

**AN EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SCHOOLS
AND ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

by

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Declaration

I, ***Silvia Gonaone Makgone***, do hereby declare that the work presented in this document entitled: “***An evaluation of strategic leadership in selected schools and its contribution to academic performance***” is my own work and independent research making use of different literature. I also declare that this thesis has not been submitted for degree purposes to any University or academic institution.

Ms. Makgone Silvia Gonaone

Date

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Abstract

The Cambridge education system introduced after independence is mainly blamed for the high failure rate experienced in the Junior Secondary (Grade 10) and Senior Secondary (Grade 12) phases in Namibia. Although it is acknowledged that failure rate can be contributed to by many factors, the research wanted to establish whether the principal's leadership can have any contribution to the academic achievement in a school.

The researcher consulted different literature in an attempt to achieve the research objectives. The principal carries out a number of leadership job functions, hence, an instrument with the relevant job functions of a principal was selected to collect data.

Three poorly performing schools were identified in the Omaheke Region. The research used questionnaires among teachers, inspectors and principals to collect data. The analysis shows that two principals were rated low in most leadership job functions. That implies that these principals are not engaged in instructional leadership, resulting in poor academic results. At the end recommendations and proposals for future research are highlighted.

Key terms:

Strategy; Strategic leadership; Strategic conversation; Instructional leadership; goal setting; Effective teaching; Job functions; Leadership behaviors; Academic performance; Strategic focused school

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract.....	iv
Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background	2
1.3 Problem statement	3
1.4 Research questions and null hypothesis	9
1.5 Aims and goals of the research	10
1.6 Value of the study.....	10
1.7 Research Design and Methodology	11
1.8 The structure of the thesis	13
1.9 Conclusion	13
Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	15
2.1 Introduction.....	15
2.2 Strategic Leadership	16
2.1.1 Strategy	16
2.1.2 Strategic leadership	17
2.1.3 Characteristics of Strategic Leaders	18
2.1.4 Strategically focused school	19
2.3 Organisational performance versus effective leadership.....	25
2.4 Contribution of school leadership to academic performance.....	29
2.5 Leadership styles	34
2.5.1 Transformational leadership style.....	34
2.5.2 Instructional leadership style	35
2.5.3 The impact of Transformational and Instructional leadership on student performance	39
2.6 Behaviour patterns of effective principals.....	41

2.7 Roles and responsibilities of a principal in a Namibian school	44
2.8 Alignment between the problem statement and the literature review	45
2.9 Conclusion	46
Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	48
3.1 Introduction.....	48
3.2 Hypothesis	48
3.3 Research Design.....	49
3.4 The research instrument	51
3.5 Sampling method	54
3.6 Data collection.....	55
3.7 Data capturing	56
3.8 Data analysis.....	57
3.9 Shortcomings and sources of error	58
3.10 Ethical considerations	58
3.11 Conclusion.....	58
Chapter 4 RESULTS: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION.....	59
4.1 Introduction.....	59
4.2 Sample profiles.....	59
4.3 Presentation of results	60
4.3.1 Results: Teacher’s questionnaire Part A.....	60
4.3.2 Results: Teachers’ questionnaire Part B.....	66
4.3.3 Results: Inspectors’ questionnaire	69
4.3.4 Results across three schools	72
4.3.5 Results: Principals’ questionnaire	73
4.4 Discussion of results by hypothesis	75
4.5 Thematic analysis	78
4.6 Conclusion	83
Chapter 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	85
5.1 Introduction.....	85
5.2 Discussion of salient points	85
5.3 Interpretation of results in terms of literature	86

5.4 Discussion of gaps	88
5.5 Significance of the results	89
5.6 Policy and other Recommendations.....	91
5.7 Future research	92
5.8 Conclusion	92
REFERENCES.....	94
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	99
LIST OF TABLES.....	112
LIST OF FIGURES.....	113

Chapter 1 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Namibia, after independence was faced with a lot of challenges, one of which was the reform of the Education sector. According to Mushaandja (1996:7) the new education authorities inherited not one, but eleven different education systems of the former “homeland administrations.” Amalgamating these education systems has not been an easy task particularly because of resistance to educational innovations.

One of these innovations was the introduction of the Cambridge system into all schools as the old system was seen as just promoting memorisation and not preparing the learners for the job market.

The new system had its pros and cons and it is still attacked with hostility in some circles of society due to the failure rate experienced in the Grade 10 and 12 phases. The learners who failed these Grades are not allowed to repeat and this gave rise to a lot of questions as most of the children were left on street. Already, in 1995, the Minister of Education noted with concern that the quality of education was still compromised, Glogg and Fidler (as cited by Mushaandja, 1996:7) consider examination results as performance indicators for quality of education.

Although many efforts were made to improve the quality of education in Namibia, the high failure rate persists in the Secondary Education Phase. This became a matter of concern to all stakeholders and Haingura, the Secretary General, of the Namibia National Teachers Union (NANTU) mentioned that “One can conclude that the current education system produces approximately 40 000 drop outs” (Philander, 2007:5).

The NANTU Secretary General in 2009, after the release of Grade 10 results, said the following: “the number of candidates who do not qualify for Grade 11 is above 50 per cent and this is not acceptable. It is not normal for a country to sustain an education system that sends an average 15 000 learners to the streets year in and year out, as it might be detrimental to the national development in the long run” Maletsky (2009:3). This statement and others show the concern that exists about performance of the education system.

1.2 Background

The Namibian nation, has each year end, an outcry on the high failure rate experienced by the Grade 10 students. During 2007 only 15 330 (48%) grade 10’s who sat for the examination qualified to proceed to Grade 11. This left around 16 630 Grade 10 learners on the streets and with an uncertain future. This scenario becomes worse at the Senior Secondary level.

The outcome of the results of 2007 published in New Era, 29 January 2008 is testimony to this as stated in that article that “Of the 31 243 candidates who sat for the Namibia Senior Certificate ordinary level examinations, only 3 256 candidates gained university admission” (Philander, 2008:2). This is a cause for concern which leaves the whole nation with unanswered questions.

According to Auala (1999:35) excellence in education will remain a dream in the absence of effective leadership. Maxwell (1998) concurs that everything rises and falls on leadership. These statements show that the attainment of success or good performance in schools depends on the type of leadership practised in schools.

Schools should be seen as organisations where constant change takes place and leadership is the one critical area that should maintain sustainable growth and profitability. The effective leadership of a school will show in the high performance of both teachers and learners. Arnott and Soobiah (2007:12) posit that if becoming a high performing organisation is the destination, leadership is the engine. Sondhi (2006:21) agrees with this statement when he writes that “whichever way you look at it, strong leadership will always be a prerequisite for the creation and maintenance of a successful team”.

It is because of the above-mentioned that the researcher sees the evaluation of the strategic leadership as vital in trying to find answers to the poor performance of learners in the identified Omaheke schools and also to find whether leadership in our schools is strategically aligned, to prove Nel’s (2007:10) statement that leadership has a dramatic effect on the performance of an organisation.

1.3 Problem statement

The Omaheke Region is experiencing poor performance (results) in the Junior Secondary and the Senior Secondary phases and this has become a concern to all stakeholders in the region.

The chairperson of the Omaheke Regional Education Forum, Festus Uitele, expressed his dissatisfaction with the performance of some schools in the region. He called on all stakeholders to redouble their efforts and turn the situation around. Uitele said it is unacceptable that at some schools 91 percent of the learners are not promoted and yet teachers and principals are receiving their monthly salaries but have not been requested to account for the high failure rate (Maletsky, 2009:2).

Rhodes, Marentette, and Trexler (1984:16) indicates that:

“Important differences exist among incompetent, competent, and excellent schools and their leaders. Schools managed by incompetent leaders simply don’t get the job done. Typically, such schools are characterized by confusion and inefficiency in operation and malaise in human climate. Student achievement is lower in such schools. Teachers may not be giving a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay”.

This suggests that this phenomenon of poor performance can be caused by many factors, but the researcher wants to concentrate on the effect of the principal’s leadership on this problem, as reflected in literature that the phenomenon of leadership is a contributing factor to the school performance.

Table 1.1 National Grade 10 results 2008

Region	No. of Candidates	Percentage on 23 Points	Percentage on 24 Points	Percentage On 27 Points	Rank order In 2007	Rank order In 2008
Oshikoto	3 640	57.3	50.6	32.6	2	1
Erongo	1 809	55.35	51.1	37.9	1	2
Oshana	4 037	51.3	45.2	29.5	7	3
Khomas	4 616	51.3	47.2	43.5	3	4
Kunene	596	51.0	47.2	27.9	5	5
Caprivi	1 898	50.5	43.9	25.5	4	6
Ohangwena	5 536	47.4	41.6	25.3	8	7
Karas	1 060	46.5	41.65	26.6	9	8
Omusati	6 487	46.3	40.6	24.5	12	9
Kavango	3 191	46.2	40.2	23.6	10	10
Hardap	1 246	42.0	37.0	24.6	11	11
Otjozondjupa	1 738	39.4	35.9	26.7	6	12
Omaheke	779	35.9	31.2	18.4	13	13
National	36 633	48.	43.3	28.2		

Source: Mr. Nahas Angula, 2008 Education Outcome Balance Sheet, New Era 14(9), p.6, 2009.

Table 1.1 depicts the National Grade 10 examination results of 2008 and the ranking of the regions based on the performance.

To proceed to Grade 11 a candidate is expected to score 23 points and at least an F in English. Score values at Grade 10 are as follows: A=7; B=6; C=5; D=4; E=3; F=2; G=1. Six best subjects are scored in order to determine the total value of a candidate. Column 3 shows the percentage of candidates who qualified for Grade 11 in the 2008 examination by obtaining 23 points and F or better in English. Column 4 and 5 show the percentage of candidates who obtained 24 and 27 points in the 2008 examination respectively (this part is only for comparison purposes).

Columns 6 and 7 show the ranking of the regions in terms of examination performance in 2007 and 2008. As depicted by **Table 1.1**, Omaheke Region occupied the last position (13) out of the 13 Regions with regard to results of the two respective years of 2007 and 2008. **Table 1.2** clearly shows the ranking (regarding performance in examination) of schools in the Omaheke Region nationally and regionally.

Table 1.2 Grade 10 Full-time Results:2008 Omaheke Region

NAME OF SCHOOL	Centre No	Number promoted	%	Not Promoted	Totals	Ranking National	Ranking Regional
1.Izak Buys JSS	G07	16	94%	1	17	70 +9	1 (+2)
2. MokalengComb..S	G09	25	86%	4	29	77 +0	2 (+0)
3. Rietquelle JSS	G11	27	64%	15	42	102 +32	3 (+1)
4. Johannes Dohren. SS	G08	29	56%	23	52	191 +86	4 (+1)
5. Wennie du Plessis SS	G12	63	54%	54	117	287 +91	5 (+1)
6. MokganediTlh.SS	G10	21	33%	42	63	412 +86	6 (+2)
7. Epako JSS	G03	51	32%	106	157	469 -60	7 (+0)
8. C.Heuva JSS	G02	25	31%	56	81	479 +27	8 (+1)
9. Gustav Kandjii JSS	G06	12	13%	83	95	544 -10	9 (+2)
10. Epukiro Post 3 JSS	G04	11	9%	115	126	560 -229	10 (+0)
		280		499	779		

Source: K. Kangueehi, Poor Grade 10 results for Omaheke. New Era 14(108) p.2, 2009

Table 1.2 shows the total number and percentage of learners promoted and not promoted to grade 11. The table also shows how many positions the school picked up or dropped, nationally and regionally compared to the results of 2007, (+) signifies picking up, while, (-) signifies dropping in position. It is also important to mention that the last school in performance nationally is from Omaheke region which is Epukiro Post 3 Junior Secondary School.

The results show that out of the 779 learners that sat for the Grade 10 examinations, only 280(36%) learners were promoted to Grade 11, while 499 learners were unable to proceed to the next grade and therefore were destined for the streets.

It is due to this unsatisfactory outcome of the results that the following appeared in the Editorial of the New Era newspaper (2009:6)

“The Grade 10 examination results for the Omaheke Region are a total disaster and an embarrassment. The results are an indictment on teachers, learners, parents and the regional education authority. By presiding over this dismal performance, these key players have exposed themselves as either ineffective or simply incompetent. These stakeholders have in so many ways let down the region and have failed to protect the integrity of the education system in the country. When a region such as Omaheke achieves a 36 percent pass rate for its Grade 10 learners, naturally this raises many questions about the capacity and leadership of those in charge of education in that region”.

Although it is recognised that the failure rate in these grades could be contributed to by many factors (i.e. parental involvement, inadequate resources, not committed teachers, ill-disciplined learners, inadequate advisory services); the perception is always created by the public as if the education system is the sole contributor to the disastrous failure rate. The question arises, whether the blame should be put wholly on the education

system, a few schools in the same region and other schools in the country at large perform well.

The latter argument is staffed by Barker (as cited by Wong and Evers, 2001:16) that:

“all too often educationalists (want) to explain away the poor performance of, say, an inner-city school by reference to the socio-economic circumstances of the area in which the school was located...one should not discount such factors entirely...On the other hand, even in these areas there can be very good schools with high levels of achievement. It depends essentially upon the leadership of the Head and the quality of the teaching as staffed by various literature sources.”

While the contributions of other factors to the weak performance are not disputed, the feeling is that effectiveness of leadership needs to be investigated to ascertain its contribution towards academic performance in the schools.

This is where the interest of the study evolved to try to prove whether leadership in the schools is one of the major contributing factors to the outcome of the poor results in the Omaheke Region.

The study is also encouraged by the following:

- No study of the impact of school leadership especially the principal on the output of schools in Omaheke has been done
- It is observed that other reasons of non-performance are always put forward except leadership.
- No educational institution or courses are given to the current school leaders or aspiring leaders to prepare them for leadership positions in the schools.

The term “leadership” is not new in educational circles and many have attempted to define this concept and a few of the definitions will be given underneath:

Bennis and Nanus (1985) stated that leadership is “an act of influencing, guiding in direction, course, action, and opinion.” This definition implies that leadership is about vision and goals and it would be expected that each leader’s action in a school will be directed towards the achievement of pre-determined outcomes if there are any.

Beare, Caldwell and Milikan (as cited by Telford, 1996:7) point out that leadership is concerned with gaining commitment to a set of values, statements of what “ought to be” which become the heart of the culture of the school. Davies (2006:15) concurs by stating that leadership is about creating a culture within the school.

Lewis (1984:39) is of the opinion that, “like high-performing leaders in the private sector principals of successful schools have a vision of what their schools should be and of their role in achieving it.” The question then arises whether principals of the poor performing schools are contradicting this statement. Baldrige et al. (as cited by Bush, 2008:275) on the other hand caution that: “We . . . must be extremely careful about attempts to manage or improve . . . education with “modern management” techniques borrowed from business.” The assumption is that the research should shed more light on this.

The study is relevant and important as secondary education is seen as an essential foundation for the human resources required for building a sustainable competitive economy, but it seems as if the standard of education in the region is failing the nation.

This sentiment was uttered in the editorial of the New Era Newspaper (2009:6) that:

“The 36% pass rate for Omaheke should send shivers down the spines of its population for there lays a serious problem for this region because how else is Omaheke going to

extricate itself from the poverty that plagues it when its human resource is condemned to ignorance and illiteracy.”

It is utterances like this that necessitated the carrying out of this study to ascertain whether leadership indeed contributed to the poor academic performance of the three selected schools in the Omaheke Educational Region.

1.4 Research questions and null hypothesis

This study was aimed at investigating the instructional leadership of poor performing schools' principals based on certain principals' behaviours as perceived by teachers and inspectors and the potential relationship between these behaviours and learners' academic achievement. The study was guided by the following questions:

1. Which principal instructional leadership job functions identified by the Principal Instructional Management Ratings Scale (PIMRS) instrument are being demonstrated by the principals of these schools as perceived by the teachers?
2. Which principal instructional leadership job functions are being demonstrated by the principals of these schools as perceived by the inspectors?
3. Is there a significant difference between the perception of the teachers and that of the inspectors regarding the leadership behaviours demonstrated by the principals?

The following two null hypotheses were tested in the study:

H₀ There is no relationship between instructional leadership of the principals and academic performance of learners as perceived by the teachers

H0 There is no significant difference in principal's instructional leadership behaviour as perceived by teachers and inspectors.

A questionnaire will be used based on themes that will lead to the understanding of the objective of the research, which is to evaluate whether instructional leadership exists in schools and what impact it has on academic achievement of the learners.

1.5 Aims and goals of the research

- To explore what a strategic, effective leader is and to compare it against the leadership in the identified Omaheke schools
- To investigate whether the principals in the associated schools demonstrate certain leadership behaviours that are identified with high performing schools and those principals seen as engaging in instructional leadership
- To explore the effects of leadership on the academic performance of schools in the Omaheke Educational Region.
- To investigate what theoretical and practical training the principals of schools underwent that empowered them to be effective leaders in the schools.
- To provide reference material to be used by the Ministry of Education officials concerning leadership in schools.

1.6 Value of the study

The researcher speculates that this study will help to:

- Evaluate the type of leadership in the selected schools and to find out whether it has any contribution to the current performance in those schools.

- Show that performance in schools can be an indicator of the type of school leadership and that results can be improved if the principals in those schools are engaging in instructional leadership.
- Determine the type of training the current leaders in schools underwent and to find out whether it is adequate and beneficial to the individual and the institution.
- Enable leadership within the schools to assess themselves whether they are strategic and effective leaders or not and if not to try and change for the benefit of the school.
- Give ministerial authorities the realisation that leadership and in-service training for current and aspiring principals is needed for effective schools.

1.7 Research Design and Methodology

The research is empirical by nature and the survey method has been seen to be more appropriate for this research as the primary aim of the study is to evaluate the leadership at the school and how this leadership impacts the end results of the school.

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2003:92) state that the survey is popular as it allows the collection of a large amount of data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way and often obtained by using data collection techniques of questionnaires and or structured interviews. The poor performing secondary schools in Omaheke Region will be selected to be part of the survey. A more generic topic of evaluating the impact of leadership on academic performance is chosen. It is unlikely that the entire population of the non performing schools would be covered.

The research will be concentrated on the three lowest performing schools which represent 30% of the ten secondary schools in the region.

Probability sampling is most commonly associated with survey-based research and implies that the chance or probability of each case that is selected from the population is known and is usually equal for all cases.

The targeted schools do not have more than 15 teachers on their roll and the target is to include all the teachers in the survey. Due to possible unforeseen circumstances, it will be appropriate to have at least 10 teachers including the principal and management of the school to be part of the survey. There will be an extra questionnaire to be completed by the education officer/s (inspectors) at the Ministry of Education head office, so as to get a broader picture of the problem.

As the survey will be enormous work, it will not include the whole school community and will only concentrate on the teachers as the objective is to survey the leadership of the principal as perceived by the teaching staff and the inspectors.

As this research topic can be perceived as sensitive in nature, the researcher foresees a problem of questionnaires not being completed or returned and so opt to be physically at the school for circulation and collection of questionnaires.

The questionnaire was found to be the most appropriate technique to use for the purpose of this particular survey in order to achieve the primary objectives of the research, namely to evaluate the strategic leadership in schools and its contribution to academic performance. The choice of a questionnaire is based on the argument of Saunders et al., (2003:281) who admit that questionnaires can be useful in explanatory or analytic research, as it will enable the researcher to examine and explain relationships between variables, in particular cause-and-effect relationships. The teachers are literate so they can read and answer questions.

The choice of analysis is driven by the research objectives, research purpose, research questions/hypothesis, and type of data collected. The mixed model research will be used, meaning that quantitative analyses of qualitative data will be conducted. Johnson and Christensen (2004:425) call it “quantitizing data”. Quantitising data involves converting qualitative data into numerical codes and then using statistical analysis techniques with the data.

1.8 The structure of the thesis

Chapter two presents the overview of the literature review on leadership with particular reference to the leadership in schools. The capabilities of a strategic leader and specifically the behaviours that will make the principal, as a strategic leader effective will be highlighted. It will be interesting to show the functions of a principal as set out by the Ministry of Education in Namibia.

Chapter three explains, in detail, the methodology as employed in the research in the quest of trying to find a solution to the identified problem.

Chapter four focuses on the presentation of the results and discussions of the findings.

Finally, chapter five briefly provides the conclusion and recommendations that can be assessed for possible implementation.

1.9 Conclusion

The chapter gave a historical background of the experienced problem in Omaheke region that prompted the researcher to undertake this research. Although the leadership in schools is known to be broad, the researcher decided to focus on the leadership of the principal and its contribution to academic performance.

It is envisaged that the study comes up with findings and recommendations that can contribute towards the strategic leadership that leads to strategically focused schools that are profitable to all members involved and the nation as a whole.

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter conceptualised the study, while clarifying the research problem. Aims, goals and value of the study were covered with a short indication of the structure of the study, which was followed by this literature review.

The literature review is a crucial portion of the research process and its purpose is to provide a context for the study. Literature review systematically summarises past empirical research or evaluation studies, or both, on a specific topic (Lauer 2006:83). Badenhorst (2007) is of the opinion that, it is at the literature review that you unpack the key concepts and theory, and discuss the conceptual framework of the study.

Tuckman (as cited by Mushaandja, 1996) argues that, a literature review should reflect the major variables of the study. It should be selective, systematically organised, and structured so that the important information about the problem being studied might not be lost in the vastness of literature.

There is a vast amount of literature on the topic of leadership in general, while there is less on strategic leadership and specifically on strategic leadership in schools. Literature covering this topic is mostly international, while there is a shortage of local material.

The literature review in this study will be organised in sections as follows:

The first section will be devoted to defining strategy, strategic leader and giving a brief description of characteristics of a strategic leader and a strategically focused school. The purpose is to determine whether there are general theoretical assumptions in literature on strategic leadership and its characteristics, which leads to organisational effectiveness.

The second section contains the discussion of organisational performance versus effective leadership, which at the end will culminate in whether it can be argued that effective leadership in schools can lead to school effectiveness.

The third section will explore whether effective school leadership has any contribution to academic performance.

The fourth section will briefly highlight the roles and responsibilities of a school principal as set out by the Ministry of Education for Namibian schools.

SECTION A

2.2 Strategic leadership

Leadership is a popular concept with multiple meanings, and has given rise to an extensive literature. It is therefore important to state from the onset of this study that another perspective of leadership which is strategic leadership is being adopted.

Strategy and strategic leadership are concepts that were mostly used among the business fraternity and have over the years been adopted in the educational setting.

The researcher identified ***strategy*** and ***strategic leadership*** as key concepts and will attempt to give different definitions as set out in different literature.

2.1.1 Strategy

Ryan (2008:31) defines strategy as “the journey you will take in order to reach your vision”. Davies and Ellison (2003:3) state that strategy should be seen as a medium-term activity, perhaps three to five years, and one which deals with broad aggregated data, rather than detailed plans.

Davies (2003:295), in his article “*Rethinking Strategy and Strategic Leadership in Schools*” argues that it is possible to see strategy as a specific pattern of decisions and actions taken to achieve an organisation’s goals. He went further and identified four initial elements of strategy as a means of developing an overall understanding:

1. Strategy can be considered to include a broader view dealing with aggregated data or trends rather than disaggregated detail.
2. It deals with the medium- to long-term rather than the short-term operational view.
3. It is important to consider strategy as a perspective and in particular to focus on strategic thinking.
4. It should be seen as a template against which to assess current action.

Strategy thus, can be understood as a path, direction or plans crafted by any organisation (school) to achieve its set goals that can lead it to success. As mentioned above the plans can be medium or long term but success from both should be sustainable.

2.1.2 Strategic leadership

William (2009:127) defined strategic leadership as:

Leadership in a business school setting is a dynamic process whereby one or more individuals initiate/support those changes that are conducive to the achievement of the school's mission and objective.

Rowe, (2001:81) put it as follows:

Strategic leadership is the ability to influence others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the long-term viability of the organisation .

Middlewood and Lumby (1998:135) define strategic leadership as “those processes of bringing about change by inspiring others to follow”.

Effective strategic leadership is about leaders being able to think strategically, being emotionally intelligent, having a range of behaviours at their disposal and the wisdom to

apply the right combination of behaviours, being able to apply transactional or managerial leadership and transformational or visionary leadership (Amos, 2007:21).

Kabacoff, (2009) put forth the following definition in the Wall Street Journal *"Strategic leaders take a broad, long-range approach to problem-solving and decision-making through objective analysis, thinking ahead, and planning."*

From the above definitions, strategic leadership can be understood as a certain positioning of the leader who pursues the attainment of the objectives of an organisation through different approaches.

2.1.3 Characteristics of strategic leaders

According to Davies (2003:303) the difficulty in reviewing the literature on leadership is that it is not always easy to distinguish the characteristics of 'good leadership' from those of 'strategic leadership'.

Davies (2003:304) argues that 'strategic leadership' could be considered an element of good or high-performing leadership and he gives a preliminary list of those characteristics which make up the strategic leader:

- *Can see the future, bigger picture for the organization as well as understanding the current contextual setting of the organization. Strategic orientation is the ability to link long-range visions and concepts to daily work.*
- *Has a dissatisfaction or restlessness with the present. Involves what Senge (1990) describes as 'creative tension' which emerges from seeing clearly where one wishes to be, one's vision, and facing the truth about one's current reality.*
- *Has a strategic map of the future state and dimension of the organization-creates the strategic architecture of an organization.*
- *Has the ability to define the key moment for strategic change in organizations that Burgelman and Grove (1996) call strategic inflection points. The key here is*

knowing not only what to do strategically but also precisely when to intervene and change direction.

- *Has the ability to translate strategy into action through a strategic process involving strategic intent, focus and implementation.*
- *Believes that strategy is as much about the creation of meaning for all those in the school as it is about the establishment of direction. Critical in this is the art of strategic conversation and dialogue.*
- *Has powerful professional and organizational learning networks etc.*

While an effective strategic leader is coupled to outcomes, Fullan (2005:35) takes it further when he argues that the main mark of an effective leader at the end of his or her tenure is not so much the impact on the bottom line (of profits or student achievement), but rather how many good leaders he or she leaves behind who can go even further.

Through the identified characteristics it becomes evident that strategic leadership is not concerned with the positioning of the leader but rather the actions of the leader (principal) and its deliverables or outcomes within an organisation like a school. These outcomes within the school milieu will be to make the school successful in its core function that will lead to academic achievement.

The next part will give a brief description of how a strategically focused school is.

2.1.4 Strategically focused school

Davies (2006:11) is of the opinion that a strategically focused school is one that is *educationally effective* in the short-term but has a clear framework and processes to translate core moral purpose and vision into *excellent educational provision* that is challenging and sustainable in the medium- to long-term. He continues by saying that schools that want to become strategically focused need to prioritise on developing powerful strategic processes rather than neat plans that do not always affect practice.

It is thus obvious that a school that is academically successful will be termed to be strategic as educational effectiveness is the core function of any school. The leader in an academically successful school will also be seen as a strategic leader as such a school has reached its core moral purpose and vision.

Leaders in strategically focused schools are obviously working to improve the current situation in their schools. They are developing strategic processes and approaches so as to enhance the capability of the school to move forward to new and improved learning opportunities for all children.

Davies (2003:309) argues *that*:

“The challenge in developing a strategically focused school is to ensure that not only do we give importance to developing planning documentation that emphasizes the strategic dimension but we give equal importance to developing the strategic conversation and dialogue to build a strategic perspective in the school. It is only by this process that we will be able to develop strategic leadership characteristics within all those who have leadership responsibilities in the school”.

This is a very important point made by Davies, as generally schools are expected to draw their school’s development or improvement plans; the question is whether these plans are implemented and implementable or are the plans just a document to satisfy the ones who will visit the school or those who do school evaluation.

Middlewood and Lumby (1998:137) argue that organisations are not solely concerned with outcomes, processes and resources; they are also concerned with the human spirit and their values and relationships. Authentic leaders breathe the life force into the workplace and keep the people feeling energised and focused.

This view of Middlewood and Lumby fits well with the argument of Davies because organisations (schools) require engagement in strategic conversations to build a

strategic perspective as a way of enhancing the strategic thinking characteristic of effective school leaders.

It is through the strategic conversation that all involved in the school becomes aware of the current situation of the school, they start knowing where they want to go and start drawing frameworks on how to reach there. All in the school become involved in the planning processes as all are in constant conversation.

The remaining question is how individuals can be encouraged within the organisation to engage with each other to build strategic understanding and enhance the strategic capability of the organisation.

Davies (2006:11) is of the opinion that the engagement of enhancing strategic capability of an organisation can be seen to consist of four elements: strategic conversation, strategic participation, and strategic motivation leading to strategic capability.

The relationship between conversations and their ability to enhance participation and motivation, as a means of increasing strategic capability, can be seen in **Figure.2.1**

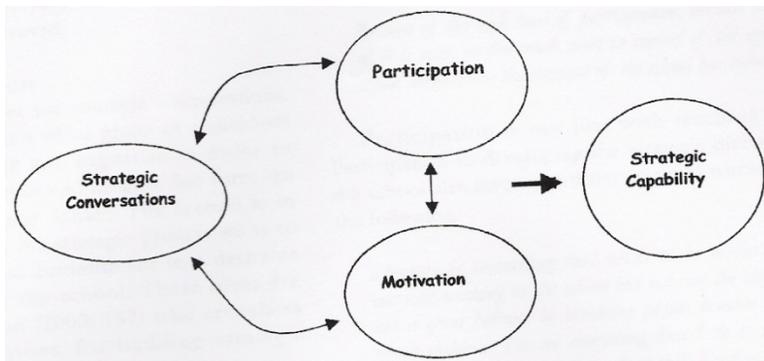


Figure 2.1 Building strategic capability

Source: From Management in education: Processes Not Plans Are the Key to Strategic Development. (p12) by Davies, B., 2006 (20) Sage Publications.

Strategic Conversations

Davies (2006:12) is of the opinion that schools are made up of different individuals who think about their role and the nature of the school in different ways. It may also be reasonable to assume that the school is not just a collection of these views but that, through the interaction of these individuals, a unique and powerful perspective can be developed to enhance the school.

He highlights a number of significant points that emerge from developing strategic conversations:

- establishing a common vocabulary;
- understanding how staff could make things happen;
- consensus building;
- outlining staff visions;
- building reflection;
- keeping everyone involved;
- carrying everyone forward;

Van der Heijden (as cited by Davies, 2006:12) argues that:

Often much more important is the informal learning activity consisting of unscheduled discussion, debate and conversation about strategic questions that goes on constantly at all levels in the organization.

Schools are thus seen as networks of individuals linked together through a series of interconnections based on conversation. Leaders need to take the informal opportunities to interact with others not only to discuss the problems of the present, but also to engage in a dialogue about the challenges of the future.

Strategic Participation

Davies (2006) argues that there are two purposes for strategic conversations. The first is to draw in a wider group of individuals with their knowledge and expertise in order to increase the pool of ideas and sights that form the strategic discussion and debate. The second is to involve individuals in the strategic process so as to build involvement and commitment to a desirable future direction for the school.

Gratton (as cited by Davies 2006:13) articulates three powerful reasons for building strategic participation. These are using participation:

- i. to build guiding coalitions; it means: “the continued involvement of broad groups of people is crucial – to build management learning through involvement in the visioning process; to map the causal relationships; and to become involved and committed to making the journey.”
- ii. to build the capacity to change; he sees this as “being about creating genuine adaptation, developing an organisation which is permanently adaptable and flexible and is involved at both the individual team and organizational levels, with a collective wish to move forward.”
- iii. to keep focusing on the strategic themes; this he interprets as: “The broad themes of the [strategic] journey act as a focus for action. This overview plays a crucial role in bridging from the present to the future. Perhaps most importantly it is a vehicle for communication, both across the teams and to the wide group that will be involved ... this overview ensures consistency of action across the organisation...”

Schools are dynamic interactive systems and individuals need to be both aware of the directions of the school and be open-minded to change and to development. Leaders need to know that all involved need to own the process, get a feel for it and take it on. Leaders have to consult because as a leader you have to bring people with you, as it is easier to lead than to push.

Strategic Motivation

The purpose of strategic conversations is the greater involvement of individuals within the school to participate in the strategic development. This process will enhance the motivation of individuals to become involved in its strategic debate and implementation.

Davies (2006:15) argues that the motivation of staff depends on factors such as:

- trust in the leadership of the school;
- sense of purpose – where we are going and why;
- feeling valued;
- feeling that their contribution is important and recognized;
- feeling that their contribution can make a difference.

Developing these five factors becomes a critical part in establishing individual and group motivation to enhance the strategic capacity of the school.

Strategic Capability

Davies (2006) makes a distinction between strategic capability and strategic capacity. He is of the opinion that capacity may be thought of in terms of more teachers, more information technology equipment, new facilities, in general, increasing the amount of resources to build a strategically focused school. Strategic capability deals with enhanced levels of knowledge and understanding, which allow individuals to adapt to change and build new ways of working.

The researcher agrees with Davies, because while schools obviously need more resources, those resources will have a minimal effect unless the abilities and attitudes of individuals can develop creative and meaningful solutions to enhance and not just replicate current practice.

Davies states that strategic capability would encompass abilities such as:

- the ability to see the current situation of the school in a wider system context;
- the ability to recognise and utilize change;

- the ability to envisage and improve future scenarios for the school;
- the ability to build effective relationship to create new understandings across the school;
- the ability to utilise resources in new and innovative ways.

Davies (2006:15) states that:

Leadership is about creating a culture within the school where everyone buys into the responsibility for where the school is now and where it is going.

Engaging and motivating people are vital to a sustainable and successful future of the school. It is obvious that a leader should have characteristics of a strategic leader that will make him/her successful through all the processes of building a strategic focused school.

The next section looks at how effectively leadership can enhance organisational performance.

SECTION B

2.3 Organisational performance versus effective leadership

Dunford, Fawcett and Bennet (2000), mention the following attributes: risk taking, passion, confidence, listening, praising, encouraging, acknowledging, having a dream (vision) as very important for a school principal to lead an effective school. This view is supported by Bush (2008:280) who states that:

“The evidence on school effectiveness and improvement during the last 15 years has consistently shown the pivotal role of effective leadership in securing high quality provision and high standards . . . effective leadership is a key to both continuous improvement and major system transformation”.

Sergiovanni (2001) sees principal leadership as a set of forces available for improving and maintaining quality schooling. He identified five forces and is of the opinion that each of the “forces” can be used by the principal to push the school towards effectiveness and believes that different forces have different consequences for school effectiveness.

Rhodes et al., (1984:16) describes “Force” as the strength or energy brought to bear on a situation to start or stop motion or change. Five “forces of leadership” – technical, human educational, symbolic, and cultural – are all important. Technical, human and educational are foundational forces that must be provided to ensure that schools will work. Symbolic and cultural are stretcher forces that help schools to rise to levels of extraordinary commitment and performance.

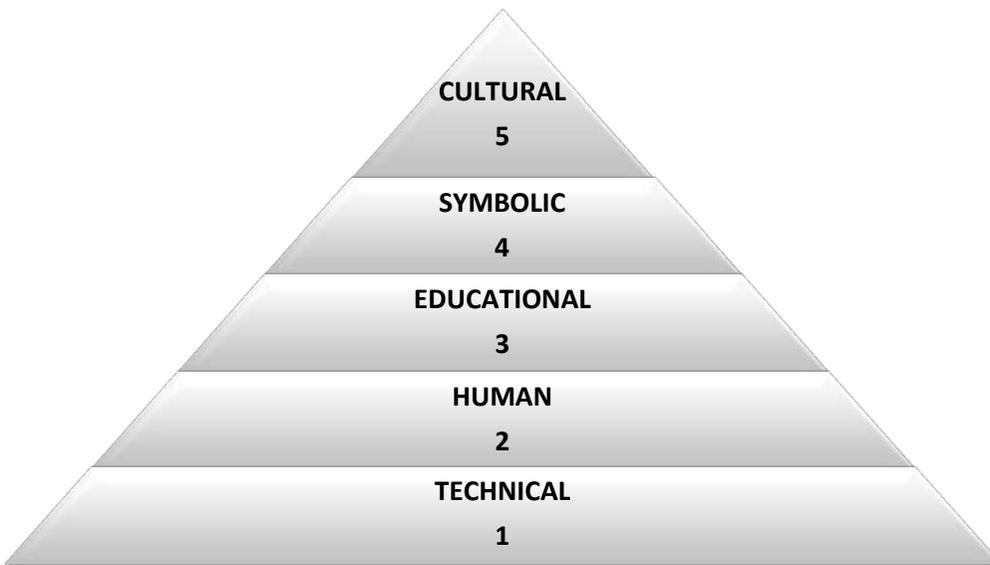


Figure 2.2 Leadership forces Hierarchy

Source: *From The Principal as Instructional Leader: Reflections on Effectiveness.* (p19) by Rhodes, L.A., Marentette, B., and Trexler, L., 1984, Development Communications Associate, Inc., Alexandria, Virginia.

Explanation of the five leadership forces as articulated by Sergiovanni (2001:100-105)

- *Technical* – derived from sound management techniques. This force is concern with the technical aspect of leadership. When expressing the technical force, principals can be thought of as assuming the role of a ‘management engineer’,

who emphasizes such concepts as planning and time management, contingency leadership theories and organizational structures. As management engineers, principals provide planning, organizing, coordinating and scheduling to the school and are skilled at manipulating strategies and situations to ensure optimum effectiveness (Sergiovanni, 2001:101)

Hoyle and Wallace (2005:68) agree with the afore-mentioned when saying that effective leadership and management “take the strain” by creating structures and processes which allow teachers to engage as fully as possible with their key task.

- *Human* – derived from harnessing the school’s social and interpersonal potential – its human resources. This force is concerned with human aspects leadership. Principals expressing this force can be thought of as assuming the role of “human engineer”, emphasizing human relations, interpersonal competence, and instrumental motivational techniques. As human engineers, principals provide support, encouragement, and growth opportunities for teachers and others. It is hard to imagine a school functioning properly without the strong presence of this human force of leadership. High student motivation to learn and high teacher motivation to teach are prerequisite for quality schooling and must be effectively addressed by principals (Sergiovanni, 2001:101)
- *Educational* – derived from expert knowledge about matters of education and schooling. This force is concerned with educational aspects of leadership. When expressing the educational force, the principal assumes the role of “principal teacher” who brings expert professional knowledge and bearing to teaching, educational program development, and supervision. As principal teacher, the principal is adept at diagnosing education problems; counseling teachers; providing for supervision, evaluation, and staff development; and developing curriculum (Sergiovanni, 2001:101-102)

- *Symbolic* – derived from focusing the attention of others on matters of importance to the school. This force is concerned with the symbolic aspect of leadership. When expressing this force, the principal assumes the role of “chief”, emphasizing selective attention or the modeling of important goals and behavior, and signaling to others what is important and valuable in the school. Touring the school; visiting classrooms; seeking out and visibly spending time with students; downplaying management concerns in favour of educational concerns; presiding over ceremonies, rituals, and other important occasions; and providing a unified vision of the school through proper use of words and actions are examples of principal activities associated with this force (Sergiovanni, 2001:103-104)
- *Cultural* – derived from building unique school cultural aspects of leadership. When expressing this cultural force, the principal assumes the role of “high priest” seeking to define, strengthen, and articulate those enduring values, beliefs, and cultural strands that give the school its unique identity over time. As high priest, the principal is engaged in legacy building, and in creating, nurturing, and teaching an organisational saga that defines the school as a distinct entity with an identifiable culture that builds institutional character (Sergiovanni, 2001:104-105)

According to Sergiovanni (2001:104), the technical aspects of leadership are managing structures and event; human aspects are managing psychological factors such as needs; and educational aspects are managing the substance of our work. By contrast, symbolic aspects are managing sentiment, expectations, commitments, and faith itself. Because symbolic leadership affects the faith that people have in the school, it provides the principal with a powerful force for influencing school events.

All the above said let us believe that for an organisation to be successful, the leader should have different capabilities that will attribute to the desired high performance of the organisation with an established culture.

Arnott and Soobiah (2007:10) in their article put it as follows, “A culture of high performance depends on commitment at the highest levels of the organisation – not only to set it in motion, but also to maintain the momentum that ensures ongoing high performance.”

They further state that a culture of high performance or, in its terminology, performance anatomy, is being divided into three components; namely,

- mindsets,
- practices and
- results.

When the mindsets are aligned, they generate operational practices that, in turn, lead to superior business results. Only when the necessary force, in the form of leadership is exerted does performance anatomy become an effective driver of high performance.

From the above statement it becomes clear that high performance is associated with leadership action. The leader needs to have the right mindset and develop approaches that can lead the organisation to success.

SECTION C

2.4 Contribution of school leadership to academic performance

Leadership and management are now of global significance as governments recognise the importance of education, so that they can compete effectively in an international economy, and see effective leadership as the key to school improvement. In many

parts of the world, school leaders are being given enhanced status, and in some cases specific training in recognition of their importance.

The idea that leadership especially the leadership of the principal, matters in determining levels of school effectiveness and of student achievement is widely accepted. This is agreed upon by Dunford et al., (2000:1) when they say that everyone agrees that effective leadership is one of the most important factors in the success of a school. Sergiovanni (2001:99) cited the U.S. governmental study stating the following:

“Principals are important! Indeed, no other school position has greater potential for maintaining and improving quality schools. In many ways the school principal is the most important and influential individual in any school. It is his leadership that sets the tone of the school, the climate for learning, the level of professionalism and morale of teachers and the degree of concern for what students may or may not become. If a school is a vibrant, innovative, child-centered place; if it has a reputation for excellence in teaching; if students are performing to the best of their ability one can almost always point to the principal’s leadership as the key to success”.

Dunford et al., (2000:16) continue by saying that for schools to be effective they need to be well managed, but to excel they need to be led. Those who choose only to manage surrender leadership to others. Principals who lead let others manage.

Leadership of a school is about providing vision, about establishing what the future will be like and then winning support for the vision from those who can make it happen. Schools whose principal does not lead will get stranded in complacency, problems will not be confronted and solved, and opportunities will be missed. Effective leadership in schools means seizing opportunities, confronting problems and always seeking to improve. The challenge facing many principals is to move out of a management mode into leadership.

The latter opinion is also shared by Bush (2008:272) when he says that:

“School leaders (experience) tensions between competing elements of leadership, management and administration. Irrespective of how these terms are defined, school leaders experience difficulty in deciding the balance between higher order tasks designed to improve staff, student and school performance (leadership), routine maintenance of present operations (management) and lower order duties (administration)”.

The above explanation provides a clear distinction that we know that leadership has to do with change, while management has to do with maintenance. Hargreaves & Fink, (as cited by Robinson, Lloyd and Rowe, 2008) is of the opinion that the literature on sustainability also sees the quality of school leadership as a key to continued organisational learning and improvement.

Although the latter mentioned statement recognises the leadership of the principal as contributing to the effectiveness of the school, there are some critics Hallinger & Heck (as cited by Robinson et al., 2008:637; Witziers et al., 2003 and Marzano et al., 2005) who believe that school leaders (principals) have small and indirect influence on the students outcomes.

According to their belief, most subsequent quantitative research has conceptualised the relationship between leadership and student outcomes as indirect, with leaders establishing the conditions such as, provision of teacher professional learning opportunities, forms of student grouping, through which teachers make a more direct impact on students.

Wong and Evers (2001:17) are of the opinion that poor performance of the school depends essentially upon the leadership of the head and the quality of the teaching. Robinson et al., (2008:637) put it as follows “we are recognizing that leaders’ impact on student outcomes will depend on the particular leadership practices in which they engage”.

Despite all the mentioned contradictions, the researcher tends to agree with Robinson who came to the conclusion that the focus should be put on types of leadership rather than on leadership as a unitary construct. To strengthen the above mentioned, Leithwood and Montgomery (as cited by Sergiovanni, 2001) identified four levels of leadership behaviour, each with a different focus and style and each with different consequences for principal effectiveness. They found that the “higher” the level of principal behaviour, the more effective the school. Effectiveness was defined as gains in student achievement in the “basics” and increases in student self-direction and problem solving.

Each of the levels represents increasingly complex and effective principalship behaviours. The four levels are set out in **Table 2.1** with a short clarification on how they contribute to the effectiveness of a principal.

Table 2.1 Levels of leadership behavior

LEVELS	LEADERSHIP	
Level 1	Administrator	Believes that it is the teacher’s job to teach and the principal’s job to run the school.
Level 2	Humanitarian	Believes that the basis of a sound education is a good interpersonal climate.
Level 3	Program Manager	Believes that their job is to provide the best possible programs for students.
Level 4	Systematic Problem Solver	Is committed to doing whatever is necessary by way of invention and delivery in order to give students the best possible chance to learn.

According to Sergiovanni, what administrators do at level one is not necessarily ineffective, only less effective than the other three levels if this behaviour pattern is dominant. Humanitarians at level two carry with them some of the Administrator's style but focus primarily on more complex behaviors that emphasize human relationships. Although Humanitarians are more effective than Administrators, they are not as effective as Program Managers.

Program Managers bring aspects of Administrators and Humanitarian style to their practice but focus primarily on more complex matters of educational programme development and implementation. Finally the Systematic Problem Solvers focus primarily on students' success.

Taking the levels in cognisance, we can concur with the following description of Bath (as cited by Sergiovanni, 2001:100)

"The principal is ultimately responsible for almost everything that happens in and out of school. We are responsible for personnel-making sure that employees are physically present and working to the best of their ability. We are in charge of program-making sure that, teachers are teaching what they are supposed to and that children are learning it. We are accountable to parent-making sure that each is given an opportunity to express problems and that those problems are addressed and resolved. We are expected to protect the physical safety of children-making sure that the several hundred lively organisms who leave each morning return, equally lively, in the afternoon".

The citation shows the holistic task of a school principal and to accomplish all that, it is believed that the principal should possess certain qualities or should have a certain leadership style to help him through the complicated task.

2.5 Leadership styles

Quite a number of literature is available on the different leadership styles but only a few of them are available on the differential effects of leadership types on student outcomes. For this study the focus is on the transformational and the instructional leadership types because they dominate the empirical research on educational leadership.

2.5.1 Transformational leadership style

“Transformation” is a term used in reference to the need for changing assumptions and developing common goals and directions. Strategic planning makes this transformation possible. It helps people to see how today’s realities cannot be understood with yesterday’s assumptions (McCune 1986:63).

Burns (as cited by Kawana, 2007) believes that the essence of transformational leadership lies in the leader having a vision for the organisation and sharing it with the followers. He further argues that transformational leaders are individuals who appeal to higher ideals and moral values, such as justice and equality, and that transformational leadership can be found at various levels of an organisation.

According to Northouse (as cited by Sinvula, 2009:18) a transformational leader has the following qualities:

- Empowers followers to do what is best for the organisation
- Is a strong role model with high values
- Listens to all viewpoints to develop a spirit of cooperation
- Creates a vision, using people in the organisation
- Acts as a change agent within the organisation by setting an example of how to initiate and implement change
- Helps the organisation by helping others contribute to the organisation.

Robinson et al., (2008:639) define transformational leadership as:

“Transformational leadership focuses on problem finding, problem solving, and collaboration with stakeholders with the goal of improving organisational performance”

It can be detected from the above descriptions that transformational leaders, are leaders that are not satisfied with the status quo or conditions in which they find themselves, and therefore have as an objective to bring about change through influencing and inspiring all in the organisation (the school) to commit them to the identified vision of academic achievement.

2.5.2 Instructional leadership style

Instructional leadership, developed during the effective schools movement of the 1980s, viewed the principal as the primary source of educational expertise. Aimed at standardising the practice of effective teaching, the principal’s role was to maintain high expectations for teachers and students, supervise classroom instruction, coordinate the school’s curriculum, and monitor student progress (Marks & Printy, 2003)

Murphy (as cited by Marks & Printy, 2003) narrowly defined instructional leadership, as leadership functions that directly relate to teaching and learning. Donmoyer & Wagstaff, Murphy (as cited by Marks & Printy, 2003) further stated that, in a broader view, instructional leadership also refers to all other functions that contribute to student learning including managerial behaviours.

Through research on instructional leadership, it is noted that principals in productive schools, that is - schools where the quality of teaching and learning were strong – demonstrated instructional leadership both directly and indirectly. Four sets of activities with implications for instruction were emphasised in these schools, namely:

- a) developing the school mission and goals;
- b) coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating curriculum, instruction, and assessment;
- c) promoting a climate for learning; and
- d) creating a supportive work environment.

To strengthen the aforementioned, Barth (as cited by Robinson et al., 2008) states that instructional leadership is aimed at standardising the practice of effective teaching, the principal's role was to maintain high expectations for teachers and students, supervise classroom instruction, coordinate the school's curriculum, and monitor student progress.

According to Hallinger (2005) instructional leaders were goal-oriented. As leaders they were able to define a clear direction for the school and motivate others to join in its achievement. In instructionally effective schools, this direction focused primarily on the improvement of *student academic outcomes*. The effective instructional leader was able to align the strategies and activities of the school with the school's academic mission.

Instructional leadership was initially assumed to be the responsibility of the principal, and neglected the contribution of other staff to instructional goal setting, oversight of the teaching programmes, and the development of a positive academic and learning culture. It is only later that the 'shared instructional leadership' was understood as to involve the active collaboration of principal and teachers on curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Marks & Printy, 2003). According to Hallinger (2005:11) the model of instructional leadership proposed by Hallinger and Murphy (1985) is the model that has been used most frequently in empirical investigations. This model, similar in many respects to the others proposes three dimensions for the instructional leadership role of the principal:

1. *Defining the School's Mission*
2. *Managing the Instructional Program; and*

3. Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate

These three dimensions are further delineated into instructional leadership functions, as depicted in **figure 2.3**



Figure 2.3 Instructional Leadership Framework

Source: Instructional Leadership and the School Principal: A Passing Fancy that Refuses to Fade Away. *Leadership and Policy in Schools* (p5) by Hallinger, P., 2005.

Two functions, *Framing the School's goals* and *Communicating the School's Goals*, comprise the first dimension, *Defining the School's Mission*. This dimension concerns the principal's role in determining the central purposes of the school. The dimension focuses on the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable, time-based goals focused on the academic progress of students. It is also the principal's responsibility to communicate these goals so they are widely known and supported throughout the school community (Hallinger, 2005:5).

The second dimension, *Managing the Instructional Program*, focuses on the coordination and control of instruction and curriculum. According to Hallinger (2005) this dimension incorporates three leadership functions: *Supervising and evaluating Instruction, Coordinating the Curriculum, and Monitoring Student Progress*. Hallinger and Murphy (1987) on which the instructional leadership is based, includes a fourth function namely, *Knows Curriculum and Instruction*.

This dimension requires the principal to be deeply engaged in stimulating, supervising, and monitoring teaching and learning in the school. Obviously, these functions demand that the principal has expertise in teaching and learning, as well as a commitment to the school's improvement (Hallinger, 2005:6).

The third dimension, *Promoting a Positive School Learning Climate*, includes several functions: *Protecting Instructional Time, Promoting Professional Development, Maintaining High Visibility, Providing Incentives for Teachers, Developing High Expectations and Standards, and Providing Incentives for Learning*. This dimension is broader in scope and purposes than the other two. It conforms to the notion that effective schools create an "academic press" through the development of high standards and expectations for students and teachers (Hallinger, 2005:6).

To assess the principal's instructional leadership, Hallinger, and Murphy (1985), developed an instrument the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS), that will be discussed in detail in chapter 3. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1987:60) principals who obtain high ratings across the various job functions are perceived as engaging in instructional leadership behaviours associated with principals in effective schools. Other findings from similar efforts to establish links between what principals do, as instructional leaders and school outcomes are as stated by Heck (1992:29) that:

“Heck, Marcoulides, and Lang (1991) were able to classify correctly by achievement 77% of the sample schools according to a similar model of principal instructional leadership. Heck, (1991) also was able to classify correctly 77% of a random sample of high- and low- achieving secondary schools in Singapore according to the school’s climate, teacher expectations, and the instructional leadership profile of the principal”

It can be concluded that the above-mentioned results and others have focused on the principal as well as the classroom behaviour of teachers providing the needed empirical support for the belief that school variables, including principal instructional leadership, are predictive of the school’s academic outcomes.

After discussion of the two leadership styles, it is therefore reasonable to deduce that transformational leadership puts emphasis on investigating any process and bringing in the needed change. Instructional leadership on the other side puts emphasis on bringing about change in the instructional process to get the required results. Instructional leadership is thus a way of bringing in transformation. It is thus right to agree with Marks & Printy (2003:376) that, when principals who are transformational leaders accept their instructional role and exercise it in collaboration with teachers, they practise an integrated form of leadership.

2.5.3 The impact of transformational and instructional leadership on student performance

Some literature although few, shows that there is interest in the question of how educational leaders influence a range of student outcomes. Qualitative research done supported the idea that school leaders make a considerable difference to student outcomes, school effectiveness and improvement; while, the quantitative evidence for the impact of leadership conceptualised the relationship between leadership and student outcomes as indirect, with leaders establishing the conditions, through which teachers make a more direct impact on students. (Robinson et al., 2008)

It is due to the mentioned contradiction between qualitative and quantitative evidence as stated above, that Robinson et al., (2008); Marks & Printy, (2003) focused on the type of leadership and its impact on student performance, and through review of research came up with the following results:

- Principals with instructional leadership demonstrated both direct and indirect effects on student achievement through school governance, instructional organization, and school climate (Marks & Printy, 2003).
- To improve organisational performance, transformational school leaders focus on the individual and collective understandings, skills, and commitments of teachers (Marks & Printy, 2003).
- Although transformational principals can enhance student engagement in learning, studies have not shown any direct effects on student achievement (Marks & Printy, 2003).
- The leadership of high performing schools was reported to be, among other things, more focused on teaching and learning, to be a stronger instructional resource for teachers, and to be more active participants and leaders of teacher learning and development (Robinson et al., 2008).
- The impact of instructional leadership on student outcomes is notably greater than that of transformational leadership (Robinson, et al., 2008).
- The comparison between instructional and transformational leadership showed that the impact of the former is three to four times that of the latter. The reason is that transformational leadership is more focused on the relationship between leaders and followers than on the educational work of school leadership, and the quality of these relationships is not predictive of the quality of student outcomes (Robinson et al., 2008).

It is therefore proper to conclude that an “integrated” form of leadership, incorporating a strong capacity for developing shared instructional leadership combined with qualities

associated with transformational leadership, is the best predictor of the intellectual quality of student outcomes.

2.6 Behaviour patterns of effective principals

Vision, resourcefulness, school improvement processes, instructional support and monitoring were identified by Rhodes et al., (1984:13) as behaviour patterns of effective principals. The researcher will use these identified patterns as a basis to make a brief review on how these patterns are reflected in literature as contributors to effectiveness:

Vision: Effective principals have a sense of vision as to the kind of school and learning environment they intend to create. They articulate goals, directions, and priorities for their school to citizens, faculty, and students (Rhodes et al.,1984:13).

Bush (2003:278) suggests that vision has been regarded as an essential component of effective leadership for almost 20 years, and that heads are motivated to work hard 'because their leadership is the pursuit of their individual visions'.

Fullan (as cited by Bush, 2008) contradicts the above by saying that visionary leaders may damage rather than improve their schools:

"The current emphasis on vision in leadership can be misleading. Vision can blind leaders in a number of ways . . . The high-powered, charismatic principal who 'radically transforms the school' in four or five years can . . . be blinding and misleading as a role model . . . my hypothesis would be that most such schools decline after the leader leaves . . . Principals are blinded by their own vision when they feel they must manipulate the teachers and the school culture to conform to it".

The above quotation teaches us that visionary leadership can be harmful if it is overdone and mostly when it is only owned by the leader who is imposing it on others. It is therefore good that a vision of a school should be shared and owned by the whole school community, for it to survive when the leader leaves the school.

Resourcefulness: Rhodes et al., (1984) argues that effective principals do not stop with the limited resources provided them through normal channels, It is rare that an urban principal accomplishes much by way of school improvement if he or she is not a bit of a maverick. While not necessarily defying the system, effective principals demonstrate ingenuity in convincing central office personnel, parent groups, business leaders, and others of the school's needs. Robinson et al., (2008) put this as "*resourcing strategically*", stating that the word "strategic" signals that the leadership activity is about securing resources that are aligned with instructional purposes, rather than leadership skill in securing resources per se. Thus, the measure should not be interpreted as an indicator of skill in fundraising, proposal writing, or partnering with business, as those skills may or may not be applied in ways that serve key instructional purposes. The ultimate resourcing will be how principals can influence student achievement through their decisions about staffing and teaching resources.

School improvement Processes: Effective principals plan for school improvement. All leaders need to spend considerable time earning "people power" beyond the "position power" conveyed with their title. Effective leaders seek to develop a feeling that the organisation cares about its employees and values their contribution. (Rhodes et al., 1984:13)

Robinson et al., (2008) state that the leadership dimension that is most strongly associated with positive student outcomes is that of promoting and participating in teacher learning and development. They further allude to that the leadership in higher performing schools is also judged by teachers to be significantly more successful than the leadership of lower performing schools in protecting teachers from undue pressure from education officials and from parents.

Instructional Support. Effective principals are a visible entity in all phases of school life and provide active support to teachers. They spend much time in a manner regarded by teachers as helpful. The difference between effective principals and others

seems to lie in their knowledge of quality instruction, and this drives their judgement on how to spend their time (Rhodes et al., 1984:13). Robinson et al., (2008) argue that the closer educational leaders get to the core business of teaching and learning, the more likely they are to have a positive impact on students' outcome. Friedkin and Slater (as cited by Robinson et al., 2008) state that the principals in higher achieving schools are more likely to be seen by staff as a source of instructional advice, which suggest that they are both more accessible and more knowledgeable about instructional matters than their counterparts in lower achieving schools.

Monitoring: Effective principals know more about how students are doing in Mathematics or Composition or Art than other principals, and they use the information as the basis for setting new priorities and as valuable feedback to teachers. (Rhodes et al., 1984:13)

The leader involvement in classroom observation and subsequent feedback was also associated with higher performing schools. The teachers in such schools reported that their leaders set and adhered to clear performance standards of teaching. Heck (as cited by Robinson et al., 2008) found through research that there was greater emphasis in higher performing schools on ensuring that staff systematically monitored student progress and that test results were used for the purpose of programme improvement.

The afore-discussed behaviours of effective principals are giving guidelines on how principals can assess themselves and also use the behaviour patterns to bring productive transformation within the whole school process.

SECTION D

2.7 Roles and responsibilities of a principal in a Namibian school

The job description of a principal in a Namibian school is set out in the relevant documentation as follows:

- To ensure that the school is managed satisfactorily and in compliance with applicable legislation, regulations and personnel administration measures as prescribed.
- To ensure that the education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner and in accordance with approved policies.
- To be involved at school management level with responsibilities relative to grade implementation, evaluation of teaching programmes, teaching, supervision, administration and in-service development, inspection and guidance of teachers at the school.

Core duties of the job:

The duties and responsibilities of the principal are individual and varied. Depending on the approaches and needs of the particular school the duties and responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Accountability
2. Promoting a positive school climate
3. Creating an effective learning environment
4. Leading and managing the staff
5. Effective deployment of staff and resources
6. Interaction with stakeholders
7. Administration

The list only contains the core duties while under each core duty there are several responsibilities to be handled by the principal that are not listed. Due to the differences in educational achievement arising from historical, social and geographical causes, the Ministry of Education came up with several initiatives to level up standards so that all

schools may advance towards the standards of the best. For this study the following initiatives as identified by the Ministry of Education are of importance:

1. Guidelines for school principals
2. Education and Training Sector Improvement Program (ETSIP)
3. National Standard and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia

It is the responsibility of the principals in the Namibian schools to know the content of these documents as to get leadership guidance given to them and also to make sure whether they are fulfilling the mandate as set out in the mentioned educational documents.

2.8 Alignment between the problem statement and the literature review

The study was based on three schools perceived to be producing poor academic results. Evidence is shown by the results as depicted in the presented tables 1.1 and 1.2 in chapter one. Citations from literature especially newspapers regarding the academic performance in Omaheke Region also indicated that stakeholders were not satisfied with the results in that region. The researcher then undertook to investigate the contribution of the principal's leadership in three selected schools.

In the literature review a strategic leader is viewed as someone who is leading a strategic school, and a strategic school is seen as a school which is educationally effective. The behaviours of a principal who is able to bring about academic achievement to a school, through his leadership are highlighted in chapter two. Davies (2006) in chapter two is of the opinion that schools that want to become strategically focused need to prioritise on developing powerful strategic processes rather than neat plans that do not always affect practice. Hallinger (2005) argues that these leaders are goal-oriented, they are able to define a clear direction for the school and motivate others to join the direction which focuses directly on the improvement of student academic outcomes. The processes include developing school- vision, -mission, strategic

conversation, and strategic capability, monitoring instruction, monitoring student progress and transforming the school to academic excellence. All the aforementioned were seen to be made possible by a principal as a leader who offers instructional leadership to teachers. It is through this understanding that the researcher felt that leadership contribution to poor academic performance in the Omaheke schools needs to be investigated.

It is from Dunford et al., (2000), through literature review in chapter two, that it is established that management makes the school effective but leadership makes the school excel academically. This statement thus confirms that leadership impacts on student academic outcomes. For the latter to happen the principal should exercise instructional leadership that directly relates to teaching and learning (Marks & Printy, 2003). It is further stated that instructional leadership also refers to all other functions that contribute to student learning including managerial behaviours.

The researcher tried to establish through literature review the type of leadership which when applied would solve the problem of poor academic performance in the schools. Through comparison it came to light that instructional leadership compared to other leadership styles would produce the required academic results in the schools. It is due to the latter that the researcher opted for a research instrument that would assess the instructional leadership of the principals to look at their contribution to the results that are produced.

The instrument will measure all those behaviours of a principal that contribute to academic achievement within a school and it will be explained in detail in the next chapter.

2.9 Conclusion

The chapter was introduced by giving different definitions of the concepts strategy and strategic leader as portrayed in different literature. An attempt was also made to give

the characteristics of a strategic leader by Davies (2003) and through different reviews done. These characteristics are considered to be gears that enhance effectiveness in school leadership.

Different factors that contribute to effective schooling are identified and discussed i.e., leadership forces and leadership levels from which a principal can operate to improve and maintain quality schooling. Although school principals' leadership is seen as the primary factor which impacts student outcome in the literature, a few is of the opinion that the trick lies with the leadership style of the principal and not leadership per se. It is because of the contradicting opinions that this study focused on the transformational and instructional leadership styles and compared them to identify the one which would have more impact on the student outcomes, although the combination of the two leadership styles was seen as the best to trigger results.

Within the discussions it became evident that a principal with vision, who is resourceful, who is involved in the school improvement process, who gives instructional support and monitors results of a school will be successful and is seen as effective in his/her task, while students in that school will deliver the required results.

The chapter ends with the roles and responsibilities of a principal in a Namibian school as set out by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry, in recognising the undesirable performance in schools, gave some guidelines to the leaders in schools in the quest to improve educational performance that is judged by student outcomes.

The next chapter discusses the methodology employed during the research process.

Chapter 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Through the literature review, it was reported that academic performance in schools can be linked to the leadership style of the principal. Therefore this study focused on instructional leadership as empirically researched by Hallinger (2005).

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will determine whether instructional leadership exists in three selected poor performing Omaheke schools and the relationship of leadership with academic performance.

The survey measures the perceptions of teachers and inspectors regarding the principal's instructional leadership behaviour in the three schools, so that inferences could be made regarding the possible relationship between reported principal leadership behaviours and student achievement.

To enable the analysis of data in a structured manner, the researcher used an existing instrument which is proved to have success in collecting data to assess the instructional leadership of principals.

3.2 Hypothesis

The hypothesis represents the formal statement of the researcher's prediction of the relationship that exists among the variables under investigation. Johnson & Christensen (2004) and Punch (2005:38) gave a simple definition of the hypothesis as "a predicted answer to a research question". He further states that to say we have a hypothesis is to say we can predict what we will find in an answer to a question. The researcher,

through the chosen instrument and subsequent analysis of data intends to prove or disprove the formulated hypothesis, which is:

Instructional leadership in three poor performing Omaheke Schools determines academic achievement of the learners

H0 There is no relationship between instructional leadership of a principal and academic achievement of the learners

H1 There is a positive relationship between instructional leadership of a principal and academic achievement of the learners

H2 There is a significant difference in the principal's instructional leadership behaviour as perceived by teachers and inspectors

H0 There is no significant difference in the principal's instructional leadership behaviour as perceived by teachers and inspectors

3.3 Research Design

A research design is the plan according to which we obtain research participants (subjects) and collect information from them (Welman & Kruger, 2001). It is further stated that in the research design we have to specify:

- the number of groups that should be used,
- whether the groups are to be drawn randomly from the populations involved; and whether they should be assigned randomly to groups;
- what exactly should be done with them in the case of experimental research.

For Punch (2005:62) research design means “all the issues involved in planning and executing a research project – from identifying the problem through to reporting and publishing the results”.

The identification of continuous poor academic performance of secondary schools in the Omaha region prompted the undertaking of this study. Through literature review in chapter two, the pivotal role of leadership in achieving performance excellence was highlighted and cannot be underestimated.

The research is thus conducted in three poor performing schools of Omaha Region and assesses whether instructional leadership is present in those schools and whether it has any contribution to the academic performance of learners.

The research design will thus explore the relationship between the independent variable “instructional leadership” as demonstrated by the three principals and the dependent variable “academic performance” as demonstrated by the learners under supervision of those principals.

Academic performance in this research refers to the end of year academic results of the school and more specifically the Grade 10 external examination results, as all the three schools identified for the research do have Junior Secondary Phase.

The research instrument which will be used is a structured self-administered questionnaire, consisting of both closed and open-ended questions. This allows for quantitative and qualitative data analysis to test the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the two indicated variables.

The whole population (teachers) of the three schools will assess the principal's leadership within the relevant school and no sampling will take place. All teachers in the three schools were expected to complete the self-administered questionnaire. According to Hallinger & Murphy (1987) questionnaires may be a quick and dirty way to generate assessment data. But they are convenient, since it generally takes less time to complete and score them than to conduct a single observation.

The questionnaire to be completed will not take more than ten minutes and fits the last statement.

Questions from the existing questionnaire of the “Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS)” on instructional leadership as developed by Hallinger & Murphy (1982) provides a basis to the questions which were adapted for use to determine if instructional leadership does exist within the three Omaheke schools.

The questionnaire has 30 questions, to be completed by teachers assessing the principals of the three schools on specific practices and behaviours for both accountability and professional improvement purposes. The inspectors are also expected to complete a questionnaire of 20 questions, assessing the principals on the practices and behaviours relevant to their job. A score will be generated across all the respondents for instructional leadership per job function to enable an analysis of the correlation between instructional leadership as perceived by the teachers and the inspector at each school.

3.4 The research instrument

The chosen research instrument to test the hypothesis is a survey instrument administered to teachers, principals and inspectors. The research was intended to assess the instructional leadership of the principal and how it contributes to academic performance of the learners.

The research instrument utilised is the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) developed by Dr. Philip Hallinger in 1982. According to Hallinger & Murphy (1987:59) the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) is a questionnaire instrument that can be used to assess the principal’s instructional leadership behaviour. They argue that the principal’s role comprises three dimensions of instructional leadership activity, namely, a) defining the school mission, b) managing the instructional programme, and c) promoting the school learning climate.

It should be borne in mind that *role* in this setting refers to the usual functions of the principal that includes all his/her responsibilities. These roles are also referred to as job functions, which the principal will be assessed on to determine his/her instructional leadership. *Dimension* on the other hand refers to a certain specific aspect of this role, as set out in **figure 2.3**

Each of the three dimensions contains specific job functions, and each job function includes a variety of the principal's practices and behaviours that can lead to the success of the school if properly administered. Practices and behaviours refer to the leadership tasks in which a certain function is divided into.

The original PIMRS instrument as developed by Hallinger consists of 50 behavioural statements that describe the principal's job practices and behaviours. For this survey, the researcher identified two job functions for each dimension as depicted in **table 3.1**

Table 3.1 Dimensions and job functions of an instructional principal.

Dimensions	Job functions
Defining the school mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frames the school goals, • communicates the school goals,
Managing the instructional program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervises and evaluates instruction, • monitor student progress,
Promoting the school learning climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protects instructional time; • promotes school improvement

The researcher identified only two job functions per dimension, as some job functions for example coordinate the curriculum, does not entirely occur under the principal's jurisdiction within the Namibian situation. There are five behavioural statements per six

job functions which give a total of 30 questions that the principal is to be assessed on (Appendix A). Some of the practices and behaviours are adapted to suit the Namibian situation.

The PIMRS Teacher Questionnaire consists of two parts. Part A that asks the teacher to answer questions to gather descriptive data. Part B is a four-point Likert Scale which consists of 30 questions used to provide a profile of the principal according to the teacher's perception. Answers are recorded on the four-point Likert Scale from 1 = Almost never, to 4 = Almost always.

Four-point and five-point rating scales are very popular with educational researchers and have been shown to work quite well (Johnson & Christensen, 2004:171). They also stated that research has also shown that omitting the middle alternative does not appreciably affect the overall pattern of results and it is why the researcher chose to use a four-point scale in this survey.

The PIMRS Inspector's questions are identical to Part B of the teacher's questionnaire and consists of 20 questions (Appendix B). The inspectors' questions assess only four job functions of five statements each, as some job functions do not fall under the inspectors' scope of daily function.

The PIMRS can also be administered to a principal as a self-assessment instrument as well as to supervisors and teachers to provide a broader picture of the principal's leadership. The principals in this survey will not do the self-assessment but they will only complete a questionnaire that consists of descriptive questions (Appendix C). The researcher included the inspectors in the study to get an external perspective on the leadership profile of the principal.

The researcher also administered face to face interviews with the members of the School Management and also requested some materials to verify some data that would come up during the survey, because according to Punch (1998:174) interview is a very

good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. When an instrument or assessment procedure is used, the two important psychometric properties to consider are reliability and validity. Reliability refers to the consistency or stability of a set of test scores (Johnson & Christensen, 2001).

Punch (2005:95) agrees with Johnson & Christensen that reliability means consistency, but he further states that consistency has two main aspects, which is consistency over time (stability) and internal consistency.

According to Hallinger & Murphy (1987:60) at least three studies (Hallinger 1983, Hallinger and Murphy 1985, Krug 1986, O'Day 1984) have found the PIMRS to provide data on the principal instructional leadership that meet both legal and professional standards of reliability and validity.

Hallinger (as cited by Lyons, 2010:36) mentioned that the PIMRS instrument has been used in 119 other research studies since its development in 1982. The latter mentioned serves as assurance of the validity and reliability of the instrument and that the researcher can draw meaningful and useful inferences from scores on the instrument.

3.5 Sampling method

According to Gorard (2001) the main reason that samples are used is to save time and money for the researcher. Sampling is a useful short cut, leading to results that can be almost as accurate as those for a full census of the population being studied but for a fraction of the cost. The population to be surveyed is as follows, school A has 12 teachers, school B has 21 teachers, while school C has 13 teachers that give a total of 46 teachers. The researcher does not see the size of the population as impractical or uneconomical and has the intention to involve all the members of the population in the research project.

The possibility of some teachers not being present due to unforeseen circumstances is taken into account and the researcher is of the opinion that 80% of teachers per school completing the questionnaire will still represent the population. Based on the aforementioned it is obvious that sampling techniques and methods will not be used to establish representation of a larger population.

3.6 Data collection

The main data collection tool was the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) which is a questionnaire instrument that can be used to assess principal instructional leadership behaviour.

The questionnaire consists of Part A descriptive questions and part B, six job functions and each job function contains a representative sample of critical behavioural statements. The respondents indicate the degree to which they perceive the principal has performed a particular practice over the year.

Punch (2005) is of the opinion that interview is a very good way of accessing people's perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations and constructions of reality. The researcher also found it necessary to administer some interviews to collect data that would supplement what would come up during the questionnaires.

Hallinger & Murphy (1987) are of the opinion that the analysis of school documents as a method of generating data on principal instructional leadership is under utilised, although it is inadequate if used as a single method of assessment. Analysing school documents can provide a revealing picture of the principal's concerns, priorities, and communication style. These include, analysing goal statements, newsletters, memos, bulletins, meeting minutes, and other school documents.

It is due to the above-mentioned that the researcher did interviews with the school management to find out more on the school improvement plan and documentary proof of meetings and other relevant material.

According to Punch (2005) the researcher should stay in control of the data collection procedure, rather than leave it to others or to chance. This statement by Punch (2005) encouraged the researcher to opt for being physically present at the research site to distribute the questionnaires and collect them after completion. The questionnaire return rate increases as a result of researcher's presence.

Confidentiality was maintained during the data collection process as no respondent was required to use any form of identification, except the school's name, on the questionnaire.

3.7 Data capturing

Each respondent's scores will be calculated as per job function and then all the respondents' scores will be calculated together as per job function. A mean of the total scores will be calculated to get a score to represent each school's response per job function.

The researcher will use Excel spreadsheet to enter the data per job function for each school. The data on the spreadsheets was codified and transferred on the computer chart statistical analysis. Punch (2005) sees coding as analysis on the one hand and as the specific and concrete activity which starts the analysis, on the other hand.

The coding in this study will be numeric as the program works with numbers. After the coding, two graphs will be drawn to depict the profile of the principal as assessed by the teachers and inspectors as per job function. Another graph will be drawn, depicting results of all six job functions calculated across the three schools to allow comparison of the assessment of the principals' profile.

3.8 Data analysis

The questionnaire is composed of different items and the analysis will follow the procedure of item by item analysis. Other items on the questionnaire were descriptive in nature and thus a simple descriptive analysis will also be done. Punch (2005) states that, the benefit of descriptive analysis is that it keeps the researcher close to the data; and understands the distribution of each variable across the survey respondents.

Quantitative methods were used to analyse the responses of the participants, and thus address research questions related to the null hypothesis. Statistical analysis of the data consisted of means for the 30 individual behaviours demonstrated by the principal surveyed, as well as the 6 subscales or job functions. The instrument is scored by calculating the mean for each job function. A high score on a function indicates active leadership in that area. Principals who obtain high ratings across the various job functions are perceived as engaging in instructional leadership behaviours associated with principals in effective schools (Hallinger & Murphy, 1987).

The assumption is that the lack of instructional leadership at the school is the cause of poor academic performance at the school. The researcher did an analysis of every job function to determine which behaviour is high and which is low, that would culminate in the existence or lack of instructional leadership at each school.

The drawn graphs helped with the analysis of the data, for conclusions to be made on whether a principal of a certain school has instructional leadership style which will contribute to positive academic performance and be associated with effective schooling.

The study also involved the analysis of scores between two groups (teachers and inspectors), which gave a comparative analysis of the data. It was also interesting to compare the analysis and note the variance to determine if a significant difference exists between the two groups in their assessment of the principal.

Another graph will be drawn that depicts all three schools' results as per job function. The analysis here will try to show which school does better in which job function and try to highlight the similarities and differences amongst the schools. The assumption is that the principals will use this part to know on which aspect they should work on to bring about improvement in their leadership.

3.9 Shortcomings and sources of error

Although questionnaires are popular and easy to handle, the respondents in some cases do not respond objectively when completing questionnaires. Creswell (2003) states that all statistical procedures have limitations; hence, the researcher also incorporated the interview part to understand the situation and to construct reality.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Ethical issues were considered by the researcher and thus wrote a letter (**Appendix D**) to the Director of Education of Omaheke Region to get permission to do research at the identified schools.

The Director's office sent a letter to the schools to notify them of the intended research. Site respect was shown by not disrupting any formal programme of the schools. Confidentiality and anonymity was maintained through the whole process, as no names were requested on the questionnaires.

3.11 Conclusion

Chapter three introduced the detailed research methodology needed to investigate the hypothetical relationship between the instructional leadership of a principal and learners' academic performance. The next chapter presents the results found per leadership function and concludes with an interpretation of these results.

Chapter 4 RESULTS: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three discussed the research method and the procedures involved in collecting, capturing and the analysis of data. Possible shortcomings and ethical considerations were looked at.

This chapter first presents a description of the responding sample of teachers, inspectors and principals who took part in the survey. The results are presented and the findings of the data are summarised. The discussion of the results is done to try and address the two null hypotheses. The latter will then be followed by the thematic analysis of the results to conclude the chapter.

4.2 Sample profiles

The purpose of this survey was to assess whether the Principals in the three schools that were sampled are strategically aligned through instructional leadership, as perceived by the teachers and inspectors, and to assess whether this leadership has any contribution to academic performance of the learners so that the Principals can be classified as strategic leaders.

Fourty six (46) teachers in the three schools were all included in the survey to get a valid sample. School A has eleven (11) teachers and ten (10) participated in the survey. School B has twenty (20) teachers and nineteen (19) took part, while school C has ten (10) teachers and all ten (10) took part in the survey. The researcher thus reached more than the 80% response rate that was set for each school

One inspector was responsible for schools A and C, while the other inspector was responsible for school B. Both inspectors participated in assessing the Principals of their respective schools. The Principals were not required to assess themselves but they completed a descriptive questionnaire.

4.3 Presentation of results

4.3.1 Results: Teacher’s questionnaire Part A

The **first question** asked the respondents to indicate the number of years of their professional training. The tables below indicate the teachers’ responses. The total number of respondents will be indicated with n throughout the presentation.

Table 4.1 Teachers’ professional training

	School A		School B		School C	
<u>Number of years of professional training</u>	<u>n=10</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n=19</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>n=10</u>	<u>%</u>
0 to 2	0	0	0	0	2	20
3 to 4	8	80	12	63	8	80
5 to 6	2	20	3	21	0	0
More than 6 years	0	0	4	16	0	0
TOTAL		100		100		100

The total population surveyed was 39 teachers. The **table 4.1** above indicates that 37 teachers in the three schools had a qualification of 3 years and more, which is classified as professionally qualified and meet the requirement by the Ministry of Education to be appointed as a teacher. This is 95% of the teachers, while the remaining 2 teachers represent only 5% can be classified as un- or under- qualified.

The **second question** asked the respondents to indicate their number of years of teaching experience and the responses are indicated in the table below.

**Table 4.2 Teachers' years of teaching experience
SCHOOL A**

<u>Number of years of teaching experience</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 5	4	40
6 to 10	3	30
11 to 20	2	20
More than 20 years	1	10

SCHOOL B

<u>Number of years of teaching experience</u>	<u>n = 19</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 5	5	27
6 to 10	7	39
11 to 20	3	16
More than 20 years	4	21

SCHOOL C

<u>Number of years of teaching experience</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 5	7	70
6 to 10	2	20
11 to 20	1	10
More than 20 years	0	0

The tables above show that 60% of teachers in School A, 76% teachers in School B and 30% teachers in School C had teaching experience of six years and more. Only School C has a high percentage (70%) of teachers with teaching experience of five years and less.

The **third question** asked the respondents to indicate the number of years they have worked with the current Principal. The responses are indicated below:

**Table 4.3 Teachers' years of working with the Principal
SCHOOL A**

<u>Number of years of working with current Principal</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 2	6	60
3 to 4	4	40
5 to 6	0	0
More than 6 years	0	0

SCHOOL B

<u>Number of years of working with current Principal</u>	<u>n = 19</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 2	7	36,8
3 to 4	4	21,1
5 to 6	6	31,6
More than 6 years	2	10,5

SCHOOL C

<u>Number of years of working with current Principal</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 2	3	30
3 to 4	7	70
5 to 6	0	0
More than 6 years	0	0

The tables show that at School A 40% teachers have worked with the Principal for three to four years, which is the time the principal has been at the school. School B, indicated that 63,2% teachers worked three years and more with the Principal. School C indicated that 70% worked for three to four years with the Principal.

The **fourth question** asked the teachers to write down the mission statements of their schools.

This question was left open by the majority of the teachers and those who attempted wrote nothing close to the mission statements of their schools. This is an indication that all teachers (respondents) from the three schools did not know the mission statements of their schools. During the interviews it was mentioned at one school that each year they review the vision and mission of the school to see whether it is still relevant. One teacher at school A made the observation that the mission statement was not developed at the school, but it was sent from somewhere.

The latter may be true in all the schools and this cause the teachers not to understand the purpose of the mission statements as they did not own it.

The **fifth question** asked the respondents to indicate how many times the current Principal observed their class presentation in his/her term of office at the school. The tables under table 4.4 indicate the responses of the teachers:

Table 4.4 Number of class observations by Principal during term of office.

SCHOOL A

<u>Number of class observations by Principal</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Sum of all visits taking the highest number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 1	5	5	50
2 to 3	1	3	10
4 to 5	3	15	30
More than 5 years	1	6	10
TOTAL	10	29	

SCHOOL B

<u>Number of class observations by Principal</u>	<u>n = 19</u>	<u>Sum of all visits taking the highest number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 1	5	5	26,3
2 to 3	5	15	26,3
4 to 5	4	20	21,1
More than 5 years	5	30	26,3
TOTAL	19	70	

SCHOOL C

<u>Number of class observations by Principal</u>	<u>n = 10</u>	<u>Sum of all visits taking the highest number</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
0 to 1	1	1	10
2 to 3	7	21	70
4 to 5	2	10	20
More than 5 years	0	0	0
TOTAL	10	32	

Principal of School A was for two years at the school, Principal of school B was six years while School C's Principal was three years at that school. The total number of class observations done by the Principal in each school divided by the total number of teachers in a school gave the average of class observations done by each principal. This number weighted against the years of the principal being at that school gave the mean of observations done in that number of years.

School A shows $29/10 = 2.9$ mean, $2.9/2 = 1.45$ observations per year per teacher.
School B shows $70/19 = 3.68$ mean, $3.68/6 = 0.61$ observations per year per teacher.
School C shows $32/10 = 3.2$ mean, $3.2/3 = 1.06$ observations per year per teacher.

The results show, that on average all three Principals made one class observation per teacher per year. This shows that class observation is not getting the deserved attention at all three schools. The research concentrated on the leadership and guidance of the principal given to the teachers and did not research on the observations done by the entire management staff.

The **sixth question** asked the respondents to write down the overall pass percentage targeted for the school for 2011, and the responses were as follows.

SCHOOL A: Two (2) teachers did not write any percentage, two (2) gave 65%, while other two (2) gave 50%. The remaining four indicated varying percentages of 30, 40, 55 and 60.

SCHOOL B: Nine (9) of the respondents here wrote 50%, six (6) of the respondents did not write any percentage, two (2) indicated 35%, while two (2) indicated 26% and 45% respectively.

SCHOOL C: Seven (7) of the respondents indicated 50%, one (1) respondent gave the range of 50 -59%, one (1) gave 80%, while the last one (1) wrote no percentage.

Diverse responses were received from the teachers of the three schools making it look like a guessing exercise. This indicates that there is no commonness in the school goals.

4.3.2 Results: Teachers' questionnaire Part B

The research question asked the teachers which of the instructional leadership job functions identified by the PIMRS instrument they saw being demonstrated by the Principals:

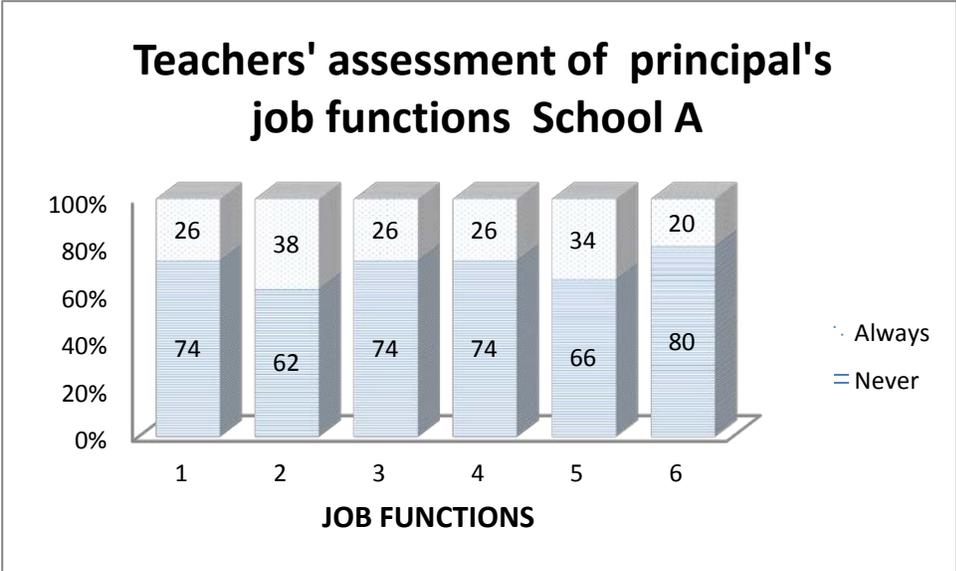
- 1 = Sets the school goals,
- 2 = Communicates school goals,
- 3 = Supervises and evaluates instruction,
- 4 = Monitors student progress,
- 5 = Protects instruction time,
- 6 = Promotes school improvement;

A range of 45-55% in a job function shows an average performance, while higher than 55% indicates an above average performance, while below 45% shows a below average performance within a job function.

The teachers assessed the school Principals on 30 individual behaviours using a 4-point Likert scale with the two extremes of “almost never” and “almost always”.

The teachers' responses were calculated per school using the two extremes to get a percentage for 6 leadership job functions. The results per school are as reflected in the following charts.

Figure 4.1 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership



School teachers at A School rated the Principal's performance of leadership functions below 39% in every way, which is very low. This indicates that the Principal "almost never" demonstrates all the instructional leadership behaviours. The highest score on a job function is 38% which is job function 2 (communicates school goals), while the lowest score is on job function 6 (promotes school improvement) with 20%.

Figure 4.2 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership

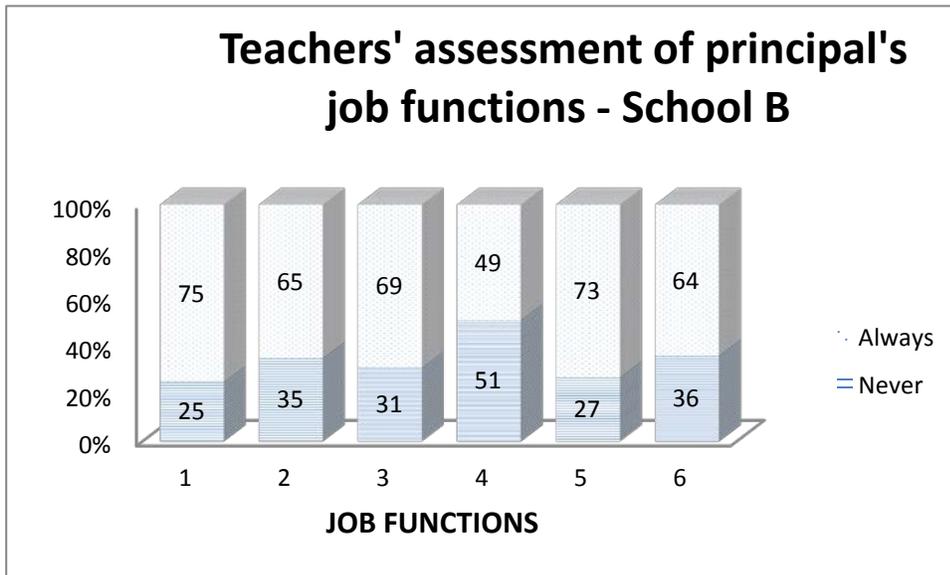
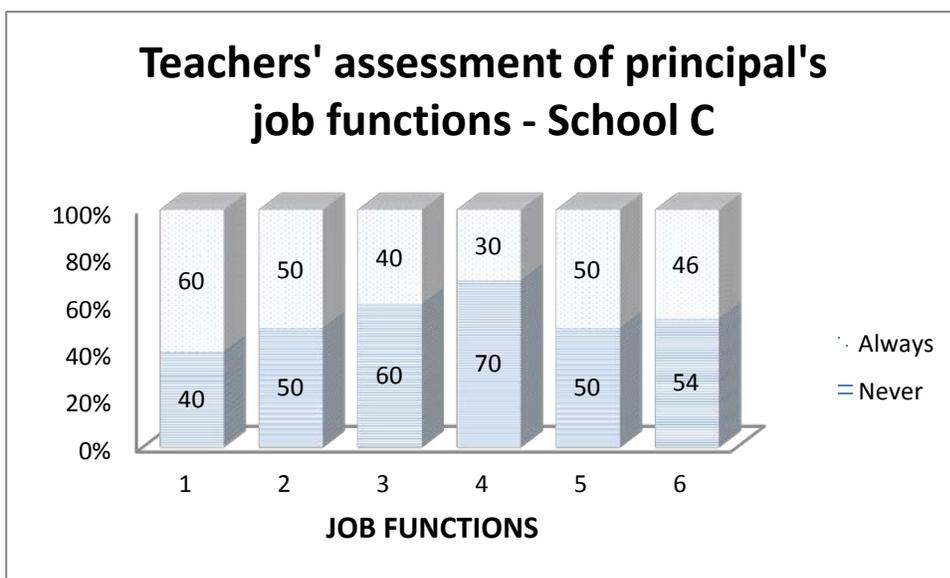


Figure 4.2 shows that the principal of School B “almost always” demonstrates the behaviours of five of the six functions as they are all rated above 64%. Job function 1 (sets the school goals) got the highest score of 75%, while function 4 (monitoring student progress) got the lowest score of 49%.

Figure 4.3 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership

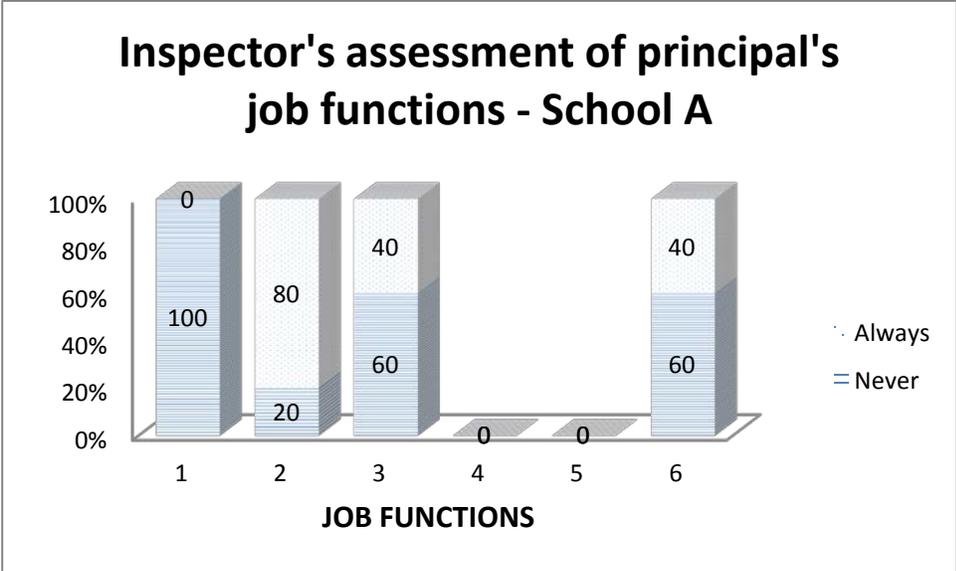


The results for the Principal at School C, as shown in chart 4.3 show that the Principal demonstrates job function 1 (sets school goals) the highest with 60%, while job function 4 (monitoring student progress) is the lowest with 30%. Two job functions show an average score, which is function 2 and 5 (communicates school goals and protects instruction time).

4.3.3 Results: Inspectors’ questionnaire

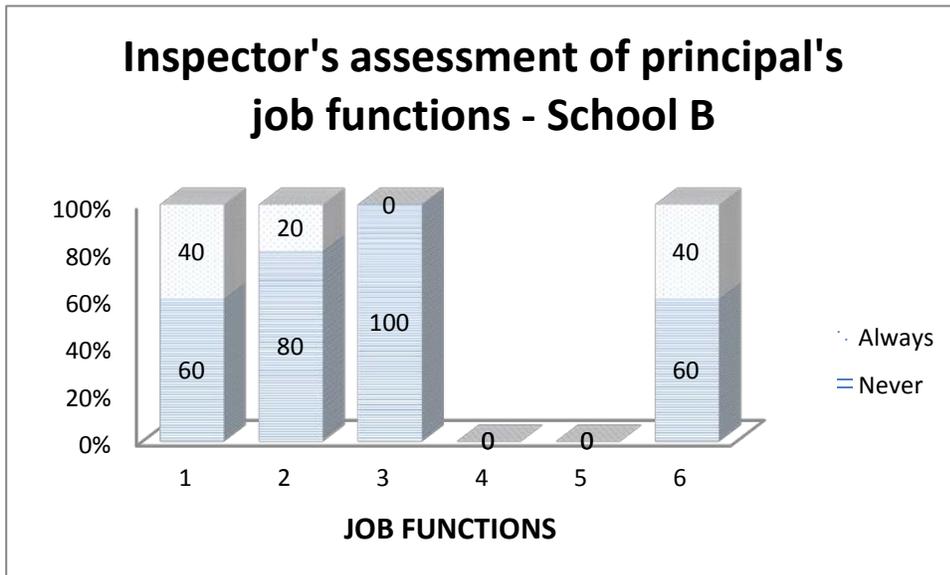
The two inspectors assessed the Principals on only four job functions and the results are indicated in the figures 4.4 to 4.6

Figure 4.4 Inspector’s assessment of principal’s leadership



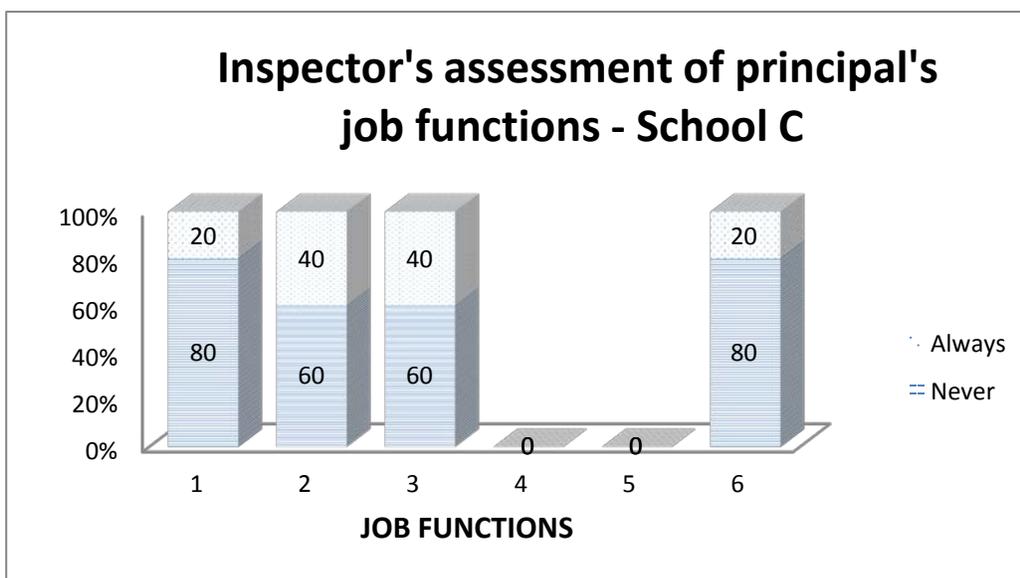
The inspector indicates that the Principal in School A demonstrates leadership function 2 (communicates the school goals) the highest with 80%, while leadership function 1 (sets the school goals) is the lowest with 0%.

Figure 4.5 Inspector’s assessment of principal’s leadership



The results show that the Principal in School B does not demonstrate any of the four leadership functions as perceived by the inspector. This can be seen in chart 4.5 The highest job function is 40% for both functions 1 and 6 (sets the school goals and promotes improvement), while the lowest is 0% for job function 3, which is supervises and evaluates instruction.

Figure 4.6 Inspector’s assessment of principal’s leadership



The results show that the Principal in School C does not demonstrate all four leadership functions as perceived by the inspector. The highest job functions are 2 and 3 (communicates school goals and supervises and evaluates instruction) rated 40% which is performance below average. The lowest scores are for function 1 (sets school goals) and 6 (promotes school improvement) which are rated 20%.

Table 4.5 Summary of leadership job functions as assessed by teachers and inspectors

		LADERSHIP JOB FUNCTIONS					
SCHOOL		1	2	3	4	5	6
		Sets School Goals	Communicates school goals	Supervises and Evaluates Instruction	Monitors Student Progress	Protects Instruction time	Promotes School Improvement
A	Teachers	26	38	26	26	34	20
	Inspector	0	80	40	-	-	40
B	Teachers	75	65	69	49	73	64
	Inspector	40	20	0	-	-	40
C	Teachers	60	50	40	30	50	46
	Inspector	20	40	40	-	-	20

Table 4.5 indicates the leadership job functions of all three schools' principals as assessed by the teachers. The highlighted (red) scores are under or in the range of

45-55% which indicates below average performance, while above 55% indicates above average performance.

4.3.4 Results across three schools

Comparison of the results across the three schools was done by the assessment of the six goals calculated through all job functions of each school so that a comparison of the three schools could be made. The results are plotted in **figure 4.7**

Figure 4.7 Comparison of leadership across three schools

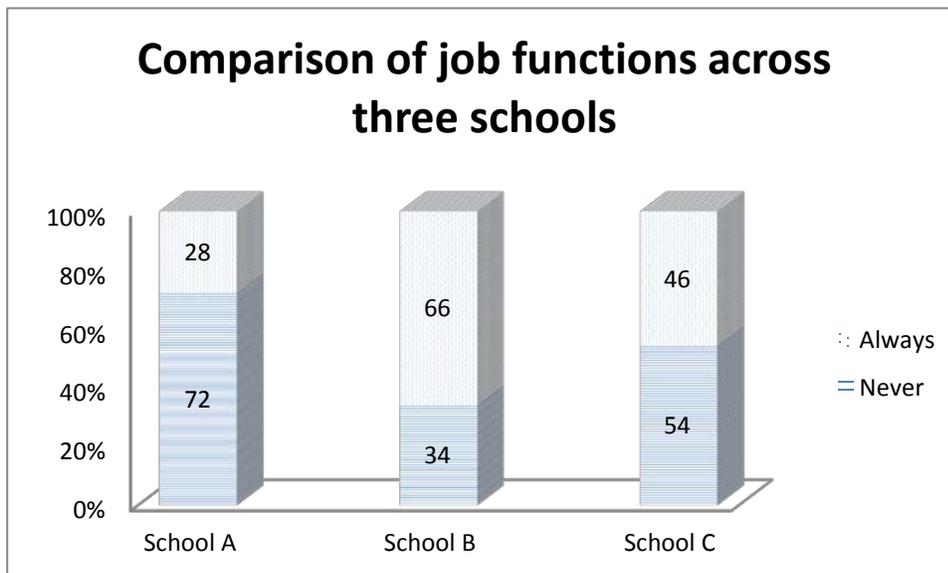


Figure 4.7 is based on the results of figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3. A total of each school's "almost always" and "almost never" of the six functions was put together respectively and a mean calculated.

The results provide an overview of teacher responses of leadership functions across the three schools. Principal of School B obtained quite a high score across the functions at 66%, while Principal of School C is average with 46% and School A Principal is far below average with 28%.

The results put School B Principal in first place, Principal of School C in second and Principal of School A in the third place. The assessment correlates positively with the end of year examination (2011) results: School B has 27,8%, School C 10,3% and School A 7,6% pass rate in the Junior Secondary examinations (**Appendix E**).

4.3.5 Results: Principals' questionnaire

The first question asked the Principals to indicate the number of years of their professional training and the results show that the three Principals are well qualified, as they possess qualifications of five to six years of tertiary education.

The second question asked the Principals to indicate the number of years of being Principal. The responses are indicated in **table 4.6** below

Table 4.6 Number of years of being Principal

<u>Number of years of being Principal</u>	<u>n = 3</u>	<u>School</u>
0 to 5	1	C
6 to 10	0	
11 to 20	2	A and B
More than 20 years	0	

The principal of School C has under six years' experience as a Principal, while the other two have between 11 and 20 years of experience.

The third question asked the Principals to indicate the number of years they have been Principal at the current school. The responses are in **table 4.7**

Table 4.7 Number of years of being Principal at current school

<u>Number of years of being Principal at current school</u>	<u>n = 3</u>	<u>School</u>
0 to 2	1	A
3 to 4	1	C
5 to 6	1	B
More than 6 years	0	

The Principal of School A indicated 0 to 2 years, Principal B indicated 5 to 6 years, while Principal C indicated 3 to 4 years at the present school.

The **fourth question** asked the Principals to write down the mission statements of their respective schools. All three Principals wrote down the mission statements of their schools. It is worth mentioning that the Principals completed the questionnaire in their offices and could have copied the mission statements, an opportunity which the teachers did not have.

The **fifth question** asked the Principals to indicate the overall pass percentage targeted for their school for 2011.

School A Principal indicated 55%, School B Principal indicated 30%, while School C Principal indicated 50%.

The **sixth question** asked the Principals whether their professional training included any leadership courses. The Principals of Schools A and B responded in the affirmative, while School C Principal's response was negative.

The **seventh question** requested the Principals to write down any in-service training they received during their tenure as Principals and also to indicate the years of the in-service training.

Principal of School A indicated that in 2009, he received 'Workplace Wellness' training. The Principal of School B, indicated to have received courses from the Institution of African Leadership Management, Leadership and School Management courses and International Computer Driver's Licence (ICDL). School C's Principal indicated that he was enrolled with Institute for Open Learning (IOL) for Bachelor of Education (Honours), but this was on his own initiative.

4.4 Discussion of results by hypothesis

The analysis of the data of the survey, especially Part B in figures 4.1 to 4.6 that assess the perception of the teachers and inspectors indicate that Principals of School A and C *almost never* demonstrate most of the leadership behaviours that are measured by the PIMRS instrument. The survey was done during August 2011 and the November 2011 results show that the three schools occupy the three bottom places out of the ten (10) schools in Omaheke Region offering Junior Secondary Examinations. (**Appendix E**)

The data also indicated that the Principal of School B according to the rating is demonstrating the leadership behaviours measured by the PIMRS as he was rated 60% and above.

The first null hypothesis stated that:

There is no relationship between instructional leadership of a Principal and academic performance of the learners.

To address the null hypothesis the scores of the leadership functions were calculated to see whether the Principals as perceived by the teachers are high or low in a behaviour area. For this survey an above average score will be above 50% and will indicate that the Principal is perceived to be engaging in instructional leadership.

The survey results (figures 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6) as summarised in Table 4.5 indicated that the Principals of Schools A and C *almost never* demonstrated most job behaviours as measured by the PIMRS instrument. As mentioned by Hallinger, and Murphy, (1987) in chapter two, principals with high ratings across the various job functions are perceived as instructional leaders and are associated with effective schools.

The Principals of school A and C obtained low ratings across the leadership functions, except for job function 2 for principal of school C. Due to the below average performance, these principals cannot be perceived as engaging in instructional leadership and cannot be associated with high performing and effective schools.

The null hypothesis must be rejected because there is a relationship between instructional leadership of a Principal and academic performance of the learners. The lack of instructional leadership in these schools as per the results is demonstrated as being a contributing factor to poor performance in the schools.

The second null hypothesis stated that:

There is no significant difference in a principal's instructional leadership behaviour as perceived by teachers and inspectors

To address this hypothesis, the scores of teachers and inspectors were compared to determine whether there is a significant difference, and the results indicated the following:

School A results indicated a difference in job function 2 (communicates school goals) where the teachers gave a low performance of 38% while the inspector rated the principal 80%. The results of the teachers and the inspector did not show a significant difference for the following job functions: sets school goals, supervising instruction and promotes school improvement. On average it can be concluded that the difference between Principals' scores as perceived by teachers and inspectors of school A is not much.

With regard to school B, there was a significant difference between the principal's scores as perceived by the teachers and the inspector. Teachers' assessment indicated that the principal almost always demonstrate the behaviours as all ratings were above 60%, while the inspector indicated that the principal almost never did so, with the lowest being supervising instruction with 0%. This contradiction will be interpreted at the thematic analysis with reference to the results obtained by that principal during the 2011 examinations.

It can be concluded that the results of school C show that the teachers rated the principal 60% on the function of setting school goals, while the inspector indicated 20%. The job functions of, communicates school goals, supervising instruction and school improvement did not show a significant difference as rated by the teachers and the inspector.

The results show that there is a relationship between the instructional leadership of a Principal and the academic performance of the learners as perceived by teachers and

the inspectors. The relationship is that there is not much instructional leadership demonstrated by the Principals which is the cause of poor academic performance in the three schools. It is therefore right to state that the second null hypothesis should also be rejected.

4.5 *Thematic analysis*

The descriptive data of the survey shows that most teachers of the three schools are qualified and have enough teaching experience. This means that poor academic performance cannot be attributed to lack of experience or to un- or under qualification of the teachers.

It is observed that teachers of School B have worked more years with the current principal and the teachers reflected a more positive picture of him, as he was perceived to be above 64% in most job functions.

The above perception is contradicted by the inspector. The data shows that the Principal of school B has stayed for six years at that school. 63,2% of the teachers worked three and more years with the principal and the assumption would be that the teachers know the principal better than the inspector, and that could be the reason of the high ratings from the teachers. However, the examination results of the school correlates more with the rating of the inspector.

Principals of Schools A and C had only two to three years at the respective schools. The perception by the teachers corresponds with the perception of the inspector, except on one job function of each of the principals (table 4.5). It is also interesting to mention

that the outcome of the examination results of 2011 as indicated before, also reflected the same to show that the principals are not engaged in instructional leadership, which is contributing to the poor performance in the schools.

It is expected of any leader to define a very clear mission for the organisation he/she is heading so as to give clear direction, priorities and articulate goals for that organisation. This is why teachers and Principals were requested to write down the mission statement of their schools. Part B of the questionnaire looked at two job functions, which are *Setting the school's goals, and communicating the school's goals'*

This function concerns the Principals' role in determining the central purpose of the school. According to Hallinger (2005) this dimension focuses on the Principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable, time-based goals focused on the academic progress of students. It is also the Principal's responsibility to communicate these goals so that they are widely known and supported throughout the school community.

Each of the three schools surveyed had a mission statement on the notice boards of the staff-room and the Principal's office. It became evident in the results that the mission statements were not a result of collective activity with the teachers let alone the parents, learners and school board that form the school community.

The teachers were not able to copy the mission statement as the survey was done in a different venue than the staffroom. It was established through interview that all teachers knew of the existence of the mission statements of their schools and that it is in the staff room.

The researcher could not establish with certainty that the Principals knew the mission statements of their schools, as they did their questionnaire in their offices and could have copied it, an opportunity which the teachers did not have. The results show that the principals are perceived to demonstrate active leadership in the dimension of defining the school mission.

This could imply that the Principals are good in articulating the school goals without involving the school community or they are not implementers of what they articulate.

In chapter one, reference was made to the definition by Bennis and Nanus (1985), that leadership is about vision and goals and it would be expected that each leader's action in a school will be directed towards the achievement of pre-determined outcomes, if there are any.

It is observed through the results that the schools did not have a targeted passing percentage rate for the year, although it is expected through the Plan of Action for Academic Improvement (PAAI) system in Namibia which requires schools to set targets to improve performance. A very disturbing fact is the response of the Principal of School B who indicated the overall passing target percentage of the school as 30%. This may imply that the Principal has no vision for improvement and commitment towards the success of the school.

The results also indicated that class observation is neglected throughout the three schools, showing that on average one observation is taking place per teacher per year in all three schools. It is important to note that the results were calculated using the highest cohort on the number of class observations done by the principal. The scenario will be worse if the lowest number of the cohort will be used for the calculation.

This phenomenon shows that monitoring of teaching and learning in schools is not taking place. This is a very serious cause for concern as teaching and learning is the core function of a school environment. This is what Sergiovanni (2001) called for in the literature review, when he said that high student motivation to learn and high teacher motivation to teach are prerequisite for quality schooling and must be effectively addressed by principals.

The results of the teachers in part B indicated that job function: *monitoring student progress* is the job function that is lowly rated in all three schools even in school B where all job functions were above 60%. This means that the principals of the three schools were perceived as *almost never* demonstrating the described function. Robinson, et al. (2008) in chapter 2 emphasised that in high performing schools student progress is monitored and that test results were used for the purpose of programme improvement. It is obvious that when this important function is not taking place in a school, poor academic performance should be expected.

An inspector assessed the Principals only on four functions, namely, sets the school goal (1), communicates the school goal (2), supervises and evaluates instruction (3) and promotes school improvement (6) and these ratings were compared with the assessment done by teachers. It is interesting to note that most ratings of the teachers and inspectors agree in terms of below average performance of Principals of school A and C as illustrated in figures 4.1, 4.3, 4.4 and 4.6., as summarised in table 4.5. The exception can be seen with regard to job function 1 for school C principal that was rated 60% by the teachers, and job function 2 for school A principal that was rated 80% by the inspector.

A closer look at school A assessment by the inspector shows another picture. The highest function was *communicating school goals* with 80% rated by the inspector in

contrast of 38% rating by the teachers. The lowest rating is *setting the school goals*, rated 0% by the same inspector, as illustrated by the summary in table 4.5. This shows a contradiction that the principal cannot set goals but can communicate them well. The question is which goals is the principal, communicating so well, if setting school goals is 100% *almost never*?

The comparison of the results across the three schools as depicted in figure 4.7 shows that the Principal of School B as perceived by the teachers is engaged in instructional leadership that makes him effective and a strategic leader. However, the examination results (**Appendix E**) show a very poor academic performance of 27,8% for the school which suggests that the principal does not demonstrate instructional leadership. The results thus correlate positively with the assessment made by the inspector who assessed the principal of School B (figure 4.5). Based on the latter it can be deduced that the three principals do not demonstrate instructional leadership and thus the schools they are leading did not deliver positive academic results and cannot be classified as high performing schools.

The Principals through the survey indicated their years of training, years of being Principals and years of being Principal at current schools. The responses show that the Principals cannot offer lack of qualification and lack of experience as reason for not being able to lead the schools to academic success.

However, it should be mentioned that two of the principals indicated that their professional training did not include leadership courses that could have prepared them for the tasks at hand. In service training is also lacking as indicated and the Principals are left to their own devices year in and year out, with the same results being produced. As poor academic performance in the schools cannot be attributed to lack of

professional qualifications and experience, then poor leadership can be seen as the major contributor to that.

4.6 Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to determine whether the leadership of the Principals in the three schools demonstrated the identified leadership behaviours that can contribute to high academic performance of the learners.

The first part describes the sample, while the second part of the chapter presented the results of the data derived from the teachers' and inspectors' responses in the PIMRS. The data was then used to test the two null hypotheses.

The results indicated that, based on the teachers' perception of the Principals' behaviour, most leadership functions were not being demonstrated by the principals. The observation is that overall the leadership function that was the least demonstrated by the Principals is function 4, which is *monitoring student progress*. Job functions 2, 3, 5 and 6 were only demonstrated by the principal of school B, while job function 1 was demonstrated by principals of schools B and C.

The inspectors' perception did not differ much from the teachers' perceptions on the functions they assessed. The indication is most job functions were not demonstrated by the principal, except job function 2 that was highly demonstrated by the school A principal (table 4.5).

Several outputs were analysed to address the two null hypotheses, which resulted in both null hypotheses being rejected because it is found that there was a relationship

between the instructional leadership of the Principal and the academic performance of the learners.

In the next chapter, a short summary of the findings highlights the significance of the results. The chapter ends with recommendations and suggestions for possible future research.

Chapter 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

Aspects of instructional leadership are interrelated and influence each other. This chapter discusses the relationship between the various summarised findings while conclusions are drawn. A discussion of the study's potential implications are highlighted and suggestions for further research are also presented.

5.2 Discussion of salient points

Through the research it is found that all the principals and most teachers who took part in the survey were well qualified as required by the Ministry of Education. It can be deduced from the findings of the survey that the principal and teachers' academic qualifications and work experience in a school does not necessarily lead to an improved academic performance of the learners. Therefore a principal within a school needs other variables to help him/her create a conducive environment, with the support of the teachers to make the school effective through academic performance of the students.

Another finding is that the mission statements of the schools are not well known by all the teachers. This was a disturbing factor. The mission of a school is a statement that should be giving direction to all who are involved in the school. The principal's role is to work with the staff to establish a mission that is focused on academic achievement. The three surveyed schools' mission statements were not properly crafted and were also not result-driven which contributed to poor academic results over the past three years.

Hallinger (as cited by Lyon, 2010:22) stated that although the principal does not unilaterally create the mission, his or her role is to ensure that the mission exists and is

communicated effectively. The fact that teachers and the principals in the surveyed schools gave different pass rate targets within their schools shows that effective communication of the mission statements is not taking place. It can be thus concluded that there are no clear vision and academic goals set for the schools and these are not communicated to the whole school community. When goals are not set and well communicated in a school then activities cannot be supervised and monitored properly. The finding in the survey is that supervision and evaluation of instruction in these schools was neglected, as the importance of these exercises was not known. Teaching and learning in these schools is thus happening haphazardly without coordination, and the principals were not taking responsibility of the process.

The latter mentioned resulted in students' progress not being well monitored and students' results were not used for academic improvement of the school. Under student progress it is expected that the principal discuss academic performance results with the teachers to identify curricular strengths and weaknesses, use tests and other performance measures to assess progress toward school goals. The schools will not be able to deliver good academic results, when these activities are not taking place as part of monitoring.

Another tested dimension is whether the principals promote school climate through protecting instructional time and promoting improvement in the schools. School learning climate refers to the norms and attitudes of the staff and students that influence learning in the school. When the staff and students are not motivated, effective teaching and learning cannot take place and this will result in poor academic performance.

5.3 Interpretation of results in terms of literature

The research has focused on the instructional leadership functions that are evaluated by the PIMRS. This survey instrument provides principal performance levels on job functions associated with a principal's leadership in effective schools.

Instructional leadership is aimed at standardising the practice of effective teaching. The principal's role is to maintain high expectations for teachers and students, supervise classroom instruction and monitor student progress.

Through literature review in this study, it became evident that the principal with instructional leadership demonstrates both direct and indirect impact on the academic achievement of the students through school governance, instructional organisation, and school climate (Marks & Printy, 2003).

The results in charts 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 indicated that principals did not demonstrate job function 3 and 4, which are *supervising and evaluating instruction* and *monitoring student progress*. This is evidence on why the schools have poor academic performance, confirming Wong et al., (2001) observation that poor performance of the school depends essentially upon the leadership of the Head and quality of the teaching. Principals should ensure that students receive appropriate instruction in areas identified through the curriculum.

It is thus obvious that through instructional leadership there will be quality of teaching culminating in quality learning that will result in high academic performance by the learners, and the school will then be classified as a high performing school.

Another aspect that can be highlighted from the survey is the result on job function 1 and 2 that has to do with the developing of the school mission and goals. Hallinger (1987:57) stated that out of the mission evolves a sense of purpose shared by the staff, students, and community, which unites all the school's activities. School goals are articulated to promote both accountability and instructional improvement.

The results in charts 4.1 and 4.3 show that schools had developed mission statements that are not shared and are on the notice boards of the staffrooms, which the learners and school community are not aware of. The latter proves Davies' (2003) caution in the

literature review, that schools should not only give importance to developing planning documentation that emphasise the strategic dimension but give equal importance to developing the strategic conversation.

The latter implies that the whole school community including teachers, learners, parents and stakeholders should know the strategic direction the school is taking. It does not make any sense that the principal is the only one in the school that knows the mission statement of the school as indicated through the survey. This also shows that although the principals were seen as demonstrating job function 1 and 2, it is evident that goals were not clearly communicated yet, that is what Davies in the literature review terms a strategic conversation. The two functions relate to the principal's role in working with the staff to establish a mission that is focused on academic achievement.

5.4 Discussion of gaps

The results showed that the highest job functions demonstrated by the principals are job functions one and two that have to do with, *setting the school mission* and *communicating the school mission*. The contradiction comes in when all the teachers at the three schools do not even know the mission of their respective schools even though they rated them higher than other functions. This shows that the mission of the school does not occupy central place of the schools' activities that need to be achieved. The possibility also exists that the significance of a mission statement to an organisation is not known, as some teachers eluded that the mission statement was developed somewhere and was sent to the school.

The main deviation in the data is the perception of the teachers compared to the perception of the inspector with regard to the leadership behavior functions of the principal of school B, whereby the teachers think he demonstrated most of the job functions, while the inspector scored him below average. As already mentioned in

chapter four, the reason of the deviation could be that the teachers are in daily contact with the principal and knew him better than the inspector, who just comes to school on visits. It is interesting to note that the academic results of the school tend to correlate with the assessment of the inspector that implies that the principal does not demonstrate the leadership job functions as indicated by the teachers.

Ambiguity is also found in the survey through the way the principal of School B indicated 30% as the academic target for the school's performance, when he answered question five. This can be concluded that the low target set for the school, shows that the principal has no vision for result improvement at this school. Another version can be that the other two schools set completely unrealistic targets given the level they achieved the previous year. School B could reasonably achieve 30% and then push for 35%.

5.5 Significance of the results

The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership of the principal and its contribution to academic performance. More specifically, the goal was to determine whether the results indicate an ability to predict achievement outcomes based on teachers' and inspectors' perceptions of the instructional leadership activities in the school. The research questions were thematic based on the leadership job functions of the principal that are seen to improve academic results when demonstrated by the principal. It was thus, necessary to investigate this as the identified schools were producing poor academic results.

In this research the data in charts 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6 clearly indicate that the majority of leadership functions measured by PIMRS were not being demonstrated by principals within the surveyed population. This may have direct implications for professional practice, and reinforce the belief that effective principals do many things that other principals do not do. The results thus confirm what is mentioned through the literature

review that leadership is one factor if not the main cause of poor academic performance in poorly performing schools.

It is high time that the results produced at schools are traced back to the principal heading the school. This is strengthened by Lyons (2010) who stated that school districts will continue to address the needs of state identified struggling schools through the hiring of principals who have been shown to consistently demonstrate many of the leadership behaviours. The result is that poor performing school principals need to account for the results produced in their schools, an action that is not given much attention in the Namibian schools.

The results of this study and others that have focused on the principal as well as the classroom behavior of teachers provide the needed empirical support for the belief that school variables, including principal's instructional leadership, are predictive of the school's academic outcome.

Sheppard (as cited by Hallinger, 2005:14) stated that when teachers perceive principals' instructional leadership behaviours to be appropriate, they grow in commitment, professional involvement, and willingness to innovate. Thus, instructional leadership can itself be transformational.

This research is significant as it will add to the local literature that lacks in the area of school leadership and its relationship to student achievement, but rich in resources regarding school leadership in general.

Namibia's education is generally perceived as substandard due to the poor academic results in secondary and senior secondary schools. It is therefore that the researcher found it necessary to look at leadership in schools and its impact on student achievement. It is believed that principals of schools will use the material to make self-assessment and know which function they had to work on to transform or deliver the expected results in their respective schools.

5.6 Policy and other Recommendations

This section draws policy implications from the research findings on the relationship between principal instructional leadership and the students' academic performance.

Through different data collection methods used during the study, administrative proof (documentation) could be seen that confirms the activities, but school principals should be able to align the strategies and activities of the school with the school's academic mission. Thus instructional leaders focus not only on *leading*, but also on *managing*.

Strategies should be developed where principals must use most of their time observing classroom practices (effective teaching and effective learning), promoting discussion about instructional issues, and emphasising the use of test results for monitoring student progress and school programme improvement.

Allocate time to activities aimed at improving teachers with the desired quantity and quality of feedback on their teaching after classroom observation. This action is consistent with Heck (1992:30) who found that the amount of time principals spent in classrooms and the quality of their feedback to teachers were important predictors of school achievement in a different cultural context.

Schools need to be assisted to set clear visions, tailor made mission statements, and collective academic goal setting that will trigger academic performance and ownership of the whole process in the school environment. This is in line with what Bennis and Nanus (as cited by Sergiovanni, 2001) said, when they mentioned that, a compelling vision is the key ingredient of leadership among heads of the highly successful organisations he studied.

Existing educational documents like the "National Standards and Performance Indicators for Schools in Namibia" and others need to be made available at schools. Principals need to be made aware of the existence of these documents and have these clarified to them so that they can be fully implemented during class visits.

Professional development of the teachers should be given the needed attention so that the teachers can be motivated through incentives and the needed in-service training to be given to sharpen them for the daily tasks implementation.

Urgent transformation is to be made at poorly performing schools. Principals should be trained in instructional leadership that can help the schools to attain good academic achievement.

5.7 Future research

The study demonstrated the teacher and inspectors' perception of the leadership of the principal, while future research could look at principals assessing their instructional leadership.

Future research (quantitative) could also compare the instructional leadership of principals of highly performing and poorly performing schools.

Although the schools identified were from one Region to minimise demographics and other factors on the data, future research could compare schools from different regions, or across different groupings such as urban and rural.

Research could also look into other factors influencing academic excellence and how leadership influences those factors.

5.8 Conclusion

Different literature acknowledged that instructional leadership role of the principal is one key element in a conceptual framework that recognises the importance of the school's social and environmental milieu in determining student achievement.

The existing PIMRS instrument that tests instructional leadership of principals was used to determine which leadership functions are demonstrated by the principals of the three identified schools.

The study thus investigated the instructional leadership behaviours of school principals as perceived by teachers and inspectors. The analysis indicated that both teachers and inspectors perceived that most leadership functions were not being demonstrated by the principals. With regard to the null hypotheses, it was found that both were rejected as the finding was that there is relationship between the instructional leadership of the principal and academic performance of the learners and also that there is relationship between the instructional leadership of the principal and academic performance of the learners as perceived by teachers and the inspectors.

There is thus no dispute that instructional leadership of the principals supported by other variables in the school can lead to academic improvement in schools resulting in principals being classified as strategic and effective principals.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Teachers' questionnaire	100
Appendix B	Inspectors' questionnaire	105
Appendix C	Principals' questionnaire	108
Appendix D	Permission letter to do research, to Director Omaheke Region	110
Appendix E	Examination results November 2011	111

APPENDIX A

TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME OF SCHOOL: -----

PART A

Complete Part A by ticking in the relevant box to answer question 1 – 3, and write down the answer for question 4 -6.

1. Number of years of **professional training**.

- 0-2 years 3-4 years 5-6 years 6 years and more

2. Number of years of **teaching experience**.

- 0-5years 6-10 years 11-20 years more than 20 years

3. Number of years **you worked** with the **current principal**.

- 0-5years 6-10 years 11-20 years more than 20 years

4. Write down the Mission of your school.

How many times did the current principal observe your class presentation in his/her term of office?

5. What is the overall target (pass) percentage set for your school for 2011?

PART B

Complete **Part B** by **ticking** the appropriate box that describes the actions of your principal.

To what extent does your principal...?

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

	ALMOST NEVER		ALMOST ALWAYS	
1. Develop a focused set of annual school-wide goals	1	2	3	4
2. Frame the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	1	2	3	4
3. Use needs assessment or other systematic methods to secure staff input on goal development	1	2	3	4
4. Use data on student academic performance when developing the school's academic goals	1	2	3	4
5. Develop goals that are easily translated into classroom objectives by teachers	1	2	3	4

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

6. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	1	2	3	4
7. Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at subjects meetings	1	2	3	4
8. Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	1	2	3	4
9. Ensure that the school's academic goal is reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g. Posters or bulletin boards emphasizing reading or maths.	1	2	3	4
10. Refer to the school's goals in student assemblies	1	2	3	4

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

	ALMOST NEVER		ALMOST ALWAYS	
	1	2	3	4
11. Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the stated goals of the school	1	2	3	4
12. Do regular class observation to evaluate whether teaching and learning is taking place	1	2	3	4
13. Compliment teachers privately for their efforts or performance	1	2	3	4
14. Review student work products (written work, projects) when evaluating classroom instruction	1	2	3	4
15. Point out specific strengths in teachers instructional practices in post-observation feedback	1	2	3	4

IV. MONITOR STUDENT PROGRESS

16. Meet with individual teachers to discuss student academic progress	1	2	3	4
17. Discuss the item analysis or tests with the department and subject-heads to identify strengths and weaknesses in the instructional program	1	2	3	4
18. Use test results to assess progress toward school goals	1	2	3	4
19. Inform teachers of the school's performance results in written form (e.g., in a memo or newsletter)	1	2	3	4
20. Inform students of the school's test results	1	2	3	4

V. PROTECTS TIME

	ALMOST NEVER		ALMOST ALWAYS	
21. Limit interruptions of instructional time by public Announcement	1	2	3	4
22. Ensure that learners who miss instructional time classes get the relevant punishment	1	2	3	4
23. Take time to talk informally with learners and teachers during recess and breaks	1	2	3	4
24. Ensure that instructional time lost is worked in through extra classes	1	2	3	4
25. Attend/Participate in extra curriculum activities	1	2	3	4

VI. PROMOTES IMPROVEMENT

26. Conduct regular parent and community outreach and involvement	1	2	3	4
27. Shares leadership and decision making and empowers staff	1	2	3	4
28. Ensures that there are incentives for learning and incentives for teaching	1	2	3	4
29. Mobilises extra resources regularly to be used in the school improvement program	1	2	3	4
30. Provide teachers with materials and professional development necessary to be successful	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B

INSPECTOR'S QUESTIONNAIRE

**An evaluation of strategic leadership in 3 selected Omaheke schools and
its contribution to academic performance**

NAME OF SCHOOL: _____

The purpose of the study is to examine the potential relationship between perceived principal instructional leadership behavior and student academic achievement.

The study is intended to be of great help within the problems phased in our Education System. It is therefore that you are requested to complete this questionnaire which will only take 10 minutes of your time.

Please be as objective as possible as your information is anonymous.

Tick in the box that you think describe the principal best.

You as inspector, how do you perceive the actions of the principal under your supervision?

To what extent does he/she?

I. FRAME THE SCHOOL GOALS

	ALMOST NEVER		ALMOST ALWAYS	
	1	2	3	4
1. Develop a focused set of annual school goals	1	2	3	4
2. Set the school's goals in terms of staff responsibilities for meeting them	1	2	3	4
3. Use needs assessment or other systematic methods to secure staff input on goal development	1	2	3	4
4. Use data on student academic performance when developing the school's academic goals	1	2	3	4
5. Develop goals that are easily translated into classroom objectives by teachers	1	2	3	4

II. COMMUNICATE THE SCHOOL GOALS

6. Communicate the school's mission effectively to members of the school community	1	2	3	4
7. Discuss the school's academic goals with teachers at subjects meetings	1	2	3	4
8. Refer to the school's academic goals when making curricular decisions with teachers	1	2	3	4
9. Ensure that the school's academic goal is reflected in highly visible displays in the school (e.g. Posters or bulletin boards emphasizing reading or maths.	1	2	3	4
10. Refer to the school's goals in student assemblies	1	2	3	4

III. SUPERVISE & EVALUATE INSTRUCTION

	ALMOST NEVER		ALMOST ALWAYS	
	1	2	3	4
11. Ensure that the classroom priorities of teachers are consistent with the stated goals of the school	1	2	3	4
12. Do regular class observation to evaluate whether teaching and learning is taking place	1	2	3	4
13. Regularly compliment teachers for their efforts or performance	1	2	3	4
14. Review student work products (written work, projects) when evaluating classroom instruction	1	2	3	4
15. Point out specific strengths in teachers instructional practices in post-observation feedback	1	2	3	4

IV. PROMOTES IMPROVEMENT

16. Conduct regular parent and community outreach and involvement	1	2	3	4
17. Shares leadership and decision making and empowers staff	1	2	3	4
18. Ensures that there are incentives for learning and incentives for teaching	1	2	3	4
19. Mobilises extra resources regularly to be used in the school improvement program	1	2	3	4
20. Provide teachers with materials and professional development necessary to be successful	1	2	3	4

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART IN THIS SURVEY!!!

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE

**An evaluation of strategic leadership in 3 selected Omaheke schools and
its contribution to academic performance**

NAME OF SCHOOL:-----

The purpose of the study is to examine the potential relationship between perceived principal instructional leadership behavior and student academic achievement.

The study is intended to be of great help within the problems phased in our Education System. It is therefore that you are requested to complete this questionnaire which will only take 10 minutes of your time.

Please be as objective as possible as your information is anonymous.

Complete the questionnaire by ticking in the relevant box to answer question 1 – 3, and write down the answers for question 4 -7.

1. Number of years of **professional training**.

0-2 years

3-4 years

5-6 years

more than 6 years

2. Number of years you have been principal.

0-5years

6-10years

11-20years

more than 20 years

3. Number of years you **have been principal at** the current school.

0-2years

3-4 years

5-6 years

more than 6 years

4. Write down the Mission of your school.

5. What is the overall pass percentage target of your school for 2011?

6. Did your teacher training include courses on leadership?

7. Write down any leadership in-service training courses you received while you are a principal and which say which years it took place.

8. Write down the Mission statement of your school.

9. What is the overall pass percentage target of your school for 2011?

10. Did your teacher training include courses on leadership?

11. Write down any leadership in-service training courses you received while you are a principal and which say which years it took place.

APPENDIX D

The Director : Mrs Goagoses N
Ministry of Education
Omaheke Region
Private Bag 2004
GOBABIS
22 July 2011

Makgone S. G
P. O. Box 1132
GOBABIS

Dear Madam

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN OMAHEKE SCHOOLS

I am currently studying towards my MTech-Human Resource Development at the University of South Africa and intend to conduct a research for the dissertation which is a requirement for my degree.

The topic of my research is: *“An evaluation of strategic leadership in 3 selected Omaheke schools and its contribution to academic performance”*. It is envisaged that the data will be collected from any three of the following schools, Mokganedi Tlhabanello High School, Gustav Kandjii -, Epukiro Post 3 - and C Heuva Junior Secondary school.

The research is designed to involve principals and all teachers in the identified schools and the inspectors of those schools. I hope that the research will generate relevant empirical data which the Ministry of Education may find useful as a guide in schools. I shall be grateful if I will be granted permission to conduct the proposed research in August 2011 before the school holidays, and hereby promise that instructional time will not be interrupted.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

Makgone Silvia Gonaone (Mrs)

Date

APPENDIX E

PERFORMANCE STATISTICS 2011

OMAHEKE REGION

	JSC SCHOOLS	PASS RATE			
		<i>Candidates</i>	<i>Promoted</i>	<i>Not Promoted</i>	<i>% Promoted</i>
1	JOHANNES DOHREN	53	42	11	79.2%
2	MOKALENG	24	16	8	66.6%
3	RIETQUELLE	51	25	26	49.0%
4	C. HEUVA	73	39	34	53.4%
5	WENNIE DU	122	65	57	53.28%
6	IZAK BUYS	16	8	8	50%
7	EPAKO	147	48	99	32.7%
8	MOKGANEDI TLH.	72	20	52	27.8%
9	GUSTAV KANDJII	68	7	61	10.3%
10	EPUKIRO POST 3	131	10	121	7.63%
		757	280	477	37.0%

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 National Grade 10 results 2008.....	4
Table 1.2 Grade 10 Full-time Results:2008 Omaheke Region	5
Table 2.1 Levels of leadership behavior.....	32
Table 3.1 Dimensions and job functions of an instructional principal.	52
Table 4.1 Teachers' professional training.....	60
Table 4.2 Teachers' years of teaching experience.....	61
Table 4.3 Teachers' years of working with the Principal.....	62
Table 4.4 Number of class observations by Principal during term of office.	64
Table 4.5 Summary of leadership job functions as assessed by teachers and inspectors	71
Table 4.6 Number of years of being Principal	73
Table 4.7 Number of years of being Principal at current school.....	74

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Building strategic capability	21
Figure 2.2 Leadership forces hierarchy	26
Figure 4.1 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership	67
Figure 4.2 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership	68
Figure 4.3 Teachers' assessment of principal's leadership	68
Figure 4.4 Inspector's assessment of principal's leadership	69
Figure 4.5 Inspector's assessment of principal's leadership	70
Figure 4.6 Inspector's assessment of principal's leadership	70
Figure 4.7 Comparison of leadership across three schools.....	72