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**Exploring staff involvement in an organization development
intervention in a school in the Kavango region, Namibia: A case study**

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Master of Education (Educational Leadership and Management)

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ABSTRACT

Since independence, the Namibian education system has experienced a process of transformation from authoritarianism to democratisation. The philosophy underpinning this process is spelt out in the policy, *Toward Education for All*, with its four major goals being: Access, Equity, Quality and Democracy. Democratisation of education would mean that people would be equally involved in decision-making processes both at the system and organizational level, so as to contribute collectively to shaping the destiny of education in Namibia. This would mean at the school level of an organization, that teachers are the facilitators of democracy and agents of change in the learning organization environment.

To strengthen democracy and empower people's participation in the decision-making process, Namibia further adopted a decentralization policy which involved the devolution of power and administrative functions from central government to regional authorities. In the context of this policy framework, schools should take responsibility to introduce and manage change in their organizations. However, evidence suggests that schools have been slow to take up the challenge and that change is largely still initiated by regional officials.

This study looks at how organisation development (OD) may play a role in encouraging a mind-set where change may be initiated by the organisation itself. OD is a planned change strategy based on normative re-educative and empirical rational strategies implemented systematically. OD is participant driven, involving a series of activities that move the organization to a preferred future. It focuses on human behaviour and organizational change through staff participation practising a bottom-up rather than top-down approach.

This study reports on an OD intervention in a rural school east of Rundu, in the Kavango Educational region of Namibia. The study aimed at exploring staff involvement in an OD intervention and probed participants' perceptions and experiences of the process. The study is an action research case study located within the interpretive and critical paradigms. Observation and semi-structured interviews were the main data-collection tools used in the study.

In its preliminary investigation the study found that a lack of staff involvement in decision-making processes and participation in meetings were the major factors that were perceived to retard the effectiveness of the organization. The study further found that the authoritative style of leadership in the school contributed to the lack of cooperation and participation of staff members.

In contrast, the staff responded positively to the OD intervention. Participants embraced OD as a democratic approach to change as it made a meaningful impact on their understanding and conception of organization change. The intervention further empowered participants with new skills and knowledge of initiating change and problem-solving. Apart from that, the intervention provided a possible short-term outcome that encouraged participants to adopt and apply OD in the future, without underestimating the difficulties associated with the process.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late grandfather, Kakuni ka Ngundya, who laid the foundation and roots of the Rengura family. I further dedicate my thesis to my late father and mother, Rengura and Rosalia Ghukamba Shiyengo, for imparting the values of hard work, commitment, dedication and love for learning new things. Let your souls rest in peace.

DECLARATION

I, Demetrius Kativa of Rengura, hereby declare that this thesis is my own product and it has never been submitted to another University for degree examination and all sources used have been duly acknowledged.

SIGNATURE

DATE

ACRONYMS

ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programmed
FSC	Future Search Conference
HIV/AIDS	Human immune virus/ Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
MoE	Ministry of Education
MRLGHRD	Ministry of Regional and Local Government, Housing Rural development
MRLGH	Ministry of Regional and Local Government and Housing
NTL	National Training Laboratory
NSFPS	National School feeding programme scheme
OD	Organization development
RCGD	Research Centre for Group Dynamic
SDF	Survey Data Feedback

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the study

The Namibian education system went through a process of dramatic transformation from authoritarianism to a democratic educational system since the dawning of independence in 1990. The new government embraced a philosophical transformative policy, *Toward Education for All*, with its four major goals of Access, Equity, Quality and Democracy (Namibia. Ministry of Education and Culture, 2003, pp. 32-41).

Democratization of education would mean that people have to be equally involved in the decision making process both at the system and organization level to democratically exercise their power and contribute collectively to shape the destiny of the educational organization. In this context therefore teachers are viewed as the facilitators of democracy, the managers and providers of quality education and the agents of change in the learning organization environment (ibid, p. 42).

To strengthen democracy and empower people's participation in the decision making process, Namibia adopted a decentralization policy which involves the transfer and devolution of power and administrative functions from the central government to regional authorities (Namibia. Ministry of Regional, Local Government and Housing [MRLGH] (1997, p. 16). The essence of the policy is to make people more responsible in determining change, improving quality in service delivery, and vigorously involving themselves in the development of the local public service organizations.

This devolution of power is intended also for schools which entails that staff should participate in the decision making process through cluster centre forums or at school base and take a democratic decisions on the type of change and development they wish to embrace in their own organization (Namibia. MRLGHRD, 2008, pp. 2-3).

In the context of this policy framework it is also generally assumed that the schools are given more power, responsibility and autonomy to manage and introduce improvements and change in their organizations. But my own experience, in the Kavango Educational Region of Namibia, since the introduction of the new policy is that changes in schools that will materially affect the organization growth or structures are initiated largely through regional training workshops by officials within the regional educational structures (Namibia. Ministry of Education: Education and Training Sector phase 1 [ETSIP], 2007, p 26).

In a local research study on managing change in schools in the Kavango region, Muyeghu (2009, pp. 27-30) similarly found that the regional education office generally plays a dominant role in initiating training workshops for change in management performance and quality teaching and learning in school organizations. In this context therefore the Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP) became a very significant document used to spearhead training workshops for improving the management and academic performance in schools (ETSIP, 2007, p. 28).

It is against this background that this study looks at an alternative form of bringing about change, Organisation Development (OD). OD differs in many ways from the other change strategies employed such as the workshops run by regional officials. OD is a planned change intervention based on normative re-educative and empirical rational strategies which is systematically implemented. It is a participant driven which involves series of activities that move the organization to the intended goal. It focuses mainly on human behaviour and organizational change through staff participation in the OD intervention (Smith, 2003, pp. 1-3). OD emphasizes human values, democratic values and optimistic values. Humanistic values consider the individual as more important than the organisation deserving respect and dignity. It is assumed that every person has the potential to bring about change in the organization if people develop mutual trust, understanding, collaboration, open communication, decentralized decisions and a sense of unity (French & Bell, 1995, pp. 73-75).

In general it is believed that school improvement brought by staff themselves through a series of efforts will last longer than changes imposed from external means. This is because OD builds

capacity and empowers participants. In a recent OD study conducted by Kashikatu (2009, p. 24) he argues that “capacity-building activities in change in the organization is prerequisite for successful change”.

1.2 Motivation for the study

An independent, democratic country today expects its citizens to be competent in dealing with change at both national and organizational level. This change occurs both independently as well as collaboratively in the web of dynamic, national transformations. This belief prompted the motivation for this study that culminated in my carrying out an OD intervention project in a school in the Kavango region, Namibia.

The purpose was to explore and sensitize the potentiality of OD and inspire the mind-set of school leadership and teachers to understand their democratic roles in bringing about change in a decentralized education system where initiatives, cooperation, active participation in change efforts and proactive problem-solving becomes the culture of working.

1.3 Research goal

The goal of my research study was to explore the extent to which the staff involves themselves in an OD intervention in one of the rural junior secondary schools of Kavango region, Namibia. To achieve this research goal I conducted an OD research project with the school I selected as a case study. These research questions shaped the frame of the study.

1. To what extent do the school stakeholders get involved in the intervention?
2. How do stakeholders feel about OD? Are they positive, or negative?
3. What is the school principal’s leadership role in an OD intervention?
4. Does the intervention actually lead to change?

1.4 Significance of the study

I believe that the study is of potential significance to educators and educational leaders. It will serve as an example of a change initiative that uses OD principles, norms and values to improve

human relationship and behaviour in their own organization. The study is also of value as it will enhance democracy and bring long-lasting changes in the organization. It may also encourage other researchers to do OD studies and conduct OD projects with any organization of their choice. Hopefully it will demonstrate to the school that it is able to bring about change before being instructed to change.

1.5 Research methodology

My research was an action research case study located within the interpretive/qualitative and critical paradigms. Qualitative research focuses in understanding social actions in a particular context rather than generalization. Maxwell (2005, p. 17) argues that “qualitative research helps the researcher to understand the meanings of particular events, situations, and the experiences and actions of participants”. Interpretive research helped in understanding participants’ cultural norms and values, actions, experiences and perception during the OD intervention process.

Babbie and Mouton (2001, pp. 271-273), argue that in understanding human actions the researcher should conduct research in the specific environment of the phenomena and uncover the reality on the ground. This approach is typical of a case study.

According to Weisbord (in Smith 2003, p. 21), action research works within a framework of systems thinking which stresses the interdependent nature of people at the workplace and their environment. The research is known as “participatory action research” hence people in the organization and the facilitator (researcher) are engaged in all phases of action process for bringing changes to the organizational culture (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 314). French and Bell (1995, p. 7), state that most of OD field activities for change rely on participatory action research.

The fundamental purpose of critical paradigm is to bring about change through a critical approach to the phenomena. Winberg (1997) argues that critical research paradigm focuses on critical understanding of the situation or practice being researched in order to plan for transformative action. Similarly Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, pp. 28-29) and Janse van

Rensburg (2001, P. 24), assert that critical research helps to bring transformative change in individuals and groups through participation in action research.

During the OD intervention process participants were fully engaged in SDF workshop, training workshop and OD discussions and learned more about how to bring change. Participants were inspired with OD democratic values, beliefs and assumptions. I used interviews and observation to collect data.

1.6 Thesis outline

The thesis consists of six chapters including the introduction. In chapter 1 I present the context of the study, motivation for undertaking the study, research goal, significance of the study and research methodology in which I briefly shed light on paradigms and methods used for data collection during OD action research journey.

In chapter 2 I present literature that inform the essence of the study with the emphasis on exploring staff involvement in an OD intervention. In chapter 3 methodological perspectives that underpin the study are discussed in detail. In addition, I discuss the ethical issues, validity and limitation of the study. In chapter 4 I present a narrative account of the data collected from the research context during the OD intervention process. The presentation is mostly in the respondents' own words with a minimum comment from researcher.

In chapter 5, an analysis of the data and the main findings are discussed with reference to theoretical frameworks presented in chapter 2.

Chapter 6 is the last chapter of the thesis in which I summarize the main findings of the study. I outline the significance of the study and give recommendations for practice and for future research. I present the limitations of the study and conclusion with brief reflections.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of the study is to explore staff involvement in an organization development (OD) intervention in one of the rural junior secondary schools of the Kavango region, Namibia. It is aimed at determining the level of participation in this approach to change and intends probing into participants' perceptions and experiences of the intervention process.

However, this chapter will focus mainly on reviewing the literature that provides the theoretical perspective and in-depth understanding of the phenomena under scrutiny. Brink (2000), as cited in Muyeghu (2009, p. 10), argues that "a literature review is a process involving reading, understanding and forming conclusions about theory on a particular topic". Hence, theory is significant as it provides the conceptual framework for the study.

Two identifiable planned change theories, namely change and organization development (OD) are important in this chapter of literature review. The content of the chapter consists of three main sections which are: organization change, planned change strategies and organization development (OD).

2.2 Organization change

2.2.1 Understanding the concept change

The concept change means a process of moving from an old state to a new circumstance. It is driven by human desire, upon the realization that the current condition in their own situation has become obsolete and needs to be replaced with new norms. Hence, change is need driven and deliberately involves the effort of individuals to influence and modify the status quo of the organization.

According to Van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 183), change is the struggle between what is and what is desired. It is a planned, systematic process that takes time to come to fruition and the

aim is to bring improvement to human life. Galloway (2007), in Muyeghu (2009, p. 11), holds a similar view that change is a process of shifting from one permanent state to another, through a sequence of steps. In fact, Galloway's view concurs with the OD principle of intervention of solving the organizational problems through a sequence of steps with the involvement of staff members (Cummings, 2008, p. 16).

Therefore change is tightly bound with the involvement of members to improve the behaviours, relationships, skills and performance in an organization. According to French and Bell (1995, p. 3), change means that the "new state of things is different from the old state of things and as such it is omnipresent". Fullan (1993, p. 5), elucidates that "change is a journey, not a blueprint", which implies that change can take place unexpectedly at any time within the life cycle of an organization.

Fullan (2002, p. 237), further describes change as "an emotional laden process that can generate feelings of tension, disquiet and uncertainty within an organization". This state of affairs always sparks resistance to change, which is another way of expressing discontentment with the proposed change. Van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 223), maintains that although change can be a painful experience, the outcome at the end can be refreshing and rejuvenating. Interestingly it is more important to look at why people resist accepting the proposed change.

2.2.2 Resistance to change

Resistance to change means a refusal that manifests itself in human behaviour, to accommodate the intended alteration in some, if not all, of the existing norms, values, culture and structure of the organization. Similarly, Zaltman and Duncan (1973), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 220), define resistance to change as "any conduct that serves to maintain the status quo in the face of pressure to alter the status quo".

Resistance to change in general is a symptom of discontentment with the proposed change, and as such from a managerial point of view is also regarded as pure rejection for any change. Schein (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 221), argues that those forces reacting to changes are "part of the inherent nature of an organization". Resistance to change should be

viewed as a counter reaction for change and it is normal for the proper functioning of an organizational system.

According to Lewinian force-field theory, it is very important to acknowledge that the driving and restraining forces are always helping to bring the organization to an equilibrium point where the organization exhibits a satisfactory performance (Stoner *et al.*, 1995, p. 414).

To answer the question of why there is some resistance to accept a proposed change, a number of theorists, for example, Russouw, 1990; Coetzee, 1993; Lippitt, 1982; Lunenberg and Ornstein, 1991, in van der Westhuizen (2008, pp. 224-225), hold related views that teachers resist accepting proposed changes based on the following grounds:

habit and dependence as they are accustomed to the existing practices and authority; loss of the familiar and reliable situation or practices; loss of personal choice and values; lack of understanding or insufficient information for the reasons of change; inadequate feedback from initiators of change. Non-involvement in the planning and decision-making process for change; fear of change as change may affect their positions and loss of authority if change is realized; lack of infrastructural support and communication break down between top management structure and staff.

Similarly, De Villiers (1995), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 227), in his survey research discovered identical motives as illustrated above, which are mostly a psychological resistance to change, expressed in human behavioural terms.

Resistance to change is a common phenomenon in organizational culture, and thus leaders of organizations who find themselves in such an awkward situation, are best advised to first be conversant with the content of the resistance and then to seek an OD intervention to help with solving the problem and improving working relationships with the assistance of an outside OD facilitator. According to Vaill, in Cummings (2008, p. 217) and French and Bell (1995, p. 6), OD intervention in situations where change is being implemented, is the heart of organization development which solves organizational problems using behavioural science concepts, thereby improving working relationships and changing the situation with the assistance of a consultant. OD efforts are aimed at improving the organization's performance both on a small

and large scale respectively. A total dynamic organizational system is an open complex system interwoven with the external environment.

2.2.3 Complexity theory

Complexity theory refers to a non-linear dynamic complex system that is interwoven with the external environment and always exhibits unpredictable behaviour in response to change.

According to Fullan (1993, p. 38, 2001, p. v), dynamic complexity means that there is constant interaction between the internal and external environment with rapidly occurring and unpredictable non-linear change. Morrison, in Kashikatu (2009, p. 12), and Hanna, in Harris *et al.*, (2000, p. 13), hold the view that complexity theory is a collection of interacting parts which function together as a whole and has boundaries and properties.

Taking a school as an example, one could say that it is an open, dynamic, social system that is always interacting with the external environment and thus variable factors from both environments randomly influence the organizational change, thus complicating the normal function of a school's organizational system.

Variable external factors such as teacher unions, community culture, norms, values and assumptions, as well as government policy, impose unpredictable and non-linear change on an organizational system. Due to constant interaction with the external environment, organizations become complex systems and as a result variable factors always tend to divert planned change programmes. Fullan (2003, pp. 21-22), argues that complexity theory is related to chaos theory and it creates a condition of change.

According to French and Bell (1995, p. 6), a system perspective directs leaders and OD practitioners to be aware of interdependencies, interrelatedness and multiple cause and effects of the system. From a complexity perspective, each school is a unique organization and has its own culture, a complex web of living communities and a set of problems that emerge from the environment; therefore, OD facilitators are reminded to take the effect of external factors into consideration whenever OD intervention is conducted in such an organization.

2.2.4 School as an organization and change

A school is an organization that strives towards changing and improving human capacity to better live in harmony with other human beings around the globe. According to Moloji (2002, p. 3), the school is a learning organization that embraces change in knowledge and skills, which includes attitudes and behaviour, through dynamic group learning.

An organization is a living entity that consists of members from the internal and external environment and as such it is a complex system. It is continually experiencing challenges with regards to any change; thus, according to French and Bell (1995, p. 2), the goal of organization development (OD) is to effectively manage change; to improve the functioning of individuals, teams and the total organization by imparting the necessary knowledge and skills through OD intervention so that the members are able to continue improving on their own.

Similarly, van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 246), affirms that the goals of OD includes both the quality of life of individuals, as well as the improvement of organizational functioning and performance. Furthermore, he holds the view that in order for individuals to keep on improving, the school as a living entity needs to continually review the change and development of the organization (ibid.). The task and responsibility of the organizations' leaders is to keep on observing the actual changes at their schools and to render the necessary support to members to assist them in embracing the intended change.

2.2.5 Leadership and change

An organization's leader plays a crucial role in the organization; therefore, the leader should always be conversant with the driving and restraining forces of change and direct and support the members towards the realisation of the change. Cummings and Worley (2001), and Susanto (2008), as cited in Kashikatu (2009, p. 16), agree that "in a changing environment the role of the leaders is [*sic*] very crucial in inspiring people to support and participate in the change initiative".

The concept 'participation' is significant in the contemporary democratic leadership of an organization, as it allows members to be involved in any change initiatives and to own the

decisions made. It also generates feelings of autonomy and satisfaction and releases creative energy and encourages self-expression. Participation, teamwork, collaboration and cooperation are the concepts that fit well into promoting a quality work life and solving organization problems (van der Westhuizen, 2008, pp. 249-251).

Katzenbach and Smith (1993), cited in Smith (2003, p. 17), state that “organization leaders can foster team performance best by building a strong performance ethic, rather than by establishing a team-promoting environment alone”. An organization leader needs to lead with strong and acceptable morality so that members can emulate his example. Leading the organization with strong morality is the fundamental principle of democracy employed in OD, as it uses behavioural science in solving organizational problems through different strategies.

2.3 Planned change strategies

The strategies under discussion are the tentative OD strategies used to affect organizational change. Smith (2003, p. 2), defines the concept of planned change, as a change that is consciously thought about and systematically implemented. According to Cummings (2008, pp. 24-25), the “conceptions of planned change strategy have been contemplated as a tentative program that focuses on how change can be implemented in an organization”. Cummings disputes the word “planned”, as he believes it is premature to put a fixed programme on unexpected problems and thus a change strategy is a tentative programme.

Planned change strategies are theories that describe different strategies intended to show how activities can be carried out successfully in organizational change. In this section, three types of planned change strategies are explained. Chin and Benne (1976), in French and Bell (1995, p. 102), placed planned change strategies into three categories, namely empirical rational strategy, normative re-educative strategy and power coercive strategy as described below.

2.3.1 Empirical rational strategy

This change strategy is based on the assumption that people are rational and follow their rational self-interest and only change if they realize that the change is beneficial/advantageous to them (ibid).

The strategy focuses on the diffusion of knowledge and information which are held closely by clients once they realize that the change is to their benefit. It is indeed an expert driven OD strategy that is based on individual choices.

2.3.2 Normative re-educative strategy

According to Chin and Benne (1976), in French and Bell (1995, pp. 102-103), normative re-educative strategy or cultural change strategy is “based upon the assumptions that norms form the basis of human behavior and change comes through a re-educative process in which old norms are discarded and supplanted by new norms”. This implies that the strategy is aimed at transforming participants’ behaviour through motivation.

Furthermore, “change in normative re-educative orientations involve change in attitude, values, skills, and significant relationships, not just change in knowledge, information or intellectual rationales for action and practice “ (Chin & Benne (1976) cited in Smith (2003, pp. 3-4). In the same vein, Chin and Benne (1976), in French and Bell (1995, pp. 1002-103), assert that in normative re-educative strategy, the “pattern of action and practice are supported by social-cultural [*sic*] norms and by commitment on the part of the individual to these norms”.

Smith (2003, p. 4), concurs with the notion and states that “since norms are socially accepted values and beliefs about appropriate and inappropriate behaviours held by groups, focusing on the group, not the individual, can best change the norms”. Burke (1982), as cited in Smith (*ibid*), holds a similar view:

If one attempts to change an attitude or behaviour of an individual without attempting to change the same attitude or behaviour in the group to which the individual belongs, the individual will be a deviant and either will come under pressure from the group to get back into line or will be rejected entirely. Thus, the major leverage point for change is at the group level; for example, by modifying a group’s normal standards.

In brief, normative re-educative strategies are based on the assumption that change is possible in an organization by discarding old norms and replacing them with new ones which will create a new organizational equilibrium point. This is the most powerful participative-driven strategy on which OD heavily relies to solve organizational problems.

2.3.3 Power coercive strategies

These change strategies are based on the assumptions that change occurs when people with less power in the organization, conform to the demands of those who have more power. This change effort comes from external forces and features authoritative management and disempowerment of members by decisions that are imposed on them (Smith, 2003, p. 3). OD norms, values and assumptions are based on democratic principles and respect for human dignity, thus coercive strategies are not recommended in OD operational strategy.

2.4 Organization development (OD)

Organization development (OD) is defined as a planned change strategy aimed at improving organization culture, structure, leadership and management performance, as well as staff attitudes, behaviour and working relationships. This is achieved through members' participation in the OD intervention process, with the assistance of an OD practitioner or consultant-facilitator, using behavioural science approaches to solve the targeted problems collectively within the organizational setting.

It is most important that members engage themselves in the actions of the problem-solving process, as by doing so they are empowering themselves through obtaining further knowledge and skills of facilitation, that will help them deal with problems of a similar nature that may arise in the organization.

Similarly, Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert (1995, p. 420), define OD as:

a top-management-supported, long-range effort to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal process, particularly through a more effective and collaborative diagnosis and management of organization culture - with special emphasis on formal work team, temporary team, intergroup culture - with the assistance of a consultant-facilitator and the use of theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including action research.

The essential element of OD is that it enhances the democratic participatory approach to decision-making without coercive measures being exerted on members of the organization. The external support exists through a consultant who only helps them identify the strengths and

weaknesses of the organization; thereafter members have to take the responsibility in their own hands to solve the problem with the guidance of the facilitator during the process (Smith, 2003, p. 8).

It is indeed necessary to provide a brief history of organization development (OD) so that the individual can understand the roots of OD.

2.4.1 The history of OD

Organization development (OD) originated from the business world as a reaction against the dominant theory of organization design known as 'scientific management' which based its ideology on "the work of the human should be made as machinelike as possible". Psychological studies were conducted at the Hawthorne plant of the Western Electricity Company between 1924 – 1932 to see if workers would become more productive under differing conditions, as productivity had dropped considerably and the company were aware of the negative image they portrayed in the business arena (Schmuck & Runkel, 1994, p. 9). The outcome of the research finding was that "workers would respond favourably, with higher production, to interested and sympathetic attention from supervisors and managers and eventually it "became part of the human relations movement "in the history of OD (ibid).

OD in reality emerged in the late 1950s and early 1960s after several attempts were made by Kurt Lewin and his colleague McGregor in the 1940s. They coined the idea based on participative management, collaboration and group decisions (Weisbord, 1991, pp. 89-91).

After a series of experimental research, with the assistance of McGregor, Lewin succeeded in n establishing the Research Centre for Group Dynamic (RCGD) at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), in which leaders have been trained " to become skilled at improving group relations and managing change" as cited in Weisbord (1991, p. 98).

Kurt Lewin also managed to establish the National Training Laboratories Institute (NTL Institute), where people participated in action research and were trained in collaborative management strategies based on human behaviour (Weisbord, 1991, pp. 99-101). Hence, the

OD theory literature grew from strength to strength in solving organizational problems, using human behavioural scientific knowledge.

In the same vein, French and Bell (1995, p. 2), hold similar views that “the field has evolved into an integrated framework of theories and practices capable of solving or helping to solve most of the important problems confronting the human side of an organization”.

The following are the OD values, beliefs and assumptions.

2.4.2 OD values, beliefs and assumptions

A range of values, beliefs and assumptions form the foundation of OD, shaping the goals and techniques on which the field relies. Since these values, beliefs and assumptions differentiate OD from other improvement strategies employed in the organization (French & Bell, 1995, p. 77), they provide the idea of creating a better structure and stability for people as they attempt to comprehend the world around them.

Empowering employees to act responsibly, creating open communication, promoting a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, as well as facilitating ownership of the process and outcomes are significant aspects in OD values (ibid).

OD’s basic values are embodied in humanism and human rights, which are optimistic and democratic. Humanistic values declare the importance of individuals who need to be treated with respect and dignity, as everyone has intrinsic value and has the potential for growth and development (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 35). These values make it possible to formulate more satisfactory ways of running an organization and developing human potential.

Optimistic values view people as intrinsically good, that progress is possible and desirable in human interactions and that rationality and goodwill are the instruments for making progress in life (French & Bell, 1995, pp. 73-77). Democratic values emphasize the inviolability of the individual, the freedom of the person from arbitrary misuse of power, the importance of fairness and equitable treatment for all and the need for justice through the rule of law and due process (ibid.).

Furthermore, democratic values promote the individuals' right to participate in an organization's goal setting, decision-making and problem-solving, in the affairs that affect them and their organizational working life (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 35).

These values and assumptions which are constructed on the basis of democratic principles are perceived as the most important guidelines for members of an organization who need to implement them in their efforts to improve the situation through OD interventions.

With the exception of OD values, beliefs and assumptions discussed above, the following are the key theories and concepts that underpin the OD field.

2.4.3 Key theories and concepts that are employed in OD

OD draws on the theories and concepts from a host of disciplines, mostly the social and management sciences, including social psychology and sociology as an example (Smith, 2003, p. 9). Some of these theories and concepts will be discussed in the next section.

2.4.3.1 System theory

According to French and Bell (1995, p. 82), system theories view an organization as an open system in active exchange with their environment. It further expounds that system theory is an instrument that enables the individual to understand the dynamics of organizations and organizational change.

Hanson (1991), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 86), maintains that "openness or closedness [*sic*] of the organization is determined by the degree of interaction which occurs with the external environment with respect to specific decisions, pressures or materials". Therefore, organizations are neither open nor closed systems, in an absolute sense (*ibid.*).

Taking the school into consideration, as an example, the dynamic interactive relationship that exists with its external environment is a signal of an open system. Thus, the school is an open system which is internally and externally connected and is continually interacting with the community outside its own boundaries. It is therefore very essential and crucial for an organization to have a clear and effective communication channel with its internal and external

environment so as to enable it to understand and link together these influences in the interest of the organization's survival during the change process (Smith, 2003, pp. 9-11).

Open communication with both the internal and external environment is vital for building a positive working relationship in an organization and as such it enhances mutual understanding, as well as facilitating the effective flow of information between the school and community (ibid.).

French and Bell (1995, p. 89), clarify the concept "system" as "interdependency, interconnectedness of a set of elements that constitute an identifiable whole or gestalt". Smith (2003, p. 9), concurs with the definition by saying that "a system denotes a bound whole; it has an identifiable inside the system and an identifiable outside or environment...the system is open".

Apart from its openness to the external environment, a system denotes that "its constituencies are interrelated, interconnected and interdependent; changes in one part of the system influence the rest of the system" (Smith, 2003, p. 10). This is why connectivity with sub-systems or constituencies and the external environment are significant as the system will inform itself via its constituencies or sub-systems about the change that may affect the organization.

The sub-systems mentioned above, in a school context, refer to various portfolios that exist at schools, for instance the school board, school management team, and committees such as HIV/AIDS. All these sub-systems form a bigger system known as school organization structures, and all are assumed to be working together harmoniously in pursuing a common goal. The notion is that the organization change is viewed to be effective, successful and satisfying if synergy forces in the organization are harnessed together towards the same direction (ibid.).

Equifinality is another feature of open systems which is grounded in the notion that the organization members together can construct a system that best meets their aspirations, goals and needs, as alternative ways to achieve the objectives (Smith, 2003, p. 11; French & Bell, 1995, p. 91).

The socio-technical system (STS) theory developed by Eric Trist and Fred Emery in 1950 is another characteristic of open system theory and as such it holds the premise that all organizations comprise both human (social) and a technical system which are interdependent, therefore a change in one will influence the other (Smith, 2003, p. 11). This theory perceives that the ideal organization should optimize both systems for maximum individual motive satisfaction to achieve high productivity. French and Bell (1995, p. 94), assert that system theory and system thinking are very helpful for effective change.

According to Peter Senge (1990), in Smith (2003, p. 12), open system thinking is a prerequisite for creating a learning organization, which I discuss next.

2.4.3.2 Learning organization

Learning in the contemporary world has become part of people's life to enable adaption to the ruling situation. Haines (1995), in Moloi (2002, p. 2), describes a "learning organization as an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future and achieve what it truly desires". According to the *Harvard Business Review* (1991), in Moloi (2002, p. 2), they see a "learning organization as a group of people learning from experience and best practice of others".

Peter Senge (1990), as cited in Chinganga (2010, p. 21), broadly defines a learning organization as an:

organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together.

The understanding that emerges from these definitions is that learning is an on-going process of acquiring the desired worthwhile knowledge and skills through dynamic group practice and sharing experiences, in order for them to adapt to a rapidly changing world. A learning organization is not an organization for individual activity but has become a group business where members of an organization are involved and participate in acquiring new knowledge and skills.

Argyris, in Cummings (2008, p. 53), in support of Peter Senge, argues that learning in the organization implies the “detection and correction of error”. Argyris further argues that for learning to take place successfully, it is necessary to implement four phases namely, diagnosis of the problems first, invention of a solution, implementation of the solution and evaluation of the effectiveness of the implementation process and then to check the outcome against learning with evidence for validation (ibid.).

The process involves members of the organization tapping into the knowledge and skills of each other when engaging in a group dynamic interaction. Involvement and participation of members in the learning process is the pivotal core value of OD, as it affects organization change.

2.4.3.3 Lewin's model of change

Kurt Lewin (1947), a German-born psychologist, identified a three-stage model of change to be followed, in an effort to solve problems in the organizational development with regards to change (van der Westhuizen, 2008, p. 191). Lewin states that the model for change presents a three stage process namely: unfreezing the existing behaviour, movement to new behaviour and refreezing new norms (ibid.). The three stages are discussed below.

2.4.3.3.1 Unfreezing

Lewin (1935), in van der Westhuizen, (2008, p. 189) argues that “change is a dynamic balance of opposing forces that are active within an organization”. According to Cummings and Worley (2005), in Kashikatu (2009, p. 22), the need to change the existing norms is subject to the strength of the driving forces to override the resistant forces, that tend to maintain the status quo. Such a situation is termed as unfreezing as a result of problems in the organization; therefore, changes are necessary to take place. Davis and Newstrom (1985), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 189), view unfreezing as the replacement of old ideas and practices with new ones in the organization.

According to Lewin, in Weisbord (1991, p. 94), unfreezing means reducing the negative forces and altering the status quo by replacing it with the new norms. Whenever crises occur at

schools, it is generally accepted that the principal needs to play a leadership role in changing the status quo, in accordance with the demand from the driving forces. Hence OD also requires that the top management support the change effort to improve the organization's problems through effective collaboration with members. Once old norms are discarded, then the members tend to move forward to the new situation.

2.4.3.3.2 Movement

According to Walker and Vogt (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), movement means that a process is set in motion that changes the established practices, in favour of new procedures and behaviours and that this stage involves moving to a new desired situation. Van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), points out that movement involves the development of new norms, values, attitudes and behaviours through changes in structures. Davis and Newstrom (1985), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), argue that these new ideas are subject to close scrutiny, developed and applied in practices. It is important to stress that participants in the change process need support with, for instance, resources and time during the movement stage. As soon as the forces of change have had sufficient impact to bring about the desired changes, the steps of refreezing can resume.

2.4.3.3.3 Refreezing

According to Lewin, (1947) in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), refreezing is the last step in the change process and the new change becomes constant into a new, quasi-equilibrium. This implies that new forces are in place to support the new behaviour (van der Westhuizen, 2008, p. 191; French & Bell, 1995, p. 810). It is the responsibility of the principal to make sure that members are supported in order to maintain stabilization and avoid regression to old norms or practices. In terms of OD democratic principles, members demonstrate their readiness to participate fully in the change process right from the unfreezing up to the refreezing stage.

2.4.3.4 Readiness

Readiness to accept the OD process is an important variable at all stages of the OD project. For the OD project to commence, participants therefore need to indicate their readiness. Schmuck

and Runkel (1994, p. 56), argue that the organization is not ready when the members are not happy with their condition and believe that they themselves have no hope of improving it. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 61), propose that in order to help raise readiness levels, a facilitator should first work with administrators or the management team and then with key teachers, who may then influence the rest of the staff to take up the change initiative.

Smith (2003, p. 18), holds the view that readiness to participate in an organizational change depends on the desire and willingness of members to take up the initiative of change, the capability of the organization to change and the members confident belief that they can make a difference and embark on the process of change. An organization is ready for OD intervention if members or the manager recognize the problems that impede the progress and indicate to the facilitator their willingness for improvement.

According to Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 59), readiness for change is manifested in members' behavioural expression of feelings of group cohesiveness, solidarity and loyalty to one another and protecting their membership in a group, as well as identifying themselves with others as group members. Organization members can be ready for change if they adopt new behavioural norms that are conversant and accepted by all, as helping them to improve their situation.

Moreover, Smith (2003, p. 19) explains that the theory of psychic tension, developed by Lewin, is a state of readiness for action, caused by an external stimulus such as a desire (vision), a goal or unfinished activity. Survey data feedback (SDF), a process of collecting data from an organization and giving feedback for action planning, is also viewed as a key "readiness raising" intervention (ibid.). During the introduction of OD workshops, members showed their readiness by their eagerness to hear more about OD and how it works.

2.4.3.5 Teaming and teamwork

Teaming and teamwork are significant as it forms the basis of OD. According to Stoner *et al.*, (1995, p. 499), a team is two or more people who interact and influence each other with complementary skills and are all committed toward achieving a common goal and objectives as they hold mutual accountability. Hanson *et al.*, (1995, p. 24), hold a similar view that a team is

a group of people working unitedly together, in which members identify and fully utilize one another's resources and facilitate their mutual interdependence toward more effective problem solving and task accomplishment.

Teaming increases the individual member's performance and happiness through participation and empowerment, and as such it is a critical aspect within the milieu of organization and change. French and Bell (1995, p. 97), assert that individuals' behaviour is deeply rooted in the socio-cultural norms and values of the work team and if norms and values of the team are changed with the involvement of every member, it influences the individual member's behaviours accordingly. Furthermore, French and Bell (1995, p. 98), argue that complex tasks require concerted effort rather than individual input; teams therefore serve to accomplish this purpose.

In the same vein, French and Bell contend that teamwork fosters human life, because it satisfies the individual member's need for social interaction, status, recognition, respect and feelings of belonging (ibid). Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 20), also point out that it is vital for team members to recognize and accept their own needs and also to be sensitive to the needs of others so as to maintain some balance between these needs.

Hence, OD intervention for change hinges on participation, teamwork and collaboration, emphasising that team effort is more effective than individual input. Members' involvement in change initiative and teamwork are the most essential ingredient for successful OD intervention in change efforts.

2.4.3.6 Participation and empowerment

As mentioned earlier, participation, teamwork, collaboration and empowerment are the core elements of OD; therefore, it needs to involve all members of the organization in finding solutions to the problems of change. Smith (2003, pp. 4-5) affirms that participation is a democratic approach to the decision-making process, enhancing members' performance, producing optimum solutions to the problem, overcoming resistance to change and increasing organizational commitment and sense of belonging.

French and Bell (1995, p. 94), state that early OD research shows that increased involvement and member participation produces high performance and better solutions to problems, and enhances shared decision-making. Furthermore, French and Bell (1995, p. 94), emphasize the fundamental nature of participation when they explain that “participation is a powerful elixir- it is good for people, and it dramatically improves individual and organizational performance”.

Similarly, empowerment implies giving individuals the authority to participate, to make decisions, to contribute their ideas, to influence and to be responsible and commit to decisions taken (Smith, 2003, p. 6). Based on this view of participation and empowerment, OD intervention activities are consciously planned to increase involvement and participation by organization members, with the view of empowering them to ensure the improved performance of the organization.

2. 4.3.7 Organization culture

Hoy (1990), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 122), defines organizational culture as “a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization’s members, that produces norms that powerfully shape the behavior of individuals or groups in an organization”. The important aspect to note is that culture has a strong influence on a particular organization as it shapes human behavioural norms and the adoption of certain values, beliefs and knowledge. It is the type of philosophy that influences the behaviour, beliefs, and attitudes of a particular society and how people live and interact together in a certain environment (ibid, p. 122).

Handy (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 121), provides a comprehensive definition of culture as “the sum total of inherited ideas, values, beliefs and knowledge that determine the social structure and motivate people to enhance and cultivate traditions”. In brief, culture describes a typical society with similar knowledge and convictions.

Schein (1985), cited in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 122), broadly defines organization culture as:

a pattern of shared basic assumptions—invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaption and internal integration,

that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way you perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

Owens (1991), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 126), concurs with Schein by defining organization culture as “the shared philosophies, ideologies, values, assumptions, beliefs, expectations, attitudes and norms that knit a community together”. Schein, (1985) in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 122), identifies three main aspects of organization culture, namely: artefacts, norms, values and assumptions. Artefacts are the highest level of cultural expression which also includes aspects of norms and values, as well as basic assumptions. Artefacts are observable through the overt behaviour of members such as the way people communicate, the dressing code and type of infrastructures available.

Norms are rules for behaviour that dictate what is considered to be appropriate and inappropriate reactions from the members of an organization. Norms guide and regulate the behaviours of members and gear them towards organizational objectives.

Values are defined as the accepted standard that is geared toward a desired behaviour from individuals. Values become part of the organization once it has been shared by members successfully (ibid, p. 131).

Assumptions refer to behaviours, beliefs and perceptions that are taken for granted when an organization solves problems. It directs organization members on how to perceive, think and feel about human nature, activities, relationships and environment (Cummings and Worley, 2005, p. 484). It is of course axiomatically accepted that each school is situated in a particular environment where the culture of the community exerts its influence on the organization. When any change is being contemplated to take place in an organisation, the cultural context of such organization needs to be taken into consideration and it is an accepted truth that an OD facilitator should fully acquaint himself with all the relevant aspects. French and Bell (1995, p. 5) state that culture needs to be altered, if permanent change is contemplated. In essence, organizational culture is the fabric that holds the organization together, projects the organization’s life and gives it its unique identity.

Therefore, the success of any organizational change would depend on the ability of the facilitator to carry out an OD intervention process, with the involvement of the members of that organization. Since this is essentially action research, a brief discussion of this is appropriate.

2.4.3.8 Action research

Action research, by definition, is a scientific method of *undertaking* research involving the members of the organization, *who are to be part of the fact-finding in the field, aimed at solving existing problems*. Similarly, French and Bell (1995, p. 108), define action research as a data-based change method that replicates the steps involved in the classic scientific methods of inquiry, with the involvement of participants from the organization. *It is an action research type founded by Lewin (Weisbord, 1991, p. 95).*

Smith (2003, p. 21), and French and Bell (1995, p. 138), largely define action research in OD as a process involving facilitators and organization participants in a cycle of activities from the start-up: agreement on the process, data collection, data analysis and feedback, data exploration and data interpretation, action planning based on data interpretation and implementation of the action plan.

The whole process is collaborative and interactive, comprising the cyclical steps of planning, action, observation and reflection. Each step involves acquiring new knowledge and skills in problem-solving that are aimed at bringing change in the organization and of course it is also an experiential learning process. Furthermore, French and Bell (1995, p. 140) affirm that this type of research is one of the most powerful cornerstones of Lewinian organization development (OD) intervention.

2.4.4 OD intervention

The organization development (OD) intervention is the planned activities which members of the organization and the consultant or facilitator participate in in the intervention process, with the sole purpose of improving the organization's functioning (French & Bell, 1995, p. 156). According to Argyris (1970), as cited in Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 58), the concept of OD

intervention is “to intervene or to enter into an ongoing system of relationships, to come between or among persons, groups or objects for the purpose of helping them”.

It is important to note that when an OD intervention is in the system, the aim is to help improve the problems that impede the progress of the organization. The intervention should not be based on coercive but on normative re-educative strategy through democratic participation, collaboration and empowerment of participants.

Moreover, French and Bell (1990), as quoted in Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 58), view OD intervention as “sets of structured activities in which selected organization units engage in a task or a sequence of tasks to organizational improvement”. Drawing on Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 74), OD design is an OD intervention study focused mainly on the following aspects: training, survey data feedback (SDF), constructive confrontation, process observation and feedback and future research conference.

2.4.4.1 Training

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 28), state that an OD facilitator should create the learning outcomes for a predetermined period of time, and organize and direct the activities. Training is regarded as an acquisition of knowledge and skills, whereby the participants gain more experience for the benefit of themselves and the organization as a whole. Skills, the exercise thereof and procedures are considered as the building blocks of organizational training.

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 75), hold the view that since training requires highly formatted structures, the facilitator needs to be well invested in leadership qualities to conduct the training workshop in, for example, problem-solving; cooperation; participation and communication and other problems experienced by an organization. It should be noted that training without collecting data is not in the interest of OD intervention.

2.4.4.2 Survey data feedback (SDF)

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 29), assert that SDF is the collection of data by means of interviews, questionnaires and observations and gives feedback to participants for diagnosis

and action planning. To make the OD intervention successful therefore, the facilitator needs to perform the following responsibilities:

- Collect and feed the data back to participants unambiguously to energize them.
- Give significance to mundane data to boost the participants' interest.
- Incorporate data into the natural ebb and flow of the larger OD design.

The next steps are to diagnose the data, plan for action that will lead to action implementation and then problem-solving (ibid).

2.4.4.3 Constructive confrontation

Constructive confrontation becomes suitable only when two groups obviously arrive at a point of disagreement and proceedings become disruptive. However, the state of affairs may need more clarification on the problem, in order for the participants to come to an agreement and solution.

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 79), argue that “confrontation works best in eliminating hostilities stemming from opposition and schisms”. It is one of the strategies used to clarify and resolve the thorny issues between two conflicting groups, but it needs an expert facilitator to help them to understand each other.

In the same vein, Schmuck and Runkel (1994), stress that the role of the facilitator is to help the organization, through discussion, guidance, communication and the training of the participants. They would also guard against proceedings plunging into a volatile situation that may lead the participants to abandon the training (ibid.).

2.4.4.4 Process observation and feedback

This design is aimed at helping participants to become conscious of how they are working together by observing the situation and reporting to each other. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 77), hold the view that the facilitator should sit in on a series of meetings and then provide feedback to the group members, advising them on how to give feedback themselves and solve problems, as well as strengthening working relationships when called for.

2.4.4.5 Future Search Conference (FSC)

According to Weisbord (1996), in Steenkamp (2011, pp. 25-26), and Mitchell (2004, p. 22), Emery and Trist developed the idea to have the Future Search Conference as a large planning meeting for the whole system of an organization.

It is a powerful strategy that is gaining popularity in OD intervention and as such, it places emphasis on convening members of an organization together under one roof, where they can all discuss their experiences about the effectiveness of the organization's performance in the past and present, and find common ground for future plans. According to Weisbord and Janoff (2005), in Kashikatu (2009, p. 31), the conference involves 60-70 members and lasts for four days. Participants are put into groups by expert facilitators and all engage in group discussion; sharing experiences and strategies together for organizational improvement.

2.5 OD in Namibia

OD literature in Namibia indicates that it is a relatively young growing body of knowledge as confirmed by Steenkamp, (2011, p. 65) who states that, "OD is relatively new to me and to the staff members of Evergreen but very powerful". Similar comments are also evidenced in various OD interventions conducted in Namibia by students using the OD classical action research model of seven phases (Neshila, 2004; Perestrelo, 2008; Kashikatu, 2009). Kashikatu (2009, p. 32) affirms that the study on FSC conducted by Hausiku (2004) and Layne (2004) in Namibia, showed that the participants regarded FSC as an effective tool for organization self-renewal and adaptation to new challenges.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I attempted to discuss the theories that influence organization change. The discussion covered three main sections, namely organization change, planned change strategies and organization development (OD). The concepts of change, resistance to change and complexity theory have been broadly defined, with special reference to the context where the phenomena occur. Different planned change strategies employed in OD have been extensively discussed.

The last section was a deliberation on OD with the subsection outlining the methodological framework of the study. The chapter concluded with a brief review on the growing body of OD knowledge in Namibia.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I presented the literature theories that address the essence of my research goal. In this chapter, methodology employed for the duration of the study is discussed. The research paradigms that underpin the study are specified and then the two significant research methods used during the study are described. I used interviews and observation as the main techniques for data collections. The last important sections of the chapter are ethical issues; validity and limitations of the study were also discussed.

The purpose of the study was to explore staff involvement in an organization development (OD) intervention in one of the rural junior secondary schools of the Kavango region, Namibia and is aimed at determining the level of participation in change approach and probing into participants' perceptions and experiences of the intervention process.

To achieve the goal I conducted an OD project with the school, where I primarily introduced the OD concept to the participants through an SDF workshop, as an approach to organization change and thereafter carried out the following:

- The OD intervention process
- Exploring participants' experiences and perceptions of the OD intervention process in their context
- The evaluation of the OD intervention

The most significant paradigms that underpin the study are discussed below.

3.2 Research paradigm

The concept paradigm refers to the way we observe, think and understand the world and draw conclusions about the phenomena. According to Babbie and Mouton, (2001) paradigm is a model or framework for observation and understanding, which shapes both what we see and how we understand and attempt to draw meaning from it. Paradigm can open up a new

understanding about the nature of the world and theorizing about the phenomena. Schwandt (1997, p. 108), holds a similar notion that a paradigm is a cognitive framework used by a specific community of scientists to generate and solve puzzles in their field. According to Janse van Rensburg (2001, p. 11), a researcher should clearly understand the philosophical frameworks that guide the research activities, before making a choice of paradigm. My research is an action research case study, located within the interpretive and critical paradigms. I opted for action research with the view of interacting with participants and understanding and interpreting their actions. Action research allowed for the involvement of the participants which ultimately leads to change.

3.2.1 Interpretive paradigm

The interpretive research paradigm seeks to understand the meanings that people give to their own social interactions. It exposes how individual and group interpretation of reality influences both intentions and actions (Winberg, 1997). Janse van Rensburg (2001, pp. 12-16), asserts that humans can understand the world as it appears to them and as such the research knowledge is constructed in the minds of the people who are active in the research process. In understanding the phenomena under scrutiny therefore, the researcher should interact with the participants, listen, cooperate and share the experience. This is in line with my study that requires the researcher to be actively involved in the social context of the participants.

Maxwell (2005, p. 17), argues that “qualitative research helps to understand the meanings for particular events, situations, experiences and actions of participants”. In understanding human actions therefore, the researcher should conduct an action research in a specific environment of the phenomena and uncover the reality on the ground (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, pp. 271-273). Hence, interpretive qualitative research helps in understanding in-depth, participants’ cultural norms, values, experiences and perceptions within their social context. The interest of my study is to explore staff involvement in OD change efforts.

3.2.2 Critical paradigm

The fundamental aims of the critical paradigm are to bring change through a critical approach to the phenomena. Winberg (1997) argues that the critical research paradigm focuses on a critical understanding of the situation or practice being researched, in order to plan for transformative action. Similarly Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, pp. 28-29) and Janse van Rensburg (2001, P. 24), assert that critical paradigm research helps to bring transformative change in individuals and groups through participation in action research, as it empowers participants with OD democratic values, beliefs and assumptions.

Participants are empowered through discussion and interpreting, reasoning on and understanding why the desired change in their own organization was initiated. I opted for this paradigm in order to approach and assess the participants' involvement in OD intervention with critical understanding. An action research study requires that the facilitator needs to be directly involved in the interaction with the members of the organization throughout the whole process of intervention. I conducted the OD project at Utokota combined school and involved staff in the intervention and empowered them through training, discussion and reasoning about change.

Below is the discussion of research methods used during the research study.

3.3 Research methods

The research methods employed during the study are a case study and action research.

3.3.1 Case study

Yin (2003, p. 13) defines a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context setting ". According to Cohen, et al., (2007, p. 253) a case study 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 the chosen topic and therefore a case study enabled me to understand the information gathered on staff involvement in organization development, from more than one view.

My study was based on organization development (OD); therefore a participatory action research case study was appropriate for facilitating the intended OD research project with Utokota junior secondary school, in the eastern part of Rundu in the Kavango region, Namibia.

I chose the school because it was situated within a short walking distance from my home and it was easy to reach the school in time. The OD intervention research project was fruitfully carried out and sufficient data for writing the thesis was collected successfully.

3.3.2 Action research

The study methods employed was an action research case study located within an interpretive qualitative paradigm and critical paradigm. The purpose was to investigate and understand the phenomena under study in its social context. Smith (2003, p. 4), asserts that action research “operates within a system thinking of interdependent nature of people in the workplace and their environment in order to bring the desired change in the organization”. In general, action research is commonly known as participatory action research as people in the organization and the facilitator are all engaged in the process for bringing change (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 314). Cohen *et al.*, (2000, 229) state that action research is “participatory through which people work together towards improving their own practice”. Most of OD field activities for change rely on participatory action research (French & Bell, 1995, p. 7).

According to French and Bell (1995, p. 108), action research is a data-based change method that replicates the steps involved in the scientific method of inquiry. French and Bell (*ibid*, p. 151), further argue that “a sound organization development programme rests on action research model”. Smith (2003, p. 21) asserts that “action research has formed the methodological basis of OD intervention as from the start “.

The nature of action research is participant driven, from the organization and facilitator’s role as collaborator and co-learner, as well as the iterative process of diagnosis and action. My study is an OD participatory action research study which was conducted at Utokota combined school, using OD democratic principles to empower members of the organization to embrace change. To conduct the OD research project successfully, I applied the action research concept model of

French and Bell (1995, pp. 7-8), by negotiating the entrance first with the “gatekeeper” as the term used by Lewin (1947), in Weisbord (1987, p. 91), for the leader of the organization.

This thesis is a continuation of a pilot study conducted in April 2011 in which the first 5 phases of the OD process were carried out for a research assignment only and then the programme resumed in July by repeating all phases again, involving all staff members of the organization. The resumption was aimed at upgrading the research assignment into more complete research for writing the thesis. The following phases are generally employed in OD: entry, contracting, data collection, data diagnosis, feedback, action plan, action implementation and evaluation. Below is an account of each phase of OD intervention, as it was done at Utokota combined school.

3.3.2.1 Entry

The entry stage is the initial stage for the change initiative effort, signifying the first contact between the facilitator and members of the organization. It involves exploration of the organization’s situation by the facilitator and the assessment of the nature of the problem. According to OD principles, the organization members should have initiated the intervention by identifying the organization’s problems first and then seeking an outside consultant to help with solving the problem (French & Bell, 1995, p. 131).

In this case, I initiated the intervention. On my initial introduction and first contact in April 2011, I explained to the Circuit Inspector and gatekeeper that I wanted to do an OD research assignment. I asked permission from the gatekeeper if it was possible to allow me (a researcher) to conduct the OD research assignment with the school. The gatekeeper agreed to my request and in the morning on the next day, I met the all the members of staff in the staff room and briefed them on the OD programme (Appendix C). The staff then agreed to proceed with the programme.

However, this was only the first part and the process was resumed in July at the same school in order to upgrade the assignment into more complete research for a thesis. A similar procedure was also followed and members of the organization were informed about the purpose for the

resumption. The emphasis during the second phase of the OD intervention was to train staff members on cooperating to change their working relationships, by embracing OD values, beliefs and assumptions. Signing an agreement is one of the most important steps in OD culture as it guarantees mutual commitment for intervention.

3.3.2.2 Contracting

Contracting is an expansion of the entry phase, where members of the organization reach an agreement by signing a consent document that stipulates ethical issues, anonymity and mutual benefit. Cumming and Worley (2001, p. 75), assert that the principle goal of contracting is to make a good decision with regards to implementation of OD. Before signing the agreement, I conducted the SDF workshop so as to raise awareness and the level of readiness for OD intervention. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 56) state that, “for an OD project to take hold, members should have some imagination about a better life at work”. Unfortunately the staff, including the principal, did not sign an agreement, but we agreed verbally that the staff should attend the workshop, excluding those members whose circumstances made it difficult for them to attend. In the same vein, Schmuck and Runkel (ibid, p. 63) argue that a “facilitator should enter into a contract with the system that needs assistance and exhibit a sign of readiness”.

During the resumption of the OD intervention in July, a short workshop was conducted, with the purpose of getting the staff members on board for the intervention process. Members exhibited high levels of readiness and as such we signed a contract for OD intervention. Participants were not forced to sign an agreement form. Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 101), hold a similar view that “any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary”. This was done to allow participants to exercise their freedom of choice. In both cases, (the first and the second phase), participants elected the steering committee to help manage the process. During the second phase of OD intervention, three staff members were nominated to be co-facilitators.

3.3.2.3 Data gathering and diagnosis

This process involves the facilitator and steering committee collecting and diagnosing the data. Burk, as cited in French and Bell (1995, p. 131), asserts that data gathering and analysis are the

most significant key activities during the OD intervention process. Similarly, Cumming and Worley (2001, p. 82), agree that “diagnosis is the process of understanding how an organization is performing”. It was important to help the organization members to identify organizational problems and to plan for improvement. We used semi-structured interviews and observation as the tools for collecting data. We considered the interview as the most comfortable tool for respondents to express their views and experiences. Kawana (2007, p. 29), holds a similar notion that “semi-structured interviews allow respondents to talk freely without the researcher losing track”.

We chose semi-structured interviews as it allowed me as a researcher to do follow-up for data validity. All three co-facilitators were not prepared to interview their colleagues as they wanted to avoid any possible future conflict.

The interview schedules used are attached as Appendix E.

3.3.2.4 Feedback

The primary goal of feedback is to inform the members about the outcome of the research, understand the state of the organization and consider the plan for change. During this stage, the steering committee and facilitator provided the data feedback to the participants for validation and helped the members to establish an agenda (Appendix D) for exploration and action planning. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 53), assert that “it is the responsibility of the OD facilitator and steering committee to provide a design for problem solving that will enable the system to agree to move ahead”. The members decided to move ahead with planning. Schmuck and Runkel (ibid, p. 75), state that, **“in OD projects where the facilitator works with steering committee throughout as from outset should feedback the faculty committee and guide them to problem solving”**. ******

Participants decided to embark on first training the staff on cooperation and then compiling the action plan for the intervention process.

3.3.2.5 Action planning

This involves identifying strategies, prioritizing the problems and taking decisions for action. All staff including the facilitator, were actively involved in compiling the needed action for change. The priority was to conduct a training workshop first on cooperation and then proceed with an action plan. The next step was to implement the action plan for the OD intervention.

3.3.2.6 Action implementation

In this phase, members of the organization are expected to implement the action plan for change which they have committed to during action planning in phase 5. It is crucial in terms of theoretical assumption that the expected changes are to take place during this phase and as such, members took responsibility themselves to observe and record any intended change that had to occur in the organization. Members were encouraged to share their experiences in the process of monitoring the change and provide suggestions for further intervention, if any hindering factor was identified.

3.3.2.7 Evaluation

The impact of OD intervention to affect change is evaluated in this phase. The goal for intervention is to explore the staff involvement in the OD change initiative and to determine the level of staff cooperation, participation, leadership and change. Participants were evaluated regarding the outcome and their experiences during the short term process of OD intervention. The data might also be used for further planning, implementation and for future research. Details of discussions for all phases are presented in chapter 4. The following section discusses data collection as the technique used during the study.

3.4 Data collection

Data collection is the techniques employed in research, to gather information from the phenomenon under study and then draw a meaningful understanding in accordance with a research question. Similarly, Merriam (1998), in Lankshear and Knobel (2004, p. 172), defined the concept data as:

bits and pieces of information found in the environment that are collected in systematic ways to provide an evidential base from which to make interpretation and statements intended to advance knowledge and understanding concerning a research question or problem.

Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 143), state that “qualitative researchers often use multiple forms of data techniques that suits well with the research questions”. In this study I used interviews and observation as the main tools for data collection. Patton (2002, p. 48), argues that studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors, than studies that use several methods in which different types of data provide cross-data validity checks. Different types of data provide opportunity for triangulation and ensure validity. The data that was collected during the study is qualitative. According to Cresswell (2003, p. 182), “qualitative research data is fundamentally interpretive”.

3.4.1 Observation

Since OD is an action research study, I was directly involved in the real life situations of the participants and observed their behaviours throughout the whole process and recorded relevant information for my research topic.

According to Maxwell (2005, p. 94),” observation can enable you to draw inferences about the perspectives that you couldn’t obtain by relying exclusively on interview data. It is of particular importance to get at tacit understandings and theory in-use as well as aspects of the participants’ perspectives that they are reluctant to directly state in an interview”. By observing the participants’ behaviours, interactions and level of participation, it was useful to understand the context of the phenomena under study and pose more relevant questions on the research topic.

The observations focused on the following areas:

- Staff involvement / participation and contribution in meetings and the decision-making processes in change initiative
- Staff teamwork and cooperation
- Type of leadership role played in the organization
- General mood of the staff towards the organizational change.

I kept a record of data for validation.

3.4.2 Interviews

According to Kvale (1996), in Cohen *et al.*, (2000, p. 267) an interview is an interchange of views between two or more people, on a topic of mutual interest aimed at knowledge production. Patton (2002, p. 341), argues that “the purpose of interviews is to allow us to enter into another person’s perspective“. I used semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions in order to understand the participants’ experiences and perspective on OD intervention. I interviewed 16 participants, including the principal and heads of different departments, in three interviews. The first interviews took place in April during the SDF workshop and the second interviews were conducted in July. The last ones were conducted in September before the end of the OD intervention.

In the first interviews conducted in April, I aimed to collect data to identify areas which the school felt needed attention. It was necessary to write the SDF assignment as that has become this thesis. The second interviews conducted in July, were aimed at collecting data for this study. I interviewed staff on how they felt about their involvement in the decision-making process at the school. I wanted to get a sense of what kind of management approach was in use at the school, which would have a bearing on the OD process. The last round of interviews was aimed at finding out participants’ responses to the OD process.

3.5 Data analysis

According to Cohen *et al.*, (2000, pp. 147-9) data analysis is not a separate phase that can be marked out at some singular time during the inquiry. Data analysis begins with the very first data collection. It is a process of organizing, categorizing, coding, transcribing and translating the data into real meaning so that it can respond to the research topic. Transcriptions and data analysis were done with the assistance of co-facilitators at the school but, unfortunately due to time constraints, we selected the main points only, as members wanted the feedback on the research topic.

According to Stake (1995, p. 71), data analysis is the process of unlocking information hidden in the data, that the researcher transforms into meaningful and useful information for understanding the phenomena. In the study, an interpretive method was used to analyse the data, firstly by coding and grouping similar data into categories and identifying themes that addressed the research goal. These categories helped to compare data during analysis.

3.6 Ethical consideration

Ethical issues are important in every research; therefore it was significant to take into account the effect of the research on participants and the organization where the project was carried out. Merriam (2002), as cited in Kapapero (2007, p. 50), argues that “ethics begins with the conception of the research project and ends with how we present and share with others what we have learned “.

To seek permission, I first contacted the Regional Director of Education, circuit Inspector and the school principal and informed them that I needed to conduct the OD research project at Utokota combined school, east of Rundu in the Kavango region, Namibia. Weisbord (1991, pp. 91-92), agrees with this approach as he states that, “if you want anything to succeed get the gatekeepers in on it early”. The gatekeepers in this regard are referred to as the principal of Utokota combined school and the Inspector of Education, as well as the Regional Director of Education.

The participants were informed about the details and purpose of my OD research and then were asked to sign the consent form. They were given the right to withdraw from participating at any time during the process. Leedy and Ormrod (2005, p. 101), hold a similar notion that “any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary”. For ethical issues and confidentiality purposes, participants’ names and the school’s name were written under pseudonyms during the whole period of my research. In this way participants avoided suffering any discomfort or pain and their personal dignity and the character of the institution was kept intact. All data are protected and the right of admission to data is reserved solely for the researcher, participants and my supervisor.

3.7 Validity

The concept of validity in general, refers to fairness and justice in confirming data collected from the phenomena that was aimed at supporting the research study. According to Mason (2004, p. 246), validity is a way of confirming the research data by asking a range of participants for their version of similar events.

Validity determines the legitimacy of the research; therefore I double checked the data and shared the data with participants for members to check to ensure the validity of the data. Bush (2002), cited in Kashikatu (2009, p. 41), states that triangulation is fundamentally a device for improving validity by checking data either by using mixed methods or by involving a range of participants. Mixed methods and member check therefore helped in securing the data validity.

3.8 Limitation

One of the constraints experienced in execution of the OD research study was insufficient time for the OD intervention journey, as the research was expected to be completed within two months. The OD program was restricted to afternoons only, as during the morning, members paid more attention to their organizational schedules. However, the programme was successfully completed although change was visible only on a small scale.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented the research paradigm that underpins my study, the methods used, the research tools used for data collection and ethical issues that relate to my research study. I also presented the validity and limitations of the study. The next chapter is the narrative presentation of the data collected from the field.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter I present a narrative account on OD intervention in a selected rural combined school, east of Rundu in the Kavango region, Namibia. The presentation is drawn mainly from semi-structured interviews and observation data collected from the context of the research site of the study. The respondents' names and the research site have been given pseudonyms. They appear in the study as P for the principal and HOD1, HOD2, HOD3 and HOD4 for heads of department while T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7, and T8 for the teachers respectively. The research site is called Utokota combined school.

The data is mainly presented in the respondents own words where appropriate, for readers' benefit and understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny. However, data is also clarified where possible in order to avoid misunderstanding. The chapter consists of three main sections: the first section deals with the context of the research site that shaped the basis of the study, the following section focuses on SDF as an initial OD intervention stage and the last section deals with the resumption of the OD intervention.

My research goal is to explore staff involvement in an OD intervention and the data collected is aimed at determining their level of participation or involvement in change approach, probing into participants' perceptions and their experiences regarding the intervention process.

4.2 Context of the research site

4.2.1 A brief historical background of the research site

The OD intervention was conducted at Utokota combined school in the Shambyu educational circuit. It is a rural school which is situated about 30km east of Rundu town. The school was established in 1933 by Roman Catholic Missionaries under the leadership of the Dutch. The initial purpose was to teach the Shambyu communities about Christianity and convert them to

become members of the Catholic Church and also to strengthen and expand the church's spiritual services among the inhabitants (Appendix B).

In the initial stages of the school, the educating of young adults took place under the trees and they were taught the basic skills of reading, writing and speaking Dutch and a smattering of English. The translation of words into the mother tongue was done in order to enhance the understanding between the missionaries and the community. As time progressed, more permanent structures were constructed, but are currently not in existence.

Since that colonial time period, the school has gone from strength to strength in terms of an increase in the number of learners, the introduction of new grades and curriculum changes. The space for expansion became limited; hence the school was relocated to new premises. The school is now 200m away from the centre of the Shambyu Catholic mission, across the main road near to the Educational Circuit office.

The construction of new school infrastructures took place in 1983, while the transfer of all grade 5 to 9 learners had taken place during the crucial time of political upheaval in 1984 when Namibia was about to gain its independence in 1989. The school was only upgraded to grade 10 in 2000, during the leadership of a female principal who left the school by the year 2002 to assume a new post of senior adult education officer at the regional education office of Kavango region, Rundu, Namibia.

The school is headed by a female leader since 2003 up to the current date and its current demographic population consists of 23 teaching staff members including the principal and 3 heads of department, 672 learners, 2 institutional workers and 1 secretary which brings the total population to 698. It offers classes from grade 5 up to 10.

It is of course one of the best government schools that has produced good grade 10 final results over the past two consecutive years, with a 68% pass rate in 2009 and 67, 1% in 2010 (Source: School record).

It is a rural school which consists of 18 classrooms, one administration block, a library, flush toilet block, two recreation fields for boys and girls respectively and a computer laboratory

centre where communities are also being trained in computer literacy skills. It occupies the area of approximately one soccer field or ten thousand square meters. The photograph below is the administration office. **(Photographer: Researcher 2011)**



The school does not have a hostel and most of the learners commute from their parents' homes. To avoid high absenteeism and avoiding of classes by the learners as a result of hunger, porridge is being catered to the learners every lunch-time, so that they can pay more attention to their studies. It became a common practice in Namibia that when a school applies for assistance for food for their learners, the government provides bags of maize meal to schools through the National School Feeding Program Scheme (NSFPS). This is applicable to Utokota combined school, as it always receives quite a number of maize meal bags at the beginning of every term and parents render a free service by cooking porridge for their children. Figure 2 below shows the open fire on the left where the porridge is cooked.

(Photographer: Mr. Rengura: 2011)



Most of the teachers, including the principal are provided with accommodation by the government. The teachers' accommodation is located close to the school area and only a few of them are living in the community.

4.2.1.2 School vision and mission

The mission and vision of a school are statements of intent that spell out what the organization should do, how it should be done and in which direction the organization is moving. The goal is one of the most important aspects that cement all members of the organization together as they remain focused in the same direction without wavering. In this regard therefore, each staff member is required to rally behind and support the school mission and vision statement. The principal provided me with the following documents of the school vision and mission statement.

Vision: "Striving for more community involvement, staff and learners cooperation"

Mission: Work in consultation.

Objectives: "Improvement through hard work and joining hands together for change".

The vision, mission and objective of the organization fit well into the OD intervention framework and objectives. As an OD facilitator, I felt at home when I read and interpreted the statement.

4.3 SDF: The intervention of OD at the initial stage

4.3.1 Entry negotiation

Negotiating with the gatekeeper for permission is the best approach to gain access to an organization, as one would then be treated with respect and honour. The gatekeeper holds the authority and power to refuse or allow any outside expertise to penetrate into the organizational system. In this regard therefore, it was imperative to first contact those who were in authority, in order to gain access to the organization.

Weisbord (1991, pp. 91-92), agrees that “if you want anything to succeed get the gatekeeper in”. The gatekeeper in this regard is the principal of Utokota combined school, as the direct person to be contacted for permission, along with the Inspector of Education.

The process of seeking an entry to the school organization began by first meeting with the Inspector of Education of the Shambyu circuit on the 5th of April 2011 in his office. In the first instance, I made an appointment with him on the 4th of April 2011 and then the following day I went to meet him in his office at the educational circuit. I gave him a letter from Rhodes University, Department of Education written by my Supervisor, clarifying what I am doing at the University and the purpose for engaging with a school or other educational institution.

I informed him that I had chosen Utokota combined school because it is near the circuit office where the Inspector could easily be contacted and secondly it is of course the first and the oldest school established by the Roman Catholic Missionaries in the Shambyu community. Thus it would be of advantage for me to gain a rich historical background of the organization for my mini research study. On the basis of grade 10 results that have been showing improvement for two consecutive years, I felt it would be of advantage to learn more from the experiences of how the staff and management have united together to bring these positive changes in the human working relationships of the school. In addition, I explained to him that the main purpose of my visit was to conduct an OD survey data feedback intervention workshop at the school and work with the staff to explore the possible problems that they were experiencing and then find ways of addressing such problems. After the discussion, he welcomed the ideas and took note of it, but referred me to the principal to ask for permission to conduct the workshop. He promised that he would inform her telephonically. In the meantime, upon request, he availed the circuit PowerPoint machine and computer for me to use during the workshop when necessary and he also requested the secretary to render assistance.

On the 6th of April 2011, I approached the principal in the morning as the gatekeeper of the school organization and introduced myself to her and then explained that the main purpose of my visit was to conduct an OD survey data feedback intervention as one of the course requirements that needed to be fulfilled. I asked her for permission for me to conduct an OD

intervention at her school. I produced the letter from Rhodes University and gave it to her to read, as I had done with the Inspector.

I briefly clarified the concept of Organization Development (OD), how it works, its norms, values and its assumptions. I explained to her that my programme included working together with the staff during the whole process, in order to explore the possible problems that the organization experiences and find out what mechanisms could be used to address the problems together. This would eventually add value to the school's organizational culture if the OD intervention could be given an opportunity to work according to the plan.

During our conversation she acknowledged that it was a good idea and that she was happy to welcome the programme of OD intervention, but she raised a concern because it would come at the crucial time of examinations, when all the teaching staff was fully engaged in supervising and marking the answer sheets of the learners. However, despite the examinations, we came to an agreement that the only opportunity for me to engage the staff in the OD intervention was from 11h00 to 13h00 every day, after all the learner's had finished writing the examinations.

She told me to come and meet the staff the following day, as she wanted to brief them first before I could go ahead. As per agreement, the following day on the 7th of April, I met with her before we proceeded to the staffroom. She informed me that the staff welcomed the programme of OD intervention. In the staffroom she introduced me and then she explained that the purpose of my visit was to conduct an OD survey data feedback intervention programme as part of the requirements of completing a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Management at Rhodes University. Despite the pressures of examinations, she encouraged them to cooperate, support and work together with the facilitator throughout the whole process.

After the introduction, I explained to them how the OD survey data feedback intervention works, by briefly stating that it is the process of involving all staff members in solving an organization's problems, to initiate changes, discuss ideas, decide and commit together to an action plan. Due to the hectic schedule of supervising the examination sessions, the OD workshop was postponed to the next day, Friday, the 8th of April, immediately after the learners

finished their examinations. All staff decided that the workshop should be in the computer room, where there was enough space to use the PowerPoint machine. Unfortunately, the staff including the principal, did not sign an agreement on paper, but agreed verbally that all staff should attend the workshop except those who found themselves in situations beyond their control. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 63), hold a similar notion that the facilitator should “**” enter into contract with the system that are reaching out for help and exhibit sign of readiness”. **

4.3.2 OD workshop

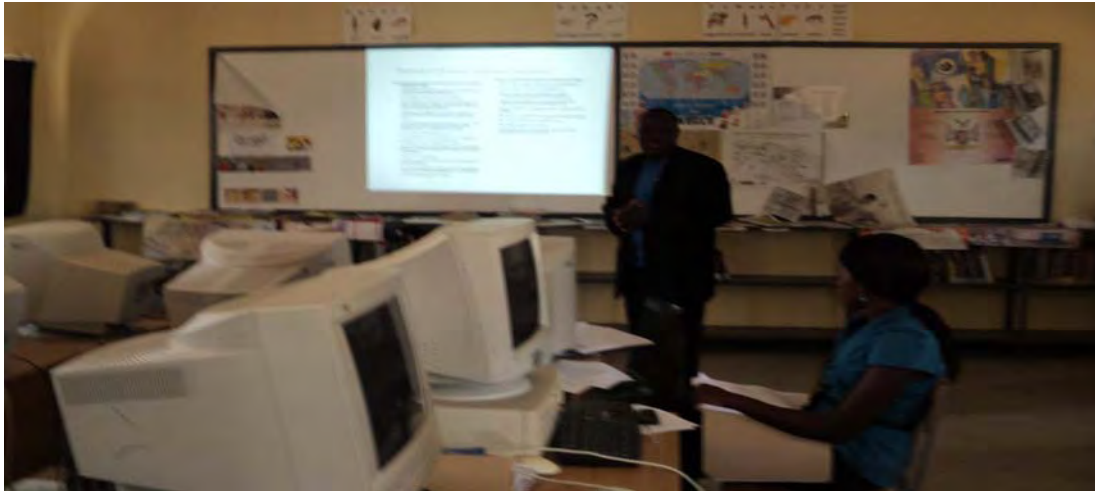
The following day the workshop began immediately after the learners had completed the examination session which finished at 11h00. The workshop was conducted in the computer room as per staff decision and facilitated by me, as an initiator of the OD workshop. Twelve staff members managed to attend the workshop, while nine teachers were unable to attend due to circumstances beyond their control. The principal was also not able to attend as she was on sick leave.

The presentation started after official opening remarks that were made by the acting principal of the organization. According to French and Bell (1995, p. 29, “top management lead and actively encourage the change efforts”. The PowerPoint slide show was also used during the presentation but each participant was also provided with a hand-out of the presentation for further reading. The workshop mainly focused on the objectives, meaning and background of OD, the value and assumptions of OD, OD features versus traditional consultancy and OD design cycles. The aim of the workshop was to let the staff members clearly understand why the OD intervention was so significant at a school level as an organization, so that they could ascertain their readiness to participate fully in the OD initiative.

Smith (2003, p. 21) argues that members of the organization together with the facilitator should participate fully in the process of SDF, commencing from “start-up agreement and move on to data collection, data analysis and feedback”. For members of an organization to understand how the process of OD survey data feedback works, it was necessary for them to attend the event as they are the people who know their own workplace and understand it

better than any outsider. Figure 3 below, shows the facilitator presenting the OD workshop by using the PowerPoint machine.

(Photographer: **participant 2011**)



After the presentation, all participants were fully engaged in vigorous discussions where some made constructive criticism on management issues. A female participant argued that “some of the decisions that are taken here are undemocratic”. She was supported by a gentle man who went on by saying that “OD is democratic from the bottom-up and not always from top-down and from now on we must implement OD”. After the debate they came up with questions. Two male participants raised the following questions:

- Since OD originated in SA how can it be implemented here in Namibia, particularly at Utokota combined school, as an organization?
- Principals from former regimes still have the mentality of running schools in the traditional way, blocking the way for new teachers to bring change. What can be done?
- The learner representative council and school board do not know their roles, what can be done?
- Disruptive learners are misbehaving themselves, what can be done?

Some of these questions and comments that came out of the meeting signalled organizational problems and hence as the facilitator of the OD workshop, I advised them that it would be more appropriate if these questions could be converted into actual problems and then they could be prioritized, according to their degree of importance.

It was also of utmost importance that members should be given the floor to decide for themselves whether to change the questions into problems and move forward. Giving an opportunity to the participants to decide what to do to solve the problem is one of the important steps in OD intervention. An OD intervention is a participant driven process in which all members should be actively involved in the decision-making process to solve the organizational problems. French and Bell (1999, p. 87), believe that members' participation in problem solving energizes greater performances which eventually produces better solutions to the problems and also enhances a greater acceptance of decisions taken.

The participants agreed to convert some of the questions which were relevant to their own situation into problem points and then list them according to priority. Together, we then discussed the remaining questions and tried to find the answers. The participants discussed the question of how an OD intervention should be implemented at the school and who should implement it, in order to affect change in the organization. Reference was made to the hand-outs of the slide show presentation in which the steps involved in problem solving were outlined and this was discussed in more detail with the participants (Appendix K).

In addition it was made clear to them that any OD intervention does not originate from South Africa and is in fact the process that exists within any organization that is aiming to improve human working relationships. An OD intervention process needs all the members' involvement, at all levels in the workplace, in initiating any changes and moving forward to improve the performance of the organization. Members need to identify and diagnose the problems, take action and share the responsibilities of problem solving. The process is not actually dictated by a single individual in the leadership position, as it is a system that helps to empower members of all the groups in the organization, through a participative democratic approach to the decision-making process (Smith, 2003, pp. 4-6).

Through discussion, we managed to find an answer to one of the questions regarding the older principals from some schools who usually tend to block new teachers who want to bring changes to the school organization. In answering this question, reference was made to the cluster principals and head of the cluster centre, who should initiate an OD intervention

workshop in which these principals could be addressed and encouraged to work together with younger teachers who want to make use of their talents to initiate change in the organization. Alternatively, the school cluster centre head could initiate an OD intervention workshop and invite an OD facilitator to facilitate the workshop where OD values and assumptions could be made clear to those principals who show tendencies of resistant behaviour to change.

(Photographer: **participant 2011**)



Fig. 4. This picture shows staff members during the OD workshop, deliberating on some questions and prioritizing the problems.

The staff continued with the intervention and went on to discuss the problems they wanted the facilitator to explore. Problems were listed during the brain storming session and the following topics were identified:

- Lack of school board involvement
- LRC involvement in maintaining discipline
- Staff involvement in decision- making
- Learners' disruptive behaviour

After the discussion the participants were given an opportunity to decide which topic from the four, they wanted to investigate further. In terms of OD principles, the members of an

organization will know more about their own organizational culture, problems and circumstances surrounding the environment and would therefore be in a better position to prioritize and choose the problematic topic for further research. The participants eventually agreed on staff involvement in decision-making as a topic for investigation. I informed them that before proceeding with the investigation we needed to enter into a contract which is a requirement in any OD intervention.

4.3.3 Contracting

I asked the participants to select at least three members from their team to be co-facilitators in the research study and to work together with me as the facilitator. Due to the hectic schedule of supervising and marking the learners' examination scripts, only two male participants volunteered to be co-facilitators in collecting data through interviewing staff and the management team.

4.3.4 Data gathering and diagnosis

The co-facilitators declined to collect data through interviewing their colleagues due to any future conflict but, they were willing to assist in other aspects.

In my data collection I managed to interview three staff members, including the principal, HOD and a teacher. I analysed the data collected and codified each interview, with P for principal, HOD1 for head of department and T1 for the teacher and eventually the following three themes emerged.

4.3.4.1 Acceptance

From the general responses it seemed that the staff show loyalty to their leader and accept their delegated tasks rather than showing any opposition. This was brought out by P when she said that, "we are supposed to have three HODS, but we only have one HOD who is officially appointed and the other two posts are still vacant. Additional members from the staff help with the daily demands of the vacant posts, without extra payment". HOD1 supported the statement by saying that "two of the HOD posts here at school are run by ordinary teachers". T1 is an

ordinary teacher who has accepted the offer of helping out: “I serve in the management structures just to help the school to run smoothly”.

4.3.4.2 Communication

Based on responses, it seemed that healthy communication exists among management, as was claimed by P when she said that, “open communication between myself and staff members exists; if they want something my door is always open”. HOD1 is a member of management who denies this, as he said that there is a “broken line of authority which may lead to crippled organization development”. It sounds like there is an uneasy relationship that exists among management members which could lead to misunderstandings.

4.3.4.3 Staff involvement/participation

In general, all participants revealed similar responses that support staff involvement. According to P, “we involve teachers, members of management, the school board, learners and parents in the decision-making process”, while HOD1 stated that “staff only contribute during discussions”. T1 agrees that “staff participate actively in discussions but management members come up with the ideas”. HOD1 and T1’s responses therefore give evidence that staff members are not initiating change and that they have developed a syndrome of dependency on the top structure at the school to initiate change on their behalf. If this is the general tendency of the staff, then one can conclude that the organization needs staff empowerment through OD intervention or by using other strategies to improve their skills and knowledge.

The OD values and assumptions stipulate that every member of the organization has the potential to initiate change only if members collaborate together, develop mutual trust, and have a sense of unity, confidence and the desire to bring about change. In order for the members to initiate change, they need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills obtained through the OD training workshop. Kashikatu (2009, p. 24), agrees that “capacity-building activities in change in the organization is a prerequisite for successful change”.

4.3.5 Survey data feedback

After the whole schedule of data gathering up to data presentation, as facilitator of the OD intervention, I managed to give feedback to the staff on the 13th of April 2011 at 12h00-13h00 in the computer room, as during the morning most of the teachers were supervising the examination session of their learners.

The feedback was significant for each participant as they wanted to hear more about the outcome of the OD survey data feedback intervention and thus it was my responsibility to make sure this was done. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 75), argue that a facilitator who works with a steering committee throughout the whole process, needs to give feedback to the faculty committee and guide them in problem solving. See photo below.

(Photographer: **participant: 2011**)



Figure 5. It shows participants and facilitator during the feedback presentation.

The members of the school organization were given feedback on the themes that were derived from the interview data analyses. During the feedback, participants were encouraged to ask questions or give comments on anything pertaining to the outcome of the SDF, but they preferred to ask questions or to comment after the presentation. In the absence of PowerPoint, the summaries were written on the chalkboard and the report was explained to the members.

The four themes of acceptance; communication; involvement and participation were of significance to the members of the organization.

Regarding 'acceptance', according to the findings I explained to them that staff members exhibit positive relationships with other staff, by accepting the offer to act in vacant managerial posts without remuneration. One female teacher commented as follows: "We do that because we want to learn how to run the school and manage the department, as one day you may be appointed in a post at any school and then you would at least know how things are done".

Regarding staff involvement, it was reported that teachers' participation in the decision-making process, as well as in organizational change is satisfactory, but according to the data it revealed that staff rarely participate and contribute when it comes to initiating change. In terms of OD principles, norms and values, every staff member of the organization is considered important and has the potential to initiate change. The change should not always come from the top structure only, but it should also be initiated from the bottom-up. The problem of not initiating change themselves, could infer that staff might be having problems with self-initiative, motivation, self-esteem and cooperation. I informed them that they should empower themselves through intensive workshop training that would focus on improving skills for organizational change. I continued by giving them feedback on communication problems which the management needed to rectify, as it was imperative in terms of keeping the lines of communication open.

After receiving the feedback, the staff expressed their gratitude for making them aware of how OD should work and they understood the process and content of the workshop. I reminded them about the remaining phases, namely: action planning, action implementation and evaluation, which the members of the organization should implement in order to resolve the problems. It should be the responsibility of their organization to take further steps to implement the plan. My responsibility as the OD facilitator ended at this point.

The staff requested a training workshop on empowerment, but I advised them to write a letter later on, if they still needed my assistance in the OD intervention. They expressed their dissatisfaction at the short period of time that I had spent with them but, they promised to look

into the problems and solve it according to the OD action plan phases. Participants reminded me that next time I should conduct the workshop at a more appropriate time and not during the examination period, as they were unable to pay much attention to the OD workshop programme.

Toward the end of the feedback I distributed the evaluation (Appendix F) forms to be completed during their own time. As all participants are accommodated in teachers' houses, I could collect the evaluation forms during the afternoon from them. Twelve participants responded positively to OD intervention on the evaluation form.

4.3.6 Critical reflection on OD short term intervention

In general, the organization of the OD intervention programme went well, beginning with the circuit Inspector of Education in Shambyu who welcomed me into his office. He provided me with the use of the PowerPoint machine and computer, if needed during the workshop presentation. He availed two secretaries of the circuit to assist me with typing the programme and making copies of the workshop materials.

In the same manner, the principal as a gate keeper together with the staff welcomed me into the staff room with open arms and smiling faces. Apart from the internal examination, the OD workshop was presented in the computer room where there was enough space for everybody. The PowerPoint machine was used during the workshop to show the slides and also to make things attractive and inviting. Staff were involved in the workshop and contributed actively in many ways and kept the presentation lively. Two male staff volunteered to be co-facilitators.

Data collection was done by using semi-structured interviews. The collected data was analysed and transcribed with the assistance of one co-facilitator and then feedback was given to the staff. Feedback took place in the same venue where the workshop was conducted and left the members of the school organization embracing the action plan.

The downside of the program was that the OD survey data feedback intervention was conducted during the examination period, when almost all staff members were engaged in supervising the examination sessions and marking the answer scripts of their learners. Hence

the examinations took preference and most staff devoted much of their time and attention to the school exam programme.

The time period for collecting data was short as there was only about one week left before the school was to close and I was expected to complete the OD survey data feedback intervention programme within five days. The transcription of the interview data was done roughly by picking out the main points only, as the time for returning to Rhodes was approaching and the staff needed to get feedback on the OD survey data feedback intervention. The timing was crucial in the sense that the programme needed to be finished quickly.

4.3.7 Conclusion

Finally, I would like to conclude that the OD survey data feedback intervention process was an eye-opener for me and the staff of the school, as this was a new way of finding common solutions to the problems. It was a learning process for both the staff and the facilitator.

I also learned that OD survey data feedback interventions in any organization can bring everlasting change if the program is well implemented, since it involves all staff members to solve organizational problems step-by-step. It recognizes and values the human potential of every member in the workplace and removes fear and suspicion between management and staff. Most of the staff members expressed their satisfaction with the OD intervention because they saw a great future for the organization if they could work together according to what they had learnt. I have also learned that the leadership practice that prevails in the organization is based more on a democratic participatory leadership style. This was evidenced when the principal delegated power to an ordinary female teacher to act on her behalf as principal.

The large amount of work, especially that of transcribing data, data presentation, triangulation and theme seeking, have enabled me as a facilitator to probe deeper and learn more on this new topic. This will help me in conducting any further research study.

4.4 Part 2: The resumption of the OD intervention

4.4.1 Entrance

4.4.1.1 Meeting with Regional Director and Circuit Inspector

In order to seek permission for the resumption of the OD intervention programme at Utokota combined school, I communicated first with the acting Regional Director of Education at the regional office on the 30th of June 2011 and informed him about the OD intervention project programme which was unfinished in April. I gave him a letter from Rhodes University, Education Department, written by my supervisor, informing him again about my study (Appendix A2). Luckily, the acting Regional Director was the same person as the circuit Inspector of Shambyu Circuit, who knew my programme of OD intervention research project at Utokota combined school and as such was delighted to see me back again at the same school. After reading the letter he then told me to go to the school and see the gate keeper and while I was doing that, he would communicate with her about me.

4.4.1.2 Meeting the gatekeeper and staff of the school

The gatekeeper was informed telephonically beforehand about the OD renewal programme as they had requested me to come back and proceed with the OD training workshop when the time arrived to assist them.

However, on the 4th of July, even though I arrived at school early in the morning, I missed the morning briefing. Although I found them busy with the morning assembly, one of the staff approached me and said: "Welcome back Mr. Rengura! We have been waiting for you this morning as the principal informed us about you; I am so delighted to see you back". He escorted me to the principal who was standing in front of the learners and welcomed me with open arms.

The first thing that I observed and noted down was the prevalence of organizational culture and leadership during that moment as all learners were in a beautiful, blue colour school uniform, singing the national and school anthems. The LRC chairperson was given the responsibility of

reading the Scripture, praying and making an announcement to his co-learners regarding discipline. Afterwards, the principal took over and proceeded with the announcements by encouraging the learners to take their studies seriously. During the announcement she used me as a “role model from whom everybody should take as an example, as at the age of 56 he still continues learning”. She asked me to say a few words of motivation to the learners.

After morning assembly, I approached her in the office and informed her about the OD intervention programme which was left half way during April and asked her if it was possible to resume it. She was delighted to see me back for the same programme. After a discussion I told her that I needed to meet the staff during staff briefing in the morning. The following day I met the staff in the staff room, as scheduled, and briefed them about the purpose of returning to resume with the OD intervention programme (Appendix G). The staff was happy about the resumption of the OD intervention at Utokota combined school.

During the meeting we agreed on a date, time and venue to review the workshop conducted in April and to get them on board. The date for the workshop review was scheduled for the 7th of July, at 14h00, but unfortunately the workshop did not take place according to plan. The workshop was rescheduled to Monday, the 11th of July.

4.4.2 Review on prior OD workshop

(See Appendix H)

Venue: Computer room Date: 11/07/2011 Time: 14:00

Attendance: 13 teachers Absentees: 7 teacher’s Vacant posts: 2

I asked for a volunteer from the participants to assist with the writing down of the minutes and Mr. Moroshi availed himself to render the service .The workshop was opened with a prayer by a participant who volunteered.

Welcoming remarks:

The principal welcomed all participants present to the workshop and encouraged them with the following: “I call upon all of us to make use of this opportunity to empower ourselves for our lives, our work and our own studies in the future”. She furthermore stated that “the OD workshop is not for Mr. Rengura, but for us at Utokota combined school to improve our own situation, therefore let us engage ourselves in learning new ideas and knowledge from him”.

I briefly explained the purpose for the workshop review which was to remind the participants about the previous SDF workshop that took place in April and to get all members on board. I used the mission and vision statements of Utokota combined school to encourage the participants. The PowerPoint machine was used to focus on the OD values, beliefs and assumptions, and the difference between OD and the old way of bringing about change.

Afterwards, the floor was opened for questions and discussion. The following questions were asked by participants.

- I want to know how we can develop and build a team in an organization?
- When a decision is taken by staff with the members of management in the absence of the supervisor, but upon his arrival he turns it down, what can be done in this regard?
- Who possesses more power between the principal and school board in the structure of OD?
- The school board members are uneducated; can the principal help them with recommendations when it is needed?

After posing the questions, participants discussed the questions in groups to find the possible solutions. The group members attempted to provide answers to some questions, for example, Mr. Ngongo said that “team building is about improving the behaviour of people at work and members must like each other, support each other and establish positive mutual respect and relationships. Through this approach then, team spirit will function well”.

On the question of the school board, Haingura stated that, “although the school board is not educated, they should be empowered through mini workshop training in order to understand their role, how to solve school issues and work together with the management”. Mr. Bahema suggested that, “while Mr. Rengura is here with us, it is important that the school board should be trained about their role”.

During discussions, I observed that the members of the organization really needed empowering through training as they had initially requested me during the SDF workshop that took place in April. I asked them to list the problems that affect the performance of the organization on the chalk board as they had done during the previous SDF workshop. The participants wrote down the problems as follows according to their list:

- Staff cooperation
- Absenteeism of teachers
- Punctuality at school
- Discipline among learners
- Favouritism
- Staff involvement in decision- making
- Teaching resources
- Tribalism
- Lack of representatives
- Staff initiatives

Together with the participants, we contemplated the list of ten points and I told them that the point of tribalism is a difficult topic to research, provide training for and create a solution, since it is an issue that emerges from community cultural practices and therefore it is beyond my research goal. I asked the participants to place these problems according to priority and choose the most significant problems that needed immediate attention. The members prioritized the problems as follows:

- Staff cooperation
- Staff involvement in the decision-making process.

According to Mr. Haingura, “cooperation is the biggest problem among the staff because we are divided into different groups which is why we are not working together”. He stated that “we need a facilitator to help us to know how we should cooperate and improve on relationships”. Mr. Bahema added that, “even during staff meetings and morning briefings most of the teachers keep silent when the management briefs us on certain issues”. Mr. Kumbi argues that, “even if you participate, your input is not considered, so why should we waste our

time". I asked them to pick out one problem from the two, which they considered as the main obstacle within the organization, even if both are deemed important.

At the end of the debate, all the participants agreed on the point of staff cooperation, but still felt that staff involvement in decision-making needs to also be touched on during training as it was part of their initial decision during the SDF workshop. The participants were reminded that the April agreement on the SDF workshop has expired, so it was imperative to renew the contract.

4.4.3 Contracting

I requested the participants to nominate at least three members from their team to be co-facilitators and work together with me as an outsider facilitator in leading the OD intervention process for change. This time it was different from the previous SDF workshop as all members were free from the pressures of examinations and they nominated three teachers from the participants. The composition of co-facilitators consisted of one female teacher, one male teacher and one member of management. As per the OD requirement, all of us signed the agreement to participate in the OD intervention process.

4.4.4 Data gathering and diagnosis

A new venue was organized for us, as the usual one was occupied with community computer lessons and readings. The principal provided us with the laboratory room for the interviews.

In data gathering through face to face interviews, all three co-facilitators were not prepared to interview their colleagues to avoid any future conflict but, they were willing to assist in other aspects, for instance observation and data diagnosis, as was done during the first SDF workshop of OD intervention at the initial stage. As a researcher, I managed to interview 8 members of staff including management and teachers (Appendix I).

After the interviews we came together and tried to transcribe the data collected, by listening to the voices and jotting down the main points only, but it was not an easy task. The co-facilitators wanted to go and perform other duties; therefore they left the researcher to go ahead with the

task of transcription. As a researcher, I tried to transcribe the data by picking out the most important points only and identifying the themes. After data analysis the following four themes emerged, namely: staff involvement in the decision-making process, staff cooperation, staff participation in change, leadership and change.

4.4.4.1 Staff involvement in decision-making process

From the general responses, the staff indicated that the majority of them are not involved in the decision-making processes at the school. This was revealed by T2 who stated that, “the management comes to the staff with the issue and then we discuss it, while they have already made a decision in their management meeting”. Furthermore he says, “They just approach us as a formality and inform us about their decision. Although we may feel differently, the decision of the staff won’t be considered; they only consider their own decision”.

In the same vein, T4 holds a similar view that, “in the past they used to involve the staff, but now they do not involve us at all” ,while respondent P disputes this statement by saying that, “my decision is not a final decision. I might come up with a suggestion but it is up to the staff to take a decision”. Respondent P further argues that “I am also listening to what others have to say, before we come to a final decision”.

According to T3, “most of the time when we are deciding, the principal asks the opinion of the staff first to obtain their decision”. HOD3 added that “management makes the suggestions and discusses it and when they see that there is no need to involve the staff members, they decide on it themselves, but if the point needs the opinion of the staff, then they will involve the staff in discussion, which eventually ends up with a collective decision”.

The HOD2 disputed the views of T3 and HOD3 by saying that “some of the decisions are taken collectively but when the top supervisor comes back and the majority decision is not in her favour, she turns it down unless the decisions are in her favour”. He added that “even if the head is present, the majority decision is turned down”. This was evidenced when P rejected a staff decision to finish school at 12h00 in order to give the learners enough time to have their lunch and come back earlier to continue studying. P argues as follow: “I cannot agree to the

learners finishing at 12h00 as you have suggested. I say the correct time is 13h00, as we in the management team have decided on the time of 13h00” (observation: 8.08.2011). P repeated her decision by stating that, “I have decided that we will remain in our classes up to 13h00. I have taken a stand as supervisor; I know that it is democratic but I cannot allow it” (observation: 15.08.2011).

T5 argues that, “sometimes the staff gets involved in the decision-making process and sometimes they don’t get involved and just accept what the head or management have decided without their participation”. T6 holds a similar view that the “staff is not involved in the decision-making process” and elucidates that “as I said earlier, what happens is that she decides and then comes down to the staff and asks them for their opinion but she has already taken a decision. The staff can comment on the issues, but in the end, she will do what she has decided”.

The previous claim of P which states that “we involve teachers, the school board, learners and parents in the decision-making”, seems to have been refuted by T6 who argues here that the “LRC are not involved and only the principal decides when to effect change”. P later also confirmed that “we do not involve the LRC, as we always forget to involve them”. In an attempt to answer the question during face-to-face communication, as to why the school board was not involved in the appointment of a relief teacher, P argued that “I don’t want to be dictated to” (observation notes: 4.07.2011). This scenario could also apply to similar situations with regards to staff participation in meetings, morning briefings and other organization activities.

4.4.4.2 Staff participation

Participation is the cornerstone on which organization development hinges, as members feel proud when they participate and contribute to the growth of an organization. In this case, most of the respondents revealed that there was a lack of participation either in meetings or morning briefings, as articulated by T2 that:

Here we have more traditional ways of doing things at our school. You come to staff meetings as a teacher and you are only here to teach. You let management talk and you do not bring up new ideas and ambitions. Only a few teachers contribute while others are

passively listening. The ethos of participation is not there and only one or two teachers always contribute. The meeting ends up being for only two people while there are twenty three teachers.

Furthermore he states that, “teachers feel afraid of confronting the principal in case they are black-listed as bad teachers, but then after the meeting you will hear them talking about the things they wanted to say at the meeting”. In the same breath, T3 claims that “teachers don’t talk at briefings, they just keep quiet. Some talk, but it is hard to follow what is being said as it is only one or two people who contribute. Openness to express their ideas is not encouraged even though the principal is a friendly person. Fear has them talking about their ideas outside after the meeting”. T4 states “we don’t participate and only the same two people talk, while the rest just listen, because if you participate and your idea is ignored, you are discouraged”. T6 holds a similar view that “I have observed only a few people participating or contributing while the rest of the staff just listen and watch, as they get the feeling that even if they ask or contribute, in the end their decision or voice won’t be considered. The staff are de-motivated”.

P argues that “staff participation changes from day to day and with the agenda on the table, as people prefer to keep quiet and only one or two people participate. Sometimes I assume that maybe the topic on the table has also altered the mood and influenced the teachers not to take part in any discussion”.

In line with T2, HOD2 argues that “teachers are supposed to make an effective contribution to the meetings and morning briefings but, I assume they are afraid to be labelled if they say something against the existing authority”. According to staff members’ observations, T5 stated that “I used to see female teachers get involved on certain occasions, especially to do with the disciplining of learners, but not on planning and development. It is only the male teachers who discuss issues of planning and development but we want them all to be involved because planning and development is for the whole school”. HOD3 concludes that “some members have withdrawn and the participation is very poor from both sides - management and the staff.” The observation notes (July-August: 2011) reveal similar cases of poor staff participation as it

normally ranges from two to three members only that participate. This state of affairs could also be similar when it comes to staff cooperation.

4.4.4.3 Staff cooperation

It is indeed very necessary that staff members should cooperate and support each other for the common cause of achieving the organizational goals. Nothing can prevent them from changing the pattern of behaviour geared towards better working relationships, as long as the members realize the need for change.

According to HOD3, “we are divided into groups and this may affect staff cooperation as it may not contribute towards working together”. HOD3 added that, “previously we used to have weekly management meetings every Thursday”. She went on to say that, “since I joined the management team the programme stopped. This is the platform for us as management where we are supposed to sit and deliberate on our problems and find solutions between ourselves. It is then easier for us to bring the issues to the staff, but management no longer has these meetings”.

In line with HOD3, HOD2 states that, “as I mentioned earlier, some of the decisions staff were not involved in, so they will leave certain parts of the action to be taken to those who have made the decision; this really creates a division between management and staff. There is no cooperation because management does their own thing and the rest of the staff also does their own thing, therefore there is no cooperation”. T6 holds a similar view that “there is no cooperation because the leader or supervisor places teachers in category A and B. If a teacher in category A whom she favours does something wrong he or she will not be punished but, if a teacher from category B makes the same mistake, that teacher will be punished. Because of this, there cannot be cooperation”.

T4 argues that “we do not cooperate as we feel we will be wasting our time. Why should we go to meetings if our suggestions will not be taken into consideration? Even if a meeting for all staff members is called, only a few will turn up, while the rest will not come because they know

they will be wasting their time". T4 elaborates that "in the past we used to cooperate, for instance when someone died, teachers used to contribute, but now it has stopped".

According to T2, cooperation is of a poor quality as unqualified teachers feel inferior to more highly qualified teachers and that qualified teachers tend to undermine the unqualified teachers. He further alluded to the fact that when younger teachers who are in an advisory capacity have to instruct the elder teachers, the elder teachers are not willing to accept instructions from the younger teachers. The elder teachers always say to the younger teachers, "I was teaching your mother and you cannot tell me what to do, as you don't have experience". The younger teachers always respond that they need to "forget about the old things as we are now in a new era. So there is no cooperation and teamwork". P maintains that "at least 80% of teachers are cooperating and that teamwork is there". T5 argues that "cooperation and teamwork are being broken down; teamwork is for everybody and the whole of management must get involved in order to have good cooperation; if they are not involved, the other parties do not function well. Two hands work better than one".

Based on the responses, it seems that the majority of the participants complained that there is a lack of cooperation within the organization, while one respondent disagreed and claimed that 80% of the staff cooperate and maintain teamwork. Cooperation and teamwork is usually influenced by the leader of the organization who inspires and motivates the followers to unite and work together towards the common objectives. It is also true on the other hand, that if the leader does not support and direct followers, then the situation of non-cooperation exists within an organization.

4.4.4.4 Leadership role

The leadership role is significant in the organization in terms of pursuing organizational goals and as such, a leader needs to influence, inspire, support and motivate the followers to unite, work together and rally behind the organizational goals. The outcomes of the interviews reflect on the leadership role at Utokota combined school.

HOD2 argues that the current leadership, “is a little democratic, but more an autocratic leadership style”. He states that: “We want democratic leadership where everyone is involved in the decision-making process and takes collective decisions, problem-solving collectively”.

In line with HOD2, T6 states that, “the kind of leadership that we have here, is a type of dictatorship, as all the decisions are taken by the principal alone”. T6 holds the view that, “I would like to see the leadership that we have learned about from the OD workshop, because it emphasises a democratic leadership style, whereby decisions are taken collectively”. He added that “the decision should not only come from the top, but people at the bottom should be considered in the decision-making process as they are part of the organization”. This is in line with observation data (3 August 2011) during a morning briefing when the social science HOD1 asked the following question: “I am the HOD of social science, heading the department, so why was I not informed about the social science examination question paper that contained problems and I only hear about it now in the staff meeting”? P responded to him by saying: “There was no need to inform you as I am the principal of this school representing all the subject heads and HODs and you have to accept what I have informed you now in the staff morning briefing”.

None of the staff members attempted to ask any more questions. T5 stated that “the leadership applied here at school is both democratic and autocratic but democracy should be the one that prevails”. He further argues that “I wish a democratic type of leadership would prevail because it is built on flexibility, cooperation and is mostly constructive”.

P stated: “I don’t know much about different types of leadership but I think we show a democratic leadership style, because people participate in the discussions and decision-making”. T4 is ambivalent and thinks that “the current leadership is democratic, as management comes to the staff first and asks for ideas and that shows that it is democratic. Unfortunately, when they go back to their office and make the decision, then that is in complete opposition to democratic principles”. T4 still maintains that she would like to see a more democratic leadership style at the school and that the whole staff, including management should all work together along the lines of a democratic leadership style.

T2 reasons as follows: “Since I attended the OD workshop, I learnt that the best way to lead is to employ a democratic leadership style where everything is transparent, there is openness, everybody feels part of the school and the principal is not the only leader, I am also a leader”. T2 further states: “I need to participate in decision-making, which ensures cooperation and human respect and dignity. That is what is lacking in most of the principals as they take schools as their own and whatever decision they make, we just have to follow”. T2 revealed that the leadership is not complete as one part is missing and that is the LRC. She states that, “the LRC is not involved in all the decision-making, which is why we have problems whenever you come to school rules, as they are not involved”.

T3 holds a similar notion that democratic leadership is good, as everybody feels that his or her ideas or voice is heard and, “if I make a decision, I want that decision to be put into practice. I need recognition and I feel happy if my point is recognized”. HOD3 concluded as follows: “I want to see the democratic leadership that we heard about prosper in the school, where people have freedom of expression without any stringent measures being attached”.

The general responses indicated that all members of the organization needed and wanted leadership change and embraced democratic leadership that offers opportunities for staff involvement in decision-making, participation, recognition, respect and cooperation. After the data analysis was completed, I invited the co-facilitators to look at and plan together for feedback. Feedback is important as participants want to hear more about the outcome of the OD survey data feedback and it would mean sharing responsibilities among members of the organization.

4.4.5 Data feedback and the way forward

After the whole schedule of data gathering up to data analysis was completed, as the facilitator of the OD intervention with the help of the co-facilitators, feedback was given to the staff on the 2nd of August 2011 at 14h00-16h30 in the laboratory room, as during the morning most of the teachers were busy with teaching. The members of the school organization were given feedback on the themes that were derived from interview data analyses. During the feedback, participants were persuaded to ask questions or comment on the outcome of the workshop,

but they preferred to ask questions or to comment after the report was presented. In the absence of PowerPoint, a short summary was used to report to the members. The following themes were significant: staff involvement in the decision-making process, participation, staff cooperation and leadership and change.

It was reported that their involvement in decision-making, participation and cooperation are not complementary as some hindering forces impede their effort but, members can decide on actions to resolve the problems. According to the data it also revealed that members wished to embrace democratic leadership that offers good opportunities to participate and express themselves freely without hindrance and to contribute to organization change. In terms of OD principles, norms and values, every staff member of an organization is considered important and has the potential to initiate change. The intended change initiative is not expected to come from the top structure only, but it should also come from the bottom-up.

After feedback the staff indicated that they still stand by their previous decision of wanting to be trained in the area of cooperation. HOD2 emphasized that, “our biggest problem is lack of cooperation amongst ourselves, therefore let us tackle this problem first before we come to the others”. He was supported by all participants and afterward I reminded them about the three phases remaining, namely: action planning, action implementation and evaluation. The members of the organization should take these steps in order to resolve the problems and it should then be the responsibility of the organization to take these further steps to implement the plan. On this note, members requested me to proceed with the OD intervention programme. We decided that I would come back and map out the strategies for training and for drawing up the action plan.

4.4.6 Data exploration

On Thursday, the 4th August, all the co-facilitators and a few members of the staff came back to review the data presented earlier and plan how the training should take place. Initially members looked at the data again and contemplated the two significant themes, namely staff cooperation and participation. They came up with a final decision that the training should be based on cooperation.

We fixed the date and time for training as the 10th of August, in the afternoon. A learner centeredness approach was adopted to be employed in training the staff and the participants were divided into four groups, supported by a co-facilitator per group. Participants suggested that each group should nominate someone from the team to report on the group findings to all participants, and added again that an action plan should be drawn up during the session. (Appendix D).

4.4.7 Action planning for OD intervention

As it was decided during data exploration, members came together again in the laboratory room, on the 10th of August 2011 for action planning and training. This time 18 staff members attended the training workshop and only three teachers were absent due to other commitments. The objective of the workshop was to train and empower staff on cooperation or teamwork, participation and involvement in the decision-making processes that might affect change in the school as an organization.

The principal welcomed all the participants by encouraging them to participate fully in the discussions and urged them to bring the problems that impede their cooperation to the fore, so that they could learn from their own mistakes and change for the better. The co-facilitators divided the participants into three groups and then each group received three posters, two marker pens and guiding questions to work on. Each group nominated a group leader who was tasked to report on the group discussions and a secretary who was also tasked to write and summarize the group deliberations. The following guiding questions were given to the participants to work on:

- Briefly define the concept 'cooperation'.
- Write down factors that impede cooperation among staff members.
- Suggest amicable solutions that will promote a sustainable cooperation.

In general, participants defined the concept cooperation as, "when people in the organization work together and pursue the common objectives of the organization". A participant from group C broadly expounded that "cooperation is when people in the organization are united,

work together, share responsibilities and strive towards achieving the common goal”. From different group reports, participants articulated a common definition of cooperation as it was defined by a participant from group C.

Before listing the impeding factors of cooperation, participants explained non-cooperation as “situations where people in the organization are not working together as a result of certain disagreements or factors that divide them”. The following factors of non-cooperation were revealed by three different groups of staff members during the training session.

Favouritism	Lack of effective management
Laziness among staff members	Negative judgments
Lack of trust	Personal perceptions
Gossiping	Self-centeredness
Pocket politics	Lack of support
Lack of openness and transparency	Negative attitudes and behaviours
Stress	Negative criticism
Depression	Having different interests
Intimidation	Lack of intrinsic motivation
Manipulation	Lack of communication
Leadership boasting	Lack of commitment
Negative influences from others	Lack of vision

The staff or participants also proposed solutions to the problems of non-cooperation during the training session. The action plan that follows comprises of two main components, namely the element of non-cooperation and possible solutions to the problem.

It is of fundamental importance that every staff member should take serious steps to implement the action plan, observe the success and failure of the plan, do weekly reviews and improve on weaknesses collectively. Each staff member needs to identify and mark the factors that impede cooperation on a daily basis and suggest further discussion in order to find an amicable and collective solution.

Plan of action: Cooperation

Observation schedule:

Elements of non-cooperation	Mark x	Possible solutions
Favouritism		Avoid side-lining and apply equal treatment to all members.
Laziness among staff members		Motivate and encourage staff members, talk to individuals.
Lack of trust among staff members		Cultivate trust, mutual respect and show empathy to each other.
Gossiping		Be brave enough to talk to one another as brothers and sisters.
Pocket politics		Avoid groups and back biting, accept each other and encourage team work.
Lack of openness and transparency		Be open, transparent and ask assistance from colleagues.

Stress		Find time to relax, be social and join discussions with other colleagues.
Depression		Show sympathy to one another, motivate, encourage and give help.
Intimidation		Avoid intimidation and blame, find amicable solutions, give advice and support for improvement.
Manipulation		Avoid influencing somebody to do something for personal gain or falsifying information for personal gain. Be honest, fair and just.
Leadership boasting		Leaders should be humble, integrity keepers, have self and mutual respect, uphold human dignity, inspire, influence and guide the followers.
Dictatorship		Apply democratic principles based on member participation in the decision-making process, consultation, advice seeking, respecting members' voice and concerns, taking collective decisions.
Lack of effective management		Identify areas of weakness and initiate training workshops for empowerment.
Negative judgments		Avoid blaming but correct mistakes by educating individuals, give advice and support.
Personal perceptions		Avoid negative sentiment but try to understand and accommodate others' views, learn from each other and if need be advise one another.
Self-centeredness		Refrain from self-centeredness and self-serving agenda, understand the mission, vision and objectives of the organization, NB: two heads are better than one, accept others views.

Lack of support		Members should support one another, management should try to understand their needs and provide support to the members of the organization.
Negative attitudes and behaviour		Negative attitudes and behaviour will never bring change into the organization; hence it should be replaced with positive sentiment towards each other.
Negative criticism		Use positive and constructive criticism, avoid offensive language and blaming but give advice, direction and support, accept mistakes as a learning process.
Different interests		Avoid wavering, stand together and focus attention on and respond to the call of the vision, mission and objectives of the organization.
Lack of intrinsic motivation		Get involved and learn through making mistakes, everybody's input is needed, it doesn't matter how big or small it is, it can bring change in the organization. Nobody is perfect; everybody needs to keep on learning new skills and acquiring knowledge.
Lack of communication		Improve on communication; disseminate the rightful information to the members; avoid biased information.
Lack of commitment		All members of the organization should be just and fair, take collective decisions and implement it accordingly.
School vision		All members should understand the meaning and the purpose of the school vision. They should rally behind the school vision and support it and operate under the guidance of the school vision and mission.

At the end of the workshop, participants felt tired and they suggested that they should come back on another day to take the final steps of implementing the plan which they had created for the organization to follow. Mr. Hangura, a co-facilitator, gave a vote of thanks and reminded everybody not to take the workshop too personally, but to see it as an effort that is aimed at improving the working relationships of members of the organization.

4.4.8 Action implementation

The committee came together on Monday, the 15th August and decided that every member should put the programme into action by observing situations and jotting down any factor that may attempt to bring division among staff. Members were encouraged to keep on monitoring the action process and reminding one another not to go back to the old ways of creating division among the members of the organization.

4.4.9 Evaluation of the OD intervention

4.4.9.1 Participants' perceptions and experience of OD intervention

The OD intervention at the initial stage was viewed as a new approach which attempted to infiltrate the organizational system. This was evidenced when one of the participants asked a question during the first SDF workshop: "If OD originated in SA how will it be implemented here in Namibia, particularly at Utokota combined school as an organization?" This is a typical question that signals a lack of understanding of what OD is all about and as such, members needed more explanation.

The OD workshops and training created tremendous awareness and understanding of what OD is all about, as most participants expressed similar opinions on each workshop evaluation form and in the interviews (Appendix J). From the general responses, participants affirmed that "OD is a process of running an organization collectively in order to achieve the common objective". They assert that "OD is about people involvement and cooperation in the organization and it is a way of managing the organization whereby decisions are taken collectively rather than by one person". Participants further affirmed that, "OD is about creating good relationships between members in order to help them achieve the goals". They view OD as developing an organization

from one level to another level and that everyone's decision is considered and decision-making should be from the bottom to the top. These are the participants' perceptions based on the workshop evaluations about OD intervention. The following responses are participants' perceptions that emerged from interview 3 about OD intervention.

T3 holds the views that, "OD is good because it is a democratic approach, from the bottom up to the top and it involves all people in the decision-making process". According to participant P, "OD focuses on the development of the institution, for example, what should be improved and what initiatives should be brought by the staff, learners, parents and community for the development of the organization" and T8 added that, "it is a mechanism or technique that hinges on building an organization where everyone is involved and works together to develop the organization". In the same vein, T7 states that, "OD is about improving the quality of the leadership; including all members of the organization and sharing the responsibilities". T2 affirms that, "OD is changing the way the organization should be run, from the old system to the new system, in a democratic way, with the involvement of all staff and stakeholders".

In terms of participants' experiences in OD intervention, T6 expressed a token of appreciation by saying: "I thank you that you gave us the OD workshop because before that we did not know how an organization should be run. Now we know the old way of running an organization and a new way that is based on democracy, peoples' involvement, participation in the decision-making process and cooperation". T3 holds a similar view that, "OD is very good because it is a democratic approach, from the bottom up, involving all people in decision-making".

T2 states that, "in the beginning I did not know how the organization should be run and the OD intervention changed my way of thinking; I learned a lot of good things but, some of our leaders feel threatened. The OD intervention helped us to understand how to run the school and built up our personal experiences". In the same manner HOD4 asserts that, "it is quite a learning experience and OD now influences my way of thinking about how change should be brought into the organization". He furthermore appreciates the impact of OD intervention by stating that, "I have been equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to approach change in the organization".

Similarly, T7 argues that, “OD intervention opened the minds of the members who thought that they are the only ones who can make decisions; later they realized that in an organization one man cannot make changes alone but he needs the support of the others”.

Other general responses emanating from the evaluation of the workshop training revealed that participants were pleased with the OD intervention. Participants asserted that this was the most interesting of the OD workshops attended, as they had learned new ideas on how members should work together, participate, initiate changes and resolve problems amicably. Most participants stated that the training was very educative as they learned how to identify problems and resolve issues collectively without harming each other. Participants affirmed that the training was very good as they learned that cooperation needs the participation of all members and they learned what hinders cooperation in an organization. Participants affirmed that cooperation in an organization is important for achieving the organizational goals as was expressed by one participant who stated that, “cooperation in an organization is very important to achieve common goals”.

The participants expressed that they enjoyed the presentations by the different teams and the participation of members in the discussions. They learned how to promote cooperation among staff members. “The experience was magnificent, and I really enjoyed my time of being the group presenter”, said a participant.

4.4.9.2 OD values, beliefs and assumptions

The OD pivotal values are based on democratic participation and contribution by all members and that all members need recognition, trust and respect as individuals. Decentralized decision-making is the focal corner stone of OD. With reference to OD values, beliefs and assumptions, all participants according to their responses, embraced OD values, beliefs and assumptions, as expressed by T2 who stated that, “I would like to see democratic leadership; I need to be able to participate, as my voice is important in the organization”. In the same vein T3 asserts that, “I want democratic leadership as I need my voice to be recognized when I participate”.

HOD3 affirms that, “OD makes people aware of their rights and lets people work together, encouraging teamwork and cooperation. People bring their ideas from the bottom level to the top”. T6 states that OD is a democratic approach therefore, “we need to be involved in the decisions and show cooperation in our work”. From the general responses therefore, it seems that participants are empowered and wish to embrace OD values in the organization.

4.4.9.3 The triumph of OD intervention

It is well understood that an intervention for change effort in any system produces two results, namely success and failure, which might be visible or not visible. The success of the OD intervention at Utokota combined school was witnessed by the statements of members of the organization during interview 3, conducted on the 8th and the 9th of September, towards the end of the intervention.

General responses revealed that the participants felt that the OD intervention attained some degree of success, as seen by T2 who asserted that, “cooperation was a problem and there was poor participation, but since the intervention of OD, teachers are now more involved in decisions; whenever we have our meetings, you can see that even those who never used to talk, are now participating in discussions, raising their hands and saying something”. He affirmed that, “the management is now listening to us when we question them on how they came to a decision”.

Similarly P acknowledges that, “some who were a bit negative, have changed to be more positive and some who were quiet in the meetings and morning briefings are now voicing their opinions”. She states that, “at least they are really participating and maybe the fear is gone because of the training”. T7 explains that in the past, most of the decisions were taken by the highest authority and members had to follow. She now affirms that, “since the OD intervention took place, it has helped and also opened the understanding of our superior to consider our views when making the final decision”. In line with T7, HOD4 added that, “OD intervention opened the understanding of our superior to consider our views when making the last collective decision”.

According to observation data (5/09/2011), P acknowledged the change in the staff meetings by stating that, “at least one of my staff speaks or expresses themselves now”. T8 agrees that the “principal’s view is really similar to mine and this implies that the OD intervention was really successful because it helped unlock some of the silent voices and they can now participate in the staff meetings”.

Observation data (ibid) also revealed that staff exhibited a positive change in terms of participation, as Songo claimed when he was not granted an opportunity to air his views at a meeting. He argued: “Some people were given more chances to talk, why not me? Am I not a staff member, why do you ignore me?” In response, P offered him an apology by saying the following: “Sorry, I did not see you”. It was put forward by one of the staff members that “morning briefings are too short to finish discussing crucial matters, therefore let us schedule the pertinent issues to be discussed during the afternoon”. The whole staff supported the idea. P added that, “management will have their meeting every Wednesday to prepare for Thursday’s afternoons meeting”.

There were some learners who wanted to drop out of school due to lack of support from home; many had to eat from dust bins. During a staff meeting this was deliberated on and finally a collective decision was taken, to help these learners by putting them in the hostel. Each member of the staff would contribute N\$20.00 in order to fund the hostel and school fees, as well as to buy uniforms and detergent for those learners.

This was a project initiated by the staff during the OD intervention period. It is evident that the OD intervention, according to the participants’ view, accomplished some degree of success in change effort. On the other hand, change cannot be achieved without challenges and an OD intervention at Utokota is no exception in this case.

4.4.9.4 The challenges of OD intervention

The challenges of OD are categorised in two ways, namely positive and negative. From a positive viewpoint, challenges imply that OD needs to extend its intervention, while a negative viewpoint would mean that participants view OD intervention as a low priority, due to lack of

understanding and in some cases, for example, the top structure interpreting OD intervention differently from its actual philosophy.

Like any other change strategy, an OD intervention has its own challenges. Since OD was new to the members of the organization, it was a challenging experience for them, as expressed by the questions they asked. The questions posed challenges for the members, as they really needed to learn new things. P stated that, "I don't know much about organization development, although I know that we as a school are also an organization on its own; and the team is the people who work here for the development of this school".

T2 in interview 2 stated that, "some of our leaders feel threatened as they feel that OD intervention is challenging their leadership". Haingura reminded the participants not to take the workshop too personally, as some of the participants felt threatened by revealing some of the areas that needed improvement.

Another challenge was the absence of the governing body attending the OD training workshop; they were invited by the principal and none of them came. According to OD principles, members of an organization are expected to participate fully in change efforts, as they are the people who know the organizational problems better than most. The governing body is the highest authority body at school level, thus they are expected to foster cooperation among staff members.

T2 asserted that the school board does not come and motivate teachers, but only arrive when school reopens to threaten the teachers if they do not work well during the year. Furthermore, T2 revealed that the principal has never tried to give the school board a mini workshop. T3 argues that the "school board complains about teachers' behaviour at school but, they don't come and talk to the teachers". She affirms that, "they have not received training". T4 states that, "I don't think that our school board has attended the workshop, because I haven't seen them". HOD3 states that, "before I joined the management, I saw that they were involved, but now they have pulled out for unknown reasons". She added that, "there is no healthy communication between the school board and management and even the staff". The situation of missing the workshop and training constitutes a setback to the OD intervention.

At the initial stage, participants gave OD low priority due to a lack of understanding of what OD is, but later on they improved their mind-set toward OD intervention. OD intervention is still welcomed according to respondent P who holds the following view:

I really appreciated the intervention and even after your study, we still need you to come back and motivate us and even arrange mini workshops or training for the whole circuit. I would like you to come back and extend your guidance and training to other schools. We want our teachers to change their thinking to become more positive and not oppose the management and with your influence it will help them to change.

HOD4 argues that, “I still think that the facilitator should go out there and provide knowledge-based workshops like this one to our youth, to learn to be critical thinkers and to better analyse situations, as it is the best way of running an organization”. T8 stresses, “We are the people who benefit a lot from OD intervention, therefore I wish that there could be a compulsory mechanism in place that can compel the staff to implement OD, so that it could be sustained at our school”. The impact of OD at Utokota combined school has borne more positive challenges than negative.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I presented a narrative account on the OD intervention at Utokota combined school as the context of my research site. The sources of the data were mainly drawn from semi-structured interviews and observation. In order to allow the data to address my research goal, the data was presented mostly in respondents’ own words with limited comment on the data. However, in some cases data was clarified in order to avoid misunderstandings.

In the next chapter I devote my attention to discussing the findings under the following main themes namely: staff involvement in the decision-making process, participation in meetings, staff cooperation, change leadership, readiness for change, participant’s perceptions and experience of OD intervention process and sustainability of OD.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

In chapter four I presented the narrative account of data collected from the phenomena under study. I presented the data in the respondents' own words with limited comment. The research goal was to explore staff involvement in an OD intervention and the data collected determined the level of participation in their approach to change, probing into the participants' perceptions and experiences regarding the intervention process.

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of the OD intervention and focus on what was learned from the data presentation and diagnosis and then call on theories from chapter 2 that inform the study. It is also possible that I will deviate from chapter 2 and consult other relevant literature that informs the study. The following major themes derived from the data form the basis for the theoretical discussion:

- Staff involvement in decision-making
- Staff participation in the meetings and morning briefings
- Staff cooperation
- Leadership roles
- Readiness for change
- Participants' perception and experiences of the OD intervention.

5.2 Staff involvement in the decision-making process

Staff involvement in the decision-making process means that teachers would participate in the decision-making process and take collective decisions. This is a democratic process whereby staff members share responsibility and own the decisions through participation. Involvement in this context simply means that they are accorded a platform to become part of the decision-making process through participation. Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011, p. 78), assert that teachers' involvement in the decision-making process is a unified effort for quality and effective

administrative functioning. These efforts provide the lower levels of the organization with a greater voice in the organization's performance.

From a heroic leadership perspective, decision taking is believed to reside in one person only at the apex of the organization, while the rest of the organization has to comply with those decisions taken. With the current democratic dispensation, such beliefs do not carry any weight in running an organization effectively. An organization is meant for the group and the effectiveness of an organization depends on the group members. French and Bell (1995, p. 94), remind us that early OD research shows that increased involvement and participation produce high performance and better solutions to problems, and enhances shared decision-making.

In OD philosophy, it is believed that an organization is for the group members, where democracy is exercised and decisions are taken collectively. The OD philosophy upholds democratic values that promote individuals' right to participate in an organization's goal setting, decision-making and problem solving, in the affairs that affect them and their organizational work life (Hanson and Lubin, 1995, p. 35).

In chapter 4, T2, T4, T6 and HOD2, disclosed that teachers were not involved in the decision-making process and only the management made the decisions. Once the decisions were taken they would inform the staff about their decisions. However, respondent P, HOD3 and T3 disagreed and maintained that teachers were always involved in the decision-making process.

Bush (2003, p. 45), reminds us that leadership in education always exhibits bureaucratic features where decisions are taken at the apex of the organization predominantly in schools and colleges but, that this approach no longer holds much water in the current democratic dispensation. In line with participative leadership, staff involvement in the decision-making process is similar to the collegial leadership model, which provides the following benefits to the organization:

- Participation of staff members in the decision-making process increases school effectiveness;
- Participation is justified by democratic principles; and
- Leadership is potentially available to any organization member (ibid, p. 78).

Hence, knowledgeable leaders of organizations ought to embrace participative leadership which also upholds the democratic principles of human respect, dignity and the right to take part in the decision-making process as stipulated in OD philosophy, where members are free to speak and own decisions through participation in this process.

Respondents further disclosed that staff sometimes attempt to raise their concerns during staff meetings or morning briefings about management decisions taken that did not involve the them. Unfortunately, no proper answers have ever been given and the staff has had no option but to accept the decisions taken. In chapter 4, one respondent made it clear that though staff do take some decisions, they would be turned down unless such decisions are in the interest of the principal. In line with this claim, data observation in chapter 4 also exposed a similar case, when the principal dishonoured a decision taken by staff and then imposed her own decision on them.

During the OD intervention, I was present during all the morning briefings and observed such occurrences and my observation data reflected a similar situation. Nevertheless, an OD intervention would recognise this as a cultural manifesto of top-down change strategy embedded in a bureaucratic leadership which believes that power and decision is vested in one person only, at the apex of organization.

Smith (2003, p. 3), in chapter 2, argues that change strategies occur when people with less power conform to the demands of those with more power and always feature authoritative leadership and disempowerment of members where decisions are imposed on them. OD norms, values and assumptions are based on democratic principles and respect for human dignity and the members of the organization are considered the most important, thus coercive strategies are not recommended in an OD operational strategy.

According to Ndu and Anogbove (2007), in Olorunsola *et al.*, (2011, p. 78) if teachers are not involved in the decision-making process, they tend to behave as if they are strangers within the school environment as their input is not accommodated and they lose their sense of interest.

Welson (1998), holds a similar view that if teachers are not involved, they believe their ideas are not wanted and this would increase a teachers' opposition to the organization (ibid, p. 79).

The central point should be to understand that teachers need to participate and to own the decisions taken, in order for them to feel proud for contributing as members of the organization. When teachers are adequately involved in the decision-making process, there will be commitment to support the principal and this will reduce opposition and the workload of their leader. Sergiovanni (1984), as cited in Bush (2003, p. 78), affirms that staff involvement in decision-making will lead to staff bonding together and the pressure on the principal will lessen, if leadership functions and roles are shared.

In Chapter 4, respondent P claimed that she involved teachers, the school board, parents and the LRC in the decision-making process. This claim has been refuted by teachers who disclosed that the school board, parents, as well as the learners' representative council (LRC) were not involved. Data from observation revealed that the principal did not involve the school board in the appointment of relief teachers. When she was approached, the respondent stated that she did not want them to be involved. Other respondents in chapter 4 also confirmed that the learner representative council (LRC) was not involved in the decision-making process.

OD theory describes this as resistance to change that is being manifested in human behavioural terms, so as not to accommodate change. Zaltman and Duncan (1973), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 220), define resistance to change as "any conduct that serves to maintain the status quo in the face of pressure to alter the status quo".

According to data in chapter 4, two of the respondents confirmed that the principal used to ask their opinion first before a decision was taken, but they felt this was just a formality as she would have already taken the decision. This claim did not overrule the view of the majority that there was poor staff involvement in the decision-making process.

Based on the whole spectrum of arguments, the study confirmed that staff involvement in the decision-making process hardly ever occurred, as teachers, including the governing body disowned the decisions taken and as such OD would view this as a genuine problem that affects

all members in the organization. Drawing on OD theory, Schein (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 221), argues that those forces reacting to changes are part of the inherent nature of an organization and it is normal for the proper functioning of an organizational system.

According to Lewinian force-field theory, it is very important to acknowledge that the driving and restraining forces are always helping to bring the organization to an equilibrium point where an organization exhibits a good performance (Stoner *et al.*, 1995, p. 414). In such situations where members recognize problems that impede progress, the organization should seek assistance to help with solutions, if the leadership is unable to resolve the issues.

The school is an organization that encompasses different people with different understandings thus, what affects one part of the system also affects others, if pro-active steps are not taken to avert the escalation of the problem. In this context, the problem of staff involvement in the decision-making process bears a negative effect on the participation in the discussion of school affairs, which is to be the next theme under discussion.

5.3 Staff participation

The concept 'participation' is significant in the contemporary democratic dispensation where members require participation in the decision-making process and need to own the decisions taken, as this generates feelings of autonomy and satisfaction and releases creative energy and stimulates self-expression. Participation, teamwork, collaboration and cooperation are the concepts that most fit in promoting quality work life and solving organizational problems (van der Westhuizen, 2008, pp. 249-251). That is the cornerstone of OD philosophy.

Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 20), in chapter 2, point out that it is vital for team members to recognize and accept their own needs and also to be sensitive to the needs of others, so as to maintain some balance between these needs. Hence, OD intervention for change, hinges on participation, teamwork and collaboration; therefore, team efforts are more effective than individual input. Members' involvement in the change initiative and teamwork are essential for a successful OD intervention in change efforts.

As was mentioned earlier, participation, teamwork, collaboration and empowerment is the hub of OD, as it involves all members of the organization in finding solutions to the problems brought about by change. Smith (2003, pp. 4-5), in chapter 2, affirms that participation is a democratic approach to the decision-making process, enhancing members' performance, producing optimum solutions to the problems, overcoming resistance to change, increasing organizational commitment and a sense of belonging.

In this study, respondents T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, P, HOD2 and HOD3 in chapter 4 disclosed that participation of staff members in the discussion of school affairs during the meetings and morning briefings, was very poor. This is in agreement with my observation data that teachers' participation was poor and only a few male teachers participated. Respondents in chapter 4 revealed that the participation of staff members ranged from two to three and that others remained passive and watched the 'drama'. The data disclosed that the staff consists of 23 members and out of this number, only a few, usually from the male teachers and often the same people, would participate in the discussion of school matters, while the rest opted for silence and "let them talk" and did not bring up new ideas or solutions.

What emerged here boiled down to the leadership role played in the organization. It is important to take note that a leader should always be conversant with the situation and identify organizational problems at the earliest stage and take preventative measures. According to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 316), the role of the leader is to activate, coach, guide, mentor, educate, assist and support colleagues to focus on a shared vision, strategy and a set of intended outcomes instead of leaving them to sink in the ocean.

The data in chapter 4 revealed that some teachers refrained from participating on the assumption that they might oppose the ideas of the principal and that that might lead to being blacklisted as a bad teacher. As a result, out of fear, those teachers would not speak out about any point raised in the staffroom, thus never realising their potential in the decision-making process.

It is generally believed that people in a working environment experience different kinds of fears, for example, being criticized, losing their position, unfair treatment and isolation. Fears thus inhibit peoples' productivity. It is advisable to replace fear with a sense of sincerity, respect, caring and security. An organization cannot afford to have people pulling in different directions due to anxiety.

The organization leader plays a crucial role in the organization; therefore, a leader should always be conversant with the driving and restraining forces of change and direct and support the members towards change. Cummings and Worley (2001), and Susanto (2008), as cited in Kashikatu (2009, p. 16), agree that "in a changing environment the role of leaders is [*sic*] very crucial in inspiring people to support and participate in change initiative".

The study found that some teachers lost interest in participating as they felt they were ignored several times, as expressed by a respondent in chapter 4 that "even if you participate, your idea is ignored and then you become discouraged. Teachers become de-motivated". The data disclosed similar cases as stated by another respondent, that "even if I contribute, in the end my opinion won't be considered".

This indicates that members are in a turbulent situation because they really want to participate, but there is no opportunity given. They possess the potential to contribute to the development of the organization through participation and to bring innovative ideas forward. In such a situation, it is advisable for the leader to consider and create opportunities for every member to participate.

French and Bell (1995, p. 94), emphasize that the fundamental nature of participation is that "participation is a powerful elixir and it is good for people, and it dramatically improves individual and organizational performance". Smith (2003, p. 6), holds a similar view that empowerment gives individuals the authority to participate and make decisions, contribute their ideas, influence, be responsible and commit to decisions. According to OD philosophy, members of an organization should be accorded the platform to participate and express themselves freely without obstruction.

The data exposed that the leader of the organization was aware of the lack of staff participation but to date no solution has been provided to remedy the increase of the ailment. According to data, the leader of the organization viewed the dilemma as being due to an individual preference for keeping quiet or to an agenda point that determined the level of participation.

Katzenbach and Smith (1993), cited in Smith (2003, p. 17), state that “organization leaders can foster team performance best by building a strong performance ethic, rather than by establishing a team-promoting environment alone”. An organization leader should lead with strong and acceptable morality in order for members to emulate their example. Leading the organization with good morality is the fundamental principle of democracy and avoids operating on assumption, but takes pro-active measures to remedy the expansion of a weakness.

According to a respondent in chapter 4, the study reported that female teachers participated on certain occasions only, especially on issues of discipline, but not on planning and development and that only the male teachers discussed these issues.

For members to participate fully, they would need group assistance through motivation, coaching and support, as they may show a lack of interest or lack of certain skills in some areas. OD believes in group learning, where individual members tap into the knowledge of others through participation in group activities. Learning in the contemporary world has become part of people’s lives for the proper adaptation to the current situation thus, Utokota combined school is not exceptional in this regard; it is a learning organization where members share their experiences and expertise with each other.

Peter Senge (1990), as cited in Chinganga (2010, p. 21), helps us to understand by broadly defining a learning organization as an, “organization where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together”.

The understanding that emerges from the definition is that learning is an on-going process of acquiring the desired useful knowledge and skills through dynamic group practices of sharing experiences in order for them to adapt to a rapidly changing world. A learning organization is not an individual concern, but has become a group business where members of an organization participate in learning new knowledge and obtaining new skills. The involvement and participation of members in the learning process are the core values of OD in the change effort. Utokota staff should see themselves as one unit in their attempt to pursue the organizational goals, thus they should help each other.

According to OD values, beliefs and assumptions, every individual is considered important in an organization and has the democratic right to participate in matters of organizational growth. OD's basic values are embodied in humanism and human rights, which are optimistic and democratic. Humanistic values declare the importance of the individual and the need to be treated with respect and dignity, as everyone has intrinsic value and potential for growth and development (Hanson and Lubin, 1995, p. 35). These values make it possible to find more suitable ways of running an organization and developing human potential. If members realize that the situation is not conducive to participation, then they may withdraw from participating; therefore the leader has an important role to play by motivating and encouraging members to be part of the planning process and to learn from others.

The responsibility of the organization leader is to diagnose the situation with the involvement of other members and to find out the magnitude of the problem and plan for intervention. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, pp. 60-63), inform us that if an organization is unable to do this, it is better to seek the help of an outside facilitator to render assistance.

According to the data in chapter 4, some members withdrew from participating, which has made the matter worse. The observation data (July-August: 2011), in chapter 4, exposed similar problems of poor staff participation, the only members regularly participating being two or three of the male teachers.

This state of affairs is recognized as abnormal and needs prompt attention. Whenever such crises occur, it is the responsibility of the principal to play an effective leadership role in

changing the status quo, in accordance with the demand from the driving forces. Hence, OD also requires that the top management support the change effort to improve the organizational problems through effective collaboration with members. Once old norms are discarded, members then tend to move forward to the new situation known as refreezing, and adopt the new norms. An organization leader keeps an eye on members so that they do not go back to the old behaviours.

In the same vein, French and Bell (1995, p. 29), remind the top management to initiate, lead and support the improvement “journey” and to be committed to seeing it through to completion. Leading an organization with commitment and high morality, motivates the followers, leads to effective performance and ensures cooperation among members in the organization.

5.4 Staff cooperation

Cooperation in an organization implies people working together, collaborating and supporting each other, to pursue the common objectives of an organization. An effective workplace for example, in a school, requires that members of an organization know how to work together and accomplish the goals. On the other hand, when cooperation breaks down, the result is dissatisfaction among members and this reduces the effectiveness of the organizational performance. An effective leader understands the importance of cooperation and attempts to foster cooperation among staff members. The term cooperation, teamwork and collaboration are concepts employed in OD intervention, as they are synonymous in meaning.

According to Stoner *et al.*, (1995, p. 499) a team is two or more people who interact and influence each other with complementary skills and all are committed toward achieving a common goal and objectives, as they hold mutual accountability.

It is essential that staff members should cooperate and support each other for the common cause of achieving organizational goals. However, the study disclosed that cooperation and teamwork among staff members had broken down, and that teachers were divided into groups as was mentioned by respondents HOD2, HOD3, T2, T4, T5 and T6 in chapter 4. Data further

disclosed that the principal promoted division and practiced favouritism, as stated by T6. The study revealed that management lacked a schedule for management meetings to solve organizational problems and to plan for change, as was stated by HOD3. However, respondent P in chapter 4 disagreed and claimed that cooperation and teamwork among staff members was at least 80%.

What emerged from the study is that the majority of the participants complained that there is no cooperation and teamwork among staff members, while one respondent disagreed and claimed that cooperation and teamwork among the staff members prevail. Cooperation and teamwork is usually influenced by the leader who is expected to inspire and motivate the followers to unite to work together towards the common objectives.

Planning is the most essential aspect of an organization and without planning the organization is exposed to frustration and loses focus on its journey to change efforts; therefore organization leaders should be conversant with the shortcomings and take pro-active steps to revamp the state of affairs in order to avoid embarrassment. Susanto (2008, p. 54), argues that effective leadership involves monitoring change and making necessary mid-course corrections in the programme and adapting to new changes.

Cooperation and teamwork enhances the performance. When cooperation among staff members breaks down, the consequence is that staff members become unhappy, which produces divisions and a reduction in organizational performance. An effective leader understands the importance of cooperation and tries to foster cooperation among staff members. Exchanging ideas in cooperative and mutually supportive ways is a central aspect of an effective environment in an organization. Members of an organization should work together as a team for the organization as a whole to benefit. Cooperation and collaboration enhance teamwork and collegiality.

Divisions among staff members are not at the heart of OD philosophy, and therefore organizational leaders are expected to promote cooperation, collaboration and teamwork among members in order for an organization to continue to exist. Hanson *et al.* ,(1995, p. 24) hold a similar view that a team is unit of people working together, in which members identify

and fully utilize one another's resources and facilitate their mutual interdependence toward more effective problem solving and task accomplishment.

OD theories remind organizational leaders to distance themselves from using power coercive strategies to bring change in an organization. A coercive power approach to change generates feelings of dissatisfaction among members and disempowers them because decisions are imposed on them (Smith, 2003, p. 3). OD norms, values and assumptions are based on democratic principles and respect for human dignity and thus, coercive strategies are not recommended to advance cooperation and teamwork in the organization.

5.5 Leadership role

The leadership role is crucial in an organization in terms of pursuing organizational goals and as such the leader has to influence, inspire, support and motivate the followers to unite, work together and rally behind the organizational goal. The outcome of the interviews reflects the type of leadership role at Utokota combined school, as expressed by the participants.

The data collected revealed that the leadership role prevailing at the school is based on a mix of different leadership styles, predominantly autocratic and democratic features of leadership. Democratic leadership was reflected when the principal accommodated some teachers to act in HOD posts and employed an open door policy for teachers and other stakeholders to see her without making an appointment, as was stated by respondents in chapter 4. This evidence of democratic leadership was similar to my findings during the OD intervention period. However, other aspects concerning the leadership role at this school were revealed by participants in chapter 4 as stated below.

Respondent HOD2 and T6 claimed that the leadership role demonstrated at the school consisted of more autocratic than democratic features. However, respondents T2, T3, T4, T5 and HOD3, revealed that the leadership role played at Utokota featured more democratic elements than autocratic. Based on the participants' views and on my own judgment, data in chapter 4 confirmed that the leadership style featured a mix of democratic and autocratic traits. These elements of leadership however positioned the school leadership partially in the

collegial model, whereby power and decisions are also shared with other members of the organization, as was claimed by some participants.

From a leadership perspective, Bush (ibid, p. 64) defines a collegial model of leadership as follows:

Collegial models include all those theories, which emphasize that power and decision-making are shared among some, or all members of an organization who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of institution.

Collegiality was somewhat reflected by the appointment of some teachers to act in the position of HODs, in order to share responsibility and decisions, but the involvement of staff members in the decision-making processes were not taken seriously as stated by participants.

The study revealed that all members of the organization wanted a leadership change and embraced the concept of democratic leadership that they had learned about from the OD workshops. According to data, participants affirmed that the OD workshop opened their minds and they argued that the existing leadership practice did not offer them what they wanted; they thus felt that democratic leadership would offer opportunities for staff involvement in decision-making, participation, recognition, respect and cooperation.

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 56), argue that the organization is not ready if the members are not happy with the conditions and believe that they themselves have no hope of improving it. In this case, staff members of Utokota indicated that they were ready for an OD intervention as they wanted improvement in the organization, especially with regards to staff cooperation.

5.6 Readiness for change

One of the factors that contribute to the effectiveness of any change initiative is participants' and organizational readiness for change. Smith (2003, p. 18), holds the view that readiness to participate in an organizational change effort, depends on the desire and willingness of members to take up the initiative of change, the capability of the organization to change and members confident belief that they can make a difference and embark on the process of change. An organization is ready for an OD intervention if members or the manager recognizes

the problems that impede the progress and indicate to the facilitator their willingness for improvement.

As I mentioned earlier, members of Utokota combined school demonstrated their willingness to participate in the OD intervention as they wanted to see an improvement in their own organization. Their readiness can be traced back to the earliest stage during the SDF workshop conducted in April, as it was stated by the participants in chapter 4, that “OD is democratic from the bottom-up and not always from the top-down and from now on we must implement OD”. I was highly impressed by participants’ remarks embracing the OD initiative.

Similarly, Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 59), assert that readiness for change is manifested in members’ behavioural expressions and feelings of group cohesiveness, solidarity and loyalty to one another, protecting their in-group membership as well as identifying themselves with others as group members. Organization members can be ready for change if they adopt new behavioural norms that are conversant and accepted by all, if it helps to improve their situation. Despite participants’ readiness, there were also some factors that influenced members’ readiness.

5.6.1 Factors that influenced readiness

The study revealed that the leadership of the organization was not promoting staff participation in the decision-making process, which was aimed at bringing about change. Teachers believed that the leadership denied them their right to own decisions, which they thought may bring change in the organization. Lack of cooperation among staff members was seen as a result of the leadership’s failure to promote cooperation and lead with regards to change. These are some factors motivating organization members to view OD intervention as an opportunity for them to seize change, as stated by participants in the preceding section , that “ now we must implement OD”.

5.6.2 Resistance to change

Resistance to change in general is a symptom of discontentment with the proposed change, and as such, from a managerial point of view is also regarded as pure rejection for change.

Schein (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 221), argues that those forces reacting to change are “part of the inherent nature of an organization”. Resistance to change should be viewed as a counter reaction for change and it is normal for the proper functioning of an organizational system. From data, it emerged that some staff members of Utokota combined school exhibited resistance to change by not supporting the OD intervention and looked at it as a waste of time, but at later stage, they realized that they had missed important information. Evidence of the reaction against change was seen when one of the co-facilitators said that some members took the OD training too personally.

According to Fullan (2002, p. 237), change is “an emotional laden process that can generate feelings of tension, disquiet and uncertainty within an organization”. This state of affairs always sparks resistance to change as another way of expressing discontentment with the proposed change. Van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 223) maintains that although change can generate painful experiences, at the end, the outcome can be refreshing and rejuvenating. Interestingly it is more important to look at why people resist accepting the proposed change. Susanto (2008, pp. 54- 55) expounds that, “change involves moving from a known state to an unknown state of ending the way things are done and doing things in new ways but, it creates feelings of uneasiness and tension”. Another evidence of resistance to change was expressed when the staff wanted to change the morning school time to 12h00 but, the head resisted and stuck to the old way of doing things and this caused tension among staff members.

However, during the OD intervention, the resistance to change was not apparent, as most staff exhibited a positive attitude toward OD intervention and there were a few cases when some teachers were unable to attend the OD workshop and training, due to circumstance beyond their control.

5.6.3 Raising the level of readiness

5.6.3.1 OD workshop

At the outset, the participants knew nothing about OD and they were overwhelmed with mixed feelings of what OD is about, as some thought that OD is like any other ordinary organization

development. Evidence for this claim is seen from one of their own questions, which they had asked during the workshop, when one participant raised the question, “Since OD originated from SA how will it be implemented in Namibia, particularly at Utokota combined as an organization?” This typical question clearly shows that participants did not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of OD and the intention behind having an OD workshop at the school.

Smith (2003, p. 18), holds the view that readiness to participate in an organizational change depends on the desire and willingness of members to take up the initiative of change, the capability of the organization to change and the members confident belief that they can make a difference and embark on the process of change. An organization is ready for OD intervention if members or the manager recognizes the problems that impede the progress and indicate to the facilitator their willingness for improvement.

However, after the OD workshop conducted in April, the participants started to understand the importance of OD in their own context, as was expressed by the members that “OD is democratic from the bottom-up, not always from the top-down and from now on we must implement OD”, and a female participant argued that “some of the decisions that are taken here are undemocratic”. At the second OD workshop conducted in July, participants demonstrated a high moral readiness compared to the first OD workshop as stated by participants in chapter 4. Participants raised many questions that reflected on organizational problems.

The workshop had an impact on members to support the OD intervention and even after the SDF, participants wanted the facilitator to help them to take the intervention further. Susanto (2008, p. 54), holds the view that employees are willing to accept change if they are convinced that change is beneficial. Smith (2005), in Susanto (ibid, p. 55), asserts that developing an understanding of the nature and reason for change at the early stages, can provide a sound basis for subsequent change and greater willingness to take risks and extend beyond current boundaries. Survey data feedback is another way of raising the level of readiness which is under discussion.

5.6.3.2 Survey Data Feedback

Two survey data feedbacks of similar nature were of significance during OD intervention carried out at Utokota combined. The first SDF was of particular importance as participants for the first time gained experience of OD; they tapped into the knowledge and understanding of OD and became ready to embrace the intervention. Smith (2003, p. 19), states that survey data feedback (SDF) is “a key readiness raising intervention” and it is a process of collecting data from the organization and giving feedback for action planning. During the introduction of the OD workshop, members showed their readiness as they were keen to hear more about OD and how it works.

Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 29), affirm that SDF involves data collection through interviews, questionnaires and observations and gives feedback to participants for diagnosis and planning for action taking. For an OD intervention to be successful, the following are significant:

- Collecting and feeding the data back to participants unambiguously to energize them.
- Giving significance to mundane data to boost participants’ interests
- Incorporating data into the natural ebb and flow of the larger OD design.

The next steps are to diagnose the data; plan for action that leads to action implementation and then problem solving.

The interview data and observation provided the basis on which participants made arguments and took the final decision for OD intervention. The study revealed that some staff members were not happy about revealing some issues in which they directly involved and there was an uncomfortable feeling at the presentation of the survey data feedback. Most participants wanted training on cooperation as a key problem in the organization, as was stated by participants.

Readiness to accept the OD process is an important variable at all stages of the OD project. For the OD project to begin therefore, participants need to indicate their readiness (ibid). Based on their readiness, participants were prepared to accept the OD intervention in helping them to bring change in the organization. In order for an intervention programme to proceed, the

leader of the organization should support the new change efforts. Susanto (2008, p. 55), argues that a well-planned change could not be accomplished without the support of the organization leader. The principal always supported the OD workshop programme and in my opinion, the OD workshop and SDF contributed immensely in raising the level of readiness of teachers at Utokota to embrace OD intervention that included workshop training.

5.6.3.3 OD training workshop

Training is a process of acquiring knowledge, ability and experience through participation, by individuals and the organization as a whole. Skills, exercise and procedures are contemplated as the building blocks of organizational training. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 28), give their opinion that an OD facilitator should create the learning result for a pre-determined period of time, organize and direct the activities. Based on participants' readiness for intervention, an OD training workshop founded on cooperation and participation was put in place for members to be empowered with the intended knowledge and skills needed for bringing change in the organization.

Schmuck and Runkel (ibid, p. 75), hold the view that training requires highly formatted structures, thus the facilitator needs to be well invested in leadership qualities conducive to a training workshop; for instance, in problem-solving, cooperation, participation and communication and other problems experienced by an organization. It should be well noted that training without collecting data is not in the interest of OD intervention. In this view, an OD training workshop was based on data collected that determined the theme for the training offered to the members.

The data in chapter 4 revealed that participants expressed their gratitude and happiness about the way in which the OD workshop training was conducted. One respondent stated that he enjoyed the group presentations and that the facilitator did not dictate to them how to solve problems, but rather used a learner-centered approach to problem solving. The data further disclosed that participants gained valuable knowledge and tactics for maintaining cooperation and participating in the organization as stated in the preceding section. Respondents indicated

that this was the best OD workshop training they have ever attended, as they were well equipped with new knowledge and skills.

Based on the positive views of participants regarding the training and of course based on my own judgment, I hold a similar view that the OD workshop training was a resounding success as it attained the goal of attempting to bring positive changes to members' cooperation in the workplace. However, some members were left with an ambivalent attitude towards the OD training workshop, as it revealed problems caused by them in the organization. According to French and Bell (1995, p. 29), most OD programs failed because top management was ambivalent, lost the commitment or became distracted because of other duties. It was clear that during the group presentation, the leader left to attend to other duties when the presenter mentioned current issues regarding the prevailing leadership – that it was based on a dictatorship and never compromised. Schmuck and Runkel (1994, p. 79), argue that “confrontation works best in eliminating hostilities stemming from opposition and schisms”. It is one of the strategies used to clarify and resolve the thorny issues between two conflicting groups but, it needs an expert facilitator to help them to understand each other. Furthermore, Schmuck and Runkel (*ibid*), stress that the role of the facilitator is to help with the organization, discussion, guidance, communication and training the participants. They would also guard against proceedings plunging into a volatile situation that may lead the participants to abandon the training.

However, during all the OD workshops and training sessions no visible element of conflict emerged from the participants, as they understood the aims and objectives of the intervention and most participants hoped that OD would assist them in finding solutions to the organization's problems, as stated by the principal in chapter 4, that “I call upon all of you to make use of this opportunity to empower yourselves for your lives, your work and your own studies in the future”. She furthermore states that “the OD workshop is not for Mr. Rengura, but for us at Utokota combined school to improve our own situation, therefore let us engage ourselves in learning new ideas and knowledge from him”. These words of encouragement

from the leader proved that the organization was fully determined to embrace the OD intervention.

5.7 Participants' perceptions and experience of OD intervention process

5.7.1 OD is an icebreaker

The OD intervention at the initial stage was viewed as a new approach, which attempted to creep into the organization system. This was evidenced when one of the participants asked a question during the first SDF workshop: "If OD originated in SA how will it be implemented here in Namibia, particularly at Utokota combined school as an organization?" This is such a characteristic question that signals a lack of understanding of what OD is all about and as such, members needed more explanation.

The OD workshops and training shaped a remarkable awareness and understanding of what OD is all about because most participants expressed similar views on each workshop evaluation and the interviews. From the general responses, participants viewed that OD is a process of running the organization collectively in order to achieve a common objective. They emphasized that OD is about people's involvement and cooperation in the organization, whereby decisions are taken collectively rather than by one person. Participants further affirmed that OD is about creating good relationships with members in order to help them achieve that goal. Their analysis of OD incorporated the idea that is about developing the organization from one level to another level and that every one's decision is considered and decision-making should be from the bottom to the top. These were the participants' perceptions that emanated from the evaluations of the OD intervention.

Similar views were revealed by most respondents in the interview data as it appears in chapter 4, where participants gave resounding credit to OD. According to respondents T2, T3, T6, T7 and P in chapter 4, they all reported that the OD intervention had been good news for them. One of the respondents stated that, "OD is a good, democratic approach, from bottom-up, focusing on development, building the organization, improving leadership quality and changing my way of thinking, an icebreaker".

My observation data revealed that in a similar situation there were noticeable changes in members' behaviour and even after the intervention I was informed that staff members now participate freely. According to Lewin (1947), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), this proves to be the last step in the change process, called refreezing where the new change becomes constant into a new, quasi-equilibrium. It is the responsibility of the principal to make sure that members are supported in order to maintain stabilization and avoid regressing to old norms or practices.

However, the possibility is there that members can easily abandon the new practices and resume practicing the old norms, if the leadership is not monitoring them and providing the support and motivation. According to data, the OD intervention helped the staff to understand that the school is not just for the principal but is for everybody and thus every member must see the school as a social unity. It is expected that everybody should contribute to the improvement of the organization. The leader expressed that the organization cannot afford to remain static without changing the behaviour and moving along with the global changes thus, change is unavoidable in the current world.

French and Bell (1995, p. 3), describe change as a new state of things that is different from the old state and is omnipresent, while Fullan (1993, p. 5) refers to change as a journey, not a blueprint, which implies that change can take place unexpectedly at any time within the life cycle of the organization. Susanto (2008, p. 53), states that "members of an organization have the privilege to initiate change", which implies that change should not only be proposed by the leader at the top but the lower levels of the organization should also contribute with their own proposals for change.

Data revealed that participants expressed a token of appreciation for OD intervention, as it opened their minds and they now focus on new ways of running the organization. In terms of theory, this implies that members of an organization must discard the old norms and ways of doing things and adapt the new ways. This signifies moving away from the current state of affairs to a new one. According to Walker and Vogt (1987), in van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), this means that a process of change is set in motion and it establishes practices in favour

of the new procedures and behaviours and that this stage involves moving to the new desired situation. Van der Westhuizen (2008, p. 191), argues that this movement involves the development of new norms, values, attitudes and behaviours through changes in structures. The participants and the organization leader disclosed that the OD intervention had shifted their way of thinking, thus there is a golden future for OD to play an important role in changing the minds of members of the organization, if it gets full support.

According to data, respondents expressed that they tapped into the learning experiences from the OD training workshops and it has influenced them with regards to cooperation and solving problem. Learning in the contemporary world has become part of people's lives for proper adaptation to the ruling situation. Haines (1995), in Moloi (2002, p. 2), describes a "learning organization as an organization that is continually expanding its capacity to create its future and achieve what it truly desires". According to *Harvard Business Review* (1991), in Moloi (2002, p. 2), they see a "learning organization as a group of people learning from experience and best practice of others".

During the OD workshop and training, members learned from others by sharing the knowledge and understanding of the OD values, beliefs and assumptions. This is what Peter Senge, in Chinganga (2010, p. 21) refers to as a situation where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured and collective aspirations are set free. However, it is also believed that some members will take the time to set themselves free from the bondage of egocentricity and join the team. It is of course the task of other members and the leaders of an organization to find ways and means of getting them on board with the other team members.

5.7.2 OD values, beliefs and assumptions

The OD values focus on democratic participation and contributions by all members; members also need recognition, trust and respect for individuals. Decentralized decision-making is the uppermost corner stone of OD. With reference to OD values, beliefs and assumptions therefore, all participants, according to their responses, embraced OD values, beliefs and assumption as was expressed by one participant: "I would like to see democratic leadership; I

need participation as my voice is important and I need my voice to be recognized". This was an expression of OD values.

According to Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 35), OD values foster members' involvement in the decision-making process, goal setting and problem solving of matters that concern them at workplace. OD democratic values were reflected during the workshops and training, as participants exercised their democratic right to participate and contribute more in all deliberations, as stated in chapter 4 that "OD makes people aware of their rights and lets people work, together encouraging teamwork and cooperation. People bring their ideas from the bottom up to the top".

According to data, respondents felt happy and viewed their involvement in the decision-making process as another way of owning the decisions taken, as stated by a participant that "we need involvement in the decisions and cooperation in our work". From the general responses therefore, it seems that participants were empowered and wished to embrace OD values in the organization. It is a contention that involving all members means empowering them in aspects of the organization.

Democratic values place emphasis on inviolability of the individual, freedom of the person from arbitrary misuse of power, the importance of fairness and equitable treatment and the need for justice, through the rule of law and due process (ibid. pp. 73-77). For instance, a respondent felt unhappy when he was not offered the opportunity during a staff meeting to air his views, as evidenced in chapter 4. These values and assumptions are constructed based on democratic principles and are perceived as the most important guideline for members of an organization in their efforts to improve the situation through OD interventions. OD gave guidelines to the organization on how to promote cooperation among members and improve the relationships at the workplace, for the sake of creating a conducive living environment.

5.7.3 The triumph of OD intervention

It is well understood that an intervention in any system in change effort, produces two results namely success and failure, which might be visible or not visible. The success of the OD

intervention at Utokota combined school was witnessed by the members of the organization during third set of interviews conducted on the 8th and 9th September towards the end of the intervention.

The general responses of the participants revealed that the OD intervention attained some degree of success, as it was affirmed that cooperation and poor participation used to be a problem, but since the intervention of OD, teachers have improved their participation in meetings and even in taking decisions. The respondents in chapter 4 revealed that the atmosphere at meetings and briefings changed from passive to active participation, as was noted in observation data files during the intervention process. Respondents in chapter 4 also revealed that even the leader changed her behaviour and listened to what the staff said and made the last collective decision together.

The study revealed that the leader confirmed the changes displayed by staff members as stated in chapter 4 that, “some who were a bit negative have changed to be more positive and some who were quiet in the meeting and morning briefings are now voicing their opinions. Perhaps the training has made the less fearful”. That was the judgment of the leader of the organization during OD intervention. According to observation data (5/09/2011), the principal acknowledged the change in the staff’s behaviour in the meetings, as she congratulated one staff member who never spoke out in the meeting, when she acknowledged that “at least one of our teachers can speak and express herself now”. This evidence was supported by a respondent who held similar views that the OD “unlocked some of the silent voices”. The study shows that the participants at the beginning were puzzled about their understanding of OD; however, with the wider exposure that members received, it became more significant to them and they developed an interest in OD and eventually gained more insight and confidence to talk freely about authentic organization problems and people.

Observation data (ibid) also disclosed that staff exhibited positive changes in terms of participation. Evidence for this was seen when one of the staff members who was not happy with not being granted an opportunity to air his views during a staff meeting, confronted the Principal and claimed that he was denied his democratic right in accordance with the OD

principle of participation. This was in line with what French and Bell mentioned in the previous discussion under OD values, beliefs and assumption.

According to Fullan, in Perestrelo (2008, p. 57), “effective change takes time from two to three years for specific innovations and three to five years for institutional reforms”. However, some change might take place within a short period of time depending on the urgency of the change and the way that the organization’s members view the need for change. This kind of change includes, a change in the behaviour of an individual’s perception regarding change. The Utokota staff members realized that it was necessary for them to change and support their mission and vision statements, as was stated in chapter four. The catchwords in their vision and mission statements are “cooperation, involvement, consultation and hard work”. Based on the mission and vision statements, the OD intervention added more motivation to realize the importance of change in their own goal setting.

There was a project initiated by the staff during OD intervention period, where a collective decision was taken to help some learners who were having difficulties attending school. Each member of the staff was asked to contribute N\$20.00 in order fund the hostel and school fees as well as to buy uniforms and detergents for these learners (observation data, 05/09/2011). It is evident from the above, that the OD intervention accomplished some degree of success in change effort. On the other hand, change cannot be achieved without challenges and the OD intervention at Utokota is not exceptional in this case.

5.7.4 Challenges for OD intervention

The challenges of OD are understood in two ways, namely positive and negative. From the positive viewpoint, challenges imply that OD is needed to extend its intervention, while a negative viewpoint would mean that the participants take OD intervention as low priority due to a lack of understanding and in some cases for example, the top structure may interpret OD intervention differently from its philosophy.

Like any other change strategy, an OD intervention has its own failures. Since OD was a new concept to the members of the organization, participants had many questions. This was a

challenging experience, as they wanted a clear picture of OD and had many new things to learn. The leader was also confused regarding the proper understanding of OD as she stated: "I don't know much about OD, although I know that we as a school are also an organization on its own, the team being the people who are here for the development of this school". OD became a problem at the initial stage due to a lack of understanding, but as members engaged more in finding out what OD is all about, they gained interest and grasped the opportunity to embrace OD.

Lack of knowledge and understanding of OD was not limited to Utokotan combined school, but, it is also a general problem specifically in most of Namibian school. Other Namibian students have conducted similar studies and have found similar situations where OD is a relatively new concept and a lack of understanding by school staff and other institutions were the norm (Kashikatu, 2009; Steenkamp 2011 and Perestrelo, 2008).

However, the data revealed that some leaders felt threatened by the OD intervention, as stated by respondents in chapter 4, when they were reminded to not take the workshop too personally. Another challenge was the absence of the governing body to attend the OD training workshop even though they were invited by the principal. According to OD principles, members of an organization are expected to participate fully in change efforts, as they are the people who understand the organizational problems better than most. The governing body is the highest authority body at school level, thus they are expected to foster cooperation among staff members.

According to data, the school governing body was not fully supportive of the staff and to a certain degree even went to the extent of loosening ties with the school. Only three members used to occasionally visit the school, but only at the school's invitation. The respondents revealed that the majority of the school board had unofficially withdrawn from being members, as stated in chapter 4. An attempt was made to meet those three members and they revealed similar thoughts (observation notes, 12/09/2011). At the initial stage, participants saw OD as a low priority due to a lack of understanding of what OD is, but later on, they improved their mind-set toward OD intervention. OD intervention is still welcomed according to a respondent

in chapter 4, who holds the following viewpoint: “We want the OD intervention to carry on and change the ideas of the young teachers to a more positive mind-set”.

According to data in chapter 4, participants still need the OD intervention, which should be extended to other schools. The knowledge should be imparted to younger teachers to help shape their ideas and participants suggested that OD should be compulsory at schools with the support of the Ministry of Education.

5.7.5 Sustainability of OD

Sustainability of OD at Utokota combined school seems assured, as the participants stated that with the knowledge they have gained, they strongly feel that OD will continue to be implemented. According to data, participants felt that OD should be extended to other schools and knowledge should be imparted to younger teachers, to help shape their thinking. Respondents suggested that OD should be compulsory at schools with the support of the Ministry of Education.

5.8 Conclusion

In this chapter I discussed the data as presented in chapter 4. I looked at the issues of staff involvement in the decision-making process, participation, cooperation, and the leadership roles played in the organization, as well as readiness for change, as it is the determinant factor during an organization intervention aimed at improvement. It emerged from the data that the organizational readiness supported an OD intervention as a way of helping them in an effort to bring about change. Participants believed that they could initiate change using the skills and knowledge gained from the OD intervention. The following chapter will summarize the main findings of the study.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the findings of an OD intervention in a rural school organization in the Kavango region. This chapter provides the summary of the main findings of the study that explored staff involvement in an OD intervention in a rural school organization east of Rundu, in Kavango region, Namibia.

The purpose of the study was to explore and determine the level of participation and the participants' perceptions and experience of OD intervention in their school. The significance of the study is discussed and then followed by recommendations for practice and future research. The last sections of the chapter discuss the limitation of the study and the conclusion.

6.2 Summary of the main findings

During the research voyage, the study participants displayed a high interest in OD intervention. The high level of participation was due to participants' perceptions of OD as a vehicle for obtaining solutions to organizational problems and change.

The study found that the organization was suffering from a lack of cooperation amongst members and non-involvement in the decision-making process was also a key problem. The problem of the lack of cooperation and non-involvement in the decision-making process encouraged divisions among staff members. This situation contributed to a lack of participation in meetings and in bringing initiatives for change. The study found that teachers, including the leadership of the organization, were ready for change and ready to help bring change in the organization.

The study found that the SDF workshop and training contributed immensely to raising the level of readiness for change, as members became aware of how change could be initiated. Though staff were accustomed to the traditional ways of solving problems and bringing about change,

they viewed OD as the best approach as it involves members at all levels, when change is initiated. They considered OD as an alternative to a top-down approach to problem-solving strategies. According to data, respondents hoped that OD would serve as a potential platform to advance their perception and perspective in their approach to change. Respondents stated that OD is democratic and a bottom-up approach to change, as it allows every member to initiate change and take part in the decision making process.

According to the data, respondents revealed that they wished to embrace OD democratic change approach strategies to problem solving, as it provided an equal opportunity for them to raise their concerns and contribute to organizational change. The data revealed that the leadership of the school is not putting real democracy into practice as members do not enjoy the benefits of this type of leadership; therefore there should be a change in the leadership practices of the school. Data revealed that participants wished to embrace OD democratic leadership, where members have freedom of expression, recognition of individual input and there is respect for humanity.

The study revealed that participants benefited from OD intervention as they were equipped with further knowledge and skills of problem solving in the organization. Respondents affirmed that OD opened their way of thinking of how an organization should be run, which was different from the old way of being prescribed to as members. Similarly, the principal acknowledged that the OD intervention was an icebreaker, as it opened up new ways of running the organization collectively.

The study revealed that OD intervention brought some visible changes in staff involvement in the decision-making process, because their autonomy in taking decisions enjoyed priority in meetings, unlike in the past where only management took decisions on behalf of the entire staff. The data also revealed that OD intervention gave a voice to some staff members who had never raised their hands in the meetings or morning briefings to speak, but who are now trying to participate and contribute. This was confirmed by the leader of the organization, who gave thanks to the OD intervention for helping break down communication barriers in the organization.

The study revealed that the OD intervention had a positive impact on cooperation among staff since the intervention began. Observation data testified to this change, when staff members collectively took a decision to help poor learners who nearly dropped out of the school due to lack of food and financial support from their parents. A support project for the poor learners was initiated during the OD intervention period, where a collective decision was taken that each members contribute N\$20.00 monthly for funding the hostel and school fees, as well as to buy uniforms and detergent for these learners. Furthermore, the study revealed that teamwork and cooperation were consolidated during the OD intervention. Observation data testified to this change, when staff decided collectively to avail time in the afternoon for discussing pertinent issues that affect the organization.

The study found that management lacked a management meeting programme, where important matters should be discussed and planned in advance for staff meetings. Observation data also gave evidence that this had changed, when management decided to have a meeting once a week for discussing important issues in advance. The study found that in the past, staff used to support any colleague who lost their family by contributing funds and giving to the bereaved family but that such cooperation ceased a long time ago. Observation data gave evidence that the programme was reactivated as a result of the OD intervention.

Democratic participation was applauded by members of the organization during OD intervention as participants felt happy about their involvement and learned more skills and approaches to solving problems. Respondents stated that they were now well equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge. Respondents expressed their disappointment in some of their colleagues who did not attend the OD workshops and training, as such an opportunity to gain further knowledge is difficult to regain.

OD in Namibia is still new in terms of its philosophical approach to problem-solving tactics and thus it was difficult at the beginning to understand what OD was all about and how it works. At the initial stage, participants did not know how OD would work in their context because to them OD is an “organization that originates from South Africa”. OD is new, thus it is a challenging situation to participants to learn new skills and knowledge. On the other hand, as

OD is a new concept in Namibia, all members were expected to attend the workshops and training in order to be empowered with these new skills and knowledge.

In general it is a well-known fact that people have different interests in life, thus they tend to deviate from the planned programme and pursue their own interests. This was evident during the OD workshop when some members of the organization were unable to attend the planned workshop. The study suffered a setback when some members of the organization missed the planned OD workshop, as it was meant specifically for them to acquire new thinking that would help the organization run better.

The study also revealed that the members of the governing body did not show much interest in the affairs of their organization. The governing body is expected to foster cooperation and teamwork among staff members. According to respondents, the school governing body lost interest in school affairs due to a conflict of interest between them and the staff. Even so, the organization still needs their support.

The impact of the OD intervention at Utokota was a great success as participants wanted more support to implement the OD intervention; in April they had asked the facilitator to come back and proceed with the OD intervention at their school and even wanted the facilitator to conduct OD intervention at circuit level and impart the knowledge and skills to other teachers. Respondents wished that OD intervention could be made compulsory, with the support of the educational regional office in order for OD to be sustainable. Respondents revealed that they wanted OD to be expanded to incorporate other schools in the region.

During the intervention, participants became more open and felt free to discuss genuine organizational issues, unlike in the past where members were fearful to reveal issues that concerned them. Respondents assured the facilitator that the organization would keep abreast with OD philosophy at all times and constantly apply similar skills and knowledge in solving problems and initiating change.

6.3 Significance of the study

An independent, democratic country today expects its citizens to be competent in dealing with change at both a national and organizational level. This change occurs both independently as well as collaboratively in the web of dynamic, national transformations. This belief prompted the motivation for the study that culminated in carrying out an OD intervention project.

The purpose was to explore and sensitize the potentiality of OD and inspire the mind-set of school leadership and teachers to understand their democratic roles in bringing about change in a decentralized education system where initiatives, cooperation, active participation in change efforts and proactive problem-solving become the culture of working. The study demonstrated its powerfulness in bringing positive change in human relations at the work place.

It is also believed that the study will be of potential significance to educators and educational leaders in their quest to use OD principles, norms and values to improve human relationships and behaviours in their own organization. It is also significant for enhancing democracy and bringing long-lasting changes in an organization. It may also encourage other researchers to do OD studies and conduct OD projects with any organization of their choice. Hopefully it will demonstrate to schools that they are able to bring about change before being instructed to change.

6.4 Recommendations for practice

Quite a number of important issues pertaining to OD intervention emerged from the study and thus, I suggest the following practices to researchers who intend to pursue OD studies:

- The researcher should be conversant with the topic undertaken before embarking on the study as it helps to focus on the topic and find relevant literature and create lists of that literature.
- The researcher should be equipped with a sound knowledge of OD by studying relevant literature on OD philosophy and methodology before taking the study. Researcher should study previous OD research as it may help to avoid shortcomings experienced by past researchers.

- The OD workshop is the most important tool in creating readiness among participants to engage in OD intervention. Participants are informed about the potential benefits that OD can bring to them as individuals and an organization. Importantly, the researcher should have sound planning to create positive and effective understanding among participants.
- The researcher should bear in mind that the OD process is guided by the research site thus, it is not always easy to get all staff members present during OD activities. It is also crucial that you need time for conducting OD activities and in selecting respondents during this study. Researchers need to remain calm and be flexible around the agenda of the research site.
- It is advisable to select respondents with the assistance of people on the spot and it should be based on the participants' level of interest in OD activities.
- Some respondents may keep information to themselves at first and reveal it later in the process. It is important that the researcher should be well equipped with logical skills in conducting interviews.
- It is advisable that the researcher should equip participants with the skills of conflict resolution as it may arise at any time during OD intervention. Engage participants in problem solving, how to maintain teams and cooperation as it has the potential to prepare participants for effective organization change efforts. Facilitator should always be sensitive and pro-active to the situation.
- Maintain constant communication with leadership about OD programme for possible adjustment to the school programme. Furthermore, inform participants about the next activity. It is possible that participants with less interest in the intervention can discourage others from participation, thus identify and convince them.
- Avoid negative remarks about issues at the research site during the process. Be familiar with the cultural ethics and norms of the participants and organization in the study. To be accepted and ensure the smooth running of the intervention programme, interact with participants. Constantly remind participants about OD values, beliefs and assumptions in order to avert them from going back to their old culture.

6.5 Recommendation for future research

I recommend that SDF intervention and system training are effective tools for future research as they are common intervention designs used for OD projects (Schmuck and Runkel, 1994, pp. 74-5). SDF is a functional intervention and has the potential to generate educative findings about OD intervention in education institutions. Nevertheless, even though previous OD studies

conducted in Namibia provide evidence that SDF has been a dominant intervention, there seems to be a need to explore the effectiveness of other OD interventions such as Future Search Conference (FSC) in Namibian education institutions, as it has been successfully used in health institutions (Hausiku, 2004; Layne, 2004).

The OD study also has the potential to benefit community authorities. Conducting an OD intervention with the communities governing body would therefore contribute to the communities' effectiveness. Finally, the outcome of that study may also broaden the scope of the effectiveness of OD as a change strategy.

6.6 Limitations of my study

My study was basically a case study that was focused on a single school, influenced by its unique environment. The data collected for completing this thesis was confined to respondents' perceptions and experiences of an OD intervention in a unique organizational culture, the nature of organization problems and their level of readiness for change.

It is fundamentally different from other organizations that may need a different OD intervention approach. Due to its uniqueness, the findings may not be generalized for application in an organization with a different context.

Nevertheless, there are some cases where research findings can be generalized. According to Stake (1995, p. 85), "People can learn much that is general from single cases. They do that partly because they are familiar with other cases and they add this one in, thus making a slightly new group from which to generalize". This should be done when "the researcher can provide the basis of knowing the validity and relevance of already ready-made generalizations" (ibid, p. 87). Yin (1993, p. 79) argues that "generalizing from case studies is a matter of analytic generalization which involves using a single case study to generalize to theory".

In this view then, the findings could be generalized on the basis that validity and quality issues are ensured through using multiple data collection tools for triangulation and member checking. Furthermore, the findings may add value to organizational development theory.

One of the constraints experienced in execution of this OD research study was insufficient time for the whole OD intervention journey, as the research was expected to be completed within two months. The OD programme was restricted to afternoons only, as during the morning members paid more attention to organizational schedules. However, the programme was successfully completed and change was visible on a small scale.

6.7 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to explore staff involvement in organization development (OD) intervention in one of the rural junior secondary schools of the Kavango region, Namibia and was aimed at determining the level of participation in change approach and probing into participants' perceptions and experiences of the intervention process.

The process of conducting an action research case study, offered me an opportunity to gain more experience and learn from the participants' perspectives about OD intervention in an organization and how members perceived change efforts initiated by an outsider. The study was successful carried out, as members of the organization demonstrated positive changes in participation and cooperation, as well as by embracing democratic leadership founded on OD philosophy.

Owing to the complex nature of the organizational context, it is true that any organization, including schools should keep abreast of change. For this to take place, not only are the current leadership practices required, but also a different viewpoint and perception of approaching change. One way to obtain these is through exposure to the OD philosophy, as it adopts a bottom-up, participatory and democratic approach to organizational improvement, which exploits the rich potential of organizational members. Apart from the case of Utokota combined school, there is more evidence that OD has the capacity to change an organization and the individuals' mind-set, with regards to continuous and deep-seated change.

Being new to conducting research at a higher learning institution, I found OD to be a laborious process which involved seven steps, each step requiring new learning. However, I remained

firmly resolved in my study and gained more knowledge and skills in the carrying out of a research study.

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Appendix A1

Appendix A1



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8383

Fax: +27 (0) 46 622 8028

PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140

17 June 2011
Mr Alfons Dikuwa: Director
Kavango Region
Private Bag 2134
RUNDU

Dear Mr Dikuwa

Permission to conduct research in your region

I am writing to obtain your permission for Mr Demetrius Rengura (student number 11R0886) to conduct research in a school in your region. He 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 conduct an organisation development intervention and record how the school responds to this.

Mr Rengura needs to observe the school in action to get a sense of its climate and culture and to interview selected teachers, the principal, and possibly a few learners and parents. He deserves all the assistance he can get for this project. Organisation Development is a powerful change initiative but as yet under-researched in Namibia. He has done well so far in his coursework and I have every confidence that he will produce a good study.

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 A2



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Tel: +27 (0) 46 603 8383

Fax: +27 (0) 46 622 8028

PO Box 94, Grahamstown, 6140

17 June 2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Mr Demetrius Rengura (student number 11R0886) 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 Rengura needs to conduct an organisation development intervention in your school, to observe the school in action to get a sense of its climate and culture, to interview selected teachers and possibly parents and learners. 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 Rengura'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 A3

Consent letter

Utokota Combined School

Ministry of Education

Shambyu Circuit

Rundu

7 July 2011

Re: Agreement

I hereby conclude an agreement with the facilitator Mr. Dk. Rengura to participate in the Organization Development research project that aimed at exploring the staff involvement in the Organization development intervention during July up to September 2011.

I understand that my name will remain under confidential at all time and my responses to the interview questions will be recorded with a voice recorder or tape recorder and returned them back to me for validation and approval. My responses will be maintained anonymously by a researcher and it shall appear as a code in the research project.

I have taken cognizance that the information that is to be gathered from the study will be of utmost important for the understanding of change and improvement of organization of Utokota Combined School and it is indeed exclusively for a study purpose only.

I furthermore understand that the information that is to be collected during study will be treated under high confidentiality and I have the right to withdraw from the study at any point in time when circumstance becomes not favourable with me.

Undertaking:

I am willingly agreed to take part and render assistance that are needed during the research without any form of coercion and consequences.

Participant: -----Signature: -----Date: -----

--

Facilitator: -----Signature: -----Date: -----

-

Appendix B



Appendix C

The OD work place program 5 April 2011

Utokota Combined School DK. Rengura

Date	Activity	Venue	Purpose
05 / 04 / 2011	Meeting with the Circuit Inspector of Education	Shambyu Circuit office	permission
06/ 04 / 2011	Meeting with School principal	Utokota Combined School	permission
07/ 04 / 2011	Meeting with staff	Staff room	Introduction to OD workshop
08 /04 /2011	Interview the principal	Principal's Office	Data collection
08/ 04 / 2011	OD intervention workshop(SDF)	Utokota Combined: Computer room	To establish staff's readiness for OD intervention
11/04/2011	Interview the HOD & teacher	Utokota Combined School : Office room	Data collection
12/ 04 / 2011	Data analysis	Utokota Combined: Computer room	For feedback
13/ 04/ 2011	Feed back	Utokota Combined : Computer room	Organization wants to know the results for action planning

Appendix D

Utokota Combined School

OD WORKSHOP AGENDA

Date: 08/ 04 /2011

FACILITATOR: DK. RENGURA

Time	Activities	Responsible Person
11:00-11: 10	Welcoming remarks	Acting Principal
11:10 -11:15	Purpose and objectives	Facilitator
11:15-11:30	What OD is and its background	Facilitator
11:30-11:45	OD values and assumptions	Facilitator & participants
11:45-12:00	Features of OD v/s other change.	Facilitator & participants
12:00-12:10	Discussions	Participants & Facilitator
12:10-12:20	The OD design and phases	Facilitator
12:20-12:45	Participants decide on the way forward, identify problems and select one.	Facilitator
12:45- 12:55	Evaluation	Facilitator
12:55-13:00	Closure	Participant

Appendix E

INTERVIEW: PRINCIPAL

08/ 04 / 2011

1. Briefly tell me what you do and for how long you have been working in this school?
2. Whom do you involve in the decision- making process in your organization?
3. How do staff members view / accept new ideas and change in your organization?
4. Briefly describe the staff involvement in bringing changes in the school organization.
5. What is currently going well in your school organization?
6. Do you have anything extra you want to share with me about your organization?

INTERVIEW: HOD

11 /04/2011

1. Briefly tell me what you do at the school .
2. Give two examples of changes that you have experienced in school organization development.
3. What contributions have you made in bringing changes in school organization development.
4. Describe briefly how staff involve themselves in bringing changes in school organization development.
5. What is going well in the school organization?
6. What are specific things you think to improve in the organization?

INTERVIEW: TEACHER

11 / 04 / 2011

1. Briefly tell me about your work at school.
2. Give two examples of problems you experience in your work.
3. Describe in short how the staff involve themselves in bringing changes in school organization.
4. What specific things do you think delays the progress of the organization?
5. What is going well in the organization?
6. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about the organization?

Appendix F

13 / 04 / 2011

EVALUATION of OD WORKSHOP

1. You have attended the OD workshop. Kindly comment on the ideas OD presented.
2. Is OD relevant and applicable to your school organization? If yes or no, why?
3. How did the OD workshop influence your understanding of change so far?
4. How would you describe participants' contributions to discussion of OD during the workshop?
5. What was the most interesting thing to you about OD and why?
6. Do you think that OD would benefit the school organization if it is introduced to schools?
How?
7. Is there anything else that you would like to say which was not clear to you during the workshop?

I thank you for taking part.

Appendix G

OD resumption programme Utokota Combined School July 2011 Programme of activities

Date	Activity	Venue	Purpose
30 / 06 / 2011	Meeting with the Regional acting director and Circuit Inspector of Education	Regional office	Permission
04/ 07 / 2011	Meeting with School principal	Utokota Combined School: Principal's Office	Permission
05/ 07 / 2011	Meeting with staff	Staff room	Fixing the OD workshop review agenda date
11 /07 /2011	OD intervention workshop review	Utokota combined school computer room	To establish staff's readiness for OD intervention
20 / 07 /- 25/07/ 2011	Interview the teachers & management starts	Laboratory room	Data collection
25/07/2011	Interview the teachers completed	To be determined by participants	Data collection
26/ 07/ 2011	Data transcription and analysis starts	Utokota Combined: Laboratory room	For feedback
2/ 08/ 2011	Feedback and plan of action	Utokota Combined : Laboratory room	Organization wants to know the results for action planning
10/08/2011	Training workshop and action drawing	Laboratory Room	empowerment
15/08/2011	Action taking	Laboratory room	Action implementation
8/09/2011	Assessment interview	Laboratory room	To find out the success of OD intervention
9/09/2011	Assessment interview completed	Laboratory room	To find out the success of OD intervention

Appendix H

OD WORKSHOP REVIEW SCHEDULE

Date: 07/ 07 /2011

FACILITATOR: DK. RENGURA

OD WORKSHOP REVIEW AGENDA

Time	Activities	Responsible Person
14:00-14: 10	Welcoming remarks	Principal
14:10 -14:15	Purpose and objectives	Facilitator
14:15-14:30	What OD is and its background	Facilitator
14:30-14:45	OD values and assumptions	Facilitator & participants
14:45-15:00	Features of OD v/s other change.	Facilitator & participants
15:00-15:20	Discussions	Participants & Facilitator
15:20-15:30	The OD design and phases	Facilitator
15:30-15:55	Participants decide on the way forward, identify problems and select one.	Facilitator
15:55-16:25	Evaluation	Facilitator
16:25-16:30	Closure	HOD

Appendix I

Semi- structured interview questions (Second round of interviews)

Interview: Principal

Theme: Staff involvement / participation in organization development intervention

1. What kind of leadership style do you apply in your organization?
2. What is your understanding/perception about the leadership style that you apply in the organization?
3. Do you involve staff members in the decision- making process of the organization?
4. What are the major challenges you experience in your organization, in term of teachers involvement in decision-making?
5. How can you describe staff cooperation/team work in your school?
6. How do you promote/encourage cooperation among staff members in the organization?
7. What is your observation about enthusiasm/morale of staff members' participation and contribution during staff meeting / morning briefing?
8. Do stakeholders such as school board members and parents also get involved in supporting organization change? How?
9. Since you have attended the OD workshop, what kind of leadership style would you like to provide in the organization? Why? How?
10. What strategies do you employ to solve school problems?
11. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about OD intervention?

I thank you

Interview: HOD

Theme: Staff involvement / participation in organization development intervention

1. What kind of leadership style does the school apply?
2. What is your understanding/perception about the leadership style that is being applied in the organization?

3. Does the school involve staff members in the decision- making process?
4. What are the major challenges the school experiences, in terms of teachers' involvement in decision-making?
5. How can you describe staff cooperation/team work in the school?
6. How does the school promote/encourage cooperation among staff members in the organization?
7. What is your observation about enthusiasm/morale of staff member's participation and contributions during staff meeting/ morning briefing?
8. Do stakeholders such as school board members and parents also get involved in supporting organization change? How?
9. Since you have attended the OD workshop, what kind of leadership style would you like to see in the organization? Why? How?
10. What strategies does the school employ in order to solve problems?
11. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about OD intervention?

I thank you

Interview: Teacher

Theme: Staff involvement / participation in organization development intervention

1. What kind of leadership style does the school apply?
2. What is your understanding/perception about the leadership style that are being applied in the organization?
3. Does the school management involve staff members in the decision- making process?
4. What are the major challenges the school experiences, in terms of teacher's involvement in decision-making?
5. How can you describe staff cooperation/team work in the school?
6. How does the school principal promote/encourage cooperation among staff members in the organization?

7. What is your observation about enthusiasm/morale of staff members' participation and contribution during staff meeting / morning briefing?

8. Do stakeholders such as school board members and parents also get involve in supporting organization change? How?

9. Since you have attended the OD workshop, what kind of leadership style would you like to see in the organization? Why? How?

10. What strategies does the school employ in order to solve problems?

11. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about the school organization?

I thank you

Appendix J

OD assessment interviews

Interview 1: Principal

1. Since you have attended the OD workshop and training, could you please briefly explain your understanding of organization development?
2. How did you experience the OD intervention process?
3. The staff training and action plan was aimed at improving cooperation and staff participation in the decision- making process and other organizational activities. Describe briefly the changes or improvement that has taken place so far since the intervention of OD at Utokota Combined?
4. What are your views about bringing changes in the organization through OD intervention?
5. How best would you describe staff participation during the OD intervention?
6. What kind of leadership do you think necessary to be provided in order to make the OD sustainable at Utokota combined school?
7. Did you enjoy the facilitating process?
8. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about OD intervention?

I thank you.

Interview 2: HOD

1. Since you have attended the OD workshop and training, could you please briefly explain your understanding of organization development?
2. How did you experience the OD intervention process?
3. The staff training and action plan was aimed at improving cooperation and staff participation in the decision making process and other organizational activities. Describe briefly the changes or improvements that have taken place so far since the intervention of OD at Utokota Combined?
4. What are your views about bringing changes in the organization through OD intervention?
5. How best would you describe staff participation during the OD intervention?
6. What kind of leadership do you think necessary to be provided in order to make the OD sustainable at Utokota combined school?
7. Did you enjoy the facilitating process?

Interview 3: Teacher

1. Since you have attended the OD workshop and training, could you please briefly explain your understanding of organization development?
2. How did you experience the OD intervention process?
3. The staff training and action plan was aimed at improving cooperation and staff participation in the decision making process and other organizational activities. Describe briefly the changes or improvements that have taken place so far since the intervention of OD at Utokota Combined?
4. What are your views about bringing changes in the organization through OD intervention?
5. How best would you describe staff participation during the OD intervention?
6. What kind of leadership do you think necessary to be provided in order to make the OD sustainable at Utokota combined school?
7. Did you enjoy the facilitating process?
8. Do you have anything extra you would like to share with me about OD intervention?

I thank you.

Appendix K

OD workshop

OD assumptions

- People at the site are best placed to make decisions.
- People will commit to the plan they have helped to develop
- People are sources of productivity and should therefore be treated with care.
- Most people are capable of asking greater contributions to an organization's effectiveness and development.
- Most people want to be accepted and to interact cooperatively with one or more groups in an organization.

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OD values

- Participation and contribution by all organization members.
- OD is optimistic-people are basically good, progress is possible and desirable in human affairs and rationality, reason and goodwill are important for making progress.
- OD is democratic-people have the right to be free from misuse of power, fair and equitable treatment for all and justice through the rule of law.
- Trust and respect for individuals.
- Open communication.
- Decentralized decision-making.
- OD is humanistic-values the importance of the individual as a person.
- Empowerment process-involves teaching people and equipping them with necessary knowledge and skills of improving their own organization in future.
- Readiness is crucial to change
- OD is experiential-organization. Members should learn by doing and be involved in the process of change.

Features of OD versus traditional consultancy

OD adopt change approaches which are radical to traditional consultancy such as:

- ✓ OD is planned change initiated by any staff member but needs to be supported by management.
- ✓ It is a holistic or group approach to change
- ✓ It is a normative, re-educative and rational empirical change which targets change of norms and culture for a reason to improving organizations.
- ✓ OD adopts a participative and collective approach as it involves members of the organization in the change process.
- ✓ It works with people who are at the spot as they are best placed to know their situation better based on the assumption that each organization is unique.
- ✓ OD is an empowerment process.
- ✓ It uses facilitators and co-learners role to consultancy.
- ✓ Practitioner acts as a catalyst to learning.
- ✓ The OD consultant is not a problem solver but facilitates the process for the organization members to solve their own problems.
- ✓ OD is a process approach.
- ✓ It is a long term process therefore tends to bring about permanent change.
- ✓ It is action research process that involve data gathering, analysis, action taking and implement; and evaluation.
- ✓ it is a bottom up approach to change.

Features of traditional (medical doctor) approach to change

- ✓ The need for change is initiated by top management.
- ✓ The consultant operates at individual level.
- ✓ Data is collected from the managers or target member/group through interviews and surveys.
- ✓ Organization members are not involved in the data collection and collection and analysis process .
- ✓ After feedback the consultant prescribes solutions to the problem.
- ✓ The client group implements solutions through imposition.
- ✓ The expert is regarded as a problem solver.
- ✓ The change approach is top down.
- ✓ The change process is linear and is characterized by hierarchical command and control.

1. OD designs

Coaching

Coaching is when an expert works closely with the organizational leader. It involves continuous observation and giving feedback on the way activities are done.

- It is useful because it help individuals address complex problems and attain individual and organizational goals.
- It involve SWOT analysis
- S = STRENGTH
- W=WEAKNESS
- O=OPPORTUNITY
- T=THREAT

2. Appreciative inquiry

- It is based on the thinking of what worked best in the past.
- It involves thinking of what we want in the future.
- It based on building on what worked best in order to work towards our vision.

3. Total Quality Management

- It is based on finding out what the customers at the grassroots level wants.
- Products are produced according to the needs of the customers.
- Product of high quality are produced and quality service is delivered.

4. Team Building

- A team is group of people working together towards a common goal.
- It is a process of making the group of people to reach the goals.
- It is aimed at increasing the strength and cooperation of a team or of people.

5. Survey Data feedback

- It involves collecting data
- Analysis of the data
- Feeding is given to all the members of the organization.
- Members decided on the area they want to improve on.
- It is participant driven.

6. Future Search Conference

- It is planning meeting
- It brings about 60 to 80 people in one room
- It can last up to three days or more
- People tell stories about their past, present and the desired future.
- Common ground is achieved through the dialogue.
- Concentrate action is taken after wards.
- It focuses on the future

7 Problem solving

A problem in OD refers to the gap between the present unsatisfactory situations (S) and a more wanted situation or target (T). A situation which is more wanted, that one is ready to spend some energy and time to get there.

A problem solving is therefore the process of closing /narrowing the gap between the S and the T, through designing solutions or paths (P) from S to T.

The process of problem solving according to Fred and Wallen is abbreviated as S-T-P.

7.1 STP follows well planed steps e.g:

- i) Agree on a problem
 - ✓ Key questions under this stage are: where are we now (the situation, S)? And where do we want to be (target, T)?
- ii) Generate alternative ways/paths.
 - ✓ Choose a target.
 - ✓ Think of ways/paths to get from the existing situation (S) to the target (T).
 - ✓ Prioritize the ways in terms of their desirability and feasibility.

7.2 STP follows well planned steps.

iii). List helping and hindering forces (force field analysis)

- ✓ Think of forces that will work for and against reaching your target by considering the desirability and feasibility of the path ways
- ✓ factors to consider: for helping forces [support, money, time, commitment, cooperation, skills etc]
- ✓ Factors to consider for hindering forces [history, ministerial policies, politics, poor support, lack of knowledge or skills etc]

iv). Choose action steps

- ✓ Choose the hindering forces which are possible to reduce and think of ways to reduce them.
- ✓ Agree on the force to be attacked first and choose the best way to attack it from the suggested list.

7.3 STP follows well planned steps.

v). Action

- ✓ Assign people who will implement the actions
- ✓ Complete the table

vi). Monitor and recycle

- ✓ Schedule a meeting for reviewing the progress made and map out the way forward.
- ✓ Decide on the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness and the actions implemented.