo and manage the day-to-day operations of a school" (Stone & Patterson, 2005, p. 7). It does not take the entire situation, teachers or future of the school into account when offering rewards. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that a transactional leadership theory focuses on control, not adaptation. Thus, principals as school leaders are expected to be visionary leaders and to adapt to change.

As discussed earlier, education and educational leaders are continually facing change, hence it is understandable that leadership theories also change; transactional theories break into transformational leadership theory, which is discussed in the next topic.

2.6.2 Transformational leadership theories

Transformational leadership theory is the latest and most promising theory in the evolution of leadership theories. Various researchers argue that transformational leadership is an expansion of transactional leadership theory. Stone, et al., (2004) specified that transformational leadership:

Is a leadership whereby leaders broaden and elevate the interest of their employees, when they generate awareness and acceptance of the purpose and mission of the group, and when they stir their employees to look beyond their own self-interest for the good of the group (p. 350).

In the case of Namibia and South Africa, transformation has a special meaning linked to the need to convert the previous stratified system into a new framework stressing equity and redress.

Bush (2007, p. 397) shares the same views when he says “transformation leadership is a case of a new government having to take on restructuring and redefining a whole system, to achieve the major aim of quality education for all”. Therefore principals as school leaders are expected to transform their schools and its resources. Since Namibia and South Africa experienced the same apartheid legacies, ‘transformation’ requires action at all levels and there are limits to what principals can achieve in the absence of appropriate physical, human and financial resources.

Leithwood and Jantzi as cited by Mushandja (2006) argue:

Principals as instructional leaders, are not only expected to transform, restructure and redefine the physical learning environment of their schools, but also to transform the people they work with (staff members, learners, other educational leaders, parents) and community members (p. 9).

Principals who are suit to this type of reform are both managers and leaders. Therefore principals are “expected to inspire teachers to higher levels of performance, and motivate them beyond their own interest, by emphasizing the need for all members of the group to work towards a common goal” (Johannes, 2009, p. 31).

Transformational leadership theory differs from transactional leadership in many ways. For example Stone and Patterson (2005) state that:

Transformational leaders look at where the organization should be heading and determine how to handle internal and external change and employee need to reach that goal (p. 7), while transactional leadership focuses on ways to maintain the status quo and manage the day-to-day operation of business (pp. 6-7).

Despite transformational and transactional theories employing separate concepts, good leaders demonstrate characteristics of both. The true role of leadership “is to manage the values of an

organization” (Stone & Patterson, 2005, p. 7). For this reason it is vital that principals using the transformational leadership theory understand how their values affect the school. This is in line with the collegial models, which assumes that there is “a common set of values held by members of the organization” (Bush, 2003a, p. 66).

In conclusion, even though transactional leadership theory does not build a long-term commitment to organizational objectives, I regard both (transactional and transformational leadership theories) as relevant to this study, as I consider leadership in schools as a “continuum with transactional leadership at one end and transformational leadership at the other” (Stone & Patterson, 2005, p. 8). Therefore, I believe that effective leadership in schools requires principals to employ both transactional and transformational leadership strategies.

Principals are expected to have knowledge of the type of leadership outlined in the post-transformational leadership theories that will contribute to the implementation of policies effectively. In the next section I discuss some of the post-transformational leadership theories which have relevance to this study and that will help me to understand and interpret the data as mentioned in section 2.6. Post-transformational theories encourage wider participation and place the emphasis on group or team leadership rather than ‘heroic’ individual leadership.

These theories are: shared leadership, distributed leadership, and teacher leadership. Each of these theories is explained in the next topic.

2.6.2.1 Shared leadership

Shared leadership, distributed leadership and teacher leadership are new concepts in education, rooted in the education reform initiatives of the 1980s-1990s and public demand for schools to be accountable for meeting an externally mandated standard with regards to students’ achievements (York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 276; Stewart, 2006, p. 2 and Graczewski, Knudson & Holtzman, 2009, p. 92). In addition to this, along with these movements toward greater accountability, were the increasing numbers of research studies attempting to measure the impact of leadership.

According to Carson, Telsuk and Marrone, (2007, p. 1217) shared leadership “refers to a team property whereby leadership is distributed among team members rather than focused on a single designated leader”. Furthermore, a review of the literature revealed that shared leadership is a relational, collaborative leadership process involving teams or “groups that mutually influence one another and collectively share duties and responsibilities otherwise relegated to a single, central leader” (Kocolowski, 2010, p. 24).

There are many dimensions, components and factors which affect shared leadership and some of these dimensions are mutually reinforcing and complimentary. Carson et al, (2007, p. 1222) propose that “shared leadership is facilitated by an overall team environment that consists of three dimensions: shared purpose, social support, and voice”. These three dimensions work together “to create an internal team environment that is characterised by a shared understanding about purpose and goals, a sense of recognition and importance, and high levels of involvement” (Carson, et al., 2007, p. 1223 and Kocolowski, 2010, p. 24).

Lambert (2003) expresses her feelings on the notion of shared leadership when she says” leadership is about learning together and constructing meaning and knowledge collectively and collaboratively” (p. 8). In this view shared leadership is a leadership that is distributed among members of a group, but shared leadership cannot be regarded as parallel leadership. This approach to leadership assumes that the school principal shares every leadership function with teachers, parents and students. This will result in increased support for teachers and parents.

Bush (2007) has the same views when he says “the introduction of the school board/school governing body for all schools in South Africa, and the greater prominence given to the school management team suggests a firm commitment to shared leadership”(p . 397).

From the above, it seems that principals are not only expected to work with teachers, but also to work with the School Board, the School Management Team (SMT) and others in the school’s community to create a shared vision, mission and strategic plan to inspire and “motivate all who work in and with the school and to provide direction for the school’s ongoing development” (South Africa. DoE, 2006, p. 20).

I tend to agree with Lambert (2003) and Bush (2007) who emphasise that leadership is about learning together and the involvement of others, as learning and leading are firmly linked within the school community. Therefore principals can take the first step in building shared leadership capacity within their schools.

Lambert (2003) argues that shared leadership is based on the following assumptions:

- Everyone has the right, responsibility and ability to be a leader.
- How leadership is defined influences how people will participate
- Educators yearn to be more fully who they are ... professional human beings (pp. 38-39).

In this view, being responsible for the leading of colleagues is the centre of shared leadership. Shared leadership brings many benefits to a school as it bonds staff together and eases the pressure on school principals. This point is supported by Sinvula (2009, p. 20) when he says “shared leadership creates the highest degree of community involvement and ownership which can sustain school reform efforts” (p. 20). Such collaboration builds a sense of collective responsibility among teachers, students and the community.

This is recognized by the Ministry of Education in Namibia, which stresses that “the school takes every opportunity to establish links with the community and allow them to have a share in the decision making processes” (Namibia. Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 31). In this regard, shared decision-making needs to be practiced within the culture of the school community.

Similarly, Kocolowski (2010) points out that shared leadership has the following benefits:

- The organisation can benefit from the diversity of thought in decision-making
- It reduces stress levels for key leaders, as a more robust shared leadership system does not unduly burden any single leader
- Flow and creativity seem to flourish in a shared leadership environment
- Collective leadership is positively associated with team effectiveness (p. 27).

Despite the benefits of shared leadership, the introduction of this form of leadership requires extensive preparatory work to overcome traditional professional demarcation. Proper planning,

commitment and “adaptations to cultural change are required to successfully implement a shared leadership model” (Kocolowski, 2010, p. 27)

Leaders are also cautioned that there are some limitations to this form of leadership. Decisions can take longer to make as it is sometimes difficult for a group of “leaders” to reach consensus. Jackson (2000) points out that, “team attitudes, turf battles, and individual career goals” (p. 170) are potential obstacles to efficient decision-making. The other limitation of shared leadership stems from elements of apparent conflict that may arise between a single-leader structure and a team structure. For instance, creating a meaningful, purposeful commitment to team performance and team member accountability are challenges involved in shared leadership.

Despite that, principals are expected to promote shared leadership in the schools and high levels of mutual trust and willingness to accept others leadership. Distributed leadership would also seem to work in schools that move away from traditional hierarchical models. This is explained more in the next topic.

2.6.2.2 Distributed leadership

The concept of distributed leadership refers to “a model that distributes leadership responsibility and activities across the multiple roles and participation” (Spillane, Halverson & Diamond 2001, p. 26). Furthermore, in distributed leadership, leadership does not reside in the principal’s office; it extends over the school’s social and situational context.

Spillane et al., (2001, p. 26) expand on this point when they state that “leadership is distributed not by delegating it or giving it away but, by weaving together people, materials and organization structures in common use”. In this view, leadership decisions and their implementation should not be the responsibility of a sole individual but should be shared between a number of teachers in the school. In the distributed leadership “the source of leadership is distributed among team members rather than concentrated or focused in a single as individual” (Carson, 2007, p. 1220).

According to Kennedy, Deuel, Nelson and Slavit (2011), there are three attributes of distributed leadership that support the development of strong school communities focused on improving student learning through teacher collaboration. These are:

- A leader's recognition and use of internal intellectual and experiential resources
- Differentiated top-down and lateral decision-making processes
- Culture building through dialogue and collaborative inquiry (pp. 21-23).

From above it seems that each of these attributes provide insight into effective leadership practices that support teacher collaboration in schools. Therefore, principals who practice distributed leadership build on the expertise of the teachers.

Principals are cautioned about the negative effects of distributed leadership such as "individual possessiveness and security become secondary to the needs of the school" (Van der Mescht, 2008, p. 4). A more considerable threat seems to be the tension school heads may experience between 'holding on and letting go'. This refers "to a tension between a desire on the part of school heads to 'let go' and enable the distribution of significant responsibilities, and the opposing to 'hold on' for fear of losing control and perhaps being exposed in the event of team failure"(Van der Mescht, 2008, p. 4).

Kennedy et al. (2011, p. 22) further argue that:

In long-held conceptions of leadership, a singular figure with charismatic and heroic qualities at the top of a hierarchy oversees the allocation of resources, builds and implements a vision, and makes decisions on behalf of the school. This notion of a leader has proven unsustainable because schools are too complex for one person to lead independently (p. 22).

Therefore principals are expected to play a vital role in helping distributed leadership to take root and flourish in schools. For example to "provide opportunities for teachers to exercise leadership including providing them with the space and authority to engage in the work of distributed leadership" (Murphy, Smylie, Mayrowetz & Louis, 2009, p. 197). Therefore, I feel that schools with distributed leadership have a flattened hierarchy structure as expert teachers and other leaders are involved in decision-making.

It is against this background that this study focuses on the investigation into the principals' leadership role in selected schools. Principals who practice distributed leadership are more likely to succeed in schools than those who support the traditional top-down structure leadership. Furthermore by "grading teachers a seat at the table, leaders acknowledge the importance of building a culture of open and honest dialogue" (Kennedy et al., 2011, p. 23). This leads to the next topic of teacher leadership.

2.6.2.3 Teacher leadership

According to Lieberman and Miller (2004, p. 7) the concept of teacher leadership suggests that "teachers rightly and importantly hold a central position in the way schools operate and in the core function of teaching and learning". In the same vein York-Barr and Duke (2004, p. 263) share the same definition when they say "teacher leadership is a group of teachers internally work together to transform the very culture in which they work and lead".

From the above two quotes, I can draw the conclusion that teachers cannot only be involved in the activities of teaching and learning, but also need to participate in the decision-making at their school during the initial, planning and management phases. Therefore teachers cannot have the perception that they are excluded from decision and management processes.

Swanepoel (2008) argues that:

The significant changes and reform demanded of schools can only be attained through devolution of power and through shared decision-making that encourage people to change and address educational problems (p. 2).

This is in line with the policy of decentralization of decision-making powers to the local and school levels where teacher leadership and involvement minimises the heroic leadership style seen in many schools in Namibia.

There are many ways in which teacher leadership can be practiced in the school. This idea is supported by Lieberman & Miller (2004) when they say:

Teacher leadership is practiced in either informal or formal positions. For example formal teacher leadership roles are lead teacher, union representatives, department head & mentor, representing the school in district-level or clusters level decision making, stimulating the professional growth of colleagues, member of site-based management team and curriculum specialist (p. 14).

Therefore principals are expected to play the role of fostering the development of teacher leadership in the school, for example by creating a more democratic school environment and providing opportunities for professional growth.

York –Barr and Duke (2004) also share these views when they say that school principals’ can support or promote teacher leadership in the various ways, some of which:

- Allow teachers to visit classrooms to assist other teachers with their instructional practice, to meet with the principal and to engage in school development work
- Redefine the role of the principal from instructional leader to developer of a community of leaders
- Pay attention to the change process and to human relationships (pp. 273-277).

Despite the various ways of supporting and maintaining teacher leadership, principals are cautioned about the challenges of teacher leadership which could include the tradition of top-down leadership, lack of rewards or incentives, lack of contemporary leadership skill among the stakeholders in education and teachers’ resistance to becoming involved in reform efforts (Lieberman & Miller 2004, p. 17; and York-Barr & Duke, 2004, p. 276).

This study is focused on the principals’ leadership role in schools where they are expected to use collegial models at school. At the collegial level, “the outcomes of teacher leadership can be viewed in terms of the effects on relationships between teacher leaders and their colleagues and in terms of the effects on the practices at the classroom and school levels” (Bush, 2003a, p. 49).

York-Barr and Duke, (2004) also share these views when they say:

Teachers can serve as powerful leaders when they work collegially with other teachers to encourage examination and evaluation of instructional practices and their effects on student learning and progress (p. 264).

The main point is that it is possible for teachers to be collegial and work to strengthen that practice, “but if the principal is resistant to shared leadership, it is highly unlikely the strivings of individual teachers will reach the critical mass necessary to impact the school as a whole” (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 15).

Swanepoel (2008, p. 3) argues that “teacher involvement in responsibility-sharing processes seems to be imperative, but teacher leadership will create an additional workload for the teachers”. Therefore, school principals are expected to take this point into consideration when they practice teacher leadership.

Finally, teacher leadership can work effectively in the school that has teamwork, trust, commitment and empowerment. Therefore principals are expected to have the skill in the post-transformational leadership theories, so that they can become effective leaders. This leads to the next discussion; effective leadership in the school environment.

2.7 Effective leadership in the school environment

The notion of effective leadership in the school can be viewed from many perspectives. According to Helterbran (2003):

The notion of effective leadership can be described as leadership which strengthens students’ achievement especially when coupled with a supportive school climate that encourages collaboration and risk-taking, teachers and principals alike have reciprocal roles in building and sharing leadership (p. 363).

Harris (2002, p. 72) has almost the same definition on effective leadership when she says “effective leadership is leadership that has influences on the effectiveness of the school and the achievement of the students”. However, the main focus of the principal as a school leader is often on the teachers, while the teachers are focused on helping students to learn. Despite that, effective leadership can be viewed from another angle where it needs to involve all stakeholders in education to be successful.

Streich (2009) argues that:

When a school lacks effective leadership, minimal learning takes place. School leaders, beginning with the principal, must provide strong leadership that set a tone for the daily operation of the school community. Teachers and all members of the school can demonstrate their commitment only if they are valued by the principal or heads of department (p. 1).

This quote convinced me that an effective leader is not only one who values his/her followers, but is also able to inspire improvement in their performance.

The success of the transformation of the schools depends on the commitment of all the involved parties in the education system. However, principals take on a central role in inspiring this commitment among their staff: “if the principal embodies good values and a sound work ethic, their teachers will respond to them with interest and commitment” (Johannes, 2009, p.19).

Principals as leaders of schools develop and build group members’ commitment to a common goal and purpose. Effective principals are “critical thinkers who have developed an awareness of the assumption under which they ... think and behave. They are sceptical of ‘quick fix’ solutions to problems” (Day as cited in Kawana, 2007, p. 12). Such leaders are able to “identify emerging issues and problems and swiftly deal with them in positive ways” (p. 12).

Streich (2009) states that the important characteristic of an effective leader:

Is one who works in an environment of transparent openness , their doors are always open and they take all telephone calls, willing to address even the most difficult situations or, in some case, the most difficult parents (p .1).

The above quote seems to imply that effective principals put the good of the community first and foster policies that promote the highest academic standards.

Effective leadership can also be viewed in the application of Fiedler’s Leadership Contingency Model and the Vroom Yetton decision model, “which emphasizes that leadership effectiveness is the result of interaction between the style of the leader and the characteristics of the environment in which the leader works “(Gray & and Starke, as cited in Kawana, 2007, p. 12).

According to their view the principal will be more effective if the environment in which she/he works is favourable.

Therefore effective leaders (principals) are expected 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” (Johannes, 2009, p. 20).

Principals as school leaders can promote a learning environment in many ways within schools. According to Harris (2002) “effective leadership for school environment includes leaders:

- Building capacity both inside and outside the school
- Being prepared to take a risk in order to achieve goals
- Being clear in vision for the school and communicating this to others
- Managing ongoing tension and dilemmas (pp. 75-76)”.

As a novice researcher, I am not fully convinced by Stretch (2009), Harris, (2002), Kawana (2007) and others who place emphasis on effective leadership being linked to academic improvement and that an effective leader is the one who adapts to the environment in which they find themselves. I would rather argue that effective leaders are the ones who employ all the post-transformational leadership theories to improve quality education; even though effective leadership has many dimensions.

2.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a review of literature dealing with the concept of leadership. I demonstrated how the academics and theorists have defined the leadership concept. After researching the literature, I have come to the conclusion that there is no consensually agreed upon definition of leadership.

I also presented a brief historical background of school leadership in Namibia, where leadership was characterized by single heroic leadership. The new model of leadership which is based on the policy of decentralization which was introduced in Namibia after independence was also discussed.

I also focused on the role of principals as school leaders in relation to the implementation of policies, drawing from researchers' views that principals as school leaders are "expected to have a vision that enable them to implement policies that are top-down imposed to their school context" (Johannes, 2009, p. 29). By and large policy seems to support and promote leadership approaches that encourage participation and sharing, as has been depicted in post-transformational theories.

I also looked at leadership as person and task-oriented which dominate schools in the 21st century, whereby leaders focus on both the task and the person. This kind of leadership encourages members in the organization to be committed to the organizational objectives.

The contemporary leadership theories are also presented and I touch on the transactional and some post-transformational theories which are related to this study and highlight the important role that the principal plays to promote these theories in the school environment.

Finally, I looked at the notion of effective leadership drawing from different researchers' views. I realize that there is no proper definition of effective leadership; effective leadership can be approached from different perspectives, but effective leaders are expected to have knowledge of the post-transformational leadership theories and have the vision to support these theories.

The research methodology I employed in this study is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology and methods used in an attempt to get a response to my research questions with regards to my investigation of the current understanding of school leadership and application of leadership among principals in selected schools. The chapter also explains the procedures followed in carrying out the study, and ends by describing the challenges experienced during the research process.

3. 2 Research design

3.2.1 Research paradigm

This study is a case study in the sense that it investigates the principals' leadership role in selected schools in the Oshana Region in Namibia. This study is located in the interpretive qualitative paradigm, as I wanted to gain insight into how principals and other stakeholders understand their leadership roles. The interpretive paradigm unpacks how people understand their experiences, seeking to describe and "understand an aspect of human behavior as it happens in its natural setting" (Merriam, 2009, p. 23). Interpretative researchers rely on firsthand accounts in order to present findings in more attractive and suggestive language.

Through the use of the interpretive paradigm I had the opportunity to capture the understanding of individual participants on their current school leadership and application of leadership among school principals, in accordance with the views of Merriam (2009) when she says:

The overall purpose of interpretative qualitative research are to achieve an understanding of how people make sense out of their lives, delineate the process (rather than the outcome or product) of meaning-making and, describe how people interpret what experience (p. 14).

The interpretative qualitative approach therefore helps in understanding the meaning of events, situations, experiences and “actions experienced by particular participants in the study” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 75).

Interpretative researchers collect data by using multiple methods of data collection, which leads to the next topic I discuss, research methods and tools.

3.2.2 Research methods and tools

This is a case study in the sense that it investigates the phenomenon as it appears in two schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia. This method allowed me to investigate this phenomenon “within its real-life context” (Yin, 2003, p. 13). In order for me to do this, I used multiple data collection methods that are “interactive and humanistic” (Creswell (2003, p. 181) namely semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observation. These tools helped me to strengthen my findings so that I could build a more convincing case and enhance the validity of my findings. According to Cohen et al., (2007, p. 253) case study research “has the strength to penetrate situations in ways that are not always susceptible to numerical analysis”. This is because it “uses multi-methods in collecting information about a chosen topic” (p. 253) and enables me to obtain information from more than one perspective.

I designed interview schedules for the principals, teachers and school board (*Appendix D*) to allow me as a novice researcher to gain the information on the phenomenon which I want to investigate.

I also made a preliminary visit to the research sites chosen to arrange the interview programme and appointments with the participants and to explain the research topic and the issues that I would cover during the interview. I also explained to the participants that I would need access to documents pertaining to management and leadership and also to observe the school in action to get a sense of its climate and culture.

It was during this period that I handed over a letter requesting permission to conduct research from my supervisor (*Appendix A*) and also provided the participants with a copy of my

authorization, granted by the Regional Director of Education to conduct interviews (*Appendix B*).

Using multiple sources of data allows the researcher to substantiate and augment evidence from different sources. These multiple data collections are explained in the next section.

3.2.2.1 Semi-structured interview

The individual interview is one of the most frequently used methods of data gathering within the qualitative approach. A qualitative interview is “an interaction between an interviewer and a respondent in which the interviewer has a general plan of inquiry but not a specific set of questions that must be asked in particular words and in a particular order” (Mouton & Prozesky, 2001, p. 289).

Due to the fact that my research is qualitative research, I used semi-structured interviews, as I had set of pre-prepared questions but also wanted to ask questions that were not prepared and “would be asked as follow-up questions” (Merriam, 2009, pp. 100-101). This gave me an opportunity to ask further probing questions on the answers which needed more clarification.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted at both schools, at which I interviewed the school principal, one teacher and one school board member at each school. With regards to the interviewing the teachers I asked principals to identify the teachers whom I should interview. This is in line with Merriam (2009, p. 105) who says “locating contacts is to begin with a key person who is considered knowledgeable by others and then ask that person for referrals”. The interviews for the principals and teachers were conducted in English as per the wish of the respondents. Due to the fact that I am sufficiently proficient in both English and the vernacular and can make sense of and translate from English to the vernacular language, interviews for the school board members were conducted in Oshiwambo (*Appendix D 3 b*). The interview schedule focused on the following aspects:

- Changes in school leadership
- Leadership structures in the school
- Leadership opportunities for teachers
- The roles of stakeholders to bring changes in the school

- Fostering of shared leadership
- Benefits of shared leadership
- Challenges facing school leadership

I conducted a pilot interview with one of the Heads of Department for Kakunde Secondary School, in order to test whether I needed to amend the interview schedule. Luckily, I did not need to make amendments. I used a voice recorder in the interviews; this allowed me to concentrate on the interview, as opposed to taking notes while the respondent was speaking, which can be distracting and disruptive to the interview process.

The interviews were my primary source of data complemented by observations.

3.2.2.2 Observations

Observations were the other main data collection method used for this research. Maxwell (2005) claims that:

Observation can enable researcher to draw inferences about the perspectives that researcher couldn't obtain by relying exclusively on interview data. This is particularly important for getting the tacit understanding and theory-in-use, as well as aspects of the participants' perspective that they are reluctant to directly state in interview. (p. 94)

In qualitative research, we usually find two types of observation, namely simple observation (where the researcher remains an outside observer) and participant observation, "where the researcher is simultaneously a member of the group she/he is studying as well as a researcher conducting the study" (Mouton & Prozesky, 2001, p. 293). I observed events as an outsider and this enabled me to notice details that "could lead to a better understanding of the context" (Merriam, 2009, p. 119). I planned to observe the school management, staff and school board meetings but unfortunately the meetings had taken place already in May/June while I was still doing my coursework in South Africa. Therefore, I observed only morning assemblies, management and staff briefings.

To capture what I observed I kept field notes on observation sheets for both researched schools i.e. Kakunde SS and Ndevahanga SSS (*Appendix E*). My observations focused on committees' briefings, such as SMT, and staff briefings since I was interested in observing the level of staff involvement in deliberating on the school's issues. I also wanted to see how participative these briefings really were, how leadership was shared in the school and also how teachers took part in the leadership of the school. I also observed morning assemblies for the two researched schools to see how teachers are involved in the day to day activities.

It is generally believed that the presence of an observer in a setting can change people's behaviour patterns. For example, the participants in the study might change their behaviour to impress the observer and this might have an effect on the study. To prevent this, I spent the whole month (July) at the research sites and only started to observe in the last two weeks of July 2011. This is in accordance with Merriam (2009) when she claims that "the researcher establishes rapport by fitting into the participants' routines, finding some common ground with them, helping out on occasion, being friendly and showing interest in the activity"(p. 123). Therefore the participants became used to my presence.

The other data collection tool used in this study to gather data that specifically addresses my research questions was document analysis, which is also an important source of data in qualitative research.

3.2.2.3 Documents analysis

According to Merriam (2009, p. 126) "documentary data are particularly good source for qualitative case studies because they can ground an investigation in the context of the problem being investigated". This is why I decided to use document analysis as a secondary data generating instrument. Document analysis is important in this kind of study because studying documents such as minutes helped me to see evidence of any participative and shared

leadership taking place in the school. Analyzing documents fitted in well at this stage because information gained from documents informed the subsequent of data collection, namely semi-structured interviews with the participants in this study.

Documents can be classified into primary and secondary sources. “Primary documents are those documents that have a direct physical relationship with the events being reconstructed” (Cohen et al., 2007, pp. 193-194).

Some of the primary documents that I studied in this research are the minutes of committees’ meetings, namely the school board, SMT, staff meetings (*Appendix F*), and documents which describe the school’s organisation and teachers’ roles. These documents provided me with an insight into the principals’ leadership role, for example, how teachers participate in any decision-making that takes place.

The data collected through interviews, observation and document analysis has to be managed and organized by the researcher. This is elaborated on in the next section.

3.3 Data analysis

According to Stake (1995, p. 71) data analysis is, “a process of unlocking information hidden in the data that the researcher transforms into meaningful and useful information”. I used inductive reasoning as a mode of inference during the interpretation of my data. This is in accordance with Merriam (2009) who claims that “data analysis requires the ability to think inductively from specific raw data to abstract categories and concepts” (p. 17).

My data analysis was an ongoing process and started concurrently with data collection as Merriam (2009) claims that “simultaneous data collection and analysis occur both in and out of the field” (p. 171). Once the first two interviews were completed, the interviews were transcribed to supplement the notes taken. I also summarized the records from the document analysis and observation to supplement the interview data.

All data collected from the participants by way of observation, interviews and document analysis were coded using a system of colour coding to identify patterns in the data. Maxwell (2005, p. 96) refers to the goal of coding as “... to fracture the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts”. Following this process of colour coding helped me to put the information into categories which were used as a basis for identifying themes to structure the discussions (the findings from the data analysis).

In a case study, research is always expected to be conducted at the site, where the researcher is able to get information on the phenomenon that is being investigated. This is explored in the next section.

3.4 Research site

The Ohangwena region is the Northern part of Namibia. The region has a total number of 241 Schools this year (2011), divided per phase as follow: Junior Primary Schools (JPS), Primary Schools (PS), Combined School (CS), Junior Secondary School (JESS) Senior Secondary (SS). There is one Private High School (PHS) (see table 1 below).

CIRCUITS	JPS	PS	CS	JSS	SS	PHS	Total	CLUSTERS
EENHANA	5	10	16	0	2		33	5
EPEMBE	3	8	8	0	0		19	4
ENYANA	10	4	4	0	0		18	4
ENDOLA	0	12	14	2	2		30	6
OHAKAFIYA	6	10	12	0	1		29	5
OHANGWENA	0	21	5	3	1	1	31	6
OKONGO	2	7	9	0	1		19	4
ONGHA	0	10	16	2	1		29	5

ONDOBE	1	12	17	2	1		33	6
Region Total	27	94	101	9	9	1	241	45

Table 1.Schools phases in the Ohangwena region in Namibia in 2011

Source: Planning department/division: Ohangwena education directorate (2011)

There are 9 circuits and all are under the control of the circuit inspectors. My case study schools are located in two circuits in the above mentioned region and identified by pseudonyms namely Kakunde Secondary School (SS) and Ndevahanga Senior Secondary School (SSS). These schools were easily accessible to me as a researcher, because they are situated near me, thereby saving money on transport and also time. This is in line with McMillan and Schumacher as cited in Maree and Van der Westhuizen, (2010, p. 34) when they say “it is essential to select sites that are suitable and feasible”. The fact that I know both principals helped me to gain access to the schools. The schools were therefore selected on the basis of convenience.

The quality of any research stands not only on the appropriateness of methodology, “instrumentation and research sites chosen, but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted” (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 100).

3.5 Sampling

Purposive sampling was used in this study. According to Merriam (2009, p. 77) “purposive sampling is based on the assumption that the researcher wants to understand, discover and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learnt”.

The sample included the two principals, two teachers and two members of the school board from the selected secondary schools. I selected the principals, as they control the school’s day to day functioning and they are the gatekeepers of change in schools. In one school I selected a veteran teacher (more than ten years' experience) and in the other, a teacher with about four years' experience. I hoped that these differences in age and experience might be reflected in

the range of opinions and experiences related to the topic. The school board members were both parents. These participants represent a cross-section of an organisation's members.

3.6 Validity

Since this study is located in the interpretive paradigm, I consider interpretive validity as appropriate to this study. According to Cohen et al. (2007, p. 135) "interpretive validity is the ability of the researcher to capture the meaning, interpretation and intentions of events".

One of the threats to validity in this study was the possibility of bias on the side of the researcher. Merriam (2009, p. 219) argues that "investigators need to explain their biases, dispositions and assumptions regarding the research to be undertaken". In this way the reader may judge whether the researcher has distorted the truth. My own position was that I had been a Head of Department for so many years that I might have developed certain values that could influence my approach to collecting and analyzing data. I could have also influenced the response I got from my respondents. Thus, as a researcher I strove to be as systematic and thorough as possible, informing the respondents in advance of the purpose of my study and my expectations of them. I also strove to set aside my own expectations regarding leadership as far as this was possible. As (Maxwell, 2005) explains:

The reason for making your perspective biases and assumes clear to the reader is not to eliminate variance between researcher in values and expectations they bring to the study, but with understanding how a particular researcher values and expectations influence the conduct and conclusion of the study (p. 108).

In order to strengthen the validity of my study, I made use of triangulation. Since I used different methods of data collection, what respondents told me in the semi-structured interviews could be checked against what I observed on site and "also what I read about in the documents relevant to this study" (Merriam, 2009, p. 216). This assisted in creating a rich picture of the phenomenon and helped to validate my findings.

Furthermore, triangulation means that one can look at data from several different angles rather than look at it in only one way. Data were compared and cross-checked for consistency

and also to ensure the credibility of the data produced. The data collected from all interviews were shared with the participants for members to check so that they could make comments on the things that might have been wrongly captured/ interpreted. I have also undertaken to store the raw material/data for my research safely and securely so that an audit trail could be followed.

In qualitative studies ethical dilemmas are likely to merge with regard to the collection of data and “in the dissemination of findings” (Merriam, 2009, p. 230). This leads to the next topic, ethical considerations.

3.7 Ethical considerations

I needed to be mindful of the ethical dilemmas that confront researchers. According to Leedy & Ormrod (2005, p. 101) “most ethical issues in research fall in into one of four categories: protection from harm, informed consent, right to privacy, and honesty with professional colleagues”.

Permission to conduct this research was granted to me by the Regional Director of Ohangwena Education Directorate after officially requesting her approval for me to conduct such a study. Permission was granted to me on the condition that my research activities do not interrupt normal school activities and that participation should be on a voluntary basis (*see Appendix B*).

A letter explaining the purpose of the research written by my supervisor was sent to each respondent, to ensure that they knew what was expected from them before deciding whether to participate or not (*Appendix A*). The principals of the research sites were contacted in advance to inform them of my research intentions and “to seek their consent” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 112).

As already mentioned in this chapter in section 3.6, my position as HOD was likely to have some influence on the participants and the content of data collected. For example, participants might have felt coerced (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 63) to participate in the study and consequently may provide information that they thought would interest me. I therefore carefully explained to

them the purpose of the study and informed them of their right not to participate or the right to withdraw from the research at any time (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 64). All participants were provided with the letter of consent to sign which explained what was expected from them and from the research (*Appendix C*).

During data presentation for safety and confidentiality reasons, I changed all research sites' names into pseudonyms and participants were coded as P1, P1, T1, T2, SB1 and SB2. This is in line with McMillan & Schumacher (1993) who state that "information on subjects should be regarded as confidential, unless otherwise agreed through informed consent, only the researcher has access to names and data" (p. 195).

I also explained to the participants that if anyone felt uncomfortable with any of the questions the interview could be stopped at any time. I assured the participants that the information would only be used for the purpose of the research.

Since this study is case study, it presents certain limitation in its usage. This will be dealt with in the last chapter of this thesis.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have explained my use of the interpretive paradigm to explore the phenomenon from the point of view of the respondents. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their world and what meaning they attribute to their experiences.

The case study method was employed in order to get detailed explanation and information into the investigation of the current understanding of school leadership and the application of leadership by the principals in selected schools in the Ohangwena region. According to Merriam (2009) "the decision to focus on qualitative case studies stem from the fact that the design is chosen, precisely because researchers are interested in insight, discovery and interpretation rather than testing hypotheses" (p. 42).

I have also indicated that the three research tools (semi-structure interviews, observations and document analysis) used in this study helped me to validate my findings. The research sites, sampling, rudimentary data analysis, code of ethics and limitations of this qualitative case study were explained.

In the next chapter I present the data in its raw form in order to enable the reader to understand them as they emerged from the respondents.

Chapter 4

Presentation of the data

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a narrative account of the study, which was an investigation into the principals' leadership role in selected schools in the Ohangwena region in Namibia. The presentation draws from data collected from interviews, document analysis and observation, as they comprised my main data collection methods. In this chapter, the research sites are identified by pseudonyms: Kakunde Secondary School (SS) and Ndevahanga Senior Secondary school (SSS).

In presenting these findings, the respondents are coded as follows to distinguish them:

- P1 for principal one of Ndevahanga Senior Secondary School.
- P2 for principal two of Kakunde Secondary School.
- SB 1 for School board one of Kakunde SS.
- SB 2 for School Board two of Ndevahanga SSS.
- T1 for teacher one of Ndevahanga SSS.
- T2 for teacher two of Kakunde SS.

During the presentation, when referring to document analysis data, I use the minutes for staff /management meetings, the date when it was held and pseudonyms of the school, e.g. Minutes for staff meeting held on: July 24, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS. When referring to observation data, I use the observation, the name of the committees observed, the date of observation and the pseudonym of the school, e.g. observation of management briefing held on: July 28, 2011 for (Ndevahanga) SSS. When referring to observation data for morning assembly, I use the same procedure.

Since this study is an interpretive study, I use the narrative form as a way of portraying the experiences of the principals' leadership role in the selected schools. I allow the respondents' voices to be heard throughout by way of quoting freely from the raw data.

Findings are presented in the four (4) broad categories identified as significant namely:

1. The emerging views of leadership
2. Shared leadership and its benefits
3. How changes take place
4. Challenges facing leadership

I have developed several sub-themes under each broad heading in order to make the data more comprehensible. Before presenting the data, I provide brief sketches of the research respondents.

4.2 Respondents' profiles

Principal 1

Principal 1 is married male of 36 years of age and has four dependents. He completed his grade 12 and got his Senior Certificate in 1992. He attended the University of Namibia (UNAM) in 1993-1996 and received a Higher Education Diploma Secondary (HED Sec). He joined the teaching profession in 1998 in one of the secondary schools in the Ohangwena region. At that time, he was a hostel supervisor and later on become a hostel superintendent. In 2002, he was appointed as a principal and Cluster Center principal (CCP) for one combined school in the same region. In 2010, he was appointed as principal and a CCP of Ndevahanga SSS, the school where I conducted my research.

Principal 2

Principal 2 is a married male of 40 years. He completed his primary education and secondary education from 1981-1993 in Namibia and obtained a Senior Certificate. He obtained his tertiary qualification (National Diploma in Agriculture) from Neudam Agriculture College. He also obtained various diplomas relating to the field of education. He worked in many schools.

While he was a teacher he also achieved a leadership position as he was appointed as an examiner for Accounting, Mathematics and Agriculture in the region. In 2010, he was appointed as the principal of Kakunde SS.

School board 1

School board1 is a married male of 54 years of age and has 9 children. He attended primary and secondary school in 1960 -1970. He also completed the following certificates at a tertiary level: two certificates on auto mechanics, one certificate on Orthopedics and one certificate on medical rehabilitation science. He is currently employed as a medical rehabilitation worker in one of the government hospitals in the Ohangwena region. In 2010, he was elected as a school board member and chairperson of Kakunde SS. One of his sons attends the above-mentioned school. This is one of the reasons why he was elected to be a school board member.

School Board 2

School board 2 is a married female of 50 years of age and has 6 children. She completed her primary education and passed grade 10. She trained as an electrical technician for one year. She is currently employed at the same hospital with school board 2 as an equipment attendant. In 2009, she was elected as a school board member at Ndevahanga SSS, as one of her children attends school there.

Teacher 1

Teacher 1 is a married female of 32 years of age. She completed her grade 12 in 1998. She attended her tertiary education at UNAM and obtained a Bachelor of Science majoring in Biology and Chemistry. Apart from the Bachelor of Science, she also obtained a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) in 2010. She joined the teaching profession in 2004 at a school in another region and in 2007, she transferred to Ndevahanga SSS. She is a member of the school's management team (SMT) and she is one of the performing teachers. According to her curriculum vitae, she has not held a teacher leadership position.

Teacher 2

Teacher 2 is a married male of 37 years of age. He completed grade 12 and obtained a Senior Certificate in 1995. He attended his tertiary education at UNAM and obtained his first Degree of Bachelor of Education. He also obtained a Bachelor of Education Degree (Honors) in general teaching and learning from North West University (Potchefstroom). In 2000, he was appointed as a teacher at Kakunde SS up to the present time; he is one of the veteran teachers at the above-mentioned school. He had been placed in teacher leadership roles during the years, for example, he is the regional facilitator and sets the exams for Geography and Economics grade 11-12. He has obtained several awards due to his teaching performance at national levels.

I now present the data under the four broad headings outlined above.

4.3 Presentation of findings

4.3.1 The emerging views of leadership

The respondents had limited views about leadership. Their views were more focused on traditional leadership, whereby leader is playing important heroic role in leading the organisation and on the functions of management. Some respondents viewed leadership in relation to the learners' behaviour. Some responses revealed that leaders had to lead by example, as shown in this response... "you came down to your teachers, you informed them what should be and at the same time you take a role". Some respondents viewed leadership as taking care of school resources. Taken as a whole, their views on leadership are quite traditional and they view leadership in a superficial way. Some responses revealed that they viewed leadership as characterized by delegation. Only one respondent (T 2) saw a move from autocratic to democratic leadership, but his views were based on his beliefs regarding the character traits of leaders.

According to T2, "a school leadership now days it is no longer based on autocratic leadership, but it is geared on being more equipped to follow what must be done". He further argued that leadership is based on the influential and decision-making actions that are being undertaken to

make sure that the school is being managed, organized and coordinated in a professional manner. His views on leadership were characterized by the following statement, “leadership is something that is born, so for one person for him/her to able manage positively lead the team, he must have the net characteristic of being a leader”. He also stated that as a leader of a school in the 21st century you must be able to influence the people at the school so that they will follow you and make sure that the school is being administrated correctly to meet the needs and goals of the school at large.

He clearly indicated the difference between the school leadership during the colonial period and the school leadership after independence. He confidentially stated that:

In the colonial period school leaders were dictators, they could just dictate that people have to do it and failure to do it, the consequences would be taken without proper consultation, without following the proper procedures. It was a top-down leadership style, the so-called leaders who were the managers of the schools as they were known, used to be called the bosses of the school. A leader cannot be a boss because the decision cannot be taken without the involvement of teachers.

He also argued that, after independence, there was two-way traffic whereby decisions are made wherever they made, but they are carried out by the subordinates at lower level. He further explained that when decisions affect the learners, the final decision has to be made by all the parties involved. He concluded that, “teachers are empowered to make decisions and have the say in the leadership of school today”.

Some respondents viewed leadership as quite traditional, for example, P2 stated that a leader has to be an example leading the school by focusing on academic improvement and ensuring that the school performs at the highest level. He further stated that it was “not like those days, where leadership was too much management, now we are looking at leadership where you come down to your teachers, you inform them what should be and at the same time you take a role”.

When it came to P1, his views on leadership were more focused on the management functions, for example, he stated that:

The school leadership today is all about the leadership role in the school, to direct the school, assist human resources or staff, oversee the running of the school, managing finances and acquiring things which help both staff members and learners in the school.

He also explained that “he coped by giving some responsibility to heads of department and he has two more teachers assisting on the SMT”. To him delegation is very important and he only oversees them.

T1 is unable to express herself on her understanding of leadership. She understands leadership in the sense that it has to do with keeping order in the school. Her definition of order is making sure that teachers are doing their work and that the principal has to make sure that all the learners are doing their work and to make sure that all the jobs are done in the different areas of the school.

Some respondents viewed leadership in a superficial way - they were concerned about the behaviour of learners. For example, SB 1 indicated that, “school leadership is better because of the learners, learners do not behave well these days, and this makes it difficult for leaders to establish a culture of teaching and learning in the schools. On the matter of improving such behaviour, this is what he said, “before Namibia got independence there was a subject in schools called Bible study, this subject assisted learners to have good behaviour, because learners were taught how to behave”. He suggested this subject be re-instated in all schools in Namibia.

According to SB 2, schools are now changing because of the leadership of the schools. She further stated that schools are developing in terms of sports and taking care of the school’s resources. She also stated that “the school board and principal can upgrade the school and buy the necessary equipment for the school”.

All respondents indicated that there is a change in leadership, even though their views are limited and quite traditional. They also indicated that there is a shift in leadership approaches. This leads to the following sub-theme of theme one.

4.3.1.1 Changes in leadership approaches

Most responses revealed that leadership approaches in colonial time were characterized by top-down and unconsultative leadership. They indicated that now there is two-way traffic when it comes to communication. Some responses revealed that there is a shift from autocratic to democratic leadership, which is a people-centered leadership style. Some respondents indicated that teachers are empowered to have a say in the leadership of the school. Some respondents indicated that before independence most of the decisions were done only at headquarters, but now people at grass roots level are involved in the decision-making or everyone is part of the decision-making. However, even though some responses revealed that there is consultation, what they meant was that there is a cascading model of consultation. For example, some respondents indicated that the decision should be communicated to the teachers and the teachers will implement it in the classes. Some responses revealed the idea of 'holding on and letting go' and some respondents explained the change in leadership in relation to discipline.

P2 stated that, "there is a big change in leadership, because before independence most of the decisions were done at the headquarters whereby you just received information about what you should do, but now people at grass roots level are also involved in the decision-making process". He also indicated that everyone is now part and parcel of the decision-making and there is more consultation when it comes to communication unlike in the past.

On the matter of decision-making, this is what I observed:

The principal asked his colleagues what should be done to change the many tours which take place during the examination time. SMT and staff reached consensual agreement to change the academic tours in the school (Observation of management briefing and staff briefing, July 27, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

This indicates that before school leaders take decisions he/ she needs to consult subordinates and agreement should be reached in amicable ways.

On the matter of consultation, he elaborated more by saying:

The head offices normally consult with regional directors and have directorate meetings where all the Directors of Education in the whole country come together and share ideas. After they finish they come to their regional offices for a meeting for the Program for Quality Assurance (PQA) where they call their Inspectors of Education (IoEs). Then the IoEs call up a principals' meeting where they share ideas on what is going on. Then principals call up a meeting with their teachers and from the teachers it then filters down to the learners.

It was interesting to note how information filters down from the top to the bottom level. However, his idea of consultation is based on a cascading model and his explanation was of a hierarchical structure or a purely bureaucratic organization.

He also stated that they share the work because nobody knows everything. He further argued that, "at the school level, for leadership to be smooth we normally delegate or we share among ourselves, with the Heads of Department, the subject heads and then go to the teachers". He also indicated that for leadership to be effective, normal delegation is the best, but you have to be careful when you delegate, "you keep your eyes on, but your hands off". On the issue of delegation, my observation confirmed the following:

One member of the SMT (a senior teacher) was delegated to act as principal and to make announcements during the morning assembly while one of the teachers was instructed by the principal to read government circulars to the teachers in the staff briefing (Observation of management briefing and Staff briefing, July 25, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

P1 has a similar view as that of P2 as he stressed that there is a change in leadership style since independence; for example in the past, principals were solely running the school and most of the activities were done only by the principal him/ herself. He further argued that "there was less participation of other staff members in the running of the schools, so the leadership was more individually in the hands of the school principal". However, he felt that now as a leader, you incorporate, you delegate and all people coming of board are involved. He said that the leadership style in the past was more autocratic. Whether this really constitutes a change in leadership style is debatable. This will be explored more in the next chapter.

On the matter of changes in leadership approaches, the document I studied confirmed the following... "the principal also congratulated the members of the school board for their

outstanding leadership which made it possible for the school to perform well and encouraged them to keep up the good work” (Minutes of school board meeting held on: April 03, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

This indicates that the current leadership is characterised by participative and shared leadership, whereby parents are also involved in the decision-making so that they can effectively contribute to the leadership of the school.

T2 felt that there are slight changes in the leadership styles since independence. He further stated, “there is change in leadership in terms of a shift from autocratic to a democratic kind of leadership style which is more people-centered”. He further explained that every person starting from the leader of the schools to the learners are exercising freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of opinion. He also stated that these types of freedom are allowed in the schools today unlike in the past. On the matter of the people-centered leadership style and participative leadership, my observations confirmed the following: “many teachers gave their concerns on how the afternoon study was to be supervised by all the teachers” (Observation of staff briefing, July 18, 2011 for (Ndevahanga) SSS).

According to the minutes of the SMT meeting held on April 26, 2011 for Ndevahanga SSS, the principal stated that the, “school has a patron but he does not seem to be active, the principal feels that the current school’s patron needs to be contacted to discuss the issues and find a way forward”. This also indicates that there is a change in the leadership approach as school patrons did not exist in the past. Most schools were unlikely to get gifts or equipment like photocopy machines, because there was no school patron.

T1 indicated that leaders in the past could decide what they felt was right for them without any consultation, but now they could talk to the teachers to find other ways to deal with the learners in a democratic manner.

It was interesting to observe a learner giving feedback to all the teachers and learners during the morning assembly after he had attended the National Conference on Education held in Namibia from 27 June-1 July 2011 (Observation of morning assembly held on July 25, 2011 for

(Kakunde) SS). This indicated a significant change in the leadership approach. Instead of the principal asking a teacher who had also attended the conference to give feedback, he gave the opportunity to the learner. This indicates that there are signs that leadership is to some extent being shared among learners and teachers, which empowers them. This leads to the next subtheme of the first theme, leadership opportunities for teachers.

4.3.1.2 Leadership opportunities for teachers

The strongest theme to emerge from the data was the notion of leadership opportunities for teachers, which is seen as the cornerstone of contemporary leadership theories and effective leadership. Respondents generally spoke about only the leadership opportunities for teachers at the cluster, circuit and school level. They also indicated that at cluster level, teachers are convening events, namely sport, cultural, assessment, examinations and science fairs. Some respondents emphasized only the normal work of the teachers. However, some responses revealed that only some teachers are active participants in leadership roles.

T2 stressed that the school has some teachers who take part in the cluster or circuit activities. For example:

We have committees for sport, which is comprised of teachers from different schools that fall under our cluster and these teachers are the ones that are surely given the power to make sure that the activities that are delegated are being successfully carried out without the interference of the inspector. They give a report on those activities that are being done by the various committees of the cluster.

He further stated that some teachers from various schools in the circuit used to gather in the hall to deliberate on the matters of examinations and on how to set the examinations. He also indicated that they have a Cluster Development Program Committee (CDPC) of which he is the chairperson. He informed me that the CDPC gives the targets and indicates who is responsible for what.

T1 pointed out that “teachers can play a leadership role in cluster activities like debating societies, because debating societies are not only in our school - it involves many schools in the

cluster and also in the circuit". She also mentioned that teachers are appointed to lead projects like science fairs in the circuit and cluster. She also stated that teachers are playing a vital role in sport activities.

Similarly, P2 stressed that teachers play an important role in various activities in the cluster level, school level and regional level. He stated "at cluster level there are teachers who are responsible to organize sports and cultural needs and those teachers normally delegate tasks to other teachers". Therefore, he felt that by delegating tasks to a teacher he/ she occupied a leadership role.

P1 has similar views to T1, T2 and P2; he stated that they have teachers who are responsible for sport activities in the cluster, as well as in the circuit. He also clearly indicated that "we have some teachers responsible for assessments and examinations; we also have some teachers responsible for many different activities in the cluster and the circuit".

On the matter of leadership opportunities for teachers at the cluster and circuit level, the documents that I studied confirm the following:

One of the teachers promises to meet with other history teachers in the circuit for possible changes on how the timetable should be done. One of the teachers also indicated that teachers are only called to set or moderate the examination papers, but they were supposed to be trained on how to go about setting the examination papers (Minutes of staff meeting held on: February 02, 2011 for (Kakude) SS).

What is interesting in this section is the magnitude of the teachers' desire to be involved in the activities at circuit level and the principals' willingness to promote leadership opportunities for teachers. However, it seems that there is a lack of support from the government to promote leadership opportunities for teachers, even though some principals are trying to encourage teachers to play a role in the leadership of their schools.

Apart from the opportunity for teacher leadership at cluster and circuit level, respondents indicated that teachers could play a role in leading the school. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

An interesting dimension of leadership opportunities for teachers was the realization that the single 'heroic' leadership style is not appropriate to school leadership today. Most of the respondents indicated that teachers play an important role in programs like morning assembly, making announcements and day-to-day activities of the school. However, the respondents did not mention the teachers' role in the highest level of decision-making that takes place at the school. Some respondents also indicated that teachers took part in leading and managing the school only when official leadership was absent.

T2 stressed that it is not only principals that lead the school; you also find that teachers lead the schools, for example, during the morning assembly you will see teachers in front of their learners trying to make sure that the learners follow them. He also stressed that "there have been many occasions where I have been delegated to act in the position of the principal, meaning that I have had to exercise leadership both in theory and practice". To substantiate this view my observation confirmed the following, "one of the management members (a teacher) was tasked to orientate the British students, who were on the exchange program" (Observation of management and staff briefing, July 20, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

He also revealed that before the principal leaves the office or school he delegates a teacher that he feels has the ability to stand in his place as a leader while absent. These views were also supported by the documents that I studied where there is considerable evidence of the teachers' leadership role, for example:

Principal encouraged the staff members to continue to render help to one of the teachers who will be the next acting principal, so that the reputation of the school is maintained in the circuit and the region as a whole"(Minutes of staff meeting held on: February 02, 2011, (Kakunde) SS).

Some responses indicated that the absence of the school principal and (HODs) create a good chance for leadership opportunities for teachers. For example, T1 stressed that "if the Principal and HODs are not around, the responsibility is now being placed on teachers so that they lead the school".

Similarly, P2 stated that some teachers are self-motivated. For example some teachers will take over my role of conducting the morning assembly and give instructions to the learners, so that the school can run more efficiently in my absence.

My observation confirmed these perceptions. During the morning assembly, one of the teachers (assembly presentation judge) who is in charge of judging the grades in conducting the morning assembly and rank the grades depending on how they conducted the morning assembly announced the grade which excelled in conducting the morning briefing (Observation of morning assembly, July 07, 2011 for Kakunde SS).

It was very interesting to note how staff members had been given the responsibility of participating in the activities of the school and took up the responsibility.

P1 stated that “the school only qualifies for three Heads of Department (HODs), but there are a large number of learners in the school so teachers tend to play an important role in the leadership of the school”. He further explained that if you looked for example at a superintendent who is running a school hostel, you would find that he is also an ordinary teacher and his leadership position is in his role as superintendent. This is often the norm as he explains:

We have some teachers who are leading the school in other activities, for example, HIV and AIDS education - there is teacher who is in charge of that. We also have a Student Christian Movement (SCM) and there is a teacher who is running that one, so that you find a teacher has these responsibilities also.

The overall picture that emerged was therefore positive. Both principals, by and large, seemed to practice and support teacher leadership to some extent. They (principals) pointed out the ways they used to promote teacher leadership and teachers who participated in this study indicated how teacher leadership is being promoted in their school.

It seems that the decentralization of decision-making powers to the local and school level is currently practiced in the school. This enables the principal to practice participative and shared leadership, even though it is to a limited extent, usually only when senior management is not present. This type of leadership can also be practiced if there are leadership structures in the

school as the school is a complex organization. This is explained in the next subtheme of theme one.

4.3.1.3 Leadership structures in school

The data from interviews, observation and document analysis show that the school has various committees, namely the school board, SMT, disciplinary committee, finance committee to mention only a few. Most respondents indicated that teachers are also in the SMT. Some responses revealed that in each committee there is a chairperson to oversee whether the committee is doing their work, while principals delegate and oversee those committees. Some respondents also indicated that they have close to twenty committees at their schools. They also stated that some committees are functional while others are not, depending on the activities that have to be carried out by the committees.

Some respondents regarded leadership structure as the line of authority or line of command in the school, for example, P2 stated that:

Is there a leadership structure in the school, I can say yes, because the person on top is the school board, then comes the principal, then comes the HODs, the subject heads and then down to the teachers and it goes down to the learners.

He further explained that the structure of school according to him, was supposed to start from the bottom. For example, firstly the learners, then the teachers, subject heads, HODs, principal and then the school board. He also stated that:

Apart from the legitimate committees, we also have a hostel committee that is comprised of the principal, superintendent and school board members. There is a social entertainment committee where we want to link the school to the community because the school is situated within the community, therefore we cannot operate without the community. In that committee there are four members of the community. Those people are there to mobilize the local people if we have events/functions, as it will be easier for them to communicate to the people in the community so that they can come and support us.

He further indicated that most committees are functional, for example, the counseling committee deals with troublesome learners and keeps discipline in the school.

On the matter of whether committees are functioning or not, the documents I studied confirmed the following, “the principal asked the staff to revive the dying committees using the examples of the HIV and AIDS committee, cultural committee and housing committee which are fully functioning” (Minutes of staff meetings, undated, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

Similarly, P1 stated that the school has close to twenty committees in the school. He also revealed that a few committees are not fully functional, because of lack of activities in that area. He further explained “we have a chairperson in each committee and this chairperson oversees the progress of the committee”. He also stated that he used to meet with each chairperson to review what committees have done and achieved.

Some respondents indicated that learners are also part of the leadership structure, for example, T1 stated that, “we also have some learners that are leading others”. She also has similar views to P1, P2, that her school has a disciplinary committee, entertainment committee and others and that these committees are functional. My observations also confirmed that some committees are functional, for example:

Principal gave a chance to the chairperson of the sport committee to report on the sport activities that took place during the weekend. The chairperson for the entrepreneur committee explained to the staff about the preparation of the committee to prepare for the entrepreneurial day (Observation of staff briefing, July 11, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

T2 stated that the “school is comprised of various committees and that there are those that are empowered and people who are democratically elected to lead the activities of those committees”. He also mentioned the SMT, school board and finance committee of which he is a member. He further explained that most committees are functioning on a day-to-day basis such as the school board and the SMT, but there are also those that only function when the need arises such as the finance committee.

All respondents indicated that the leadership of the schools is characterized by various committees that lead the different activities in the schools. This indicates that principals construct a shared vision with the staff and community. This enables the principals to foster shared leadership, which has many advantages to the principals, teachers, school and

community at large. This is discussed in the next section, which is the second theme of the findings.

4.3.2 Shared leadership and its benefits

Data from the interview confirmed that the term shared leadership was not regarded as a new phenomenon in schools. However, it emerged that there was no formalization of shared leadership that enabled principals to spread the workload among the staff members. The two principals (P1 and P2) indicated that they promote shared leadership in their schools in various ways.

Some responses revealed that some teachers have negative attitudes toward shared leadership. For example, one respondent stated, “sometimes you may want to share the leadership, but the person whom you want to share it with feels like you just want to use them. They have an understanding that you get paid a lot of money” P1 stated that in his school, leadership is characterized by shared leadership and that he promotes this by encouraging his staff members to take a role in the leadership of the school. He stated “I invite my teachers when there is something to decide to not wait for me, but to forward suggestions”. He clearly stated that he and his management team try to empower teachers so that they can also become part of the school leadership structure. He admitted that in “this way you find that in the management of our school we have more ordinary teachers”.

On the matter of willingness of teachers to carry out his instructions when he delegated them, this is what he said, “at the beginning it was a problem, because people did not know the information that they are delegated to do, but as the time goes they realized that is their responsibilities also, so they are ready to take it up with the other staff member that they given a mandate to do so”.

The documents I studied confirmed that one of the principals promotes shared leadership as it indicated the following:

Principal informed his staff that the chairperson and secretary's role at staff meetings would be shared so that everyone could learn how to chair the meetings and take minutes. Principal also suggested that the two HODs are given the responsibility of creating a schedule for when the Mastery tests have to be written in the school (Minutes of staff meeting held on: February 16, 2011, for (Ndevahanga) SS).

It was interesting to note how principals foster shared leadership in the school. This clearly indicates that some principals promoted shared leadership by empowerment and delegation.

According to P2, he promotes shared leadership by delegating someone to do a certain task provided that he keeps his eyes on the person, but his hands off. He clearly explained that:

You can delegate someone to do something if you see that this person is good in a specific area. For example someone who is academically good in a certain subject, where you do not have an idea of that subject, you can delegate to that person. In that way you are sharing the leadership role rather than keeping things to yourself.

My observation and document analysis confirmed that the two principals promote shared leadership and in most cases, roles were clearly allocated to the teachers. Teachers were given responsibilities to carry out and some did that. My observation confirmed this:

One of the teachers was delegated to make a quotation for the school's flag during school, to the companies in Windhoek that can embroider the school flag. She gave a report on the quotation she made (Observation of staff briefing July 26, 2011 for (Ndevahanga) SSS).

Responses revealed that respondents understand that leadership is characterized by participative and shared leadership, unlike in the past where it was top-down leadership. The respondents also indicated that there are many advantages of shared leadership; this is explained in the next paragraph.

Almost all the respondents indicated that shared leadership is beneficial to the subordinates and the leaders. Some responses also revealed that the school, as a complex organization is also in good hands since all the stakeholders are working together, sharing ideas and knowledge. Trust, teamwork, division of Labour and empowerment were dominant ideas brought out in the discussion. The data from the interviews resulted in the following benefits of shared leadership.

4.3.2.1 Professional growth

According to P2, shared leadership broadens and allows people to grow academically or mature. He stated “through shared leadership we are able to overcome the leadership challenges, because through shared leadership you are going to see what challenges are and how you can deal with them”. He further stated that shared leadership broadens a person’s positive thinking capacity. He also explained that since there is a mentoring process through shared leadership, this would create a chance of promotion for teachers.

4.3.2.2 Trust and Teamwork

Another benefit identified by respondents was that shared leadership creates trust and enhances teamwork in the work place. For example, P2 stated that shared leadership creates trust between the principal and teachers or among all the stakeholders in education. He also commented that, “shared leadership builds through team work, a trust that once that is there is difficult to destroy”. On the matter of teamwork, this is what I observed:

Teachers during the morning briefing agreed on the following: teachers of languages were to staple the examination question papers for sciences and science teachers staple the examination question papers for languages (Observation of staff briefing July 19, 2011 for (Ndevahanga SSS)).

Similarly, T2 stated that shared leadership “is a very good tool that enhances team work among the staff, non-staff as well as the learners”. He also stated that one of the benefits obtained from shared leadership is a common understanding of finding solutions to day-to-day problems at the school. Therefore he believed that it has become much easier for people to solve the problems in their schools.

SB 1 also stressed that shared leadership promotes trust among the teachers and learners. He further argued that, “shared leadership brings unity and harmony in the school”.

4.3.2.3 Learning from others and sharing ideas

P1 stated “when you have shared leadership, then you learn from others, even if you are the principal”. He further stated that the staff members are also going to learn from the experience that you have and you learn from them. He recognized that the process is more about shared ideas and knowledge and whether you are the principal or just an ordinary teacher assisting in the leadership of the school, you will also get something out of the process.

In one of the documents I studied, it confirmed that the, “principal urged the new teachers and temporary teachers to learn from others to ensure good achievements at the end of the year” (Minutes of staff meeting held on: February 02, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS). This indicates that if the leadership of the school is characterized by shared leadership, those involved will learn from one another and that this will then result in a good academic performance, as people will feel empowered by sharing the responsibility. This leads to the next benefit, sharing the load and empowerment.

4.3.2.4 Sharing the load and empowerment

Some respondents indicated that the pressure on the principal is minimized because of shared leadership and people at work are also empowered.

T2 stated that shared leadership removes a one-man show, since the work and decisions are now shared. Similarly, SB 2 stated that the work becomes less burdensome because there is a division of labour among the stakeholders in education. She further explained that, “shared leadership reduces the burden on the principal, instead of the principal doing all the work in the school, they give some of the work to their subordinates”. She further pointed out that this is one of the reasons why school boards were established in the schools, so that they can advise school principals and to share ideas so that they can bring about changes in the school.

In the same vein, T1 stated that shared leadership makes the workload much lighter and it encourages people to do their work once it has been delegated. If the leadership is not shared

you will find that the leader is the one doing the same task over and over again. She identified that delegation is part of the shared leadership practice in their school.

Another benefit identified by respondents was the idea that teachers are empowered through teamwork. For example, T2 stated that “leadership quality is also beneficial in the sense that it will help to empower others, but this can only be achieved if leaders have good leadership skills”.

In summary, the general picture that emerged leaned towards shared leadership and was positive. Some respondents seem to practice shared leadership particularly P 1 and P2. They pointed to clear benefits, even though the respondents did not elucidate on their responses. It was interesting how these principals motivated their teachers to share the workload with themselves.

Shared leadership and its benefits occur only because of transformation in the leadership system. This transformation brings about many changes to leadership and ensures that stakeholders play an important role by promoting change. This leads to the next theme of the findings, how change takes place.

4.3.3 How change takes place

Principals see the complexity that change can bring. For example, P1 has seen resistance and conflict occur because of change. Some responses revealed that in order for change to take place there was a need for consultation consensus and an awareness of the differing levels of decision-making. However, it also needs to explain, inform, and sometimes to dictate. P2 is also aware of the complex culture of the school with regards to the slow pace of change. He said that first you have to tackle the culture of the school and make people understand the nature of the change. The school board members see change as a formal process that must be followed. Some responses revealed that some respondents, particularly teachers, have limited views on change.

In the next paragraphs, I present the views of respondents as to how change takes place and the roles they play to bring about change.

Both SB 1 and SB 2 have similar views on change when they state that changes in the school could only take place once the school board and SMT meet, so that they can decide together on the changes in the school, SB 1 pointed out that he plays a vital role by advising the school principal and agreeing where possible to change that helps develop the school. SB 2 stated that she plays a role in bringing about change by participating in activities like the school bazaar and sport tournaments. She believes that these activities could bring changes to the school.

On the matter of change, the documents which I studied, confirmed the following:

One of the teachers wanted to know from the principal if the school statement, motto and slogan have changed because the one in the School Development Plan (SDP) is different from the one that was previously used. The principal stated that he copied the statement, motto and slogan from the school official document. It was agreed that the school motto written in the recent SDP should be changed from Education for Development to Ed Labora (Knowledge is power) (Minutes of staff meeting held on: February 02, 2011, for (Kakunde) SS).

It was interesting to note that all staff members were involved in the deliberation of the issues pertaining to the school and they reached consensus before the change was implemented.

According to P1, "change results in resistance, or even conflict; as school principal you have to be consistent if you use ideas from staff members. He confidentially stated that:

Some change requires consultation with members or it may require a decision from the principal or SMT or school board. It depends which level of decision-making you are going to employ. If it is a final decision I will just bring it to the attention of the staff members to reach a consensus. For other decisions we may have to all come together and discuss it and we arrive at a decision in that manner.

It is also interesting to note that when people are implementing changes, the decision-making process will be dependent on the level at which the decision needs to be taken, such as staff level, regional level or SMT level, but consensus is needed from all members regardless.

According to P 1, the role he plays as principal in bringing about change is to make people understand the reasons for the change, by explaining why something is taking place. He also stated that he must explain, "If there are disadvantages to the change, explain the positive or negative impact of the change and be there to convince or influence the teachers to prepare for a change that has come in." He also indicated that sometimes you are forced as the principal to dictate a change in the interest of the school.

P2 stated that change normally takes place more slowly. For instance, he clearly explained that if you are dealing with academic change, you should start with the teachers first and make sure that they understand the role they play at the school. He also indicated that once the teachers understand their role, they are more likely to formulate a culture of working together and to take it seriously. He believes that if gradual change begins with the teachers, after one or two years there should be a big improvement.

As the school management and staff briefings I observed showed, all the stakeholders in education have to be involved when there is something to be changed. For example the "principal asked his colleagues as to what should be done to change the many tours in the school which take place during the examination time" (Observation of management and staff briefing on July 25, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

This indicates that, when there is something to be changed in the school, everyone should be involved to give his/ her ideas, the principal and the SMT cannot decide alone.

T2 seems to have limited views on change. He stated that changes could take place through informal meetings and formal celebrations to talk about educative stories and information that would benefit the learners. He also stated that "teachers can play a major role to bring about change by participating in the various projects in the school". He stressed that he played a major role in bringing about changes in the school, for example, he was involved in the establishment of a tuck-shop committee and spearheaded this committee to make sure that the needs of the learners are being catered for.

Some respondents indicated that change could take place through meetings in the school; for example, T1 stressed that change demands effort and can take place in the school if there are discussions with the principal, superintendents, teachers and all learners in the school.

The important thread running through this theme is that all stakeholders in education need to take part to bring about changes in the school. Respondents generally showed high levels of commitment to effect any changes. However, some of their leadership roles seemed purely bureaucratic or autocratic.

When change takes place, leaders face challenges either from the subordinates (teachers) or from the community and these challenges can be academic, social or behavioural challenges to mention only a few. This leads to the last theme of the findings, challenges facing leadership.

4.3.4 Challenges facing leadership

Some respondents mentioned challenges like academic, behavioural and social challenges. Furthermore, discipline, lack of learning materials, abuse of sick leave by teachers, poverty, policies and social issues such as learners' groceries dominated the discussion. Some respondents indicated that the noise pollution from the local community and long distances between the learners' residential addresses and school were also considered as challenges. Some responses revealed that some challenges are physical and logistical. These challenges are presented in the next paragraphs.

4.3.4.1 Discipline

Some responses revealed that teachers and learners' behaviour were considered as challenges since the SMT and school board has to discipline these people. For example P1 stated that today there are more changes in personnel in the school resulting in most of the intake being younger teachers who still have to learn to take responsibility for their actions, whereas in the past, teachers stayed in one position and were mature in handling responsibilities. The younger teachers need more monitoring which is a challenge.

He explained “most of the teachers we have today have negative attitudes toward work and learners so it requires more supervision in order for them to complete tasks”. He further stated that if the principal and HODs are not around less work will be done.

Dishonesty of teachers was another issue that surfaced in the interview; for example, P2 stated that teachers have high levels of absenteeism without giving suitable or acceptable reasons why they were absent. He concedes that “teachers are also abusing sick leave, they go to doctors pretending to be sick and then they come with a sick leave note. If you find out that it is not true that they were sick there is nothing you can do”.

SB2 has a similar concern and she stressed that “some challenges are coming from teachers; some teachers also needed to be controlled, because they do not concentrate on their subjects”. She also stated that some teachers teach under the influence of alcohol. She further states that this caused them (teachers) to not finish the syllabus on time and was the reason that learners did not understand their subjects very well. She felt that this would lead to a higher failure rate in the school.

Some responses revealed that some principals and teachers are lacking understanding of disciplinary procedures, for example, T2 stressed that teachers and principals find it difficult to minimize the effect that the level of discipline that exists in the school has on both teachers and learners.

Some respondents indicated that the limited capacity of the schools is also a leadership challenge. For example, SB1 explained that:

Some schools were built only to cater to small numbers of learners, but schools have exceeded the required numbers. This is due to the fact that learners come from very far and cannot travel long distances to attend lessons. This situation forced the SMT to admit more learners to the school.

He further explained that if you have exceeded the required number of learners, you face many problems. He stated that some learners are stealing the others items, some are bringing alcohol into the school and some are jumping over the school’s fence. He finally concluded that “the more people you have under your control, the more problems you are going to face”.

On the matter of learners' misbehaviour, the documents that I studied confirmed the following, the "principal informed the house about the three boys who were suspended from the school's hostel for beating up their colleagues" (Minutes for school board held on: June 21, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS). This concern confirms my observation that "one of the management members reminded the principal about the parents who will attend the disciplinary hearing for their kids" (Observation of management briefing, July 11, 2011 for (Kakunde) SS).

SB 2 has a similar concern to other respondents when it comes to the learners' behaviour when he said:

The school leadership today is facing a lot of challenges namely misbehaviour of the learners. This is a challenge to the school leadership, because as a parent we have to talk to these learners and advise them so that learners can change their behaviour. There are some cases whereby the school board members and principal need to discipline learners together.

In brief, what is interesting here is that the school board, SMT and principal have a good relationship. This discourages the bad behavior of the teachers and learners. The respondents did not only dwell on discipline in the school, they also indicated that resources and support are also challenges facing leadership. This led to the next subtheme for this theme, resources and support.

4.3.4.2 Resources and Support

Some respondents indicated that the school was short of resources for the learners' needs. The issues of physical resources such as lack of learning materials dominated the discussion. Furthermore, support from the parents and the regional offices among other issues were considered as leadership challenges. As a school principal, you would need to make sure that effective teaching and learning is taking place in the school. Therefore, some respondents felt that the lack of resources and external support are also leadership challenges.

T1 stressed that the "school is facing academic challenges, behavioural challenges and others. With regards to academic challenges, you will find that learners for some subjects do not have enough textbooks". She further stated that even teachers find it difficult to teach when they do

not have enough resources. She felt that this is a challenge to leadership, as it will lead to a high failure rate at the school.

In a similar vein, T2 stated that:

From an academic point of view, learning materials are needed so this is a challenge a leader cannot solve alone

He further argued that catering and finding solutions to the learners' needs is also a challenge, because the learners' academic needs are constantly growing and school leadership fails to solve these problems.

Similarly, P2 stressed that the school is facing challenges due to lack of learning materials or resources. Every learner was supposed to have their own book but the situation does not allow for that. He further explained that learners come from different houses so that it is difficult for them to share a book. He explains further that learners depend only on the summary of the work and this will hinder their academic progress and this is also considered as a leadership challenge.

Practical support either from the parents or government were also regarded as challenges, for example, P2 pointed out that parents do not want to buy their kids school uniforms; some kids are unable to get the school uniform due to poverty. He further stated, "it is becoming a challenge to us in the sense that they (learners) were supposed to wear a school uniform and as the principal you cannot send learners home". He also indicated that most of the parents do not want to contribute to the School Development Fees (SDF) for the school, to help them to buy the learning materials to improve the academic performance of the school.

P1 stated that running a big school such as this one with hostel staff members and facilities requires external support and that this support does not come very easily. He stated clearly that it is difficult especially when it comes to the issues like broken chairs in the school. As a principal you have to make sure that those broken chairs are repaired so that there will be

enough for the learners. He also mentioned things like electricity and water; if they are not operational, you cannot do schoolwork, therefore, he felt that it is also a challenge.

Since policies and social issues in the environment around us can become issues for education, some responses revealed that policies also become leadership challenges and that this leads to the next challenge, policy and social issues.

4.3.4.3 Policy and social issues

Most respondents have not mentioned policy as leadership challenges; only one respondent indicated that policy is also a leadership challenge. For example, T2 stressed that:

Most challenges facing the school leadership today are lack of understanding of government policies and effective implementation of policies among the principals, teachers and SMT such as the Public Servant Act, Code of Conduct for teachers and learners.

He also stated that the school leadership failed to understand the Education Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP) to achieve Vision 2030.

Social issues from the environment were also regarded as challenges, for example, P 2 stated that noise pollution from the local community caused by music with loud speakers is also a challenge, because if you try to enforce the rules to reduce the volume of the music, it will bring us into conflict with those people.

T1 stated that there are Albinos or learners who do not hear properly and they are always teased by other learners and this hinders the learners' academic progress in the school. She further explained that "these Albinos are mostly from poor families and often go out to look for help". She explains further that some principals and teachers could not understand this situation. Therefore she felt that it is a challenge, because principals and teachers have to make sure that these learners attend lessons.

In brief, the challenges highlight the fact that shared leadership does not diminish the importance of good leadership. Leadership seems even more important in a shared

environment, both in terms of its role in developing human potential and physical resources, but also significantly, in terms of a leader's acceptance of being accountable, almost on behalf of team members.

4.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I presented data precisely as provided by the respondents during the interviews and from what I observed, as well as document reviews. I attempted to explore and provide the views, feelings and experiences on the understanding of school leadership today and other phenomenon of this study. Triangulation of the information extracted from interviews, observation and documents have spoken to each other in this chapter.

I presented the emerging views of leadership from all the respondents. Some responses revealed that there is a change in leadership approaches i.e. from autocratic to democratic leadership, which is a people-centered leadership style. The respondents also indicated that leadership is characterized by various leadership structures (committees) and teachers are empowered to take part in the various activities at circuit, cluster and school levels. However, the view that emerges is a limited one and leadership is largely seen in a traditional way.

I also presented shared leadership and its benefits, which is one of the evidences that there is a change in leadership approaches. P1 and P2 explained how they promote shared leadership so that teachers take up the responsibility along with the principal. The next finding presented was how change takes place and respondents indicated how they play a role to bring about change. The last presentation was about the various challenges (policy, discipline, resources and support) facing the leadership.

Since I am working in the interpretive paradigm and am interested in showing how others understand and shape their reality, I quoted freely from the raw data in order to ensure that the respondents' voices are heard. I believe that my personal beliefs and feelings did not influence any of the data; rather it strengthened and validated my data.

In the next chapter, I discuss the findings and make sense of my data by referring to my research goals and to the literature.

Chapter 5

Discussion of the findings

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I presented the data as collected from interviews, observation and documents. In this chapter I make sense of my data in terms of my research goal, the literature I have consulted and my personal comments.

The main aspects that captured my attention from my data are discussed under the following broad headings.

Firstly, I look at *a restricted view of leadership*, which emerged as one of the themes from the findings. Secondly, I look at the aspects of *new understandings of leadership*. I discuss new understandings of leadership in relation to participation, increased consultation, the formal teacher's role, leadership structures within the school and delegation. These new understandings of leadership are all directly or indirectly related to the phenomenon of the principal's leadership role. Thirdly, I also look at *the role of principal as leader of school*; here I focus on the role of the principal in managing change and enhancing a collaborative culture in the school setting. Fourthly, I discuss *team leadership and its benefits*, namely: team building, broadening of thinking capacity and growth, sharing ideas and division of responsibility. Finally, I focus on *challenges facing leadership* including lack of support, lack of leadership skill, resistance to change and implementation of policy.

All these themes are discussed through the lens of the relevant literature with the research goal and research questions in mind.

In the next paragraph, I provide a brief review of my study, in order to keep the reader informed of what the research is all about and the arguments it makes.

As I outlined in Chapter 4, the goal of my research was to investigate current understanding of leadership and application of leadership among principals in selected schools in the Oshana Region in Namibia. In this study my motive has been to understand the individual experiences with regard to participative and shared leadership and the policy of decentralization in the Namibian education system. In that context, the data collection techniques namely, interviews, observation and document analysis were designed in such a way as to answer the following research questions.

1. What are the principals' understandings of school leadership? How do they see their role and how does this compare with contemporary (transformational) leadership theory?
2. How or to what extent do principals promote shared leadership in their schools?
3. What are the challenges in the implementation and promotion of transformational (non-traditional) leadership approaches?

Several themes emerged during the data analysis that deal with each particular idea about the understanding of school leadership, promotion of shared leadership and challenges in the implementation and promotion of non-traditional leadership approaches.

5.2 Discussions of the findings.

5.2.1 A restricted view of leadership

According to the data, respondents understand that there is a change in leadership; however their views on leadership are quite traditional and very limited, they also viewed leadership in a superficial way. Only one respondent sees a shift from an autocratic to a democratic style of leadership. Their views on leadership were more focused on the management function (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1., p. 46). Some responses placed the emphasis on direction and control rather than distributed leadership. For example in the case of promoting team leadership, when one interviews principals who are meant to be the leaders of their schools, one expects them to

mention that they promote team leadership by practicing distributed leadership. By using this approach the leadership can “stretch over the school’s social and situational context” (Spillane et al., 2001, p. 26). But this line of thinking was not evident in the interviews, strengthening the notion that they have a restricted view of leadership.

Other empirical evidence which shows that respondents have restricted views on leadership became clear when they only focused on the formal leadership roles of the teacher. One expects them to mention informal roles of teachers namely coaching peers to solve instructional problems, encouraging parents’ participation and working with colleagues in small teams or groups (Lieberman & Miller, 2004, p. 14 and York-Barr & Duke 2004, p. 264).

The absence of such descriptions from my conversation with the principals seems to indicate that their views on leadership are very limited and they find it difficult to describe the leadership strategies they employ when they promote team leadership and to describe the changes in leadership approach.

5.2.2 New understandings of leadership

5.2.2.1 A sense of participation

According to the data, respondents indicated that in democratic leadership people are free to participate in decision-making and have a say in every leadership function. However, the respondents did not give concrete examples of participation in the leadership of the school and there is a lack of evidence in the data to show full participation. Furthermore, the data indicated that in the past there was less participation of the other staff members in leadership roles and that leadership was individually in the hands of a single ‘heroic’ leader. There is an emphasis on exercising freedom of expression, freedom of speech and freedom of opinion by all stakeholders.

The transformation and democratization of education in Namibia includes the idea that teachers, parents, learners and other people (such as members of the communities near schools) must participate in all activities of the school. The involvement and participation of the

various stakeholders and democratization of the education system is emphasized by the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture (MBEC) in Namibia (1993), which states that:

In order to teach about democracy, our teachers, and our education system as a whole must practice democracy. A democratic education system is organized around broad participation in decision-making and the clear accountability of those who are our leaders (p. 41).

The respondents' perceptions and the Ministry's views on participation seem to be in line with the idea that the tendency to regard school principals as solely responsible for leadership of the school is being replaced by the notion that leadership is the prerogative of many, if not all, stakeholders in education.

As reported in Chapter 2, leadership theories have moved away from the notion of single 'heroic' leadership to participative leadership which recognizes the voices of all the stakeholders in education and stresses participation and team work.

The phenomenon of participation is a feature of what Bush (2003a) refers to as 'collegial' models of management [leadership] (p. 64). Collegiality between the school leadership and others stakeholders in education "can improve stakeholders' participation in decision-making as a participative process with all members of the school having an equal opportunity to influence policy and action" (p. 64). Collegiality was reflected in the words of one of the respondents who stated that change demands effort and can take place in the school if there is discussion with the principal, superintendents, teachers and all learners in the school (Chapter 4, section 4.3.3., p. 65).

The data also reported that the new understanding of leadership is that it is a people-centered leadership style. The participative model is consistent with the democratic values of the new Namibia and South Africa.

There is no doubt that participative leadership is a new notion of leadership in the Namibian education system that was introduced after independence. It is against this background that it "is a relatively new challenge to schools that require learning and adaptation to change" (Niitembu, 2006, p. 82). Therefore, school leaders need to adopt more participatory forms of

leadership, that are more consultative, open and democratic and which involve teachers and parents a lot more in the schools decision-making.

In closing this topic, participation includes allowing members of the organization to take part in the leadership of the organization, which is the essence of democratic leadership that results increased consultation of all stakeholders. This leads to the next finding, where I discuss, increased consultation.

5.2.2.2 Increased consultation

The data revealed that most of the respondents have an understanding that in democratic leadership, people at the grass root levels are involved in the decision-making and everybody is part and parcel of the decision making process, but this is only to a limited extent.

Hence decision-making is one of the main activities that school leadership deals with, “in the collegial models the style of leadership both influences, and is influenced by, the nature of the decision-making process” (Bush 2003a. p. 75). As far as the new understandings of leadership are concerned, the principal cannot make a decision as an individual, but must rather practice the team leadership styles that show success in gaining the commitment of followers in decision-making.

Furthermore the data revealed that there is consultation when it comes to the decision-making process. Regrettably, what respondents really illustrated is a cascade model of consultation where decisions are made at management level and passed down (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.1., p. 49). I personally believe that decision-making should be made in the form of consultative discussion, and not in the form of persuasive decision-making as it appears in the data. Therefore, it is important for the leaders to consult with people about specific decisions and choices relating to the ongoing development of the school.

These views are in line with the statements of one respondent when he says “some changes require consultation with the other members” (Chapter 4, section 4.3.3., p. 63). In my research during the morning and staff briefings, I found out how one of the interviewed principals

consulted teachers and involved them in the problem solving and decision-making when “he asked his colleagues what should be done to change the many tours in the school which take place during the examination time” (Chapter 4 section 4.3.3., p. 64). In my view, I believe that good leadership means ensuring that appropriate consultation and discussion take place as part of the school life. Therefore, I concur with Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 171) who claim “that without consultation and negotiation, there is unlikely to be shared ownership of a change process and implementation of idea is likely to be constrained by lack of commitment”.

5.2.2.3 The formal teachers' roles

My research found that the new understandings of leadership are characterized by the notion of leadership opportunities for teachers. In spite of the new understandings of leadership, teachers seem to take up formal leadership roles. This is in line with the decentralization policy which was introduced in Namibia and South Africa which facilitates the participation of teachers in schools' decision-making processes. Leithwood et al. (2003) claim that “in traditional led- schools, teachers and principals exercise leadership in relation to quite different aspects of the school's functioning, although teachers often report a strong interest in expanding their spheres of influence”. The core of transformational leadership is the fact that teachers are allowed and encouraged to participate in the leadership of the school and in the decision-making process (Chapter 2, section 2.6.2.3., p. 25).

The data also revealed that some respondents (P1 and P2) promote team leadership by delegating teachers to participate in cluster, circuit and school activities. The designations associated with formal teacher leadership roles are mentioned in (Chapter 2, section, 2.6.2.3., p. 26). This information is in accordance with the data where one of the respondents (T2) indicated that “he is the chairperson of the Cluster Development Program Committee (CDPC)” (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.2., p. 52).

Leithwood et al. (2003) further state that “those appointed to formal teacher leadership roles are also sometimes expected to induct new teachers into the school “(p. 117). This view agrees with my observation which I conducted during my research where a principal of Kakunde SS

delegated one of his teachers to induct British students into the school who were on exchange program (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.2., p. 54).

According to the data, principals involve teachers in the leadership activities by delegating tasks to them. This is in line with York-Barr and Duke (2004) when they state that there are many ways in which principals can support teacher leadership (Chapter 2, section 2.6.2.3., p. 26).

Despite the fact that the new understandings of leadership allow teachers to practice teacher leadership which minimizes the 'heroic' leadership style in schools, there are factors inhibiting the exercise of the teachers' role (Chapter 2, section 2. 6.2.3., p. 26). This is in line with Leithwood et al., (2003, p. 117) who claim that "the effectiveness of teacher leadership is constrained by the lack of role definition". The principal of Kakunde SS concurs with a similar sentiment when he says that "sometimes you may want to share the leadership, but the person whom you want to share it with feels like you just want to use them. They have an understanding that you get paid a lot of money" (Chapter 4, section, 4.3.2, p. 58). This quote indicates that some teachers at Kakunde SS are not oriented towards the teacher leadership role; therefore there is a need to further clarify the nature of leadership exercised by teachers on both researched schools.

Another new understanding of leadership which emerged from the data is the formal pattern of relationships between people in organizations (Bush 2003b, p. 65). This leads to the next finding I discuss the leadership structures within the school.

5.2.2.4 Leadership structures within the school

School leaders are operating under the various leadership structures, some of those structures are leadership structures within the school and leadership structures outside the school. In this topic, I discuss only the leadership structures within the school as one of the findings of my research.

Data indicated that the new understandings of leadership are characterized by the various committees; some are functioning on daily basis and others not. This is line with Bush (2003b, p. 74) when he claims that "collegial approaches are often manifested through a system of

committees, which may be elaborated in the larger and more complex institution". The decision-making process inside committees is thought to be "egalitarian with influence dependent more on specific expertise than an official" (p. 74).

The introduction of the democratic education system in Namibia led the leadership structures to be lateral or horizontal rather than vertical and hierarchical, reflecting the view that all stakeholders should be involved in decision-making. This view is in line with the arguments of one respondent when he says "the leadership structure of the school was supposed to come from the bottom, starting from the learners to the school board" (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.3., p. 56). This indicates that the 'heroic' leadership structure is not appropriate in the new forms of leadership.

The leadership structure within the school is determined by the number of learners and the capacity of the school. This is in accordance with the views of the one respondent who says "the school only qualifies for three Heads of Department (HODs), but the number of learners in the school is large" (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.2., p. 55). This resonates with O'Neill as cited in Bush (2003b) who claims that:

The actual structure of the organization depends on three variables: organization activities, the existing roles of people in management [leadership] positions and the degree of motivation of people within the organization (p. 68).

These views are similar to the views of most of the respondents in my research where some committees' functionality depended on the activities carried out by the committee and some are only functional when the need arises.

Furthermore the data revealed that the operation of the schools' committees enable the school leadership to link the school to the community. This is in line with the Ministry of Education in Namibia which stresses that "the school takes every opportunity to establish a link with the committees and allow them to have a share in the decision-making processes" (Namibia. MoE, 2005, p. 31).

The new understandings of leadership assume that principals have an important role “in creating the climate for productive and appropriate relationship between all the structures in the school” (Bush, 2003b, p. 82), for example, to ensure that all structures carry out their work. This is in accordance with the views of one respondent when he says “in each committee there is a chairperson to oversee the progress of the committee”; I only meet with the chairperson of each committee to review what the committees have done and achieved” (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.3., p. 57).

Data also indicated that learners are part of the leadership structure and while this indicates that the current leadership thinking allows learners to take part in leadership activities, there is a lack of empirical evidence from the data to support these arguments.

In closing this topic, the leadership structures within the schools are significant because they underline the potential for leaders to restructure the school to meet the decentralization system. Once the leadership structures within the schools are functioning, delegation also takes place. This is explored further in the next topic.

5.2.1.5 Delegation: ‘Keep your eyes on, but your hands off’

As discussed in chapter 2, the renewed interest in leadership resonates with the approaches to leadership that emphasize group or team leadership rather than ‘heroic’ leadership. The data revealed ideas of ‘holding on and letting go’, one respondent (P1) expressed his reservations about trusting all of his colleagues, and his fears about being let down (Van der Mescht, 2008, p. 4) when he says “but you have to be careful when you delegate, ‘you keep your eyes on, but your hands off’” (Chapter 4 section 4.3.1.1., p. 50). This indicates that some principals are suspicious of their colleagues and that there is a lack of trust in their teachers. In order for delegation to take place effectively, there should be a high level of mutual trust and willingness to accept the responsibilities.

Kocolowiski (2010) asserts that:

Leaders should ensure that they delegate enough autonomy and responsibility to all members in their team, involve the team in decision

making and encourage the team to self-manage [lead] its performance to the extent possible (p. 25).

This statement concurs with my observation that “the principal delegated one member of the SMT to act as principal and to make announcements in the morning assembly while one of the teachers is instructed by the principal to read government circulars to the teachers in the staff briefing (Chapter 4, section 4.3.1.1., p. 50).

Since the new understandings of leadership are characterized by distributed leadership, it must be noted that the notion of delegation is different from distributed leadership. Delegation is “expressed in giving away responsibility to others or allowing responsibility by structured default” (Van der Mescht, 2008, p. 4). Furthermore, delegation of responsibility provides opportunity for other members of the school community to take responsibility and to participate in the life of the school in a more meaningful way.

Principals are cautioned not to delegate decision-making to inexperienced colleagues; this might be one of the reasons why some teachers in this study refused to be delegated (Chapter 4, section 4.3.2., p. 58). Furthermore the principals have to explain the information concisely when they are delegating the task to the teachers.

In closing this theme, all six of these new understandings of leadership need to be operating in a school that is trying to build a democratic ethos. They are interrelated; any one in operation without the others will result in an imbalanced situation.

5.2.3 The role of principal

This section is primarily concerned with the role of the principal, which is complex and pluralist in general. By explaining it, I focus on two aspects, namely: managing change and enhancing the collaborative culture. I begin with managing change.

5.2.3.1 Managing change

According to the data principals use various ways to ensure that change can take place in their schools and other respondents indicated they also play a role to bring about changes by participating in activities like the school bazaar and sport tournaments. However, some

responses revealed that teachers who participated in this study have limited views on change. Davidoff & Lazarus (2002, p. 37) claim that “leaders in the school context have an important role to play in drawing people together and motivating them to [venture] into often risky futures”. In my view, I think this is important in the framework of educational change currently being experienced in Namibia and South Africa, “where this aspect of leadership can assist in transcending the many fears and anxieties common in such a situation” (Davidoff & Lazarus 2002, p. 37).

Cunningham & Cordeiro (2002, p. 173) claim that “what makes the principals’ role so critical in the change process stems from the conclusion that neither top-down nor bottom-up strategies are effective by themselves”. Fullan (as quoted by Cunningham & Cordeiro, 2002, p. 173) state that “it is only when bottom-up and top-down forces interact and are mediated in purposeful directions that improvement occurs”. In my view, it is up to principals to perform this intervention and to motivate their teachers to affect the kind of changes that will realize improved performance.

The data showed that principals are playing a more important role in bringing change by making teachers understand the reasons why the change is taking place. However, it is my view that principals need to act more purposefully, as transformational leaders during the period of change. For this reason, it is vital that leaders using the transformational leadership theory understand how the change affects the organization.

Principals as change agents are able to transform their school more effectively if they use both transactional and transformational leadership strategies. However, principals are not only expected to “transform, restructure and redefine the physical learning environment of the school, but also to transform the people they work with and community members” (Leithwood & Jantzi as cited in Mushandja, 2006, p. 9). Therefore I believe that principals are expected to have knowledge of the post-transformational leadership theories so that they understand the changes that contribute to effective leadership and team leadership.

According to Theron (2007) principals are expected to carry the following responsibilities when they manage change:

- Determine the objective of the proposed change
- Determine the procedures and methods for implementing changes
- Scrutinize the literature relevant to the proposed change
- Contact other principals who have already had experience of the proposed change (pp. 198-199).

In my view, I believe that besides having to accept these responsibilities, principals are also expected to have the necessary skills to manage change effectively, namely skills in enhancing communication, trust and skills in planning for action and implementation of change.

Furthermore the data showed that sometimes principals are forced to dictate a change in the interest of the school. Therefore, their role seems to be purely bureaucratic or autocratic. This indicates that some school leaders' style of leadership is still appropriate to the old model of more formal, one-person leadership that leaves the substantial talents of teachers largely untapped.

As reported in Chapter 4, change normally take place more slowly and demands effort from the teachers, principal and parents. Therefore during the implementation period principals are expected to be supportive of their staff members and "this is only possible if they have the capacity for and knowledge of contemporary leadership practices" (Johannes, 2009, p. 27). In this way principals play a critical role in helping their followers to deal with innovation.

The decentralization of decision-making as part of school leadership establishes new roles and responsibilities for principals, for example, managing change. Theron, (2007, p. 198) claims that a "number of authors in the literature on change refer to the school principal as a change agent who has to accept the entire responsibility for managing change in the school". Therefore, principals are expected to initiate, facilitate and implement change.

Principals as change agents "have a generous education task on their hands to help everyone concerned to discover and conceptualize the true nature of change and how it impinges upon us all" (Everard et al., 2004, p. 239). This attempt to help people to conceptualize change, involves both helping people to understand change, and "helping them to comprehend and apprehend the nature of the particular change being introduced" (p. 239). Therefore, principals

are expected to have a declarative knowledge when managing change. According to Leithwood et al., (2003) declarative knowledge:

Refers to knowledge about a specific aspect of the profession, for example knowledge about government education policy, knowledge about education in general, knowledge about the school, students and community; knowledge about specific subjects and about union issues (p. 117).

To conclude this topic, in my view I believe that the success of managing change in schools depends on the principal and “an understanding of the leadership role they need to play in its process” (Theron, 2007, p. 199).

I now begin to explain the role of the principal in enhancing a collaborative culture.

5.2.3.2 Enhancing a collaborative culture

The data revealed that principals have a sizeable task to change the school culture into a collaborative culture, whereby they share power and responsibility with others through delegating to teachers and teams within the school. According to Hopkins, Ainscow and Mel West (1994, p. 83) collaborative culture “is culture which facilitates teacher development through mutual support, joint work and a broad agreement on educational values”. Enhancing a collaborative culture is one of the biggest responsibilities principals have to deal with. Bush (2003a, p. 168) asserts that “leaders have the main responsibility for generating and sustaining culture in schools by communicating core, norms, values and beliefs both within the organization and to external stakeholders”.

Data showed that some respondents are aware of the complexity of culture and the slow pace of change. This resonates with Fullan, (2001, p. 66) who claims that leading change in a culture “is about unlocking the mysteries of living organization, complexities can be unlocked and even understood but rarely controlled”. Collective change in schools however, requires individuals, “especially teachers, to change from the inside out” (Duignan & Bezzina, 2006, p. 12). Therefore, enhancing the collaborative culture in the school has to start with the teachers; this

is in line with my interviews in one of the researched schools, where one respondent stated that “if you are dealing with academic change, you should start with the teachers... once the teachers understand the role they play in the school, they are more likely to formulate a culture of working together and to take it seriously” (Chapter 4, section 4.3.3., p. 64).

This quote indicates that leaders need to assist teachers in building and maintaining a collaborative professional culture. The following strategies are employed to enhance and strengthen the collaborative school culture:

- Clarifying the school’s vision in relation to collaborative work
- Reinforcing with staff norms of excellence for their own work
- Using symbols and rituals to express cultural values in the context of social occasions in which most staff participate
- Using bureaucratic mechanism to support cultural values (Leithwood et al., 2003, pp. 83-84).

Therefore, principals as school leaders are expected to help the people who they are working with to enhance the collaborative culture. This can only be achieved if they have knowledge and skills in leadership theories which emphasize both the task and the person. This enables them (the principals) to change the culture of the school to one which is more open, transparent, co-operative and “where all stakeholders feel welcome and have clear roles and responsibilities” (Prew, 2006, p. 18).

Managing change and enhancing the collaborative culture in a school can only be achieved if the leaders are exercising team leadership which is opposed to ‘heroic’ leadership. This is explained further in the next section.

5.2.4 Team leadership and its benefits

To discuss this topic, I first focus on how the principals foster team leadership in the workplace based on the findings from the study and then I discuss the benefits of team leadership.

The data showed that the principals (P1 and P2) promote team leadership by encouraging staff members to take up responsibilities. This is in line with Steward, (2006) when he says:

Principals share leadership with teachers by providing individual support, intellectual stimulation and personal vision. This is important to the staff because it encourages teachers in the school to learn and develop, realizing that the goals are apt to be met when members of the school work together. Therefore the primary role of the principal is to share the responsibility with others in the school (p. 5).

The increasing complexity and “discontinuous nature of modern work, poses greater problems where the solo [heroic] leadership is less appropriate and ‘team leadership’ more suited”(Bolden, Gosling, Marturano & Dennison, 2003, p. 14). According to Bolden et al., (2003, p. 14) “team leadership is a leadership which delegates roles to others, builds on diversity, seeks talent, develops colleagues and creates mission ”.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the principals share leadership functions with teachers, parents and students. This is an indication that what is needed is transformational leadership, which assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be the dedication and capacity of organizational members. Transformational school leaders are continuously in pursuit of three fundamental goals:

- Helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture
- Fostering teacher development
- Helping teachers to solve problem together more effectively.

Therefore, in my view I regard these goals as the pillars of transformational leadership. It is believed that “in the context of a fast-changing world, transformation leadership holds the key to fast tracking reform within an organization” (Johannes, 2009, p. 73).

The data indicated that the school board members also take part in the leadership of the school, although to a limited extent. Therefore, principals are not only expected to work with teachers and the SMT, but also to work with the school board and others in the school community to create a shared vision and “strategic plans to inspire and motivate all who are involved in and with the school and to provide direction for the schools ongoing development” (South Africa. DoE, 2006, p. 20). Therefore principals can take the first step in building a shared leadership capacity within their school.

In support of these sentiments, the document I studied (Minutes for staff meeting) indicated that some principals promote team leadership by allowing teachers to chair the meetings and to be secretary for the meetings (Chapter 4, section 4.3.2., p. 59). This clearly indicates that there is a sense of promoting team leadership by empowering and delegating to teachers to some extent. Therefore principals are expected to play the role in fostering team leadership, for example, by creating a more democratic school environment and providing opportunities for professional growth.

In essence, principals foster team leadership by building commitment to school leadership and then empowering teachers to achieve the school's goals and objectives and this can be effectively implemented if the principals have knowledge of the transformational leadership theories.

The data also indicated that team leadership has many benefits to subordinates and leaders. These benefits are discussed in the next paragraphs.

5.2.4.1 The enhancement of team work

According to the data, the benefit of team leadership identified by respondents was that it creates a trustworthy team which is difficult for people to undermine. . The data also revealed that team leadership is a good tool that enhances teamwork among the staff, non-staff, as well as learners. This is in line with Everard et al., (2004, p. 168) when they say “team-building and trust are the most widely used approaches to the development of individuals and organizations”. Furthermore, team leadership provides teachers with a significant role in school decision-making and opportunities which contribute to their professional role.

Trust between a leader and his/her follower is the cornerstone of team leadership. This is in line with Stone and Patterson (2005) when they say:

Trust is the highest form of human motivation because it brings out the very best in people. It creates a moral foundation for extra-ordinary, value- based transformational, creating effective, sustaining leadership that leads to profitable and successful organization (p. 10).

Therefore, it is reasonable to argue that trust relies on the leader's character, which makes values-based leadership possible. Therefore, I personally believe that when people work as a team they always reach a better result and a common understanding, which makes teamwork a popular process for those striving for success.

Everard et al. (2004) identified some of the following aspects of team work that appear to be more prevalent in the team led school:

- The degree of openness and trust in the team
- The use of resources
- The clarity of tasks and decisions
- Non-verbal communication
- The extent to which values are explicit
- The degree of the commitment and whether action follows discussion (p. 173).

Therefore, I personally believe that teamwork is one of the more important aspects of organizational success, because it brings unity and harmony to the organization. Niitembu, (2006) argues that "leading together as partners can be a better solution to the effective implementation of participative leadership and the process of decentralization of power" (p. 81).

5.2.4.2 Broadening of thinking capacity and growth

Data indicated that team leadership broadens one's positive thinking capacity and allows people to grow and mature academically. This is in line with Stone and Patterson (2005, p. 7) when they say "transformational leadership broadens and elevates the interest of the followers by modeling the expected behaviour and stirring followers to look beyond their own immediate, personal needs to embrace the needs of others". Furthermore, in team leadership, the principal as leader of the school is able to help the teachers to achieve self-esteem and the need for self-actualization.

According to the data, team leadership stimulates the professional growth of people, because through the team, people are able to overcome the leadership challenges. This is in line with

Leithwood et al. (2003) who claim that team leadership attributes leadership qualities to colleagues who accept responsibility for their own professional growth (p. 117).

What is most salient from the data about team leadership is the claim that team leadership leads to higher levels of personal commitment to an organizational goal and “greater capacities for accomplishing those goals, this in turn, is assumed to result in extra-effort and greater productivity” (Leithwood et al., p. 118). Hence the people involved in team leadership are empowered and this enables teachers to acquire procedural knowledge. According to Leadwood et al., (2003. p. 126) “procedural knowledge refers to knowledge teachers have about how to carry out a leadership task, for example, making tough decisions, knowing how to run a meeting and dealing with administration”.

In conclusion, team leadership enhances team performance on complex tasks. This is in line with Carson et al., (2007. p. 1224) when they say that “when team members offer their leadership to others and to the mission or purpose of their team, they should experience tasks and share more information”.

5.2.4.3 Sharing ideas and divisions of the responsibilities: ‘Two heads are better than one’

According to the data, team leadership enables members in the organization to share ideas and work load because people are empowered to take part in every facet of the leadership functions as stated earlier. This is in line with Leithwood et al., (2003) who claim that:

Team leadership encourages the exchange of ideas and endorses mutual problem solving, thereby providing rich opportunities for the exercise of teacher leadership and suitable motivation for potential teacher leaders to develop their capacity (p. 132).

Furthermore, through the exchanging of ideas staff members learn from the experience of each other and from principals and in turn principals also learn from them. The process is more of a sharing of ideas and knowledge (Chapter 4, section 4.3.2.3, p. 61). Kocolowski, (2010) claims that “organizations can benefit from diversity of thought in decision-making, the ‘old adage two

heads are better than one' seems appropriate" to capture the idea of sharing ideas and responsibility" (p. 27).

As reported in Chapter 4, shared [team] leadership replaces the one-man show and reduces the burden to the principal. This presentation is similar to what Kocolowski (2010, p. 27) argues when he said "shared [team] leadership reduces stress levels for key leaders". This resonates with the views of one respondent when she says "instead of the principal doing all the work in the school, she/he give some work to his/her subordinates" (Chapter 4, section 4.3.2.4., p. 61). In this way team leadership reduces the burden on the principal. Similarly, Bush (2007, p. 397) claims that "the participative approach [team approach] will succeed in bonding staff together and easing the pressures on the school principal".

In summary, the general picture that emerged was favorably disposed to team leadership, however there were also some significant challenges facing this type of leadership.

5.2.5 Challenges facing leadership

Data showed that some respondents indicated that leadership faces many challenges such as academic, behavioural and social challenges. Some challenges are physical and logistic. These challenges are explained in the following paragraphs.

5.2.5.1 Support

According to the data lack of support from the parents and regional office among other issues were considered as leadership challenges. Minister of Education in South Africa states that "in order for leadership to be effective, educational leadership must be more supportive and directive of the change process" (South Africa. DoE, 1996, p. 28).

Furthermore, schools cannot sustain innovation without support; this is especially applicable to the Namibian and South Africa context, when so much change is occurring at every level of the system and where the concept of team leadership is very new. At this point it is important to

bear in mind that managing change will be successful only if the change agents are given the support that they need.

Within the context of the local school, the support can to a large extent be provided by the parents. The information from the research showed that most of the parents did not want to or could not support their children even when it came to buying school uniforms or contributing to the School Development Fees (SDF). Therefore, lack of support is a leadership challenge in the sense that principals cannot send learners home because they did not contribute to SDF or are not wearing the school uniform. This would contravene the Namibia Education Act No: 16 of 2001, part 11, section 11(6) which states that “a learner may not be denied enrolment at a state school solely on the ground that the parents fail to pay the full annual contribution to the SDF for the previous year” (Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture, 2001, p. 11).

Apart from that, the support and participation of the parents is also needed to transform the schools effectively, however parents are disempowered by their own limited education and may be unable to participate and fully support the leadership of the school.

Finally, I believe that the formalization of team leadership in Namibian and South African schools require continual support from all levels of education e.g. national, regional/provincial and school both structurally and culturally.

5.2.5.2 Lack of leadership skill

According to the data principals lacked the understanding of government policies and the skill of disciplinary procedures and failed to understand the Education Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP) to achieve Vision 2030.

In my view transformational leadership may not be helpful in meeting the challenges of the current educational system in Namibia and South Africa, as school principals do not have the necessary skills associated with the contemporary leadership approaches as referred to in Chapter 2. However, not only are the skills of principals and teachers required for transforming

schools, but also the appropriation of physical, human and financial resources. Therefore, leaders need to develop an innovative leadership “to break the current practice of non-implementation practice of policies” (Namibia. MoE, 2011, p. 2). Thus, I personally believe that principals who possess the innovative leadership skills are able to both manage and lead.

Finally, I believe that it is more difficult for any single individual to possess all the skills and abilities required to competently lead an organization today.

5.2.5.3 Resistance to change

As reported in chapter 4, change always results in resistance and conflict. This is in line with Ferting as cited in Prew, (2004, p. 4) when he says “schools and teachers are notoriously resistant to change in the entire world and usually for reason, particularly as the intent behind change and the actual impact are often at variance”. In my view this situation could be avoided if principals, who are primarily responsible for the implementation of change, recognized the factors that cause the resistance to change, and know how to manage it at their level of authority.

It is appropriate to go back to South Africa, DoE (1996, p. 32) which claims that “resistance to change flourishes where there is poor communication, little or no active participation and involvement in decisions and where tension is allowed to simmer unchecked”. Therefore it is reasonable to argue that, in order to manage resistance there should be open lines of communication, participation, support, negotiation and agreement.

According to Westhuizen and Theron, (2007, p. 218), “there are two types of resistance to change namely the revolutionary perspective (change enforced from below) and the reactionary perspective (reaction to change enforced from above)”. I think the resistance which occurs in this study is a reactionary one since the teachers are reacting to the change, which is taking place in schools and in the education system. Since the changes are likely to be resisted by implementers, Bush (2002, p. 275) argues that “principals have an important mediating role to play, which is helping the teachers to understand and cope with the proposed changes”.

Furthermore school principals are expected to understand every teacher in his/her particular circumstance and help those (teachers) to move toward accepting change.

Duignan and Bezzina (2006) claim that:

Leaders of educational change sometimes tend to focus too much on the change itself and pay too little attention to the psychological transition of 'the self' that individuals go through in coping with the change. Individuals and their psychological needs and concerns should be the primary focus in any change process, because the greatest difficulties uncounted during a process of change are those that arise inside people's heads, which may lead them to resist the change (p. 11).

In a similar vein, Fullan (2001, p. 46) as I explained in Chapter 2 in section 2.4, p. 14, gave two reasons why we need to respect the resistance, if principals ignore the resisters, it would contribute to the failure of managing the change.

5.2.5.4 Implementation of policy

Another challenge that arose from the data is the effective implementation of policies; this is a challenge in the sense that principals as school leaders have to make sure that whatever decision they take is not contrary to any of the policies of the Ministry. Therefore, principals have to comply with the ministerial policy and are required to think and act strategically in order to align school policies and practice to national legislation. Therefore, I tend to agree with Theron, (2007, p. 199) who claims that "the success of policy implementation depends on the meaning school principals attached to it, and an understanding of the leadership role they need to play in its process".

As stated in Chapter 2, section 2.4, p. 13, since policies are imposed from the top-down they are likely to be resisted by implementers (teachers and principals). Therefore principals face the challenge "to polish up top-down/government imposed policies by explaining them to the teachers and other stakeholders in education to suit their specific contexts" (Johannes, 2009, p. 19).

Furthermore, the implementation of policy is not a question of defining the policy and letting others implement it, it is a process of interaction, dialogue, modifying, feedback, frustration, patience, coping with mixed feelings, and values (Everard et al., 2004, p. 240). All these responsibilities are on the shoulders of the principals as school leaders.

In my view I believe that, the success of policy implementation depends on the sharing of information with staff and the quality of the leadership of a school. Therefore 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” (Johannes, 2009, p. 80).

Finally, policy implementation requires the implementers to take into account the feelings, values, ideas and experiences of those affected by the change [policy] (Everard et al., 2004, p. 241).

5.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to make sense of the data presented in Chapter 4 through the lens of the literature. The findings are presented in themes that highlight various aspects of team leadership as they emerged from the participants’ responses and also give a general picture of the data.

My study found that there are different views on current leadership thinking; however respondents have restricted views on leadership and often viewed leadership in a superficial way. The new understandings of leadership also emerged from the data. The respondents acknowledged the important role that the principals may play in managing change and enhancing a collaborative culture. The study also found that there are many benefits from practising team leadership. In spite of the many benefits discussed in the study, challenges facing leadership were also found in the research.

In the following Chapter, I summarise my main findings, indicate the potential value of my study and offer recommendations i.e. recommendations for practice and recommendations for further research. A short conclusion of school leadership in Namibia is also presented.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

In the previous Chapter, I discussed the main findings of my research drawn from the respondents' views. I discussed those data through the lens of the literature to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the investigation of the principals' leadership role.

In this Chapter, I present a summary of my main findings drawn from the themes discussed in the previous chapter and elaborate on the potential value of the study. I also present my recommendations arising from my findings. Since this study has illuminated other researchable areas related to my study, I found it also appropriate to make suggestions for further research later in this chapter. Finally, I briefly discuss the challenges experienced during the research process.

6.2 Summary of the main findings

The study revealed that the notion of participation of all stakeholders in education is seen as a fundamental aspect of the current leadership thinking. However, the respondents' vision of leadership is limited and quite traditional in many ways. There is an emphasis on the need to control, monitor and delegate rather than distribute leadership. Thus the picture that emerges is one of managerial leadership. Only one respondent expressed himself clearly on the shift from an autocratic to democratic style of leadership. In a similar vein, most respondents mentioned only the formal leadership roles of teachers, for example, teachers are leaders in cluster and circuit activities like sport, cultural events and examinations. There seems little recognition of the informal roles teachers as leaders may occupy, which is consistent with the narrow and superficial view of leadership that emerged. Furthermore, where consultation is mentioned it seems the respondents think of the passing down of information – a cascade

model – as consultation, a view that is narrow and inaccurate, as well as completely out of sync in terms of contemporary leadership theories.

Closely related to this issue is the principals' struggle with the notions of 'holding on and letting go'. Respondents expressed their reservation about trusting all their colleagues and their fear about being let down. As one put it, "You have to be careful when you delegate; you keep your eyes on, but your hands off". This means principals who participated in this research study are suspicious about their colleagues and exhibit a lack of trust in their teachers. This again is a far cry from the kind of leadership portrayed in contemporary thinking, where trust and distribution of power are at the heart of leadership and management.

The role of the principal as a school leader in managing change and enhancing a collaborative culture received much emphasis from the respondents. The principals were seen as the chief catalysts to bring about change in the school and to make teachers understand the change by explaining the reason why something is taking place in the school. However, the study found that principals still dictate change in their schools, driven by policy rather than the need for progress and development. It seems principals are still trapped in their formal, 'one-person' leadership approach that leaves the substantial talents of teachers largely untapped.

The other role of the principals which respondents emphasised is to enhance the collaborative culture. The research found out that some respondents are aware of the complexity of the school culture and the slow pace of change. The respondents emphasised that if you are dealing with the change of culture you first have to start with the teachers and let the teachers understand their role which will then gradually lead to them formulating a culture of working together.

The respondents acknowledged that current leadership thinking is a people-centred leadership style, unlike in the past whereby principals were solely running the school. However, the study shows that some teachers took part in leading and managing the school only when official leadership was absent. Most of the respondents indicated that teachers are self-motivated to participate in leadership formally or informally, although to a limited extent.

The study found that participation of all the stakeholders in education allows them to be involved in the decision-making process. Some respondents had an understanding that people at grass roots level are involved in decision-making. Consequently, I believe that the principal cannot make a decision as an individual; he/she has to consult other people in the school.

I found that the current leadership is also characterised by various leadership structures within the school such as various committees, some that are legitimate and some not. However the research found that some of the committees function depending on the activities that have to be carried out by the committee and some are functioning when the need arises; some are also not functioning because of the lack of activities which were suppose to be carried out by the committees.

The findings also brought to the fore the fact that the operation of the schools' committees enables the school leadership to link the school to the community. The development of teachers' leadership through delegation is seen as a means of ensuring that every member feels part of the organisation and teachers come to know the dynamics of the organisation more thoroughly.

The respondents emphasised that change demands effort from the principals, teachers, learners and parents. Therefore, during the period of managing change principals are expected to be supportive of their staff members, this only being possible when they have the knowledge and skills of transformational leadership thinking. Furthermore, principals are able to transform their schools more effectively if they use both transformational and transactional leadership strategies.

The main finding of this study, which underpins all others, is the way in which principals promote team leadership in the school by sharing every leadership function with parents, teachers and learners. According to the findings it seems that principals promote team leadership by encouraging staff members to take up leadership roles. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that there is a sense of promoting team leadership by allowing teachers to chair the staff meetings and also to be secretary for the staff meetings, but this is only to a limited extent.

The findings further revealed that team leadership has many benefits to the leaders, subordinates and also to a school as a complex organisation. According to the data, team leadership creates trust and team work which is difficult for other people to destroy. Trust and team work are the pillars of transformational leadership theories. The broadening of someone's thinking capacity is another benefit of team leadership which surfaced from the research. The respondents also indicated that team leadership enhances the developmental growth of people, because people in a team are always ready to take on any role and assume any responsibility.

The study also found that sharing ideas and the division of labour are also benefits accrued from team leadership. Through the exchanging of ideas staff members learn from the experience of others and from the principal and vice versa as the process is more about the sharing of ideas and knowledge.

Furthermore, the respondents indicated that team leadership minimises the pressure placed on the leaders, since it removes the one man-show and bonds staff together. The idiom 'many heads are better than one' appropriately captures the ideas of sharing ideas and responsibility.

While there was an appreciation of the benefits derived from team leadership, challenges facing leadership pervades responses. These include lack of support from the parents, regional officers and the Ministry of Education. Lack of understanding of government policies such as ETSIP and NSPIs were also mentioned as leadership challenges. Resistance to change was another challenge which arose from the research's findings.

Therefore, the conclusion that must be drawn from this study is that the notion of participative leadership and decentralisation of power still has a long way to go, if the principals are not used to both transformational and transactional leadership strategies.

6.3 Potential value of the study

In illuminating current understandings and processes of leadership the study attempted to inform a broader professional forum, namely principals, inspectors and policy makers. It hopes

to provide guidelines for the transformation of school leadership towards contemporary approaches which emphasise personal growth through participation. I hope that the study may also prompt researchers to probe this crucial dimension of schooling in Namibia. There is no final knowledge, the conclusions I reached in this study are tentative and lend themselves to more investigation as necessitated by ever changing time and space.

The study would enable higher learning institutions in Namibia such as UNAM to develop leadership programs and teacher development programs to enable teachers and principals to be equipped with leadership skills.

With the knowledge earned from research, I will be in a good position to provide help on the current leadership approaches to my colleagues in our school, cluster and within the circuit. The research may also contribute to the field of leadership and management in the education sector, as it relates to leadership.

6.4 Recommendations for practice

On the outcome of my findings, I would like to make the following recommendations:

- Even though management is not a focus of this study, the Ohangwena Education Directorate should provide leadership and management workshops in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and with the institutes of higher learning. These programs would facilitate the fostering of team leadership.
- Principals as transformational leaders should allow and encourage teachers to participate in the school leadership and in the decision-making process, e.g. during the initial, planning and management phases, so that teachers do not have the perception that they are excluded from the decision-making, leadership and management process.
- Teacher Leadership Development Programmes (TLDPs) are direly needed in Namibia, particularly in the Ohangwena Education Directorate. Some of these programs are professionals' development school, development and on-going support of the teacher leaders and developing teacher leader programs. These would bring more clarity on the

nature of teacher leadership both formal and informal. Once these programs are established, teachers and principals would acquire knowledge on teacher leadership.

- It was reported in this thesis that the school leaders' lack of understanding of policy hampers the effective management of change and consequently increases resistance to change. The struggling principals can team up with other principals who have already experienced the proposed change. Furthermore, I urge the Ohangwena Education Directorate to implement the recommendations made by Johannes (2009), who suggested that "Ohangwena Directorate should identify principals who need leadership development and seek help from the Ministry of Education to provide training" (p. 101).

6.5. Recommendations for further research

I suggest that further research needs to be done on the following aspects of school leadership:

- An investigation into the principals' leadership role in Namibia, which should include Learners' Representatives Council (LRC) and HODs as my research excluded them. I believe they might have different experiences pertaining to the principals' leadership role. Including LRC and HODs may provide new insight on the current school leadership thinking.
- Since the team leadership concept is in its infancy stage, a large-scale study is needed on it. This study would be useful in finding out how principals promote team leadership and to what extent the school benefits from team leadership.
- Further research and investigation into the principals' leadership role from the perspective of female principals is needed, since my study only included male principals. It seems likely that female leaders may perceive the principals' leadership role differently from male principals.

6.6 Limitations of my research

Since my study is a case study and cannot cover all the regions in Namibia and all the schools in Oshana region, the findings cannot be generalized (Merriam, 2009, p. 51). I am also aware that the validity of the findings depends upon the quality of the linguistic and cognitive skill of the participants in the study. The fact that a semi-structured interview in this study is conducted mainly in a second language and that parents cannot understand English posed a further limitation on this study. In this case I allowed some respondents (school board) to use the vernacular. As explained earlier, I am sufficiently proficient in both English and the vernacular to make sense of and to translate from English to the vernacular language (Oshana) (see Appendix D 3 b).

The topic under research was of a sensitive nature as it focused on the leadership of the school. This might have prevented some respondents (teachers) from airing their true feelings as this could be seen as offending their immediate supervisor. To overcome this I assured the respondents that they would remain anonymous and that the information obtained from them would be confidential.

Generally qualitative research generates a lot of data and making use of these data needs a careful and often complex analysis process, skills that might be a challenge to a novice researcher such as myself. Therefore because of a possible lack of these skills the validity of this study might be compromised.

6.7 Conclusion

The Namibian leadership system during the *apartheid-era* employed a highly centralised decision-making process and top-down structure typically proceeding without the consultation or participation of group members.

After independence, a fundamental shift took place in the school leadership: a shift away from top-down leadership toward school-based leadership. This shift enabled all the stakeholders in education to take part in every leadership function of the school.

The study found out that respondents have limited views of leadership, because they emphasised only the management functions and they also perceive the passing down of information, which is a cascade model, as consultation. It is clear from the responses that educational leaders play a seminal role in the process of developing a particular culture in a school and managing change. This happens only when they (principals) have an understanding of contemporary leadership thinking which encourages wider participation and stresses team leadership. This understanding would contribute to the achievement of the national goal of Vision 2030.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Permission to conduct research

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8383

Fax: +27 (0) 46 622 8028

PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140

E-mail: education@ru.ac.za



17 June 2011

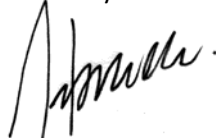
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr Silas Shituleipo Shitana (student number 11S0384) is a registered Masters student at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa in the field of Educational Leadership and Management. He has reached the point where he is ready to conduct his research. He wants to investigate leadership among principals at selected schools in your school. The purpose of this letter is to obtain your permission for him to collect data from your school.

Mr Shitana will need access to documents pertaining to management and leadership at your school, such as minutes of management meetings. He will also need to observe the school in action to get a sense of its climate and culture, and he will need to interview selected teachers, yourself and the chairperson of the School Board. He deserves all the assistance he can get for this project. Leadership among principals is an important issue in education in Namibia and the rest of Southern Africa but as yet under-researched. The caliber of Mr Shitana's work so far suggests that he will produce a sound thesis and add significantly to the field of Educational Leadership and Management.

Thank you in anticipation for your permission and support. If you have any queries please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely



(Prof) Hennie van der Mescht
(Supervisor)

Appendix B: Permission to conduct research from Director



OHANGWENA REGIONAL COUNCIL

DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION

Private Bag 2028, Ondangwa, Tel. 264 65 281 903, Fax. 264 65 240190

Enq: Sanet L Steenkamp
E-mail: cloctesanet@yahoo.com

11 July 2011

To: Mr Silas S Shitana
Masters Student in Educational Leadership and Management
Rhodes University
Grahamstown

SUBJECT: PERMISSION GRANTED TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

Your letter dated 20 June 2011 requesting permission to conduct a research at SS and SS in Ohangwena Region has reference.

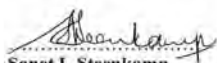
Permission is hereby granted for you to conduct a research in SS and SS. Thus, you are allowed to liaise with principals of the above mentioned schools to conduct your study. I am positive that your study will indeed shed light on the role of principal leadership as it is an important issue in education in Namibia.

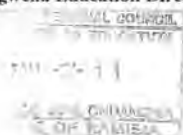
Kindly ensure that your research activities do not interrupt normal school activities, and participation should be on a voluntary basis.

By copy of this letter, Inspectors of Education of the two schools concerned are informed of your request.

Ohangwena Education Directorate wishes you success in your study.

Yours sincerely

 - 11/07/2011
Sanet L Steenkamp
Director
Ohangwena Education Directorate



Appendix C: Letter of consent

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

I understand that this research is to investing the principals' leadership roles in selected school in the Ohangwena Region in Namibia.

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 will be voice recorded, however it remains confidential. My personal identity will remain mysterious 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 S S Shitana (researcher) at Cell: 0027-796861702 /0812524061/E-mail address:shitanhah@yahoo.com.

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

Name:

Institution (**Pseudonyms**).....

Signature:

Date:

Appendix D: Interview schedule for principal, teachers and school board

1. Interview schedule for principals

- ❖ How long have you been a principal for this school?
- ❖ How many learners are in this school?
- ❖ How many teachers are in this school?

1. What is your understanding of school leadership today?
2. Have there been any changes in leadership styles or approaches since independence? In what way?
3. What are the leadership structures in the school?
4. Do 'ordinary' teachers occupy leadership roles in the school? Can you give me one or two examples of teachers taking leadership roles in the school or cluster?
5. Do you encourage or promote the idea of shared leadership? How do you do it?
6. How does change take place in the school? What role do you as principal play in bringing about change?
7. In your views/opinions what are the most challenges facing school leadership today?
8. What are the benefits of shared leadership?

2. Interview schedule for teachers

- ❖ How long have you been teaching in this school?
- ❖ How many grades do you teach?
- ❖ What kinds of teachers' training did you attend?

1. What is your understanding of school leadership today?
2. Have there been any changes in leadership styles or approaches since independence? In what way?
3. What are the leadership structures in the school?
4. Do 'ordinary' teachers occupy leadership roles in the school? Can you give me one or two examples of teachers taking leadership roles in the school or cluster?
5. How does change take place in the school? What role do you as **teacher** play in bringing about change?
6. In your views/opinions what are the most challenges facing school leadership today?
7. What are the benefits of shared leadership?

3. (a) INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL BOARD ENGLISH

- ❖ How long you have been a school board member for this school?

1. What is your understanding of school leadership today?

2. How does change take place in the school? What role do you as **school board** play in bringing about change?
3. In your views/opinions what are the most challenges facing school leadership today?
4. What are the benefits of shared leadership?
5. How do you see the relationship between the School board and the School Management Team? Why is this important?

(b). INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOL BAORD (OSHIWAMBO)

- ☐ Melelofikola owa ninga mo eedula ngapi?
1. Ou udite ko ngahelipi ewilikoleefikola mefimbo lopaife?
 2. Omalunduluko ota a dulu e uyepo ngahelipi mofikola? Onghandangala ilipi to dana ongo shilyo shelelofikola mokweeta omalunduluko aa?
 3. Pamadiladilo oye omashongo e lipi a taalela mokulela eefikola paife?
 4. Omauwa ashike taa hangwa meewiliko la topolelwafana?
 5. Ekwatafano pokati kelelo lofikola nokangudu mutima kofikola olili ngahelipi? Omolwashike lafimana?

Appendix E: Observation sheets for Ndevahanga SSS and Kakunde SS

Appendix E 1: Observation sheet for Ndevahanga SSS

Date: 04-29/07/2011

Activity	Policies implementation	Decision making	Delegation	Participation leadership	Shared Leadership	Teamwork	Teacher's role
Morning Assembly	<p>1. Only letters for sport read by the sport coordinator .</p> <p>2. Principal informed the learners that they expected to speak English always, because it official language and it is stipulated in the language policy of the Ministry.</p> <p>Date:26/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal informed the learners that if they have problem, they should channel it via the Learners' Representative Council (LRC).</p> <p>Date:19/07/2011</p>	<p>1. One of the teachers makes a prayer.</p> <p>Date:26/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Student Christian Movement (SCM) conducted the morning assembly and gave flour to principal and teachers to make announcements.</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Morning assembly was conducted to by one Grades 12 classes.</p> <p>Date:19/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Each teacher stand in front of his/her class during the morning assembly.</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Sport coordinator in the school announced the soccer players and volley ball players who will participate in the tournament for other school.</p> <p>Date:08/07/2011</p>
Management briefings	<p>1. Principal stressed that STM are expected to speak to learners in English, not during the lessons, but every</p>	<p>1. The house agreed to ask staff how the losing dates to be compensated, because learners have to go</p>	<p>1. Principal delegated HOD for Sciences to allocate student teachers to senior teachers whom they will work</p>	<p>1. All the management members participated during the morning briefing.</p> <p>2. Principal gave</p>	<p>1. Head of Department for English is in charge of the overall examination and make sure that the examination question</p>	<p>1. All the management members use to arrive on time.</p> <p>Date:26/07</p>	<p>1. Superintendent (a teacher) was tasked to report the sewerage problem to the regional office,</p>

	<p>day when they are communicating to the learners.</p> <p>Date:19/09/2011</p>	<p>home due to the sewerage problem in the school.</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>	<p>with.</p> <p>Date:26/07/2011</p>	<p>chance to his colleagues if they have Question or anything to add.</p> <p>Problems of the chairs that are not enough for the learners was raised by one of the School Management team (SMT) members.</p> <p>Date:26/07/2011</p>	<p>papers are moderate. He informed staff to give their subjects' to be moderated by the internal moderators in the school.</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>	<p>/2011</p>	<p>because it is one of his job descriptions.</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>
<p>Staff briefings</p>	<p>1. Principal emphasized on dressing code for especially male teachers. He referred them to the dressing codes for teachers</p> <p>2. Encourage teachers to communicate to the learners in English.</p> <p>Date:18/07</p>	<p>1. Principal asks the house to suggest the ways how they will compensate the losing days, because learners are going home on that Thursday. Teachers come up with the various suggestion e.g. to teach during the weekend before school holiday and one weekend</p>	<p>1. One teacher is delegated to make a quotation during for school flag during the school holidays to the companies in Windhoek that can embroider the school flag. She gave a report on the quotation she made in</p>	<p>1. Many teachers gave their concerns on how the afternoon study to be supervised by all the teachers</p> <p>Date:18/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal informed Sciences teachers to staple the Languages question papers and languages teachers staple the question paper for science</p> <p>Date:19/07/2011</p>	<p>The teachers agreed on the following: Teachers for languages to staple the examination question paper for sciences and Science teachers to staple the examination question papers for languages.</p> <p>Date:19/07/2011</p>	<p>1. One of the teachers has a responsibility of identifying best performing teachers and learners in the schools.</p> <p>Date:19/07/2011</p> <p>2. One of the teachers (a member of examination</p>

	/11	<p>after holiday. Then the house reached a consensus to teach during the weekend.</p> <p>Date: 18/07/11</p>	<p>Windhoek.</p> <p>Date:26/07/11</p>				<p>n committee) explain how the stapling the examination question paper will be done.</p> <p>Date: 26/07/2011</p>
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Appendix E 2: Observation sheet for Kakunde Secondary School

Activity	Policies implementation	Decision making	Delegation	Participation leadership	Shared Leadership	Teamwork	Teacher's role
1.Morning Assembly	<p>1. Only the invitation letters were read to the learners.</p> <p>Date:25/07/11</p>		<p>1. A senior teacher was delegated to act as principal and also make announcements' during the morning assembly.</p> <p>Date:20/07/11</p>	<p>1. Learner, who attended national conference in Windhoek, gave feedback to teachers and learners.</p> <p>Date:25/07/11</p>	<p>1. Learners are involved in conducting morning assembly.</p> <p>Date:20/07/11</p>	<p>1.All teachers attend the morning assembly</p> <p>And those we delegated gave report to the learners.</p> <p>Date: 25/07/11</p>	<p>1. One teacher is in charge of judging the grade which excels in conducting morning assembly. (Assembly presentation judge).</p> <p>Date:27/07/2011</p>
2.Management briefings	<p>1.Acting principal read government circulars from the circuit office to the house:</p> <p>Date:20/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal asked his colleagues on what should be done to change many tours which take place even during the examination.</p> <p>Date:27/07/2011</p>	<p>1. One member of the management instructed to read government circulars to the teachers in the staff briefing.</p> <p>Date:25/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal asked his colleagues on the date to conduct the interview for life skill teachers and cleaners. Then member gave their ideas.</p> <p>Date:25/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal shared the work load with his colleagues .e.g. delegated some members to read government circulars to staff.</p> <p>Date:20/07/2011</p>	<p>1. One of the members reminded the principal about the parents who will attend a disciplinary hearing for their kinds.</p> <p>Date:11/07/2011</p>	<p>1. One of the management members (a teacher) tasked to orientate the British students to school who were on the exchange program.</p> <p>Date: 20/07/2011.</p>

		7/2011		7/2011			
3. Staff briefings	<p>1. Principal gave feedback to teachers on what was decided in the principals' meeting.</p> <p>Date:21/07/2011</p>	<p>1. STM reached a conscious agreement with staff to change many tours in the school</p> <p>Date:27/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal delegated one teacher to accompany learners to the tourism quiz.</p> <p>Date:21/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal gave chance to the chairpersons of sport committee to report on the sport activities which took place during the weekend.</p> <p>Date:11.07/2011</p>	<p>1. Principal gave a chance to the chairperson of entrepreneur committee to explain to the staff about the preparation of the committee to prepare for the entrepreneur day.</p> <p>Date:11/07/2011</p>	<p>1. Many teachers reported to the house on what they were delegated .</p> <p>Date:20/07/2011</p>	<p>1. A chairperson of entrepreneur committee reported back to staff.</p> <p>Date:27/07/2011</p>

APPENDIX F: For document analysis for Ndevahanga SSS and Kakunde SS

Appendix F 1: Document Analysis for Ndevahanga Secondary School

Committee's Meetings/Documents	Decision-Making	Participative Leadership	Shared Leadership	Teacher's role/Teacher leadership	Instructional Leadership	Distributed Leadership	Delegation
<p>1.School Management Meetings: Held on: 26.05.2011.</p>	<p>1. The principal "school has a school patron but does not seem to be active. The principal feels that the current school patron needs to be contacted to discuss the issue and find a way forward"</p>		<p>1. The principal stated that there is a need to get somebody from the community for the library to be operational.</p>	<p>1. One of the teachers stated "she was given the responsibility by the school to work on the school flag. She was advised to contact a certain printing for the flag to be finalized.</p>	<p>1. The principal proposed that there is a need to put up evening classes table in order to complete the syllabus. The targeted group is grade 12.</p>	<p>1. The principal suggested that the two HODs should be responsible to put up a schedule when mastery tests have to be written in the school.</p>	<p>1. The principal suggested that the two HODs should be responsible to put up a schedule when mastery test have to be written in the school.</p>

<p>2. Staff meeting: Held on: 16.02.2011</p>	<p>1. Principal encouraged positive contribution to the meeting since it helps to build the school/ institution.</p>	<p>1. The principal responded that any staff member can make announcements as long as it is communicated to the principal's office, for example someone dealing with sports can make announcement for sports.</p>	<p>1. The principal encouraged co-planning and co-teaching to alleviate the problem.</p> <p>2. The principal indicated that the chairperson and secretary role of staff meeting will be shared / rotated.</p>	<p>1. The nature of the school requires that teachers can serve as management members.</p> <p>2. Staff members should not isolate themselves from the management.</p>	<p>1. Principal said "it is important that teachers can give each other block for study supervision and do their work in the classrooms.</p>		
<p>3. School board meetings: Held on: Undated</p>	<p>1. The copies of the school rules and hostel rules were handed out to the school board members and were discussed</p>	<p>The principal informed the house that the issue of school fees was supposed to be discussed with the parents the previous year but it was not possible</p>			<p>1. The principal admitted that, although there are some teachers who are not trying their best, there are those who are giving it</p>	<p>The school has a patron but does not seem to be active. The principal feels that the current school</p>	<p>1. It was agreed by the house that the principal and two teachers will work out on the application forms for</p>

	d. 2. The school board revisited the decision for confiscating cell phones and asking for payment when the cell is collected.	because only a few parents turn up for the parents meeting which was scheduled to take place towards the end of the year.			their all. He promised that the school will organize some classes during the holiday and afternoon lessons.	patron needs to be contacted to discuss the issue and find a way forward.	parents who would like their children to apply to be exempted from paying school fees.
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Others:

1. Committees' structures are functional/dysfunctional:

- Committees are existing and some are functional e.g. "One teacher urged the examination committee if it exists to prepare their time table so that learners can prepare according" **(Minutes for staff meeting held on 16/02/2011).**
- A list of school committees **February 2011 to February 2013** and their responsibilities is existing.
- Sport committee is exist and functions, it met on **15/March 2011(Minutes sport department meeting)**

2. Collegiality: The principal encouraged co-planning and co-teaching to alleviate the problem. He therefore supported the idea of test series" **(Minutes for staff meeting held on 16/02/2011)**

3. Policies implementation:

- The principal asked if operational files are in existence. He indicated that these files should be active and conform to national standards because the principal will check them regularly. **(Minutes for staff meeting held on 16/02/2011)**
- There was a sample of the teachers' code of conduct in the staff room. The principal reminded staff member that the teachers' code of conduct should be respected. It refers to dress code etc. A sample of dressing code was distributed to staff members for their inputs so that it can be discussed. **(Minutes for staff meeting held on 16/02/2011)**

4. Democratic Participation: The principal distributed school rules to staff members. He mentioned that the rules are subject to review. **(Minutes for staff meeting held on 16/02/2011)**

Appendix F 2: Document Analysis Sheet for Kakunde Secondary school

Committee's Meetings/Documents	Decision-Making	Participative Leadership	Shared Leadership	Teacher's role/Teacher leadership	Instructional Leadership	Distributed Leadership	Delegation
1.School Management Meeting:	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced	Minutes were misplaced
2.Staff meeting: Held on:02/02/2011	1. It was agreed that that school motto written in the recent (SDP) should be changed from Education for Development to Ed Labora (Knowledge is Power	1. Principal said “ all teachers, institutional workers and even the bus driver should be awarded certificates of achievement	1. Principal urged the new teachers and temporary teachers to learn from others to ensure good achievement at the end of the year. 2. Principal encouraged the staff members to continue render help to	1. One of the teachers promises to meet with other History teachers in the circuit for possible changes on how the timetable should be done. 2. One of the teacher indicated that “teachers are only called to set or	1. Principal said “the results are favorable but if we are to look at individual’s performance in the subjects, teachers still need to pull up their socks. 2. Each teacher should look at the learning need of each learner in the class so that a proper	1. The responsibility has to be given to the finance committee to fix /set aside amount for school related trips. e.g. workshops.	1. Principal encouraged the staff members to continue render help to one of the teachers who will be the next acting principal, so that the reputation of the school is maintained in the circuit and the region as a whole. 2. One of the teachers (T2 , the participant in the research interview

			one of the teachers who will be the next acting principal, so that the reputation of the school is maintained in the circuit and the region as a whole.	moderate the examination papers where as they were supposed to be trained on how to go about setting the exam papers.	teaching methodological that takes into consideration.		was tasked/delegated to review the school's committees.
3.School board meetings: Held on :05/03/2011	Unconsultative decision making e.g. He (Principal) on to inform the house about the three soccer boys who were suspended from the school's hostel for beating	1. The principal also congratulated the members of the school board for their outstanding leadership which made it possible for the school to perform well and			1. The principal informed the school board that most sport learner failed dismally. So he promised to monitor the performance of the sport learners so that		

	up their colleague. (School board minutes 21/06/2011)	encourage them to keep up the good work.			they can improve their academic work.		

1. Others:

(A). Committees' structure functional/dysfunctional:

- One of the teachers (**T2** the participant in the interview) was asked /delegated to review the school structure He explain why is it necessary to review the school committee, this is a results of new staff members joining the institution and staff leaving the school.**(minutes for staff meeting,02/02/2011).**
- The principal asked the staff to return the other dying committees backs to life such as HIV committee, Cultural committee, Housing committee.**(Minutes for staff meeting , Undated, 2011.)**
- A List of committees' members is ex isting, but the allocation of responsibility to the committees' members is not there.
- Hygienic staff committee is functioning, it met on: **16/02/2011(minutes)**
- Learners' Representatives Council (LRC) is functioning, it met on: **21/02/2011(LRC minutes)**
- Matrons and Institutional workers is functioning, it held its meeting: **21/02/2011(Minutes)**

(B). Policies implementations:

The principal explain the importance of the School Development Plan (**SDP**) and reminded the teachers to fill their administration file, and inform teachers that SDP can be amended if the need arise.

The regional code of conduct for should be revised so that learners' misconducts are observed and recorded which may later be conveyed to merits.