

**THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL  
LEADERSHIP IN MEETING THE CHALLENGES FACING  
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO**

by

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis “**The role of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo**” is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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## SUMMARY

The motive for conducting this study was to determine the extent in which aspects of transformational leadership identified during literature study are practiced in the sampled primary schools in Limpopo. The study was divided into seven interlinked chapters. Chapter one introduced the investigation. Chapter two presented the definition and description of the notion transformational leadership and its five constituting elements, namely shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making. A transformational leadership model was also presented in chapter two.

Chapter three focused on the primary education systems of Republic of South Africa and the three selected Southern African Development Community member states, namely Malawi, Lesotho and Namibia. The discussion focused on the structure, organization, objectives and the challenges facing each SADC member state. Chapter three further identified the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo and compared these to the challenges of the three selected SADC member states.

The details of the research design and methodology were presented in chapter four. The empirical study took a two-pronged approach. Phase one of the empirical study was conducted through the administration of questionnaires to sampled principals and educators. In the second phase, sampled principals, educators and circuit managers were interviewed. The empirical study was intended to give answers to the following research questions:

- To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in:
  - initiating visions that are shared and owned by other role players?
  - making sure that educators remain committed to their profession?
  - ensuring that educators are kept motivated?
  - ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession?
- To what extent do principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes?

In addition to that, the following research hypothesis was tested:

- There is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

And conversely the null hypothesis tested was:

- There is no significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

In phase one, data was quantitatively collected through questionnaires (principals and educators). Data was further gathered through semi-structured interviews and observation in phase two. To give a clear and a logical presentation of the data analysis and interpretation, both quantitative and qualitative data were presented separately in chapters five and six.

This study produced the following findings: The majority of primary school principals do:

- involve other role players in the development of their school visions.
- ensure that educators are committed to their responsibilities.
- ensure that educators remain motivated.
- ensure that educators are job satisfied.
- create opportunities wherein role players are involved in decision-making processes.

The views of respondents from the survey data (both principals and educators) indicated that there is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership. Based on the findings above, the conclusion deduced was that the majority of primary school principals exhibit transformational leadership attributes.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>EAP</b>	Employee Assistance Program
<b>ECD</b>	Early Childhood Development
<b>EEA</b>	Employment of Educators Act
<b>EFA</b>	Education For All
<b>ELRC</b>	Education Labour Relations Council
<b>FETC</b>	Further Education and Training Certificate
<b>GET</b>	General Education and Training
<b>HET</b>	Higher Education and Training
<b>LRA</b>	Labour Relations Act
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>MEC</b>	Member of Executive Council
<b>NCES</b>	National Center For Education Statistics
<b>NQF</b>	National Qualification Framework
<b>OSD</b>	Occupational Specific Dispensation
<b>PDM</b>	Participative Decision-Making
<b>RSA</b>	Republic of South Africa
<b>SACE</b>	South African Council of Educators
<b>SADC</b>	Southern African Development Community
<b>SADCC</b>	Southern African Development Coordination Conference
<b>SADTU</b>	South African Democratic Teachers Union
<b>SASA</b>	South African Schools Act
<b>SBM</b>	Site Based Management
<b>SGB</b>	School Governing Body
<b>SMT</b>	School Management Team
<b>SWAPO</b>	South West African Peoples Organization
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UPE</b>	Universal Primary Education

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **ORIENTATION**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Kallay (2007:30) argues that the majority of public schools in South Africa can be regarded as sites of moral panic and academic failure. According to the researcher as the deputy principal of the primary school, the following challenges face the primary schools in the area where he is employed: late coming by educators, non-attendance of classes by educators, persistent absenteeism, leaving school earlier than normal time off, leaving learners without supervision, educators visiting one another during teaching time, selling of items such as sweets and biscuits during teaching time. The researcher assumes that these actions are a result of lack of commitment from educators and inappropriate leadership practices.

There are a number of reasons that the researcher assumes contribute towards lack of commitment of educators at primary schools. Firstly, the Education Department focuses much of its energy on secondary schools. To confirm this assertion, the deputy director in the office of the Department of Education, reported that there has been an over focus on high schools (The Teacher, 2008:3). Much attention is given to Grade 12 results. Primary school educators feel disappointed and neglected by their own department.

The ever-changing curriculum is also cited as a challenge. First it was Curriculum 2005, then the Revised National Curriculum Statement and now the National Curriculum Statement. Since the implementation of the new curriculum, primary school educators are confused. According to Kallay (2007:30), educators have not been adequately trained for the new policies. He further indicates that if they had training, it was not enough. Many educators complain about the assessment methods and the new approaches to teaching. The change in educational policy has set new and more challenging demands on educators (Vandeyar, 2005: 461).

When educators do not show commitment at schools, the people who suffer are learners and principals have to account. Hallinger (2004) believes that the leadership role the principals plays is a challenge. Primary schools are faced with different problems and demand a leader who will create conditions in which it will be easier for educators to continue doing their work. The essence of transformational school leadership is dedication to fostering the growth of organizational members and enhancing their commitment (Gray & Ross, 2006:180). Yukl (1998:324) describes transformational leadership as the process of building commitment to the organizations' objectives and empowering subordinates to accomplish these objectives.

## **1.2 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **1.2.1 Introduction**

Lee (1991:83) remarked that the fact that many schools are unable to provide successful educational experiences for all learners is an undeniable and unacceptable reality. This assertion is true to what is happening in most primary schools. The conditions prevailing in primary schools around the area where the researcher is employed compromise the provision of public quality education. The introduction of radical changes by the Department of Education did not make matters better for the primary schools. According to Anstey (1999:30), the subject of change became relevant in recent years as many private and public sector institutions were confronted with the way things are done in order to survive.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:201) believe that policy makers' aiming to improve schools assume that the success with which their policies are implemented has much to do with the nature and quality of local leadership, especially leadership at school level. When the school fails, the principal as a leader and accounting officer takes the blame. The leadership approach the principal employs is very critical.

There is an abundance of theoretical literature evidence that indicates that transformational leadership has an influence in the school settings (Nguni, Slegers &

Denessen, 2006:149). Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:204) describe the following as important elements of transformational leadership: personal commitment to the organizational goals, increased effort and common goals. As indicated earlier in this section, the researcher is of the assumption that transformational leadership can be a panacea for the ills bedevilling primary schools. The section that follows focuses on the five identified elements of transformational school leadership that the researcher believes if employed by principals, challenges facing primary schools could be resolved.

### **1.2.2 Definition and description of transformational leadership**

Various leadership experts have identified the elements that constitute a transformational leader. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999:453), Nguni et al. (2006:146), Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:205) and Gray and Ross (2006:180) identify the following elements of transformational leadership: shared school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making process. In this research, the focus of the study is centred on these elements of transformational leadership and the challenges facing primary schools.

### **1.2.3 The elements of transformational leadership**

Throughout this study, the argument of the researcher is based on the elements of transformational leadership as mentioned in section 1.2.2, namely: shared school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making. Using the above elements as a basis, the researcher defines transformational leadership as the leader's ability to initiate the development of a shared vision, encouraging commitment through motivation and participative decision-making with an objective of achieving employees' job satisfaction.

#### **1.2.3.1 Shared vision**

Alder, as cited by Coetzer (2002:46) reasons that it is the head of the institution's responsibility to create the vision, since the long term direction of the organization is the

responsibility of its leader. Hornby (1995) defines vision as the ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination and wisdom. Homrig (2001) indicates that when the leader and the followers share the same vision, the followers don't have to be supervised, they know what to do when time comes.

It is the responsibility of the principal to initiate the development of a robust school vision. Sharing such a vision promotes a feeling of cooperation in principals, educators, learners and other role players to achieve the desired objectives. A school that functions without a shared vision is not effective, because vision determines the direction of the school. Vision has to do with goals and objectives. Vision guides and creates an appropriate environment for the educators and other stakeholders to work efficiently and effectively.

Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:205) state that included in transformational leadership is building the school vision, developing specific goals and priorities and holding high performance expectations. To be able to achieve the goals and the objectives of the organization, thorough planning by the school leader and other role players is needed. According to Nuku (2007:44), a vision is the shared image of the fundamental purpose of the school and embraces the hopes and aspirations of the school.

#### 1.2.3.2 Commitment

Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian, in Nguni et al. (2006:150) define organizational commitment as the strength of the individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. According to Gray and Ross (2006:179), educators in schools characterized by transformational principal behaviours are more likely than educators in other schools to express satisfaction with their principal, exert extra effort and can be more committed to the organization.

Educators have the professional responsibility to teach learners. They have to display the willingness to work by upholding high standards of work ethics. They have to ensure that



they come to school on time, attend the classes, are willing to supervise learners during their entire stay at school, do not depart earlier, control learners' class and home works and are continuously present at school unless absent with reasons. Ozigi (1984:28), cited by Nuku (2007:7) mentions that inevitably, principals meet cases of ill-discipline among educators such as laziness, frequent absence from school, incitement of learners against authority, drunkenness, financial misconduct, fighting in the staff-room, misuse of school property, threatening behaviour and acts of discourtesy. The researcher believes that these behaviours illustrate the educators' lack of commitment. Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:204) comment that all transformational approaches to leadership share the fundamental aim of fostering capacity development and higher levels of commitment to organizational goals.

#### 1.2.3.3 Motivation

Mampuru (2001:58) describes motivation as all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage the staff to perform at their best voluntarily in order to ensure successful educative teaching. From Mampuru's (2001:58) point of view, it is the responsibility of the principal as the leader to inspire the educators to work. There are a number of factors discouraging educators in primary schools. The researcher indicated that the Provincial Education Department concentrates more on secondary schools than on primary schools. From the researcher's experience as a primary school deputy principal, the departments' officials normally visit schools only at the beginning of the year, only on the first day of reopening. With secondary schools, the departments' officials consistently visit them throughout the year. Primary school educators expect recognition and support from their employer just like secondary school educators.

The following factors also contribute towards educators' low motivation:

- Uncertainty as a result of continuous reviewing of the curriculum, from Curriculum 2005, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS), and eventually the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).
- Inability to implement the assessment policies as required by the new curriculum.

- Continuous redeployment processes

According to Le Roux (2002:105), restructuring and redeployment policies threaten job security and promotion prospects. At the beginning of every year, schools are provided with the new staff allocations. This process is based on the number of learners each school have. If the number of learners had declined, redundant educators are moved to other schools where there is a shortage. This creates a situation at times where educators are moved far from their families and this leads to educator discouragement.

Nguni et al. (2006:148), assert that transformational leaders motivate followers to do more than what was originally expected of them. Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:204), argue that transformational leadership practices on the part of those in positions of responsibility have both direct and indirect effects on educators' motivation, capacity and work settings.

#### 1.2.3.4 Job satisfaction

According to Locke (1976), in Nguni et al. (2006:152) and Hoy and Miskel (1991:392), in Mampuru (2001:66), job satisfaction is a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job and job experience. Mampuru (2001:66) lists the following components of job satisfaction:

- *Attitude towards colleagues*

Educators have the tendency to belong to different groupings. These cliques are characterized by gossip, back biting and rivalry. This situation makes educators to have negative attitudes towards each other and is a breeding ground for conflicts. The conflict experienced also makes educators not to enjoy their stay at school.

- *General working conditions*

City Press (2007:4) mentions that a shortage of classrooms in Limpopo is forcing schools in the province to continue conducting classes under trees. It is very difficult for educators to conduct classes under trees and these conditions threaten the implementation

of the new curriculum. The shacks and other dangerous huts were being used as classrooms (Risimati, 2007:91). Risimati (2007:90) mentions that in 2004, 239 schools collapsed in Limpopo. From this number, 14 collapsed in one day. These conditions make teaching impossible and no normal thinking educator can enjoy his or her stay at such a school.

Most primary schools in rural areas do not have educational electronic resources such as computers, fax machines, photocopying machines and other indispensable equipments. The shortage of these resources is a serious challenge, because it impedes on the implementation of the new curriculum. The availability of technical resources makes the work of educators easier and leads to job satisfaction. They (educators) will approach their work with confidence when they are provided with the appropriate teaching equipments.

- *Financial benefits*

Mampuru (2001: 68) argues that educators' salaries are a very contentious issue. Bondesio and De Witt, in Le Roux (2002:80) believe that unattractive conditions of service, inadequate financial remuneration and insufficient fringe benefits contribute towards educators' dissatisfaction. One of the reasons why educators went on a prolonged strike in May, 2007 in the Republic of South Africa was the issue of remuneration. At one primary school (next to where the researcher is employed), within a year, three young educators left the school and found work in sectors other than education. According Kallay (2007:30), the majority of educators are angry and confused because they are asked to do the impossible and expected to do this for a salary that places them on par with the semi-skilled or untrained workers in the labour market.

#### 1.2.3.5 Participative decision-making process

Traditionally, principals as leaders relied heavily on the top-down approach. The principal would take orders from the senior officials and in turn expect educators to take

them without question. Hallinger (2004: 68) indicates that principals expected their orders to be followed with relatively little discussion. This kind of the approach isolated educators from all the decision-making processes and made them to become uncooperative, arrogant and militant. They organized themselves into labour movements. Leithwood, in Hallinger (2004:68) believes that as organizations, schools are less in need of control and more in need of both support and capacity development.

Kallay (2007: 30) argues that there is wide agreement on the basis of international research that top-down policy solutions seeking to bypass educators are not going to bring the desired results. Homrig (2001:7) indicates that participatory decision-making is one of the characteristics of transformational leadership. Because South Africa is a democratic state, all state institutions are expected to apply democratic principles, which include participative decision-making.

Educators are members of the educators' trade unions recognized by the Department of Education. At the school level, these educators are represented by site committees and represent the interest of their members. School Governing Bodies are also important role players who must be part of the decision-making processes. They are statutory establishments representing the interests of the schools' parent community. It is appropriate and important for principals as school leaders to include these important role players in their daily processes of decision-making. The imposition of decisions on educators results in a situation where subordinates defy decisions taken. The process of inclusive decision-making can be achieved through staff meetings, general parent meetings, School Governing Body (SGB) meetings, School Management Team (SMT) meetings and other processes such as the circulation of departmental circulars and memorandums.

#### **1.2.4 Conclusion**

The purpose of this investigation is to determine the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. The preliminary literature

study revealed that transformational leadership has the potential to directly influence leadership practices in the school setting. The researcher therefore assumes that the current declining conditions in primary schools can only be countered through a transformational school leadership approach.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The legacy of the previous governments' segregation policies and the struggle for freedom had a lasting impact on the education system of the country (South Africa). Fifteen years since the dawn of democracy and the transformation of the education system, primary schools are still facing monumental challenges. The challenges facing primary schools are multifaceted and include the following: educator dissatisfaction, non-commitment of educators, chronic absenteeism by educators, low morale, poor work ethics by educators, late coming of both educators and learners, overcrowding in classes, lack of technical resources and many more others.

Preliminary literature reviewed indicates that transformational leadership can contribute towards school improvement. Leithwood and Jantzi (1999:451) assert that considerable literature evidence suggests that transformational leadership practices have an effect on educators' commitment. In this study, the researcher intends to answer the following research questions:

#### **1.3.1 Main research question**

- What is the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools?

#### **1.3.2 Sub-questions**

- What are the most serious challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo?
- What is transformational leadership?

- What is the role of transformational school leadership with regard to the following: school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making?
- What recommendations can be made regarding transformational leadership in South African primary schools?

#### **1.4 RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **1.4.1 The research aim**

- The aim of this research is to investigate the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools Limpopo.

##### **1.4.2 The research objectives**

The research objectives are:

- To identify the most serious challenges experienced by primary schools in Limpopo.
- To determine the role of transformational school leadership with regard to the following: school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making.
- To suggest recommendations regarding transformational leadership in South African primary schools.

#### **1.5 MOTIVATION OF THE RESEARCH**

The critical issue investigated in this study was the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. In 1994, South Africa went through a political transformation and this culminated in the formation of the new democratic government. The education sector was hugely affected by this transformation. Numerous education policies were introduced and this affected the way in which the

education business was conducted. The manner in which the education business was conducted motivated the researcher to revisit the issue of school leadership. School leadership is a fundamental issue. The success of every school hinges on the ability of its leader. Schools in general and primary schools in particular face challenges that are personnel, transformational and technical in nature. These challenges can only be resolved when primary schools have appointed strong principals. This study identifies the challenges related to leadership facing primary schools in details and closely investigates each challenge.

One of the issues raised in section 1.1 was that the Limpopo Education Department gives secondary schools more attention than primary schools. As a result of this, the researcher assumes that the Education Department focuses much of their attention on the secondary schools at the expense of primary schools. The findings of this investigation will assist the Limpopo Education Department with information related to the challenges primary schools face. This research will also provide valuable data related to the role of primary school principals in meeting these challenges. The information provided will also assist the Limpopo Education Department when dealing with school leadership matters in primary schools.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS**

### **1.6.1 Research design and methodology**

White (2005:80) indicates that research methodology includes the description of the research design, the participants (population and sample), the measuring instruments (data collection techniques) and data analysis. Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:89) describe research methodology as the way the study is going to be carried out. They further describe research design as a basic plan of study (Imenda & Muyangwa, 2000:31).

The researcher employed both the qualitative and quantitative research approaches because questionnaires, interviews and observations were used to collect data. The researcher believes that the employment of both paradigms enhanced the validity and

reliability of the study. According to White (2003:17), triangulation is an aspect of research that combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches. White (2003:18) identifies the following advantages of triangulation:

- It is a means to establish validity and reliability in qualitative research.
- It is a way of increasing confidence in one's findings.

### **1.6.2 Describing the sampling procedure**

The researcher cannot access every member of the target population due to its large size. Imenda and Muyengwa (2000:18) describe a sample as a small group of subjects that have the main characteristics of the accessible population. Respondents were selected from Waterberg district, which is one of the five districts in Limpopo. The researcher believes that the district selected was representative enough to give a general overview of the entire Limpopo Province. According to the researcher, the district selected has schools with the characteristics that assisted in the investigation.

The researcher used simple random sampling to select his sample, namely schools, educators and principals to administer questionnaires. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005:100), this method involves selecting at random from a list of the population the required number of subjects for the sample. Welman and Kruger (2001:53) describe simple random sampling as a sampling technique in which each member of the population has the same chance of being included in the sample and each sample of a particular size has the same probability of being chosen.

Purposive sampling was also used to select principals, educators and circuit managers for the interview purposes. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:175), through purposive sampling, the researcher selects particular elements from the population that will be representative or informative about the topic under investigation. The selections of the participants (principals and educators) were guided by the questionnaire data.



### **1.6.3 Data collection methods**

To enhance the reliability and validity of the study, the researcher selected the appropriate data collection techniques. Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:91) indicate that once data collection strategies are identified, the researcher is ready to undertake the main fieldwork in order to collect data that will be used to answer the research questions of the study. The following data collection methods were identified.

#### **1.6.3.1 Questionnaires**

The questionnaires were administered to the principals and educators who were randomly selected. The researcher requested the assistance of the circuit managers in the distribution of the questionnaires. Before the questionnaires were distributed, the researcher pilot tested them first to avoid errors. Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2005:260), indicate that the pilot test has several functions, principally to increase the reliability, validity and practicability of the questionnaire. The content of the questionnaires were designed on the basis of the five identified elements of transformational leadership, namely shared school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making.

#### **1.6.3.2 Interviews**

White (2003:75) indicates that in interviews, there is greater flexibility and freedom as compared to questionnaires. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003:455) believe that the main purpose of interviewing people is to find out what is on their minds, what they think or how they feel about something. The researcher used semi-structured interviews. The researcher prepared the interview schedule to guide and focus the interview processes. Five principals, five educators and five circuit managers were purposively selected. In selecting these participants, questionnaire data was used. Each group of participants (principals, educators and circuit managers) had its own interview schedule. During the interview processes, the researcher probed and prompted to get more information.

The rationale for the inclusion of principals as participants was that they are better positioned as leaders and understand the challenges primary schools face. The researcher believes that the inclusion of educators in the interviews is critical because they have first hand information with regard to what is happening in schools. The circuit managers are also important role players and have the corporate understanding of challenges facing both the school leadership and the primary schools. The researcher used the audiotape during the interview sessions. Permission to use the audiotape was requested from the participants.

#### 1.6.3.3 Observations

To the researcher, observation was an advantage because the researcher is employed as a deputy principal at a primary school. Cohen et al. (2005:31) assert that when the researcher is the participant, the researcher stays with the group for a substantial period of time to reduce reactivity effects, recording what is happening, whilst taking a role in that situation.

Guba and Lincoln (1989:237) indicate that persistent observation ensures dependability because it enables the evaluator to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued. Observation was not limited to a specific school because observation is a continuous process, involving every facet of research. During the interview process the researcher had the opportunity to observe the schools visited for research.

According to Bester cited by Ravhudzulo (2001:137), in the case of observation, the researcher is interested in a person's behaviour rather than responses to verbal (interview) or written questions (questionnaire). The researcher observed the culture of the schools in relation to the dimensions indicated in the questionnaires. The focus of the observations was on the behaviours of educators such as time observation, period attendance and participation in other school activities.

#### **1.6.4 Data analysis**

The analysis of data commenced as soon as sufficient data was collected. This helped to avoid data overload. The process of data analysis included sifting, organizing, categorizing, reviewing and reflecting.

### **1.7 KEY TERMINOLOGY**

There are a number of concepts used in the text that must be interpreted the same by different readers of this text. These concepts dominated the entire process of the study and are the following: transformational leadership, shared school vision, commitment, motivation and job satisfaction.

#### **1.7.1 Transformational leadership**

Transformational leadership is defined and described differently by various leadership scholars. Leithwood (1992), cited by Singh and Lokotsch (2005:280) define transformational leadership as a collective action, which empowers those who participate in the process and facilitating the redefinition of peoples' mission and vision and a renewal of their commitment. In addition to the elements identified by other researchers of transformational leadership, Nguni et al. (2006: 152) added job satisfaction.

According to Hallinger (2003:330), transformational leadership is distributed in that it focuses on shared vision and shared commitment to school change. Sahin (2004:338) agrees with Hallinger (2003:330) by indicating that transformational leadership increases the interest of the staff to achieve higher performance and developing and revealing their commitment. For the purposes of this study, the concept transformational leadership is based on the following elements: shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making processes. To ensure that the investigation is focused and to avoid the temptation of losing track, the researcher focused his argument around these identified elements.

### **1.7.2 Shared vision**

Vision has to do with a number of issues, such as the objectives and values of the organization. This study focused on the principal as the visionary leader. According to Hornby (1995), vision is the ability to think about the future with great imagination and wisdom. Charlton, as cited by Coetzer (2002:17) identifies the following elements of the visionary leader: providing inspiration, directing people, encouraging hidden human potential and leading by example with a clear purpose.

### **1.7.3 Commitment**

For the purposes of this investigation, commitment means to have passion to perform ones duty to the maximum, to give oneself to the organization for the purposes of the achievement of the objectives of the organization. Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian in Nguni et al. (2006:150) define commitment as the strength of the individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization.

### **1.7.4 Motivation**

Angle and Perry, in Nguni et al. (2006:150) believe that a strong belief in and acceptance of the organizations' goals and values and a willingness to exert considerable effort are the two components of motivation. This concept refers to the leaders' ability in inspiring the followers to contribute towards the development of the school. Educators who are motivated are willing and also desire to give an extra effort. They are inspired to perform, irrespective of the circumstances.

### **1.7.5 Job satisfaction**

Mampuru (2001:66) regards job satisfaction as a pleasant or a positive emotional state which people experience once they have made a value assessment of their job or work experience. According to Locke, cited by Nguni et al. (2006:152), job satisfaction is a

pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the positive appraisal of one's job and job experience. In this study, the term is used in relation to the conditions prevailing in primary schools with reference to the availability of resources and the remuneration packages of educators. Job satisfaction is what the employees perceive as valuable and of encouragement with regard to working conditions and remuneration.

## 1.8 CHAPTER DIVISION

- Chapter 1: Chapter one focuses on the following aspects of this inquiry: the introduction of the study, the statement of the problem, the aim and motivation of the study, research design and methods, explanation of concepts and the exposition of the study.
- Chapter 2: This chapter focuses on the theoretical discourse of transformational leadership and its constituting elements. The exposition of transformational school leadership includes the emergence, description and definition of the concept transformational school leadership. This chapter also introduces the development of the proposed leadership model, the **Transformational School Leadership Model**. The researcher elaborated on the objectives of this model.
- Chapter 3: Chapter three concentrates on the primary education systems of the RSA and selected SADC member states. The chapter further elaborates on the value and the significance of primary education. The researcher also indicates how primary education is organised in the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho. Challenges facing primary schooling in developing countries with specific reference to SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries are dealt with in this chapter. The general overview of these countries' primary school challenges is given.
- Chapter 4: This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology. The researcher elaborates on the details of how the empirical study is conducted. This chapter also covers in details all the phases involved in data collection.

- Chapter 5: This chapter focuses on what happened in phase one of the empirical study. In this chapter, the analyses and interpretation of survey data is attended to. The chapter further presents the summative conclusions on both the principal and the educator questionnaires.
- Chapter 6: In this chapter, data gathered through the interviews and observation are analysed, interpreted and discussed. The findings are further compared with what was found in chapter five. Conclusions based on qualitative data are further given in this chapter.
- Chapter 7: The summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented in this chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP: AN ORIENTATION

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher gave an introductory orientation of the entire intended investigation. A brief description of transformational school leadership and its elements was given. This chapter gives an in-depth literature study related about the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools.

Since the birth of a democratic new South Africa, the education and training sector has undergone major changes and one of these changes includes the way schools in general and their management and governance structures in particular have been repositioned (Department of Education, 2001). The current restructuring initiatives and the demands of the 90s in the education sector necessitated the review of the notion of school leadership. Primary schools face challenges that are transformational, behavioural and technical in nature.

Traditionally, principals relied on the top-down style of leadership. This system of leadership was exclusive in nature because principals were the sole decision makers. Hallinger (2004:68) argues that principals naturally expected their orders to be followed with relatively little discussion. To Oplatka (2004:427), the role of the principal is limited by a more administrative function, lack of innovation and pro-active leadership, and a tendency to employ an autocratic rather than a participative leadership style. To solidify the grip of power by the principals, the former government introduced induction programs focused on the top-down approach (Department of Education and Training, 1986).

Leithwood, as cited by Hallinger (2004:68) mentions that the schools as organizations are less in need of control and more in need of both support and capacity development. The researcher believes that the unpopular top-down school leadership approaches that

dominated education prior to democracy also contributed towards educators' militant and arrogant attitudes. According to the researcher's assumption, and based on the findings of some transformational leadership scholars, transformational school leadership could be part of the solution to the challenges facing primary schools. Hallinger (2003:335) argues that transformational school leadership found a reception audience in the educational community during the 1990's as part of the general reaction against the top-down policy driven changes that predominated in the 1980's.

Hallinger (2003:329) further elaborates that the past 25 years have witnessed the emergence of new conceptual models in the field of educational leadership. The interest in the area of leadership in schools was necessitated by the massive political and economic changes that have taken place globally. These political and economic changes also affected the way education was conducted. South Africa also experienced massive educational reforms since the period after apartheid. The advent of educational transformation resulted in the review of school leadership.

Hallinger (2004:62) believes that policy makers accept the dictum that principals hold the keys to educational change at school level. Everybody looks at the school principal for leadership in implementing these large educational reforms at the local level. Theron, in Van der Westhuizen (1996:152) indicates that the principal as the change agent is expected to initiate, facilitate and implement change. Because South Africa is a democratic state, all public institutions are expected to embrace democratic principles.

According to Hallinger (2003:345), principals who share leadership responsibilities with others would be less subject to burnout than principal 'heroes' who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone. The principal as the leader should create a climate in which educators are able to participate in crucial decision-making processes. Homrig (2001:2) argues that people cannot be treated like sheep, blindly herded from place to place. Their expertise, experience and intuition need to be encouraged, not stifled, if challenging situations are to be negotiated successfully.



## **2.2 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE NOTION TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

In this section, the researcher will give a discourse on transformational leadership. The researcher will first define leadership and then give a detailed elaboration of transformational leadership. The exposition of the elements of transformational leadership will also be extensively discussed. In this section, the researcher will link the elements of transformational leadership with the challenges primary schools face. In concluding the chapter, the researcher will elaborate on the proposed transformational school leadership model.

### **2.2.1 The construct “leadership” defined**

Before giving the emergence, description and the definition of the concept of transformational school leadership, it is appropriate to define the concept leadership to lay a foundation for the understanding of the notion of transformational school leadership. The intention of this study is not to investigate different leadership styles, but to investigate the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools.

Different leadership scholars define and describe leadership differently. Mampuru (2001:86) indicates that literature is replete with varied and sometimes conflicting definitions of leadership. Numerous researchers define leadership as the ability to influence an individual or a group towards the achievement of goals (Wilzem, Van Dyk & Coetzer, 2002:14). For every leadership theory, there is a unique understanding of what the term describes. While achieving consensus about the definition of leadership may be impossible, leadership is an important part of our human experience that we all relate to (Kadali, 2006:13).

According to Gray and Starke (1998), in Mampuru (2001:87), the process of leadership is the use of non-coercive influence to direct and co-ordinate the activities of members of an organized group towards the accomplishment of group objectives. Yukl (1998:3) argues

that leadership involves a process whereby one person intentionally exerts influence over other people to guide, structure and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization. Leadership is the ability and the potential to influence any group towards the achievement of identified goals (Department of Education, 2004). Therefore, in educational settings, the principal is the leader and has the responsibility to influence educators towards the realization of the objectives of the school.

Flowing from the definitions above, the common denominator identified is the word influence. According to Hornby (1995:611), the word *influence* means the power to change the person's actions, character and beliefs. Leading is not imposition, but persuasion through influence. In leading, the principal stimulates, directs and coordinates group interactions and activities in a given situation to achieve certain goals. The principal as the leader should be able to give a clear direction to educators on the work they are supposed to do. Giving leadership direction avoids confusion amongst educators. The complex nature of schools presently demands leaders who will be able to ensure that schools deliver the results required of them.

In ensuring that the objectives of the school are met and embraced by other stakeholders, the principal should share his leadership with educators. The effectiveness of schools in educating learners is highly dependent upon the nature of leadership within the individual school. While principals are formally required to lead the schools, leadership is not the sole responsibility of the principal. Strong leadership needs to be developed to effectively facilitate change and lead schools and create effective linkages with the immediate community and other stakeholders (Department of Education, 2000:48). Most schools are characterized by a combination of formal and informal leadership as evidenced by educators assuming responsibility for particular tasks and programs. The phenomenon of school leadership is a complex issue. The Department of Education (2004) mentions that leadership attributes include facilitating the following:

- Crafting the vision for the followers.
- Articulating how the vision may be realized.

- Influencing and steering groups towards accomplishing goals.
- Creating desirable opportunities.
- Directing and coordinating activities.
- Motivating a directive force of morale.
- Creating conditions for the team to be effective.
- Inducing followers to behave in a desired manner.

A principal who confines leadership to his or her office cannot ensure that his influence impacts on every facet of the school as it should, making sure that curriculum needs are met, educators take part in the decision making and remain satisfied and motivated to sustain commitment.

### **2.2.2 Comparison between leadership and management**

Leadership is not management and management is not leadership. The principal as the head of the school, plays both managerial and leadership roles. Kadalie (2006:21) believes that every leader must have some management capacity and every manager must have some leadership capacity. The principal as the accounting officer has to ensure that both tasks are attended to. Kotter, cited in Bratton, Grint & Nelson (2005:8), argues that if organizations are to survive, they must be able to lead as well as manage.

Classical management theorists define the roles of management in terms of planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling (Bratton, Grint & Nelson, 2005:7) The difference between leadership and management is based on the roles of each position. The following table reflects the differences between the two concepts, leadership and management.

**Table 2.1: Differences between the manager and the leader**

<b>THE MANAGER</b>	<b>THE LEADER</b>
The manager does things right (efficient)	The leader does the right things (effective)
The manager administers (controls the affairs of a business).	The leader innovates (introduce new things)
The manager focuses on systems (orderly way of doing, arranging things) and structures.	The leader focuses on people (relationships must work).
The manager relies on control (regulate affairs).	The leader inspires trust and knows how to empower his or her followers.
The manager has a short-range view (focus on the present).	The leader has a long range-perspective (interested in the future).
The manager prefers stability (making sure business is firmly established).	The leader is interested in change.
The manager is pre-occupied with rules and regulations.	The leader is caught up with vision (far-sighted, entrepreneur, adventuresome).
The manager is consensus driven (collective agreement and opinion)	The leader has the courage of his/her own conviction.
The manager is motivated by questions of procedure (the regular way of doing things).	The leader is more concerned about issues of substance (the essential part of the business)
The manager asks how and when.	The leader asks what and why.
The manager enjoys complexity (the things that are difficult to understand).	The leader knows how to simplify.
The manager has his eyes on the bottom line (the crucial factor or essential point).	The leader has his eyes on the horizon (he knows what is about to happen or that which is apparent).
The manager relies on logic (the ability to reason.)	The leader uses intuition (the understanding or feeling things immediately without conscious reasoning).
The manager accept the status quo (state of affairs as it is now)	The leader challenges the status quo.
The manager follows orders	The leader initiates.

(Source: Kadalie, 2006:20)

From this table taken from Kadalie (2006), the following remarks are worth making: leadership is inspirational, focused, innovative, courageous, vision crafting, futuristic, risk taking, adventurous and enjoys challenges. These variables are necessary for leaders to engage in the process of resolving the challenges facing primary schools.

The principal as the leader has a critical role to play in meeting the challenges primary schools face. Because of the massive changes that have taken place in the primary education system in the country and Limpopo Province in particular, the role of the principal as the transformational leader is vital. The principals' transformational approach to leadership is important in ensuring that educators and other role players embrace these changes without resistance.

### **2.2.3 The origin of transformational leadership**

Homrig (2001:1) states that Burns (1978) is credited with developing the theory of transformational leadership. He used this theory to describe the ideal situation between leaders and followers. He asked the question, *How does the leader get everyone performing to his or her potential?* According to Nguni et al. (2006:147), Burn's (1978) transformational leadership model was based on the process by which leaders motivate followers or how leaders appeal to the followers' values and emotions. To be able to influence followers, Burns believes that as a leader you need to talk to their emotions and values.

The development of this theory was never intended to focus on educational settings, particularly schools. It only became the subject of systematic empirical inquiry in school contexts recently (Leithwood & Jantzi, 1999:453). Since the development of this theory, more leadership scholars such as Leithwood and Jantzi (1999, 2006), Gray and Ross (2006) and Hallinger (2003, 2004), elaborated on the transformational leadership theory. Homrig (2001:1) mentions that Bass (1985) is regarded as the disciple of Burns because he further studied the theory of transformational leadership. Most of the scholars who

investigated this theory of transformational leadership, studied it from a comparative perspective.

#### **2.2.4 The description and definition of transformational school leadership**

According to Hornby (1995:1270), the construct transformation means to change the appearance or character of something. The transformation process that has taken place has not been without challenges (Limpopo Department of Education, 2003:1). It has had a big impact on primary schools. At the school level, principals are the main drivers of the transformation. Because primary schools are changing, principals as leaders are also expected to change the way their management styles.

Leading the transformation of schools is a complex and a challenging endeavour, whether it is for ministers of education at the level of government or for principals at the level of the school (Caldwell, 2004:82). Because of the process of transformation, principals as leaders had to become transformational in their approach to leadership. As transformational school leaders, principals are charged with the responsibility of changing the attitudes and the behaviours of their subordinates. In transforming primary schools, transformational school leadership has to be developed shared vision for the school, motivate educators to become part of the vision and become committed, include all the role players in the decision-making processes, and change the educators attitudes to make them happy and satisfied at their schools.

Leithwood and Jantzi (1999:430) describe transformational school leadership as the approach that focuses on the school vision and goals, motivation, offering individual support, symbolizing professional practices and values, demonstrating high performance expectations (commitment) and developing structures to further participation in school decisions. Bass (1985), in Sahin (2004:388) describes transformational leadership as increasing the interest of the staff (motivation) to achieve higher performance (commitment) and developing and revealing the commitment and beliefs in the organization. Singh and Lokotsch (2005:280) define transformational leadership as a

collective action generated by transforming leadership, which empowers those who participate in the process.

Leithwood (1992), in Singh and Lokotsch (2005:280) describes transformational leadership in essence as the leadership style that facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and the restructuring of their commitment and the restructuring of their systems for goal accomplishment. Nguni et al. (2006:146) claim that among the transformational leadership's direct effects are employee motivation and commitment leading to the kind of extra effort required for significant organizational change. They further comment that transformational leadership affects employee attitudes, effort, job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour. Educators are expected to change their attitudes and conduct themselves in a professional way and consistently uphold the professional ethos of their job.

According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2006:205), the following elements are critical in transformational school leadership: building school vision through developing specific goals and priorities, holding high performance expectations and creating the structures to foster participation in school decisions. Gray and Ross (2006:180) believe that the essence of transformational school leadership is dedication to fostering the growth of organizational members and enhancing their commitment by elevating their goals. Hallinger (2003:335) makes the following observations about transformational school leadership:

- Transformational school leadership may be viewed as distributed in that it focuses on the development of shared vision and shared commitment to school change.
- Leadership may well be shared, coming from the educators and the principal.
- The transformational school leadership model seeks to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than top-down. It attempts to stimulate change through bottom-up participation.
- In transformational school leadership, the principal is creating the conditions under which others are committed and self motivated to work towards the improvement of

the school without specific direction from above.

According to Homrig (2001:6) the following remarks on transformational leadership are worth noting:

- Authentic transformational leadership builds a genuine trust between leaders and followers.
- Without continuous commitment and modelling of leadership, standards of organizational ethics cannot and will not be achieved. Badly led organizations wind up doing unethical things.
- Transformational leaders concentrate on values such as integrity and fairness.
- Transformational leaders increase the awareness of what is right, good and important by elevating the follower's needs for achievement and self-actualisation.
- Transformational leaders focus less on positional authority and work interdependent with the followers and their relationship is centered on common purpose.
- Transformational leaders have sound vision and interpersonal skills.

Balster (1992:2) suggests the following strategies of transformational leaders:

- Involve the whole staff in deliberating on school goals, beliefs and visions at the beginning of the year.
- Give everyone responsibilities.
- Get the educators to share their talents with one another.
- Share information with the staff members on meetings you attend.
- When hiring new staff, let them know you want them to be actively involved in school decision-making.
- Tell your educators that you want them to be the best educators they possibly can be.

Given the definition and description of the theory of transformational school leadership by Leithwood (1992), Leithwood and Jantzi (1999 & 2006), Sahin (2004), Singh and Lokotsch (2005), Nguni et al. (2006), Gray and Ross (2006), the following critical



elements are worth noting: shared school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making. For the sake of giving the study focus, the research will be limited to these dimensions.

Using the descriptions above as a basis, the researcher defines transformational school leadership as the leader's ability to initiate the development of a shared vision, encouraging organizational commitment through motivation and participative decision-making processes with an aim of achieving educators' job satisfaction. The researcher assumes that these core elements are crucial in dealing with the challenges faced by primary schools.

### **2.3 THE ELEMENTS OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

When studying transformational school leadership, researchers focused on numerous and diverse elements. Even though they agree on some elements, they also differ on others. Logic dictates that before the researcher could elaborate on the real challenges facing primary schools, it is very important to give the theoretical underpinnings of the following concepts: *shared vision*, *commitment*, *motivation*, *job satisfaction* and *participative decision-making*.

#### **2.3.1 Shared vision**

Any organization that operates without a well-considered, robust and inclusive vision, will be unable to achieve its objectives. Vision is the projected image or picture of the school the principal intends to achieve. Leadership is very crucial in initiating the development of a sound shared vision. Leadership is the art of creating a working atmosphere that motivates and directs the people working in the organization towards the achievement of organizational aims and high performance levels (Korkmaz, 2006:14). To create such an atmosphere a robust vision is needed.

Vision is a grand future purpose that describes the optimally functioning schools, that provides an overall direction or reason for existence and motivates and can be used as a marketing tool to attract learners and employees who fit into the school's culture (Department of Education, 2004). The school vision arises from a set of values that answer fundamental questions about the purpose of education and how the educational program should be carried out (Boerema, 2006:182). The school vision is the blueprint that clearly spells out the direction how the business of teaching is going to be conducted.

De Bruyn and Kruger (1998), in Nuku (2007:44) claim that vision is a pro-active dream from which point of view an ideal environment can be seen. Whitaker and Monte, in Korkmaz (2006:17) define vision as addressing the feelings and ideas of the staff through the manifestation of the school's goals, values and aims. Munroe (2005:270) identifies the following characteristics of vision: vision helps you craft your future, it helps you use your time correctly, it helps you choose your priorities and it also helps you prioritise your to-do list.

Through shared vision, the principal is able to win the commitment and compliance of the people needed to implement the developed vision. Involving the staff-members in the development and production of the school vision should be the commitment of every principal if the objectives of the school are to be achieved. Through vision the principal is able to chart the direction for the school. When the school operates without vision, confusion is likely to be the order of the day. Nuku (2007:45) identifies the following main functions of vision:

- Vision serves as the basis for encouraging, enabling, empowering, inspiring and developing educators to execute their duties effectively within the expected professional ethics.
- It is the corner stone for decision-making that helps all educators to know where they are heading to, so that they can modify their actions daily to help the school travel on a known journey.

- Vision enables all educators at school to find common points to focus their energy in achieving sustainable and quality results. Once the school's vision is crafted with educators having accepted ownership, the power of the vision to shape the school becomes very real.

A principal who has initiated a sound and shared vision is confident about the direction the school is taking. The Department of Education (2001:11) mentions that the school vision should typically reflect the values and goals of the whole school community. The development of the school vision results in planning and goal setting. Goal setting is the fundamental aspect of vision crafting. According to Wilzem et al. (2002:42), a goal is a concisely formulated need which entails a specific achievement or action which will satisfy the need in a given period of time and in the most affordable and realistic manner. To ensure that the goals of the school are realistic and constructive, Rees, Kroon, Sims, Manz and Tshenye, in Wilzem et al. (2002:43) mention that:

- Goals should be in writing. Everybody should have a copy to serve as a yardstick to evaluate progress.
- Each goal should be linked to a target date for its attainment. Avoid extending target dates.
- Goals should pose as a challenge which staff should be able to meet. Unrealistic goals are counter-productive and should be avoided.
- Where possible, goals should be measurable in terms of time, money and statistics.
- If goals are set in co-operation with those responsible for attaining them, it will ensure that employees accept full ownership and responsibility of these goals.
- In some cases, managers can be more lenient towards the attainment of goals. Too much flexibility could however mean that goals are not attained at all.
- Clearly formulated goals will prevent misunderstandings amongst staff members.
- An organization may fail to attain its goals because the goals were unreasonable or unattainable.
- The attainment of goals should always be rewarded, even if it is only by giving verbal recognition to achievers.

- Goals should always fit in with the budget of the organization.

It is very important for the vision of the school to be shared. Sharing a school vision promotes a feeling of co-operation in principals, educators, learners and others to attain the desired future state (Korkmaz, 2006:14). *OECS Education Reform Unit (2000:6)* concurs with Korkmaz (2006) when it emphasizes that educators' participation in developing policies and goals can increase their commitment. It is very important for the principal as the school leader to involve all stakeholders in the development of the school vision. This will ensure that all members of the school share the responsibility of the mandate of the school.

When the school vision has been co-operatively crafted, the chances of educators sabotaging the vision become very slim. It is therefore critical that the process of developing the school vision becomes a collective effort. Any attempt by the principal to develop the vision alone without involving others will be destructive and suicidal. It will be suicidal in the sense that all efforts made will be aborted by those not involved in the process. The Department of Education (2004) suggests the following tips in developing the school vision:

- Situate the vision of your establishment within the broader context of the national and provincial departments.
- Always ensure that the vision you have becomes "our vision" by consulting widely. This motivates the staff-members to work towards the achievement of the vision.
- The vision must be futuristic. Its intentions should be based on taking the organization forward and not backwards.
- The vision you come up with should represent a mental picture that portrays a desirable state that sets your establishment apart from the rest.
- It has to force everyone to take calculated risks and to stretch targets.
- It should be powerful enough to propel the establishment to reach new heights.
- It ensures that the school's resources are focused on key priorities.

From these guidelines provided by the Department of Education, the following points are worth noting: The school vision should not depart from the broader picture of the provisions of the Department of Education, it should also include other members of the school which is the corner stone of vision crafting, it must be aimed at the future development of the school and it must clearly define the projected image of the school.

One must indicate that the process of the development of the school vision is not static but dynamic. It is dynamic in the sense that the vision crafting process should be revisited from time to time to keep pace with the changing nature of educational events. The school that is founded on a sound, robust and shared vision makes planning very easy for the principal and other members of the school. McNamara (1997:3) identifies the following benefits of strategic planning as a result of shared vision:

- It clearly defines the purpose of the organization.
- It establishes realistic goals and objectives consistent with the mission in a defined time frame within the organizations' capacity for implementation.
- It communicates the goals and the objectives to the organizational constituents.
- Shared vision develops a sense of ownership of the school plan.
- It ensures the effective use of the organizations' resources by focusing them on key priorities.
- It provides a base from which progress can be measured and establishes a mechanism for informed change when needed.
- It ensures that every educator's best and most efforts are utilized.

It is the responsibility of the principal as the leader to initiate the development of the school vision. Initiating the process does not mean that the principal should exclude educators. Vision is an important element of transformational school leadership. The principal as the transformational leader requires a strong vision as the transformational strategy in meeting the challenges facing primary schools.

### 2.3.2 Commitment

The integrity of the organization is measured by the amount of commitment the employees give to the organization. Simply translated, for a school to press for, achieve and maintain high standards and academic excellence, it needs to have committed educators. Commitment is central and a determining pillar of the success of any organization. The degree of educator commitment is one of the most important aspects of the performance and quality of the school staff (*National Centre for Education Statistics, 1997:2*).

Even if the school can develop and have an attractive school vision, a state of the art building, enough funds to run it, highly qualified and competent staff-members, but without commitment, it will not be able to accomplish its desired objectives. The Department of Education (2007) in its manifesto on values, education and democracy, argues that the competence of educators is meaningless if there is no commitment alongside it. Only a strong education and training system with committed and excellent educators can ensure that South Africa becomes a caring society, with a thriving economy (*The Teacher, 2001*)

National Centre for Education Statistics (1997:2) indicates that

*Commitment is degree of positive, affective bond between the teacher and the school. It does not refer to a passive type of loyalty where teachers stay with their jobs, but are not really involved in the school or their work, but rather it involves the degree of internal motivation, enthusiasm and job satisfaction teachers derive from teaching and the degree of efficacy and effectiveness they achieve in their jobs.*

A committed educator is the one who wilfully does his work with passion, is not reminded of his responsibilities and subscribes to the values and objectives of his profession. Such kind of an educator is characterized by the willingness to sacrifice for

his school. Riel and Stipple (1991), Meyer, Allen, and Smith (1993), in *OECS Education Reform Unit* (2000:2), define commitment as identification and involvement with an organization or profession, including acceptance of its goals and values, a willingness to exert extra or substantial effort on behalf of the organization, and a desire to remain part of it.

Organizational commitment represents personal identification with and self-investment in an organization (Lou, Yu, Hsu & Dai, 2007:50). Commitment is not just loyalty or compliance, but rather a whole-hearted support for the organizational values, goals and ventures. Attributes of committed educators are: doing extra work, sharing the values and goals of the school, sacrificing their time for the sake of their school, being proud of their school and exhibiting professional behaviours even outside working hours. Extra effort is demonstrated when the educator takes effort to ensure that learners understand what has been taught, gives learners feedback on time, remains after school to assist in either academic, sporting or cultural activities. Extra effort involves doing more than expected.

Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982), in Chang and Choi (2007: 301) see commitment as the psychological attachment to and the identification with an organization that makes separation from that organization difficult for the employee. *OECS Education Reform Unit* (2000:2), citing Riel and Stipple (1996), Rosenholtz and Simpson (1990), Mueller, Wallace and Price (1992), Angle and Perry (1999), supported by Jaussi (2007:52), argues that commitment to teaching has both a psychological component, reflected in the personal interpretation of the teaching experiences, and a behavioural component reflected in behaviours such as attendance, retention and non-classroom activity participation. Educators as professionals are expected to reflect behaviours that are congruent to the expectations of their profession.

According to Kushman (1992), Reyes and Fuller (1995), Rosenholtz (1998), in Joffres and Haughey (2001), low levels of commitment result in decreased learners' achievement, higher educator absenteeism and staff turnover. Educators who are not

committed create strategies to cover up their laziness and this kind of behaviour is detrimental to the learner's learning outcomes.

Allen and Meyer, in Trimble (2006:350), distinguish the following types of commitment:

- Affective commitment. It is an emotional identification and the attachment to the organization. The employee feels emotionally bonded to the organization.
- Continuance commitment. This is the commitment to stay with the organization.
- Normative commitment. The obligation to stay or remain loyal to the organization.

Angle and Perry in Nguni et al. (2006: 150), supported by Mowday, in Jaussi (2007:53) identify the following components of commitment:

- Willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization.
- A strong belief in the acceptance of the organizations' goals and values, and
- A definite desire to maintain organizational membership.

The current generation of educators holds different values and motives about their profession as compared to the past generation. According to Trimble (2006:350), the generation of today lacks loyalty and commitment towards organizations and the supervisors are concerned about the new workers. *OECS Education Reform Unit* (2000), and Trimble (2006:350), mention that older generation educators are more committed than the younger educators. According to Bennell (2004:14), the profile of educators has become younger and the exit of older generation from the education system *en masse* leaves this younger generation without mentors, professional support and leadership. The absence of experienced educators who have left the system militates against the objective of quality public provision.

In the past, teaching was regarded as a calling. Educators were committed and made their services available even after working hours. Bennell (2004:5) believes that education was strong during the 1950's and 1960's, but it has now been seriously weakened. This is an



indication that commitment was part of this noble profession. They were ready to give their service even after hours. Remuneration was not top on their agenda. They took pride in their profession. The majority of the current crop of educators is not committed as compared to the former generation.

According to Bennell's (2004:40), teaching has become employment of the last resort among university graduates and secondary school leavers and consequently they often lack a strong, long-term commitment to teaching as a vocation. Bennell (2004:9) further mentions that over 80% of the educators he interacted with through interviews indicated that they did not want to be educators. Bennell's study revealed the following:

- Teaching was never their first choice career.
- Others followed the teaching profession because universities and colleges could not accept them in other fields of study and teaching was an easy access to tertiary education.
- Lack of finances also made it difficult for these people to follow the careers of their choice and teaching was inexpensive as compared to other fields of study.

The former education departments gave students bursaries to study. The situation was also compounded by the easy and relaxed admission policies. Educators had no passion for teaching and subsequently demonstrated lack of commitment. Because admission for educators was not as tight as in other fields of study, those who were not fit to become educators were admitted. This state of affairs compromised the education profession.

According to Schoole (2002), in Pretoria University (2003:176), Limpopo Province, formerly called the Northern Province, had 22 colleges of education inherited from Lebowa, Venda, Gazankulu, and the four national departments of education from the former South African Education Departments. The Limpopo Department of Education (2007a) reports that the process of restructuring the former homeland departments into one unified vehicle for delivering education was a challenge. The majority of these colleges were sub-standard and admission was not stringent. Training in these colleges

was characterized by political upheavals. The majority of educators produced by these colleges were not readily prepared for teaching. Joffres and Haughey (2001: 4) identify the following contributors of low commitment:

- Low feelings of efficacy, that is, when educators realize that they are unable to influence their learners.
- Failure to build warm and nurturing relationships with their colleagues.
- Inadequate training or experience.
- Parental and local community political interferences, such as opposing the implementation of a particular programme.
- Little support from the schools' staff, particularly from the principal to enforce existing disciplinary policies.
- Little support from the district office in relation to the implementation of the curriculum.

Commitment implies that educators have to develop the capacity to conform to the goals of the organization and behave in such a way that it is in the best interest of the organization. A committed educator is identified by the following qualities that are in line with the Department of Education's (2006) national teaching awards, which aims at recognizing excellence in education.

- The educator should be an expert of the learning area he is offering

The Education Labour Relations Council (2003) postulates that educators should participate in agreed appraisal processes in order to regularly review their professional practice with the aim of improving teaching and learning. The educator should do research and find out more about the subject he is offering. He should like and enjoy the subject he is teaching. It will be very difficult for an educator to be committed to the subject that he does not like and does not enjoy. The educator should understand the appropriate techniques of teaching and use correct assessment methods.

- The educator should be effective in the classroom

The educator should adopt the learning and teaching strategies that will enable him to meet the needs of the individual learners effectively (Department of Education, 2006:6). He should be prepared to use a variety of strategies to meet the outcomes of the curriculum (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). To be effective means the ability to ensure that learners understand what they are taught. The educator should ensure that the learner is developed in totality according to the intentions of the curriculum. Effectiveness is measured in terms of the type of learners the educators produce.

- The educator should be creative and innovative.

He should be willing to improve his teaching skills, through professional development. The Department of Education (2006:4) mentions that the educator must engage in continuing professional development activities, which have a positive impact on classroom activities. The educator should always try new techniques that will improve his skills. The central focus of the educator is effective use of new knowledge and research to improve instruction along with the willingness to share that expertise with others.

- The educator should serve as a source of inspiration to learners.

The educator should arm the learners with information to prepare them for the challenge of life after school. Learners should be assisted to achieve their dreams through hard work and commitment. According to the Department of Education (2006:4), the educator should motivate and inspire learners. It will be difficult for the uncommitted educator to motivate learners to become committed.

- The educator should be committed to the teaching profession

According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2003), the educator should be informed of the current developments in educational thinking and curriculum

development. The educator should be an active participant and must be supportive of the decision-making processes. He must provide the leadership in the professional development and reflect the effective use of knowledge acquired through research and be able to share it with other staff members.

He should be able to conduct himself in a manner upholding the values of the profession. Nuku (2007:19) states that the Minister of Education reported that principals and educators are expected to uphold the highest levels of professionalism. This statement is made against the declining professional standards in education.

- The educator should demonstrate the love for the children

It will be very difficult and time wasting for the educator to try to educate children he does not love. Educators who attempt to educate learners they do not love will not be in a position to show commitment in whatever they are doing. The educator's love should be unconditional, whether learners are above average or below average. A committed educator will ensure that a learner who has difficulties is provided with the necessary support.

- The educator should be a role model for both learners and the peers

The educator should attempt to behave in a manner befitting the profession. The educator should behave in the manner that contributes to the ethos and morale of the school (Department of Education, 2006:4). Behavioural commitment to the profession should be demonstrated in all daily actions, whether in the classroom or playground, a meeting or informal interaction or in the community. The educator should come to school on time if he expects the same attitude from the learners. He should also refrain from being continuously absent from school without reasons. This will motivate learners to become future responsible adults.

When educators in a school are committed, the school will be able to provide quality education to the learners. It is through commitment that a school could be transformed to achieve the objectives and the mandates which it has been established for. The educator's commitment determines whether learning outcomes have been met or not. You can try to engage educators through very strict control measures, but when they are not committed, the control measures in place will not yield the required results.

The principal as the transformational leader has the obligation to ensure that educators are committed to their profession. As a leader, the principal should ensure that the educators' attitudes are positive. Again, the principal as the transformational leader should inculcate the spirit of commitment from educators through various strategies.

### **2.3.3 Motivation**

Educator motivation is the most important determinant of performance in schools. In citing Lethoko (2002), Nuku (2007:79) mentions that motivation is the driving force that causes individuals to engage in behaviours. Bennell (2004) refers to motivation as the psychological processes that influence the behaviours of individuals with respect to the attainment of workplace goals and tasks. According to Covington (2000:22), motivation refers to the reasons for individuals to be aroused to action.

It is one thing to motivate educators, but another thing to keep them motivated. It is based on the motives that compel an individual to take a particular action. Without motivation it is difficult for the school to function. According to Mampuru (2001:58), most definitions of motivation have the following three components: energizing human behaviour, channelling behaviour by creating a goal orientation for the workers and maintaining and supporting behaviour that is acceptable and positive.

The principal as the leader at the school level has the responsibility to motivate the educators. Bowers (2001:145) reports that schools should express care for educators' welfare and wellbeing. The results of the study conducted by Hertzberg-Fewis and

Brighton (2006:90) suggest that principals play a key role in educators' willingness and ability to work. Extra compensation is not enough to motivate educators (Jacobson, 1989:280). The role the principal plays as the motivator is of critical importance. The extrinsically motivational role of the principal has a strong effect on the performance of educators.

Mampuru (2001:58) states that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his staff to perform at their best voluntarily in order to ensure successful educative teaching. Nuku (2007:79) holds the same view as Mampuru (2001), indicating that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally. Motivation is the inner energy that propels commitment.

Principals need to prioritise the importance of educators' perceptions and improve educators' motivation. Ramachandran, Pal, Jain, Shekar and Sharma (2005) believe that when educators get the job they relax and start lacking commitment and motivation. The key issues of educator motivation have been ignored all together for a long time now, and there appears to be mounting concerns that unacceptably high proportions of educators working in public school are poorly motivated (Bennell, 2004:8). Motivation has a significant and direct impact on the quality of teaching. The educator in the classroom is the main instrument for bringing quality improvement in learning. Such quality is maximized where there is an enabling and supportive climate, and where educators have opportunities for personal growth.

The Department of Education has the program called the Employees Assistance Program (EAP). The objective of this program is to assist educators in dealing with issues that demotivates them, but it is understaffed and cannot cope with the amount of challenges educators face. The fundamental importance of the educators' role in ensuring effectiveness in education must be recognized, understood and taken into account.

There are numerous factors responsible for discouraging educators from actively being involved in quality teaching. Some of these factors are psychological and it is difficult for principals to be able to observe these psychologically related problems. Salary on its own is not enough to increase motivation of the educators. Firstly, most educators are emotionally wounded inside because of the impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. They are either affected or infected and are not willing to disclose their statuses. The refusal to disclose impedes the process of motivation. The emotionally affected educators are not as active as those who are not sick. Bennell (2004:9) reports that the HIV/AIDS scourge results in low morale in primary schools and this is a cause for concern. Bennell (2004:13) further indicates that apart from the obvious impact of educators who are living with AIDS, working with colleagues who are sick and who may eventually die is also demoralizing.

Reports indicate that the rate at which public servants are dying is alarming. According to the *United Nations Development Program* (2006), HIV/AIDS is claiming the lives of educators. No normal person can effectively and efficiently work under such depressing conditions. Secondly, the financial debt trap in which educators find themselves in is also creating problems at schools. Insufficient salaries force educators to be indulged in debts. Thirdly, working far from home and domestic worries impact negatively on the educator's professional responsibilities (Khumalo, 2006:46). Educators who work far away from home are also discouraged because they complain that they miss their spouses, especially married educators.

Fourthly, insufficient and sub standard professional development programs also result in low motivation. Since the introduction of the new curriculum, educators complain of lack of sufficient training. They are expected to teach according to the prescriptions of the new National Curriculum Statement, but most of the educators are still employing the traditional approaches of teaching. Because of this confusion, educators are demotivated and teach learners with little or no preparation at all. An educator may be highly committed to the attainment of the school's learning goals, but may lack the necessary

competencies to teach effectively, which ultimately becomes demoralizing and demotivating (Bennell, 2004:8).

Redeployment of educators is the fifth factor that contributes towards educator discouragement. The deployment of educators is very complex and for a variety of reasons, teaching positions are not being filled in an efficient and effective manner in most schools (Bennell, 2004). The process of redeployment separates spouses from their families, because when educators are redundant in the school, they will be posted to any school where their skills are required, irrespective of the location.

Lastly, poor leadership is also responsible for demoralizing educators. Bennell (2004:10) argues that management styles in schools tend to be authoritarian with limited participation in decision-making. Delegation, communication and educator supervision are frequently weak. When principals are appointed, they are not inducted and are expected to ensure that learners are provided with quality education. Educators need continuous professional development, as well as support from supervisors (Bennell, 2004:8). According to Mampuru (2001:58), organizations develop and progress only when these organizations have succeeded in motivating and developing their workers. Kadalie (2006:222) proposes the following principles of motivation:

- Show appreciation in little ways. A thank you note, or half day off, a meal or a phone call to say thanks, can do wonders to keep your team motivated.
- Create a stimulating climate where people are eager to work and serve. Often the place of work can be very disheartening and pathetic.
- Show recognition for work well done. Do this at special and well-organized functions and make the rewards attractive.
- Make sure that they are fulfilled in what they are doing and that they feel that the work they are doing is interesting and important.
- Allow them to give you feedback about your own performance to determine if you are not contributing to some motivational problems.



- Give them opportunity for achievements by helping them set achievable goals. People who produce good results feel good about themselves.
- Give them responsibility for important tasks and even allow them to do what they like doing.
- Help them measure how they are performing. Create a climate where feedback and evaluation is non-threatening and just part of growth and development.
- Show concern for their personal needs, even if it means sacrificing time to do it. Feed them spiritually and be careful that you don't just use them. Feed their aspirations.
- Consider them as part of the team. Involve them in decision-making, planning, and implementation.

#### 2.3.3.1 McGregor's theory of X and its relevance to education

Motivation is a concept widely studied by motivation theorists, hence the development of numerous theories that are critical in the school settings and education leadership. Mampuru (2001:60), citing McGregor, argues that leaders cannot always control the actions and behaviour of employees as though they were pawns on a chessboard. According to Mampuru (2001:60), in his theory of X, McGregor indicates that the following assumptions of leadership on subordinates are incorrect:

- The average person does not like to work and will avoid it at all costs if it is possible.
- Individuals need strong control and force and they should even be threatened with disciplinary measures and punishment in an effort to realize the goals of the organization.
- The average person likes to receive unmotivated orders from his leader and would prefer to avoid responsibility as far as possible.

McGregor, in Mampuru (2001:60) further indicates that the school principal who embraces these views, sees his management task as the exercising of strict supervision over the staff. Mounting evidence suggests that when people are coerced, they function with diminished capacity and often react with resistance, resentment and loss of energy, the antithesis of motivation (Mampuru, 2001). According to Ginsberg, Munson and

Braunger (2001:2), people whose actions are motivated tend to be highly active and display greater cognitive outcomes and are persistent.

McGregor, in Mampuru (2001:60) claims that the behaviour of individuals is motivated to a greater extent by their personal needs than by the pressure that can be exerted on them by management. The approach should be from control, coercion and intimidation to empowerment through motivation. The argument is that when people are forced and commanded to execute their responsibilities, they tend to react contrary to the expectation of the commands. Theory X bases much emphasis on control and direction (Mampuru, 2001:61). Principals who believe in theory X, assume that most educators do not want to work and they will do everything possible to avoid work and as a result they have to be coerced, controlled and be threatened with punishment.

#### 2.3.3.2 McGregor's theory of Y and its relevance to education

Based on reliable research results, McGregor formulated theory Y to oppose the assumptions of theory X (Mampuru, 2001: 61). According to this theory:

- Most of the individuals have the built-in awareness of duty and will exert intrinsic control over their behaviours. They also demonstrate loyalty with regard to working towards the realization of goals in which they are intensely involved and with which they feel closely connected.
- People are not naturally antagonistic towards work, and as a matter of fact, the average individual has a strong desire to work, as he has to relax.
- Willingness to attain certain goals is closely linked with the expected reward. This reward need not be of a material nature, but may be the fulfilment of the hierarchical needs of acceptance, prestige and self-actualisation.
- The average person learns quickly, particularly when the correct motivational factors are strong enough.
- Many organizations utilize only a limited part of the average person's intellectual capabilities, expertise and creative potential.

Mampuru (2001:62) explains that

*School principals who apply theory Y consider their staff and treat them with respect. They are not treated as objects that cannot think, but as human beings. They create a pleasant work climate and assure their staff regularly of their importance to the organization. They inform their staff about the future plans that will affect them and they involve staff members in decision-making. They delegate effectively to their staff in the interests of higher productivity, greater creativity and job satisfaction, which lead to higher morale.*

Mampuru (2001:62) further mentions that motivation is based on the following four basic principles:

- The principle of participation: If staff members are involved in decision-making and matters that affect them directly, they tend to show high motivation in whatever they are doing. The more involved they become, the more they are prompted to assist in the achievement of objectives.
- The principle of recognition: If a staff member receives the necessary recognition and job satisfaction, he is inclined to work harder. Recognition should be given to the staff member as a person and not just as a human resource.
- The principle of delegated authority: The principal should delegate authority together with specific tasks to capable members of the staff. This definitely enhances staff development, which breeds confidence.
- The principle of communication: Staff members who are informed about objectives and the results achieved tend to develop a stronger sense of belonging and are inclined to co-operate more. Staff members should be informed about results, changes and progress.

Demotivation is a cancer that destroys the education phenomenon and if left unchecked, schools will not be able to provide quality education to the communities. High motivation generates high performance and low motivation breeds low performance.

For the principal to succeed as the transformational leader in transforming the attitudes of the educators, he or she should motivate them. The principals as transformational leaders should ensure that the educators' contributions are appreciated, are fulfilled, are recognized, are involved and their needs are also considered. Principals should employ motivation as the transformational strategy in addressing the challenges primary schools face.

#### **2.3.4 Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is closely linked to motivation but not synonymous with it. Some studies on employee attitudes use both terms interchangeably. According to Mampuru (2001:67), the following remarks indicate the distinction between motivation and job satisfaction:

- Motivation is the drive to perform, while job satisfaction indicates a person's attitude or happiness with the situation.
- Motivation is largely determined by the value of rewards and job satisfaction is largely determined by the comfort offered by the environment and the situation.
- The result of motivation is an increased effort which in turn improves performance, whereas job satisfaction leads to increased commitment to the organization.

Job satisfaction has been the concept frequently contested by numerous researchers. It was initially focused on industrial organizations and the focus shifted to the educational settings. It is impossible to stay motivated and committed in a job that employees are not satisfied with. Different researchers define job satisfaction differently. The difficulty in defining job satisfaction is the way in which it is measured and the different terminology used by researchers (DeMato, 2001:21). Mampuru (2001) and Saari and Judge (2004) citing Locke, define job satisfaction as a pleasant or positive emotional state which people experience once they have made a value assessment of their job or work experience.

Spencer, in DeMato (2001:20) indicates that job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. Job satisfaction is measured by determining how satisfied employees are with various facets of their jobs. DeMato (2001:22) citing Spector argues that job satisfaction can be considered as a feeling about the job or as a related constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job. Wanous and Lawler, in DeMato (2001:20) identify the following variety in operational definitions of job satisfaction:

- Overall job satisfaction is the sum of job facet satisfaction across all facets of the job.
- Job satisfaction is the weighted sum of job facet satisfaction.
- Job satisfaction is the discrepancy between how much there is now and how much there should be.
- Job satisfaction is the result of comparison between fulfilment and desires or ideals in the present.
- Job satisfaction is a measure of desires or ideals of what one would like.
- Job satisfaction is the discrepancy between the importance of a job facet and the perception of fulfilment from a facet.

Educators are arguably the most important group of professionals for a nation's future development, therefore it is disturbing to find that many educators today are dissatisfied with their jobs (Bishbay, 1996:147). This state of affairs is affecting the recruitment and retention of educators. The majority of these, particularly Mathematics and Science educators, are leaving the education sector in favour of more paying jobs. Saari and Judge (2004:399) mention that dissatisfied employees are likely to quit their jobs. To confirm this, Sunday Times (2007:45) reports that every year, hundreds of educators, particularly new graduates, flee South Africa because they don't get paid enough by the Department of Education.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003), Johnson (2004), Smith and Ingerson (2003) in Liu (2005:1), Bishbay (1996) and Saari and Judge (2004), argue that to keep pace with the number of resignations taking place in schools by educators, policy makers and

researchers have turned their attention on finding ways on how to support new educators to make them effective, feel successful in their jobs and stay in teaching. Huling-Austin (1990), Ingersoll (2002), Ingersoll and Smith (2003), Murnane, Singer, Willet, Kemple and Olsen, in Liu (2005:3), state that approximately 30 % of new educators leave the classroom within three years, 40- 50 % leave within five years.

The attractiveness of the post package (which includes the financial remuneration, fringe benefits, working conditions, opportunity for promotion and potential work satisfaction) and not the most sophisticated recruitment methods, will guarantee a successful recruitment campaign (Bondesio & De Witt, in Le Roux, 2002:80). Ingersol (2001), in Liu (2005:5) asserts that different factors lead educators to leave their jobs, or to leave teaching altogether, but dissatisfaction with their jobs is surely one of the most important. Employees who are job dissatisfied may exhibit job avoidance behaviour, such as reducing the level of effort (Liu, 2005:6). Job dissatisfaction also impacts on job performance and organizational effectiveness.

According to Bennell (2004:20), there are many reasons why educators' turnover is high. These include educators' resignations at school level, movement of educators between public and non-state schools, educator upgrading (in particular primary school educators moving to jobs in secondary schools), occupational attrition (educators leaving the profession to take up other jobs) and international migration. Many educators are lured to the United Kingdom and other countries to teach there at considerable better remuneration.

This trend is exacerbated by the current exchange rates of the South African currency (Le Roux, 2002:104). In terms of the figures supplied by Bennell (2004:23), between the period 2001 and 2003, South Africa was leading as far as educator migration to England is concerned. Between these years, 6044 educators migrated to the United Kingdom (UK) as compared to only seven educators from Botswana who also went to the UK. Migration of educators to other parts of the world is an indication that there is something wrong particularly with the remuneration package.

#### 2.3.4.1 Comparison of conditions of service in education and other professions

Le Roux (2002:105) mentions that it is generally safe to conclude that the conditions of service in education are not attractive enough in comparison with other professions. To substantiate his assertion, Le Roux (2002:105), made the following observations.

- The educational sector is not considered a popular choice among students at tertiary level. Many students choose education as a last option when they do not qualify to be admitted in other fields.
- There is a severe shortage of educators in the so-called scarce subjects or learning areas such as Mathematics and Science. People with qualifications in these fields easily find better employment elsewhere.
- Primary schools complain that male educators are increasingly becoming scarce.
- Many young educators start off in education only to find better employment elsewhere after a few years of teaching.
- Many educators are lured to the United Kingdom and other countries to teach there at considerably better remuneration. This trend is exacerbated by the current exchange rates of the South African currency.
- The education profession is experiencing increasing pressure from the government, the private sector and parents to deliver the goods, yet with very little material compensation in return.
- After leaving school and becoming plumbers, electricians, or even semi-skilled workers in the construction industries, learners laugh at the salaries their former educators earn.
- Many educators are doing additional work, with or without the permission of the education authorities, to make ends meet.
- Educators are frantically trying to improve their academic qualifications as a means to gain promotion in spite of restructuring and redeployment that threatens job security and promotion prospects.

#### 2.3.4.2 Job satisfaction and the Theory of Maslow

Maslow's theory is vital and can be relevantly linked with job satisfaction because it speaks of the needs which satisfy people. Educators as people expect to receive attractive remuneration packages where they are employed. They also prefer to work at schools where working conditions are good and the security is guaranteed. According to this theory, people have five types of needs that are activated in a hierarchical manner (Furnham, 2002:126). According to Furnham (2002:128), Maslow's theory of needs includes the following: the physiological needs, the safety needs, the social needs, the esteem needs and the self-actualisation needs, and these are relevant in ensuring that educators needs are satisfied. The theory is without doubt one of the classical and relevant theories developed so far.

- Physiological needs

They are the lowest order needs that include food, air, water and shelter. These needs satisfy the fundamental biological drives. To satisfy these needs, organizations such as schools must provide employees with a salary that allows them to afford adequate living conditions (Furnham, 2002:129). The salary educators earn must be able to provide for the family needs and be left with surplus. Le Roux (2002:80) mentions that the remuneration package of educators is not attractive enough to recruit many educators in the system.

- Safety needs

Safety needs are related to the creation of the working environment that is secure enough for its employees. Furnham (2002:129) mentions that safety needs refer to needs for a secure, predictable, habitable, non-threatening climate, free from threats of either physical or psychological harm. Schools should be safe for educators to continue with teaching. There are reports of violence taking place in schools. Violence that takes place in schools affects both learners and educators. This violence in some instances has



claimed the lives of both learners and educators. When the climate in which educators are employed does not provide adequate security, they are likely to feel dissatisfied.

Marvin, Malek, Terry, Chang, and Davis (1998:98) state that schools are avoided at times because of the fear of violence. They further comment that students who come to school with weapons are likely to start a fight. To indicate that there is violence in some of the schools, City Press (2006:3) reported that an eight-year boy was killed because he apparently owed two primary school classmates money.

There are learners who use drugs at schools. Learners who use drugs are likely to become more violent than non-drug users. *Pretoria News* (2007:17) reports that the National Minister of Education is considering introducing drug testing as a measure to reduce school violence. *City Press* (2006:41) concurs when it reported that the National Education Minister promised to explore all avenues to create a safe environment for learners and educators. Violence in schools also results in the death of learners (Sunday Times, 2007:9). The objective of the Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service (COLTS) is to create a safer learning and teaching climate in schools where learning and teaching can take place without fear.

- Social needs

The relationship element is very important in the school environment. The school is by nature a social institution. Possessions such as money, houses, cars cannot replace the need of humans to belong. When educators work in environments that promote belonging, they become satisfied.

Furnham (2002:129) argues that

*Social needs include the need to belong to a group, to have friends, to be loved and accepted by other people. These friends, relations and work colleagues help to meet social needs, and organizations may encourage participation in social*

*events such as office parties, sports competitions or social events which provide an opportunity for meeting social needs.*

Schools need to organize social gatherings where teachers can fellowship in an atmosphere free from serious teaching business. These social gatherings give the educators an assurance that they are appreciated and belong to a group. Principals should not underestimate the impact of relationships in the school climate and should try to encourage fellowship amongst educators.

- Esteem needs

Esteem needs refer to a person's need to develop self-respect and to gain the approval of others. According to Chaplin, in Khumalo (2006:20) self-esteem refers to whether one feels worthy or unworthy as a person. Furnham (2002) argues that esteem needs include the desire to achieve success, have personal prestige and be recognized by others. School principals should recognize educators' contributions and achievements because this will help boost their esteem. It is therefore important for school principals to ensure that educators' contributions are appreciated, even when these seem to be very little. Recognition makes a big impact in one's life and boosts his self-esteem.

- Self-actualisation need

The self-actualisation needs are aroused only after all the lower order needs are met. Self-actualisation refers to the need for self-fulfilment. Self-actualisation is the desire to become all that one is capable of being, developing one's potential and fully realizing one's abilities (Furnham, 2002:130). When the general working conditions are favourable for educators, they become fulfilled and satisfied in their jobs.

#### 2.3.4.3 Job satisfaction and the situational theory

DeMato (2001:26) explains: *This theory posits that job satisfaction is determined by two factors which are labelled situational characteristics and situational occurrences. Situational characteristics include those things which workers evaluate before taking the*

*job, such as pay, promotion, working conditions and supervision. Situational occurrences are those things workers do not evaluate and are either negative or positive factors. Positive factors might be tangible or intangible, while negative factors might include typical inconveniences or irritations associated with the work environment.*

The implication of this theory is that variables such as salary, general working conditions, the style of leadership used, are critical determinants of job satisfaction. Situational occurrences are those unpredictable occurrences that one might not expect at a given moment which are not top priorities when choosing a career.

#### 2.3.4.4 Determinants of job satisfaction

The components of job satisfaction include the following: general working conditions, remuneration package, workload of educators and interpersonal relations at work (Mampuru 2001:66). As indicated earlier, various job satisfaction researchers focused on different variables in studying the concept of job dissatisfaction. Educators' satisfaction or dissatisfaction depends on how these educators view conditions at work and other factors related to the situation at work. One situation might be perceived differently by a number of educators.

- General working conditions

General working conditions are the sum total of factors which one considers when choosing a career. These factors include salary, fringe benefits, leave, promotional possibilities, job security, technical resources and staff development support. In addition, conditions of work should also include job description, attendance, hours of work and the length of the contract. The work and the living conditions of many educators are poor, which results in educator's lower self-esteem and dissatisfaction (Bennell, 2004:13).

According to UNESCO (2006:2), appropriate working conditions include the number of hours taught each week, the number of students in the classroom, support by the

principal, availability of teaching and learning materials, parent involvement and support, clear school policies and guidelines, and the physical condition of the learning space or classroom. Educators work in increasingly difficult conditions with overcrowded classes, no educational materials and in schools where the buildings have been damaged or destroyed. Often they will be forced to teach in temporary or open-air classrooms with a severe lack of resources (UNESCO, 2006:2). This is an indication of the kind of conditions educators are exposed to. Some of the learners in Limpopo attend classes under trees.

- Remuneration package

Past research indicates that there is a positive correlation between rewards and employee performance and work satisfaction (Szilagyi, 1980:95). The remuneration package includes monetary pay, fringe benefits such as housing and travel allowance and medical aid subsidy. It is widely noted that incentives for schools and educators in the public education system inefficient (Bennell, 2004:10). Low salaries result in low motivation, low commitment and job dissatisfaction.

*City Press* (2007:16) reports that the Department of Education acknowledges the fact that educators are amongst the poorly paid employees and is considering increasing their remuneration package. They have proposed the occupational specific dispensation for educators (OSD) that clearly states the way individual educators will benefit from the proposed increments. As part of the disapproval of the proposed remuneration package, *Educator's Voice* (2007a:2) reports that the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) rejects the OSD. Ramachandran, Pal, Jain, Shekar and Sharma (2005:12) argue that the primary school teachers do difficult work and increasingly more work, and yet they receive less pay as compared to other sectors of employment.

Past experience with the education sector has shown that failure to improve the financial dimension of the education departments condemns efforts to improve inputs to the teaching and learning process. To contain costs while adjusting to declining enrolments,

the education sector in the 1990's allowed educator's salaries to deteriorate and reduced the number of educators, the number of classes and the number of schools (Sue, 2000). Adequate remuneration packages ensure educator retention and decimate the rate of educator turnover. Educators who work far from their families are unable to see their family members for prolonged periods. The educators' compensation package does not include travelling allowances. These are only given to selected officials employed at the circuit and district offices.

- Workload of educators

Educators' workload includes the following core duties which are done during a formal school day (with or without contact with the pupils) and outside the formal school day: scheduled teaching time, relief teaching, extra and co-curricular duties, pastoral duties (ground, detention, scholar patrol), administration, supervisory and management functions, professional duties (meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences), planning, preparation and evaluation and professional development (Department of Education, 1999). This is an indication that educators are having enough to do.

At the school where the researcher is employed, educators are forced to assist in work which is not related to their job description. Educators had to remain behind and supervise learners do manual work such as cleaning and gardening. This responsibility is supposed to be given to non-teaching staff such as cleaners and gardeners. Because the department of education did not appoint such a workforce, educators are inconvenienced. The current working conditions impede the recruitment strategy of the Department of Education.

The condition is made worse by the high degree of educator turnover. In view of the above assertion, Hayes (2004:37) mentions that educators' unions have expressed concern that the government recruitment and retention strategies are short-term expedients and do not address the deeper concerns of an overworked and demoralized

profession. The Limpopo Department of Education is urgently in need of more than 5000 educators (*City Press*, 2007:7).

- Interpersonal relationships

Leadership is important in building up positive interpersonal relations. Shields (2006:76) argues that the educational leader needs to recognize that relationships are a fundamental and intrinsic part of being. Interpersonal relations play an important role in teacher satisfaction. If there is tranquillity in the school, the degree of educator satisfaction will be high. If the interaction of educators is characterized by negative tendencies, educators will be dissatisfied. Positive work related interaction among educators is important because it reduces the extreme isolation felt by many educators and provides opportunities to exchange support and assistance (*OECS Education Reform Unit*, 2000:6).

Positive interpersonal relations enhance team building. Such relations are also an advantage to the implementation of the new curriculum because educators are encouraged to work together. Shields (2006:76) further states that leadership must model, encourage and demonstrate the importance of relationships and positive interactions. One of the challenges facing principals as school leaders is the ability to build strong positive relationships in schools.

The principal should abstain from belonging to certain groupings in schools. He should be seen to be a unifying figure. Educators should feel free to confide to him whenever they have problems. The principal should provide the pastoral leadership. Whenever a principal maintains a neutral position and treats everybody at school the same, chances are that educators will co-operate. Teaching must be built on the relationship of respect and absolute regard (Shields, 2006:76).

Educators should be treated as human beings and not as objects and their contributions should be appreciated. Buber (1970) and Freire (2000), in Shields (2006:76) distinguish

between interaction that treats others as objects and that which treats them as fully human. The researcher assumes that if the atmosphere in the school is positive, the level of performance will increase. Educators have an urge to belong and form relationships. To confirm this, Anderman and Leake (2005:193) indicate that the idea that people have an innate need for relatedness or attachment is a well-established one.

With regard to job satisfaction, the principal as the transformational leader should attempt to transform the educators' attitudes towards their work environment. It has been stated in section 2.3.4 that the general working conditions, interpersonal relations and low remuneration contribute towards job dissatisfaction. Even though some of the factors are beyond the control of the principal, such as salary, the principal has to ensure that relations and workload issues are dealt with in such a way that it encourages educator satisfaction.

### **2.3.5 Participative decision-making (PDM)**

One of the challenges facing schools and principals during the twenty first century is decision-making. Squelch (2003:143) mentions that leaders who are able to develop decision-making structures and processes promote rather than hinder meaningful participation and collaboration. Decision-making is a critical component of leadership considering the present declining conditions which primary schools face. The situation is exacerbated by the monumental changes taking place in schools. To ensure that educators are part of the solution to transformational challenges, the participative decision-making process is important. According to Rosenblatt and Nord (1999:63), recent decades have witnessed the dramatic increase in the inquiry about how schools respond to the declining conditions they are faced with.

According to Heller, Drenth, Koopman and Rus (1983:1), the traditional view of decision-making was based on hierarchical principles. The decision making-process was top down designed. The *National Centre for Education Statistics* (1997:8) indicates that top down decision-making often fails precisely because it lacks the support of those who

are responsible for the implementation and success of the decisions. Educators cannot just be highly committed to school decisions in which they have had no say.

Traditionally, the principal was mainly the only person who decided the direction of the school at school level. The principals relied on the autocratic leadership tendencies. Whenever there was an issue to be discussed, the principal convenes a staff meeting to give orders to the educators and any deviations were considered a serious offence. Given the current challenging state of affairs and conditions in primary schools, the participative decision-making approach is assumed to be an important catalyst.

Sagie, Elizur and Koslowsky (1995:82) define participative decision-making as a process in which influence is shared between super-ordinates and their subordinates. Duke (2005:3) mentions that participative decision-making is a more general term that refers to the sharing of decision authority among stakeholders in a given context. The principal as the pivotal role player should ensure that educators participate in decision-making. Scholars who studied the construct of participative decision-making focused on different elements when describing this construct. Rice and Schnieder (1994), in Duke (2005:11) emphasized content and frequency in describing decision-making, whereas Black and Green (1997), in Duke (2005) posited the following elements: rationale of participation, structure (formal or informal), form (direct or indirect), decision issues (content), degree of involvement and decision-making (stages of the decision).

The consequences of participative decision-making for job performance and reactions of individuals are a matter of considerable debate among both organizational researchers and practitioners (Schaubroek & Jennings, 1991:49). Mohrman (1992), cited by Duke (1995:7) indicates that worker participation yields higher quality products and services, less absenteeism, less turnover, better decision-making, better problem solving and greater organizational effectiveness.

Numerous participative decision-making scholars developed models related to the degree of employee participation. Such models usually explain at which level of the organization



an employee can participate and which content must be opened for participation. Duke (2005:11) indicates that decision-making has been conceptualised in terms of the type of involvement educators are expected to have. Conley (1989), in Duke (2005:11) illuminated the distinction between authority and influence in decision-making process. Conley defines authority as an entity that stems from the legal right to make decisions, and influence as the capacity to shape decisions through informal or non-authoritarian means. Mohrman, Lawler and Mohrman (1992), in Duke (2005:11) identified the following models of participation in decision-making:

#### 2.3.5.1 Parallel suggestion involvement

In this model, employees participate in decision-making, but their participation happens outside of their usual job structure. These include the site based management activities taking place during non-school hours and include tasks and decisions not directly related to educator's instructional duties. This model implies that the degree of educator's participation is limited.

#### 2.3.5.2 Job involvement model

This model indicates that participation is part of the job and is characterized by teams or groups. The relevance of this theory is that educators actively participate in the deliberations affecting their instructional responsibilities. They are completely included in every aspect of decision-making. To give a concrete example: When learning area allocations are made, they give their views on the allocation processes.

#### 2.3.5.3 High involvement model

This model implies significant participation by all members of the organization at all levels that necessitate major structural change in that organization. The principal has to take a number of decisions, including the decision to develop internal school policies, employment of teaching staff, and support staff, financial decisions, allocation of duties

to members of the staff, purchasing of school needs. In taking these decisions, all stakeholders are critical, such as the school governing body members, support staff and educators' union representatives. In the high involvement model, decision-making is extended to all members of the school.

These models could be of assistance to schools when engaging in decision-making. Patch (2007) suggests the following decision-making processes: discuss what factors should be considered in deciding, discuss which factors deserve more consideration, finally give time to different opinions on what decision should be made, and then the decision is made. According to Duke (2005), the following concepts are closely related to participative decision-making:

- Educator empowerment, which is increasing the authority of educators by involving them.
- Educator leadership refers to the educator's participation in decision-making as part of a broader leadership role both within and outside the classroom.
- Participative decision-making is shared governance, which is demonstrated when principals share their governing roles with educators.
- Participative management refers to the management strategy of principals that leads to educator participation.
- Site based management (SBM) refers to the decentralization of formal decision-making authority from the district to the school level, including parents, community members, school staff, principals and educators.

In meeting the challenges that are facing the primary schools, the role of the principal as the school leader is very important, particularly in decision-making. Insecure leadership excludes staff-members from decision-making processes and secured principals include them in decision-making processes. Denying educators a platform to participate in decision-making is destructive because this will result in defiance.

Educators and parents have established statutory structures such as educators' unions and the school governing bodies to state their views. Apart from these structures, individual

educators' opinions should be respected in schools' formal and informal staff meetings. The degree of participation will be determined by the size of the school. It will be easy for small schools to include a sizable number of educators in decision-making. It will be difficult for bigger schools to consider the opinion of every educator in the process of decision-making.

The principal as the transformational leader is faced with the challenge of transforming the procedures in which decisions are taken. Transformation of the decision making process means that the transformational leader creates processes whereby decisions are no longer limited to an individual leader, but are taken by the collective, all role players included.

## **2.4 THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ADDRESSING PRIMARY SCHOOL CHALLENGES**

Transformational leadership is crucial in addressing the challenges primary schools face especially considering the low morale, negative attitudes and low self-esteem among educators. The following elements form part of the transformational leadership model.

### **2.4.1 Shared vision**

In section 2.3.1, it is indicated that Whitaker and Monte, in Korkmaz (2006:17) define vision as addressing the feelings and ideas of the staff through the manifestation of the school's goals, values and aims. The principal as the transformational leader initiates and develops the vision of the school. The process includes the formation of goals and objectives of the school. The principal then invites role players to take part in robust debates for the finalisation and adoption of the shared school vision.

It is the responsibility of the principal as the transformational leader to ensure that educators support the vision of the school. The researcher as the manager has experienced that some educators tend not to support the school vision. The principal as the transformational leader should change the educators' mindset towards the school vision.

During this process, decisions are taken and participation is as open and as inclusive as possible. This process will help transform the educators' negative attitudes of trying to sabotage the vision of the school. When educators are engaged and share the development of the vision, they will feel that they are part of the school and will own the vision.

#### **2.4.2 Commitment**

In section 2.3.2, the researcher mentioned that commitment is one of the important elements of transformational school leadership. It was also indicated that a committed educator wilfully does his or her work with passion, is not reminded of his or her responsibilities, and subscribes to the values and objectives of his profession. The Department of Education (2003) in Nuku (2007) maintains that the department can no longer tolerate principals and educators who do not know their professional code of conduct, who arrive late at school or leave early or who pay little attention to their learners because they are busy with their own studies during the paid teaching time.

The role of the principal as the transformational leader is critical in changing the attitude and behaviours of educators. In encouraging commitment, the transformational school leader develops his or her educators in all matters related to their work so that they are confident when executing their duties.

The principal as the transformational school leader also ensures that commitment is rewarded through appreciation and recognition. In extraordinary situations, giving such educators tokens can reward commitment. The principal as transformational leader has to ensure that strategies are developed in ensuring that the educators become committed.

#### **2.4.3 Motivation**

Mampuru (2001:58) mentions that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his staff to perform at their best voluntarily, in order to ensure

successful educative teaching. In section 2.3.3, the researcher identified the following factors as some of the factors that demotivate educators: the scourge of HIV/AIDS, the process of redeployment and inadequate professional development with regard to matters related to the new National Curriculum Statement. Bowers (2001:145), reports that schools should express care for the educators' welfare and well-being.

The principal as the transformational school leader makes it his or her responsibility to ensure that educators are constantly and consistently motivated in the execution of their duties. The principal motivates educators by appreciating and recognizing their efforts and the contributions they make. The transformational leader also motivates educators by creating opportunities where educators feel that they are part of the team. The leader also empathizes and sympathizes with his or her colleagues when faced with challenges such as sickness or death of family members. Consistent and continuous motivation is done because the transformational school leader is conscious of the fact that there are factors that discourage educators during their daily teaching routines.

#### **2.4.4 Job satisfaction**

Mampuru (2001:67) argues that job satisfaction indicates a person's attitudes or happiness with the situation and the comfort the environment offers. When educators become unhappy and feel uncomfortable, they become unproductive and consider leaving the profession. In section 2.3.4, Ingersol (2001), in Liu (2005:5) asserts that different factors lead educators to leave their jobs, or to leave teaching altogether, but dissatisfaction with their jobs is surely one of the most important.

The role of the principal as the transformational leader is fundamental in changing the prevailing situation. Transformational school leaders ensure that educators stay satisfied in their profession through the following efforts: building positive relationships among educators, creating a safe environment for all (security), ensuring that the workload of educators is equally distributed and that issues such as salaries are not delayed.

The transformational leader should consistently motivate educators and also find innovative ways to compensate for the resources that are not available in schools. The principal should also ensure that the resources that are available are equally shared amongst educators. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that educators understand the curriculum related issues. Kruger (2003:206) concurs when he mentions that principals have to give attention to issues of the curriculum and instruction. With regard to resources that are not available or inadequate, the principal as the transformational school leader should be innovative and create strategies that will compensate for those resources.

#### **2.4.5 Participative decision-making**

Excluding role players in the decision-making processes sometimes causes resistance, arrogance, defiance and uncooperative conduct. It was indicated in section 2.3.5 that in order to prevent the treatment of labour as a commodity and the resulting alienation, workers must participate in the decision-making processes (Dachler & Wilpert, in Duke 2005). The participative decision-making process ensures that decisions taken are accepted without resistance (Sagie et al, 1995:81).

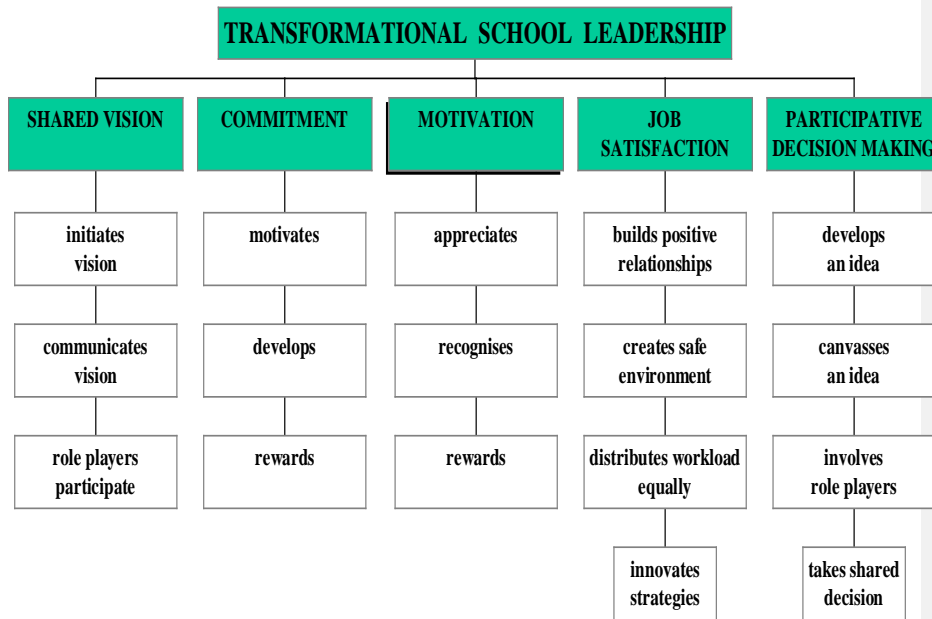
In trying to address this challenge, the principal as the transformational leader should involve all role players in the decision-making processes. The transformational leader should change his way of taking decisions alone and canvass his suggestion to stakeholders such as the school management team, the school governing body, educators, and educator unions. By involving all role players, the principal as the transformational leader will be transforming the way in which decisions are taken.

In meeting the challenges facing primary schools, the principal as the transformational leader should initiate the development of the school vision and motivate his subordinates to become committed. The transformational school leadership includes educators in the schools' decision-making processes. The principal does so in order to create an atmosphere of job satisfaction at school. The transformational school leadership model

below represents the role the transformational school leader plays in his or her daily activities:

**Figure 2.1**

**TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP MODEL**



This model is premised on the following objectives:

- The primary objective of this model is to indicate that transformational school leadership plays an important role in meeting the challenges facing the organization.
- The transformational school leader initiates and develops the school vision that will be co-owned by the role players.
- The transformational school leader ensures that the vision crafted is completely supported.
- The transformational school leader instils a spirit of commitment in educators.

- The transformational school leader creates an environment and an opportunity for all role players to fully participate in the decision-making processes of the school.
- The transformational school leader also creates an environment of satisfaction amongst co-workers.

This model suggests that transformational school leadership (principal) relies on the five elements of transformational leadership in his or her daily leadership activities. These elements are: shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making. The application of these transformational school leadership elements is interrelated, cyclic and not isolated. The process is cyclic in the sense that the transformational school leader applies these elements interchangeably, continuously and consistently.

## **2.5 CONCLUSION**

To lay a solid foundation for the better understanding of the concept transformational leadership, the definition and description of the concept of leadership was given. In the discussion the distinction between leadership and management was also explored. The researcher also deliberated on the emergence, description and definition of the concept “transformational school leadership”.

This chapter also discussed the elements of transformational school leadership. In discussing these elements namely shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making, the researcher linked the discussion with the role of the principal as the transformational school leader. In this chapter, the transformational school leadership model was also given. The objectives of the model were identified and the model was also graphically presented.

In the next chapter, the discussion will be focused on the challenges primary schools face in the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THE PRIMARY EDUCATION SYSTEMS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND SELECTED SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY MEMBER STATES**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter two, the researcher focused on the elements of transformational school leadership and the challenges facing primary schools. In this chapter, the discussion will firstly be on the organization and the provision of primary education in general. Without doubt, primary education constitutes the basis for preparation of the learners for secondary education. The influence of education on shaping our lives cannot be underestimated (Brown & Haylock, 2004).

Everyone who was in a primary school remembers something significant that happened to him or her whilst at school. What the teacher did to you, who your friend was, or any other story you might recall. The fact is, no one can claim that primary schooling had no influence on his or her life. The strength of these memories is an indication of the importance that those years in primary school held for us as individuals (Brown & Haylock, 2004).

The researcher will give the structure and organization of the primary education system of the Republic of South Africa (RSA), because the focus of the study is Limpopo, which is one of the provinces of the RSA. The discussion of the organization and the structure of primary education will focus on aspects such as the objectives of the establishment of primary schools and teaching and learning in primary schools.

These aspects are fundamental in this study because the focus of the study is the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. It is critical for one to firstly understand how primary education operates and is organized. The researcher believes that once the operation and the organization of primary schooling

is understood, it is easier to understand the challenges which primary schools face and the role transformational school leadership can play in meeting these challenges.

This chapter will also give a reflection on the primary education systems of selected Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. The selected countries are Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho. The Republic of South Africa (RSA) is part of SADC and the selection of the three mentioned countries will present an opportunity to compare the educational challenges these countries experience. Because these countries have undergone transformation and are experiencing educational challenges as a result of the transformation, the researcher assumes that it is indeed relevant to study their primary education systems.

### **3.2 THE VALUE AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PRIMARY EDUCATION**

Before dealing with the value and the significance of primary education, it is important to describe what the concept primary education means. Different countries use different notions to refer to primary schooling. Some countries prefer to use the concept elementary education. Wikipedia (2007) defines a primary school as an institution where children receive the stage of compulsory education known as primary or elementary education.

The United Kingdom and many Commonwealth Nations and most publications of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) prefer the use of the *primary education* concept (Wikipedia, 2007). Schooling is divided into different phases according to the ages of the children. The admission age of learners into primary education differs from country to country, but the commonly accepted age is between five and six years.

Primary education is fundamental and foundational in the future learning of school learners. Cassidy (2005:144) argues that starting school is a turning point in a child's life and it is associated with the increased status of going to secondary school. Primary education is primarily meant to prepare learners for advanced secondary education.

Cassidy (2005:144) further mentions that when children start their schooling, their lives change dramatically. If challenges primary schools face cannot be immediately confronted, they will have an adverse effect on the future secondary school learning of primary school children.

### **3.2.1 The objectives of primary education**

Primary schools aim to extend children's knowledge of themselves and of the world in which they live, and through greater knowledge to develop skills and concepts, to help them relate to others and to encourage a proper self-confidence (Lofthouse, 1990:73). Sevinc (2006:347) asserts that the main objective of a primary education programme is to give children more opportunities for functional real life learning. The objective of primary schooling is to give learners the basics in education.

Cassidy (2005:144) mentions that characteristics such as aspiration, pro-socialization, self-esteem, motivation and confidence are established at primary school stage. Cassidy (2005) further elaborates that these characteristics will enable the children to attain more positive achievements in their later school careers and state that educators in primary schools not only play a central role in the learning experience of every school child, but also have a powerful influence on virtually every aspect of the child's development.

### **3.2.2 Learning and teaching in primary schools**

Teaching in primary settings differs to a certain extent with the way teaching takes place in secondary schools. Learners in the primary schools are more dependent on their educators and in their daily interactions. Educators should display the following: be open minded, be gentle in their interactions with children, be tolerant, should listen, create a safe learning environment, be calm, have a sense of humour, be friendly and teach clearly (Sztenjberg, den Brok & Hurek, 2004:32).

Primary education presents the educators with an opportunity to identify the children's potential. The educator should demonstrate a positive attitude through a persevering believe in each child's potential, respect for the child as a person and a feeling of accountability for enabling progress in the classroom (Humphrey, Barotolo, Ale, Calleja, Hofsaess, Janikova, Lous, Vilkiene & Wetso, 2006:305). After the identification of the potential of the learners, the primary school educators have the responsibility to enhance the potential through various strategies at their disposal.

Cassidy (2005:144) states that in their early learning years, children are encouraged to initiate their own learning activities and to explore and develop their intellectual, physical, emotional, social, moral and communication skills with play as the medium for development. Teaching strategies are activity based and child-centred (Moyle, 1992:11). The essence of primary education is the practical activity that takes place in the classroom (Richards, 1985:5). These approaches and the characteristics exhibited by primary school educators make learners at ease. Heavy handedness in primary schools, particularly in the foundation phase classes, might result in children developing negative attitudes towards schooling.

The primary school curriculum is characterized by activities and experience rather than by knowledge to be acquired and facts to be stored. The curriculum should be designed in a manner that fosters the total development of the child. Oliver (2004), in Brown and Haylock (2004:14) argues that the curriculum, particularly in the foundation phase, should cover the following areas of learning:

- Personal, emotional and social development
- Communication, language and literacy
- Mathematical development
- Knowledge and understanding of the world
- Physical development, and
- Creative development

Primary schools are responsible for laying the basis for the development of the children's literacy, numeracy, comprehension and life skills. Garcia-Mila, Marti and Teberosky (2004:287) stress that one of the goals in primary education is to guarantee the acquisition of literacy and numeracy, two of the crucial notational systems. Apart from the other curriculum focus points, these skills are critical elements of focus in primary schools.

The organization of the classroom and seating arrangements are critical in primary schools (Merrett & Wheldall, 1990:40). The primary school educator should arrange the classroom in ways that enable children to learn more quickly and effectively than they would do alone. The educator should create a positive classroom atmosphere that promotes enjoyable learning. Moyles (1997:10) mentions that because the child is an active learner and the meaning maker, the classroom should be arranged in a manner that achieves these objectives. Oliver, in Brown and Haylock (2004:13) agrees that excellence in teaching and enjoyment in learning are the features of successful primary schools.

According to Campion (2004:21) classrooms should be arranged in a manner that allows the following practices at different stages of the day:

- At times, educators should allow learners to be seated on a carpet around the teacher and the chalkboard.
- Sometimes learners should face the front and receive instructions.
- Allow learners to respond to questions and receive input from the educator.
- Allow learners at times to work on their own.
- Allow learners to work in pairs.
- Working in small groups on a collaborative task.
- Engage learners in semi structured or structured play activities.
- Engage learners in free choice play.
- At times, allow learners to watch a television programme or a video recording.

Primary education plays an important role in the preparation of learners for further education. Learners are given elementary and basic knowledge during their primary education. Primary schooling is different from secondary schooling and the distinction is traced in the manner in which learning and teaching is conducted. The difference also concerns the teaching strategies, the children's learning styles, the classroom space, the classroom arrangement and the curriculum.

### **3.3 THE STRUCTURE OF PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA (RSA)**

Because this research is based on the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo, it is necessary to briefly elaborate on how the province is organized educationally. The RSA is divided into nine provinces and Limpopo is one of these provinces. The National Education Department has devolved educational powers to provincial education departments. These provinces have their own Provincial Education Departments that are constitutionally recognized. The Member of Executive Council (MEC) is the political head of the provincial department. He or she is answerable to the National Minister of Education. The MEC is assisted by the Head of Department who is the administrative head.

The constitution of the RSA stipulates that education is mainly a provincial matter (Hughes, Wydeman & Schalkwyk, 2002:23). Therefore, provinces have the power to make legislation and proclamations on educational matters as long as these are within the national framework and do not contradict the constitution of the RSA. According to the constitution of the RSA, section 29 of the Bill of Rights in Hughes et al. (2002:24), the child is entitled to receive basic primary education, which shall be free and compulsory at least in the elementary stages. He or she shall be given an education that will promote the general culture and enable him or her on a basis of equal opportunity to develop his or her abilities, his or her individual judgment and his or her sense of moral and social responsibility and to become a useful member of society (Hughes et al. 2002).

Manyike (2007:117) indicates that in order to achieve an integrated system of education and training, the White Paper on Education and Training No.1 (1996) introduced the National Qualification Framework (NQF), and the then Northern Province Department of Education (2001:1), which is now called Limpopo Department of Education, mentions that the structure of the new NQF is made up of three bands:

- The General Education and Training band (GET)
- Further Education and Training band (FET)
- Higher Education and Training band (HET)

According to the Northern Province Department of Education (2001:11), the General Education and Training band is divided into four school phases, namely pre-school, foundation phase, intermediate phase and senior phase, which correspond to learner's maturational stages.

### **3.3.1 The pre-school and foundation phases**

Manyike (2007:118) indicates that only nine percent of South African learners have access to early childhood development centres. Pre-primary education is elementary schooling that is provided by the early childhood development centres spread across the country. To provide and assist with the provision of pre-primary education, the Department of Education has introduced grade R classes in some schools and others do not have these classes. The Department of Education hopes that by 2010 all primary schools shall have introduced grade R (*City Press*, 2007:10).

Manyike (2007:119) indicates that during the course of 2001 the Department of Education increased access to early childhood development programmes as well as their quality. Most of these early childhood development centres are privately owned and some are partially subsidized by the state. The subsidy is in the form of salaries of the pre-primary educators. The provision of early childhood development (ECD) is impeded by numerous factors. Manyike (2007:119) identifies the following:

- Lack of financial resources for salaries of practitioners and for equipment and food for the children.
- Demotivation of early childhood development staff and a high turnover of non-formally trained early childhood development practitioners.
- Unavailability of appropriate physical structures for early childhood development services resulting in multi-purpose halls and informal structures being utilized as early childhood development centres.
- Difficulties arising from unrealistic regulations relating to norms and standards such as physical requirements for facilities, and state recognized qualifications for practitioners, thereby making subsidization of community efforts difficult.

There are a number of hours learners are expected to spend at school to achieve specific learning outcomes. The time spent on learning differs from phase to phase. According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2003), the time allocated to individual learning areas should be as indicated in table 3.1.

**Table 3.1: Time allocation for grades one and two**

Learning area	Notional time/%	Weekly contact/hour
Life skills	25%	5h40min
Literacy	25%	5h40min
Numeracy	25%	5h40min
Flexi- time	25%	5h40min

The learning programmes taught during this phase are: literacy, numeracy and life skills (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). The weekly contact for each learning area is 5h40 minutes. The time these learners spent at school is less than the more senior classes.

With regard to grade three, the difference is only the weekly contact time per hour. The learning areas and the notional times are the same but the weekly contact time is six



hours and fifteen minutes for each learning area. According to the Education Labour Relations Council (2003), the division per learning area is as follows:

**Table 3.2: Time allocation for grade three**

<b>Learning area</b>	<b>Notional time/%</b>	<b>Weekly contact time/hour</b>
Life skills	25%	6h15
Literacy	25%	6h15
Numeracy	25%	6h15
Flexi-time	25%	6h15

The difference between time spent on learning as indicated in the first table 3.1 and the second table 3.2 is 75 minutes.

### **3.3.2 The intermediate phase**

The intermediate phase is important in that it provides for a specific group of learners in the approximate age group of eight years to fourteen years in grades four to six (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). It is still part of primary education. Learners in the intermediate phase begin a major advance in thinking as compared to their level of thinking in the foundation phase. Teaching in this phase is more advanced.

The selection of learning content and teaching and learning activities is underpinned by the fact that learners in this phase are beginning to understand detailed relationships between materials, incidents, circumstances and people (Manyike, 2007). The time allocated for teaching in the intermediate phase is more than the time allocation in the foundation phase. The learners are taught in eight learning areas, namely, Arts and Culture, Economic and Management Sciences, Languages, Life Orientation, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences and Technology, which have specific learning outcomes to be achieved.

- Arts and Culture.

The Department of Education (2003a:37) mentions that the learner's interest in culture should be fully exploited through the sharing of cultures within the class, as well as opening up to culture-bearers or community members who can offer to teach dances, songs, stories and other forms of cultural engagements. Skills that should be built in this phase include: dance, music, visual art, and drama. The activities taught should be designed to fit the level of learners in the intermediate phase and prepare them for the senior phase.

- Economic Management and Sciences

The learning area, *Economic and Management Sciences* is primarily focused on the following topics: the economy, management and entrepreneurship, and their underlying dependence on the factors of production and distribution (Department of Education, 2003b:41).

- Languages

According to the Department of Education (2003c:21), the primary focus of the languages learning programme is to ensure that the learners achieve the following learning outcomes: listening, speaking, reading and viewing, writing, thinking, reasoning and language use and structure.

- Life Orientation

This learning area focuses on guiding the learners to develop their full potential in all spheres of life (Department of Education, 2003d:19). Life Orientation aims at ensuring that learners are holistically developed. It facilitates coping skills that equip learners to cope with the challenges of a transforming South African society.

- Mathematics

This learning area has five learning outcomes and covers the following mathematical topics: numbers, operations, relationships, patterns, functions, algebra, space and shape, measurement and data handling (Department of Education, 2003e:20).

- Natural Sciences

Teachers in the intermediate phase should ensure that learners cover the following themes: sustainable living, our changing world, healthy living, food and shelter, and transport (Department of Education, 2003f: 40).

- Social Sciences

Social Sciences consist of two distinct fields that are History and Geography. Their main objective is to contribute to the development of informed, critical and responsible citizens who are able to play constructive roles in a culturally diverse and changing society (Department of Education, 2003g:47).

- Technology

The focus of the technology-learning programme is to get learners to come to grips with the design process. In teaching Technology the shift should be towards learning-centeredness and the educator should introduce new ideas and then provide support for the learners to make sense of these for themselves (Department of Education, 2003h:37).

### **3.3.3 Senior phase**

Grade seven is the entry point to the senior phase and it is located in primary schools. In this phase, learners should be provided with opportunities to acquire, develop and apply a range of more advanced knowledge, understanding and skills (Department of Education,

2003c:61). The learning areas taught in the intermediate phase are also taught in grade seven.

It takes eight years (from grade R to grade seven) for learners to complete their primary education before they are admitted to secondary education. Even though grade seven is classified as senior phase, most of primary schools teach up to grade seven. Learners at primary schools are not subjected to external examination and no national certificate is issued. During the course of the year, learners are given projects and assignments as part of continuous assessment. Progression to the next grade is based on the learner's assessment throughout the year and the end of the year internal examination.

### **3.3.4 Education policies influencing primary education provision in the Republic of South Africa**

When the new government took over, it decided to transform the entire education system. This transformation was done through the introduction of new policies that regulated the provision of education. The policy makers focused on a variety of topics such as the curriculum, the governance of schools, general conditions of service of educators, the relationship between the employer and the educators and the general conduct of educators. Oosthuizen, cited in Hughes et al. (2002:8) distinguishes the following functions of the education policy:

- It regulates the rights and obligations of the interested parties equitably.
- It contributes to the creation of harmonizing patterns of co-operation amongst all participants.
- It creates a clear framework for the role of the educator as a professional.
- It interprets the given statutory position to establish workable structures for educational management and administration.
- It establishes the authority of the educator and especially that of the education manager.

The following are critical education policies that have an influence in the primary education system of the RSA.

#### 3.3.4.1 The South African School Act 84 of 1996 (SASA)

According to the Department of Education (1997a:11; 1997b:7), the governing body is responsible for governing the school and must ensure that it is run in the best interests of all stakeholders. The governing body represents the parent community of the school and performs the following functions: adopts a constitution, adopts the code of conduct for learners, develops the mission statement for the school, decides on school times, maintains and improves school property and buys text books (Department of Education, 1997a:14).

#### 3.3.4.2 The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998 (EEA)

The primary objectives of this Act are the following: to provide for the employment of educators by the state, to regulate the conditions of service of educators, to ensure that educators are disciplined, to take care of the retirement and the discharge of educators and for matters connected therewith (Educators Labour Relations Council, 2003).

#### 3.3.4.3 The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 (LRA)

This Act was introduced with an aim of regulating the organizational rights of educators and the trade unions, to promote and facilitate collective bargaining, to regulate the right to strike by educators, to promote employee participation in decision-making and other labour related matters.

#### 3.3.4.4 The South African Council of Educators Act 31 of 2000 (SACE)

The South African Council of Educators fulfils the followings objectives:

- Must promote, develop and maintain a professional image of teaching as profession.

- Must compile, maintain and from time to time review a code of professional ethics for educators who are its members.
- Must advise the minister on any educational aspect.
- Must institute a disciplinary hearing against any educator who is its member.

This Act attempts to ensure that educators conduct themselves in a manner that does not contradict their profession.

These policies were legislated after the new democratic order was instituted. They were legislated with the objective of introducing the new education system that will benefit all the citizens of the country. The principal as a leader is expected to lead within the confines of these policies.

The manner in which primary education in Limpopo is organized needs strong leadership. There are effective policies which have been promulgated and which need the principal to effectively implement them. The principal as the transformational school leader should ensure all learning areas are given attention and all learning outcomes are achieved as prescribed by policy.

With regard to learning areas, the transformational school leader should ensure that educators teach according to the requirements of the new curriculum. Education establishes the authority of the principal and as a result of that, the transformational school leader should see to it that policy is adhered to.

### **3.4 CLASSIFICATION OF CHALLENGES FACING PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO**

This study is focused on the role of the transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges primary schools face. It is therefore appropriate to give an exposition of the critical challenges faced by primary schools in Limpopo Province. These can be classified into the behavioural, transformational and technical challenges. Behavioural challenges are personnel related. Transformational challenges are related to the changes

that came about as a result of the new democratic government that took over from the apartheid administration. Technical challenges are related to lack of physical resources that are critical in ensuring quality teaching.

### **3.4.1 Behavioural challenges**

As professionals, educators are expected to conduct themselves according to the ethics of their profession. Behavioural challenges are behaviours that are incongruent with the ethos of the profession and not contributing to the improvement of teaching. These behaviours are characterized by low commitment and negative attitudes from educators. The struggle for the liberation and freedom of South Africa resulted in the production of the type of educators who exhibit militant, arrogant and defiant behaviours.

The majority of these educators are members of the more militant South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), which is at times at loggerheads with the employer, the Department of Education. These militant, arrogant and defiant attitudes spilled over to the present-day democratic South Africa. Lethoko (2002), cited by Nuku (2007:105) indicates that the breed of educators we have today in black schools were students during the struggle years, or some of them were already educators who were used to idling whilst the learners were busy marching up and down the streets.

Rosenblatt and Nord (1999:63) stress that of now, organizations, primary schools included, are going through a period of deterioration. There is a need for a total transformation of the attitudes and behaviour of these educators. This radical attitudinal and behavioural transformation of educators will improve the ever-declining conditions in primary schools. One of the critical behavioural challenges primary schools face is absenteeism of educators and it is therefore appropriate for the researcher to give a detailed exposition of it.

### 3.4.1.1 Absenteeism

Kearney and Bensaheb (2006:3) report that school absenteeism and school refusal behaviours are particularly difficult problems that often face schools. Norton (1998:95), supported by Steel (2003), in Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005:209) stress that the problem of educator absenteeism is an increasing concern. According to Rosenblatt and Shirom (2005:209), absenteeism is any failure of an employee to report for or to remain at work as scheduled, regardless of the reasons given. Jacobson (1998), in Bowers (2001:136) sees absenteeism as “an expression of employee choice”.

Szilagyi (1980:195) defines absenteeism as the number of days the employee did not report to work. To be absent is not to be present at ones work place due to various reasons, whether genuine or not genuine. So serious is the issue of absenteeism that NBC Holdings was employed by the Limpopo Government to conduct research on the impact of absenteeism of public servants. In their training and user guide, *NBC Holding Limited* (2006:43) identifies the following consequences of absenteeism:

- Organizations are losing at least the equivalent of 17 per cent of annual payroll due to sick absenteeism.
- Some 60 percent of absentee days are caused by sick leave taken by just four percent of the workforce.
- The total cost of disability alone to the economy is estimated at over R2 billion a year.
- The likelihood of an ill or injured employee returning to work is 80% if intervention is facilitated within the first weeks of absenteeism. After six months of absenteeism, this figure plummets to 20% without any deterioration in the disease or injury condition.
- Absenteeism is not gender related.
- If one per cent of staff is absent, production falls by 2, 5%.
- If 10% of 100 workers are 10 minutes late each day and 2% are absent, the total loss to the organization will be 600 days per annum.



The incidence of educator absence in primary schools has reached alarming proportions. It is a practice that seems to be out of hand and the assumption is that principals are unable to handle the situation. The situation is also made worse by the ineffective system that is used to control absenteeism by both principals and the Department of Education. Because of the loopholes in the control system, the majority of absences are not processed. The processing of leave forms manually from the school to the responsible office is time consuming and is easily manipulated. When an educator is recommended leave without pay, there are unconfirmed reports that office based educators manipulate and influence the process to nullify these recommendations. Because of this anomaly, the intentions of punishing the perpetrators are defeated.

Research indicates that numerous factors are responsible for educator absenteeism. These factors differ from one individual to the other and from school to school. Bowers (2001:143), Imants and Van Zoelen (1995:77) found that educator's sickness and school climate are factors contributing to educator absenteeism. Sickness is the number one factor that contributes towards the high rate of educator absenteeism. According to the *United Nations Development Program* (2006), HIV/AIDS is claiming the lives of society's most productive members that include educators. Educators who are sick because of this pandemic spend prolonged periods on sick leave and this places a huge impact on the education system. Imants and Van Zoelen (1995:77) argue that a high rate of sickness absence is associated with high costs for the organization and the negative impact on work place conditions.

They further comment that a high rate of educators' absence affects the quality of education in schools. Medical certificates which educators are given by doctors at times are suspicious. Educators are suspected of requesting doctors to recommend prolonged sick leave days. Bowers (2001:144) mentions that there is an assumption that employees, not doctors, generally decide whether or not they are capable of working. When an educator is absent, the principal is challenged to ensure that learners are taught. This kind of the situation compromises the stability of the school.

The organizational climate of a school is composed of characteristics that distinguish one school from another and influence the behaviour of its members (Imants & Van Zoelen, 1995:77). According to Norton (1998:97), school climate is defined as the collective personality of the school, the atmosphere as characterized by the social and professional interactions within it. The studies conducted on school climate reveal that perceived organizational support increases an employee's efforts to meet the organization's goals through greater attendance (Norton, 1998:97). When there is organizational support for educators, the level of absenteeism decreases. This means that when educators feel happy and are appreciated, they will be less likely to be absent than when their efforts are not appreciated. When the interpersonal relations are not cordial, educators are likely to become discouraged and uncommitted.

The damage caused by educator absenteeism is very great. The cost of absenteeism is harder to quantify when it is seen in terms of disruption of a school's routine (Bowers, 2001:138). Absenteeism is a cancer that slows down efficiency and effectiveness in the education system and primary schools in particular. Absenteeism has a negative impact on both the school's financial and human resources. The long-term effects of school absenteeism affect the country's economy. The effects of absenteeism are greatly felt where it hurts most, namely in the classroom. The learners are the ones who are bearing the brunt most. Absenteeism also affects other educators because they have to ensure that in the absence of their colleagues, they have to keep order in the classes.

The financial costs associated with educator absenteeism are significant. Educators who take time away from work through sickness present problems for school principals in catching up. When the educator does not come to work due to ill health or other reasons, the school must ensure that a substitute educator is appointed. This is done to ensure that the learner's education is not disrupted. For lesser periods, the Department of Education does not pay the salary of educators who are standing in for those absent. In such cases, the school pays their salaries.

The fundamental reason for the establishment of a school is to ensure that learners receive education. Educators are professionally equipped to teach learners. Schools that

are financially sound usually employ a substitute educator. Because teaching is a specialized profession, finding a replacement is no easy task. Le Roux (2002:105) mentions that there is a severe shortage of educators in learning areas such as Mathematics and Science. Getting a standby educator who is not a specialist in that learning area has a negative impact on the learners. According to Lewis (1981), in Woods and Montago (1997:308), learner-educator contact hours are lost through absenteeism. Ehrenberg, Ehrenberg, Rees and Ehrenberg (1991:72) argue that educator absenteeism has a negative impact on learners' test scores.

#### 3.4.1.2 Other challenges resulting from educators' conduct

The challenges mentioned here are related to coming to school late and leaving before actual time off, and failure to attend lessons by educators. Lawlessness is the order of the day prevailing in some schools. In confirming lawlessness in schools, Naledi Pandor, the former National Minister of Education reports that educators demand the quality of education but are silent on educators who are late, absent and do not prepare their lessons and are responsible for creating dysfunctional schools (*Educator's Voice*, 2007b).

The culture that prevails in most of the schools is causing acute damage to the future of the learners and the education system at large. According to Nuku (2007), the following state of affairs prevails in most of the schools:

- Many schools do not start on time.
- Educators do not use school timetables and educators are not always in classrooms as they are supposed to be.
- Learners are playing in the yard at all hours of the day.
- Learners are walking around in the community during school hours.
- Schools have idle classes all day without educators.
- Noise, confusion and damage to school facilities are the order of the day.

Asmal (1999:2) indicates that too many educators believe that their obligations cease at one o'clock on a school day. This behaviour creates problems for schools because they

impact negatively on the learner's learning programs. Learners also emulate the behaviours of their educators. Late coming has far-reaching effects on the learners' performance and their lives after school when they are adults. It is not easy to quantify the effects of late coming, but one thing for certain is that a minute lost in class affects the end of year results. When one adds the total time wasted by all late coming educators, it translates into hours, days, weeks and months.

The National Department of Education (2003), in Nuku (2007) maintains that the department can no longer tolerate principals and educators who do not know their professional code of conduct, who arrive late at school or leave early, who pay little attention to their learners because they are busy with their own studies during the paid teaching time. Asmal (1999:2) indicates that there is indiscipline on the part of educators and learners because too many schools fail to start and close on time. Leaving early before the actual time off is also posing a serious challenge to schools. According to the policy of the Department of Education, educators have to work seven hours per day (Educators Labour Relations Council, 2003).

All educators should be at school during the formal school day, which should not be less than seven hours per day (Department of Education, 1999). Most of the schools work less than the required time. There are numerous activities that disturb the normal teaching time. Some of these activities include: holding of memorial services during teaching time for educators who died, holding of educators union meetings and attending of courses during working hours.

The author as education manager and educator has observed that most educators suffer from what he calls "present absenteeism". This implies that educators come to school but do not attend to their duties. They do go into the classes just to impress the principal and their supervisors that they are working. Their presence makes no difference and is ineffective. They do give children class and homework, projects and assignments like other educators. The kind of the learners they produce is appalling. Most of the learners they teach cannot read, write and comprehend. These educators are normally characterized by the following attributes: they read newspapers in their classes, they visit

other educators during teaching time, they do their private studies during school hours, they frequently request to be excused before time off.

In staff meetings, whenever their lack of commitment is challenged, they are quick to find reasons to blame either the school management, the Department of Education or the education system. They also attempt to blame learners and lack of parental support. Their presence does not make any difference and their presence is equated to being absent. There are educators who attend their lessons for only a few minutes and then leave even if the period has not expired. Some give learners work and leave without supervising them and continue with their business not related to teaching. Failing to attend periods by educators is also a serious challenge facing primary schools in some schools in Limpopo Province.

For primary schools to be able to deliver quality education to learners, the transformational school leader has to ensure that the educators' unbecoming attitudes are transformed. The principal as the transformational school leader should work hard to change the manner in which educators behave towards their profession.

### **3.4.2 Transformational challenges**

The process of transforming education in South Africa has taken root visibly at all levels of the system and the process has not been without challenges. Transformational challenges resulted from the changes that took place because of the government shift. Lee (1991:83) asserts that the specific policies and practices that the government has adopted as a result of educational changes created challenges for practitioners. Embracing Lee's argument, Singh and Lokotsch (2005:279) argue that at no time in our existence was change more imminent and the future more challenging than in our schools. Since the new government took over, it introduced radical policies in education and schools. The National Education Policy Act No.27 of 1996, in the Education Labour Relations Council (2003) explains that:

*It is necessary to adopt legislation to facilitate democratic transformation of the national system of education into one that serves the needs and interest of all the people of South Africa and upholds the fundamental rights.*

One of the changes effected was the introduction of the new curriculum. Much has been written about the new curriculum. The introduction of the new curriculum presented schools with challenges. The Limpopo Department of Education (2002:5) in its annual report mentions that educators received little and ineffective training in outcomes-based education (OBE) and continuous assessment (CASS). Educators present classes even though they are not fully prepared. *City Press* (2007:1) reports that the new curriculum is creating challenges with regard to teaching and assessment.

Because the curriculum is new and educators are not yet familiar with it, it is very important that educators prepare thoroughly. Un-preparedness breeds uncertainty and lack of confidence. Kallay (2007) reports that to assume that under-prepared educators can deliver educational programs based on conceptions of progressive education in simple and easy terms is to misunderstand the complexity and the challenges of meaningful classroom teaching. As a result of the challenges brought about by the curriculum transformation and the confusion reigning amongst educators, the quality of education has taken a nosedive.

In support of the above assertion, the national department of education in response to the national, regional and international studies that have shown over a number of years that South African children are not able to read, write and count at the expected levels, and are unable to execute tasks that demonstrate key skills associated with Literacy and Numeracy, embarked on foundation for learning campaign (Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette, no 30880, 2008:4). According to the results of the survey of the Limpopo Department of Education (2003:25), the Limpopo Province's pass rates in the foundation phase fell below the national average. The following are the key findings of the study conducted by the Limpopo Department of Education (2005:5) on learner performance:

- Grade 3 learners were found to be performing poorly on numeracy and literacy. Their average performance was below 25% and 41% respectively.
- In numeracy learners were experiencing most difficulties in division, compared to other mathematical operations.
- Learners performed poorly on test items that require reading, suggesting that learners would not perform well in any subject before they mastered reading.
- The results demanded urgent improvement of reading and writing as key remedy to poor learner performance in all the areas of learning.

Given these challenges, there is an urgent need to improve the quality of learning and teaching. This quality of education can only be achieved through a process of transformation of the primary schools.

### **3.4.3 Technical challenges**

The availability of resources contributes towards improved performance and boosts the culture of learning and teaching. Technical resources are: school finances, school buildings (classrooms, offices, laboratories and libraries) and technological resources such as computers, fax machines, telephone, and photocopying machines. The following are some of the most important factors that contribute to the lack of a sound culture of learning and teaching: the poor state of repair of school buildings and facilities, large shortcomings in the provision of resources, facilities and equipment, and overcrowded classrooms (Kruger, 2003:207). To confirm this assertion, *City Press* (2007:4) reports on learners who are attending lessons in a horse stable.

Schools are classified into categories for the allocation of money from the state. Legislation regarding norms and standards suggests that the needs of schools are divided into five groupings, called quintiles (Limpopo Department of Education, 2007b). The legislation suggests that schools are subsidized according to the level of affordability within a particular community. Schools belonging in quintile one and two are fully

subsidized by the government. They are not allowed to charge school fees. Schools on quintile three, four and five are partially subsidized and can charge parents school fees.

Schools are divided into two sections, the section 21 and the non-section 21. If the school is granted the section 21 status, the school's allocation will be paid directly into their bank account. With the non-section 21 schools, the department will administer the money on their behalf. The school is required to prepare a budget and plan of how the money will be spent. The department then does the purchasing for the schools. These monetary allocations are not enough to meet all the budgetary constraints of the schools.

The declaration of no-fee schools also complicated the situation. *City Press* (2007:5) reports that the Member of Executive Council (MEC) of Education in Limpopo indicated that only schools serving impoverished areas qualify as no fee schools. Parents stopped paying school fees and some schools complained that they did not receive any grants from the state and other schools received the grants late. *The Mail and Guardian* (2007:11) reports that the government is accused of not delivering on its promise to replace lost school fee revenues. Some principals complained that the allocations they received were too little. *The Mail and Guardian* (2007:11) further reports that cash-strapped schools decided to take legal action against the Department of Education.

According to the survey conducted by the Limpopo Department of Education (2003:17) concerning the learner-educator and the learner-classroom ratios, 23% of primary school educators were teaching classes with more than 50 learners, while 25% were teaching classes with 40 to 50 learners. The high classroom ratio is caused by the shortages of classrooms. It is very difficult to implement the new curriculum without technological resources.

Educators are expected to give learners more activities to work on. These activities need to be multiplied through photocopying. The multiplication of these activities requires technological equipment. It becomes difficult for the school without a photocopy



machine to execute such activities and educators are tempted to resort back to the traditional method of teaching and the new curriculum is compromised.

When the school is faced with challenges that cannot be overcome, the culture of learning and teaching is adversely affected. The situation will deteriorate into a poor culture of learning and teaching. Kruger (2003:207) mentions that the following are common observable features of a poor culture of learning and teaching: poor attendance, lack of desire to teach by educators, tensions among the various elements of the school community, vandalism, drug abuse, high drop out rate, poor school results, weak leadership and management, and poor state of buildings, facilities and resources.

The role of the principal as the transformational school leader is critical in meeting these challenges. In dealing with these behavioural, transformational and technical challenges, the transformational leader should employ the elements of transformational leadership in a manner that they complement one another, and not in isolation. To transform the current state of affairs prevailing in primary schools, the principal should develop a strong-shared vision, motivate educators to be committed to their work, and include educators in the decision-making processes. This will assist in ensuring that educators stay satisfied. Trying to adopt an abrasive and oppressive leadership approach will not assist in addressing the challenges primary schools face.

### **3.5 PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SELECTED MEMBER STATES OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY**

The following section will focus on the exposition of the historical background of the SADC and the primary education systems of three selected SADC countries, namely Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho. One of the primary objectives of SADC is to ensure that universal primary education is provided to these and other members of SADC.

The researcher selected Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho because they were once colonial states and after they gained independence, they have experienced primary educational transformation. This will give the researcher an opportunity to find out the primary

education challenges these countries faced during transformation. This section will provide an overview of the provision of primary education in Namibia, Malawi and Lesotho. The researcher will pay particular attention to the challenges faced by these countries in the provision of primary education.

### **3.5.1 Historical background of SADC**

The SADC was initially called the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADC, 2007:1). It was formed in Lusaka, Zambia on the 1st April 1980. Later it changed its name and is currently called the Southern African Development Community. The declaration and the treaty establishing the SADC that has replaced the co-ordination conference were signed at the summit of Heads of States on the 17<sup>th</sup> August 1992 in Windhoek, Namibia (SADC: 2007:1). Each member state is allocated the responsibility of coordinating one or more sectors on a regional basis, primary education being one of them.

SADC (2007:1) indicates that member states are the following countries: Angola, Botswana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Most of these countries were colonial states and as result of colonization, has shown little economic growth. Schafer (2005:71) mentions that external factors such as debt, declining terms of trade, structural adjustment and internal factors like corruption, inefficiency and non-responsiveness to local needs contributed to the declining economic conditions. Studies indicate that both the quality and efficiency of education matters most, if economic growth is to be improved (Godona & Ashipala, 2006).

Arguing from the assertion of Godona and Ashipala (2006), for developing countries to experience economic acceleration, they had to prioritize education. Areas that require serious attention in education in this region are efficiency and quality. The SADC is faced with challenges of providing quality education to its citizens to accelerate economic growth. When quality education is provided, the economy is boosted and poverty is

eradicated. Education quality is understood to be determined by qualified educators, adequate educational materials, favourable educator-learner ratio and effective school management (Godona & Asipala, 2006).

### **3.5.2 The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of Universal Primary Education**

According to UNESCO (2004) in Birdsall, Levine and Ibrahim (2005:338), the majority of primary school going age children are not in school with the worst shortfall in Africa. In 2000, member states of the United Nations signed on to the United Nations millennium development goal (MDG), committing themselves to work together to achieve eight objectives by 2015. In trying to address this shortfall, the United Nations declared Universal Primary Education (UPE) as one of the MDG. The low levels of enrolment forced the United Nation to focus their energies on ensuring that strategies are put in place to increase enrolment in primary education in developing countries.

This declaration was approved by 189 member states of the United Nations, in which they committed themselves to improve the living conditions of humanity, with special focus on developing countries (Mosquera & Mosquera, 2005). Again the United Nations Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality made recommendations about how to mobilize the funding, leadership and innovation to provide universal access to the type of education required for participation in the global economy (Birdsall, Levine & Ibrahim, 2005).

The reason for this objective was that many children in the developing countries had no access to primary education. During the colonial period, education in general and primary education in particular was not given the necessary attention by colonial governments. There have been attempts to improve the achievement of the MDG goal of universal primary education. Birdsall et al. (2005:339) offer the following recommendations on what developing countries can do to achieve UPE:

- Encourage children to attend school.
- Enhance post-primary education.
- Improve primary education institutions.
- Create or strengthen the national commitment to education.
- Improve accountability through local control.
- Conduct serious evaluations to learn what affects learning outcomes.
- Strengthen the role of civil society organizations.

These interventions to improve attendance of primary schools were not without challenges. Some of the strategies implemented to improve access created other problems for schools. While free primary education has increased participation, it has also created considerable problems. More learners meant that more facilities and other resources had to be provided to accommodate the massive enrolments.

In addition to resuscitate education of different African states, SADC included, the Africa For All (EFA) project also came into being. The reason for its existence was to garner financial and other resources to ensure that quality education is provided in Africa and SADC countries. What is important for African countries is for them to prepare credible plans to use as the major tool of dialogue with technical and financial partners with the view to mobilizing internal and external resources required in implementing the EFA objectives by 2015 (EFA Africa Bulletin, 2002). Resources were mobilized to assist low-income countries to meet the challenges created the implementation of UPE.

### **3.5.3 The primary education system in Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho**

In giving the exposition of primary education systems of Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho, the researcher firstly presents a brief background of each selected SADC member state. It is critical to give the historical backgrounds of these countries because these backgrounds provide one with the historical causes of the educational challenges these countries face. It is imperative to elucidate the objectives of the primary education

systems of these countries because these objectives give a picture of how these countries managed the process of transformation.

The researcher also discusses the structure, organization and the management of the education systems of these countries. In section 3.1, it was indicated that the exposition of the structure and the organization of the primary education system is relevant because one is able to understand the challenges primary schools face. With regard to the management of the education systems, the researcher indicates how these countries manage their education systems and the challenges they face.

Lastly, the researcher provides the challenges these countries face because this will assist in determining the common challenge these countries face as compared to the RSA. The elucidation of the challenges faced by the selected SADC countries will provide the researcher with a general picture of the state of affairs of primary education in SADC.

#### **3.5.4 Primary education in Malawi**

Before the researcher gives a historical background of this country, it is important to justify the selection of Malawi. Some of the challenges Malawi faces are similar to the educational challenges facing the RSA. In section 3.4.3, it was mentioned that the survey conducted by the Limpopo Department of Education (2003:17) indicates that 23% of primary school educators were teaching classes with more than 50 learners. This indicates that there is overcrowding in primary schools. Malawi also faces inadequate physical resources such as classrooms (Maluwa-Banda & MacJessie-Mbewe, 2005). The similarities of some of the challenges faced by both the RSA and Malawi motivated the researcher to select Malawi.

##### **3.5.4.1 Historical background**

Malawi was a colonial state and in 1966, it gained its independence from its British colonial masters (Guest, 1998:83). The consequences of colonization were devastating,

particularly for the country's economy. The World Bank and the United Nations (UN) regard Malawi as the least developed and a highly indebted country (Ministry of Education and the Malawian Commission for UNESCO, 2004). Schafer (2005:71) also mentions that the country's external debt severely limited the state's educational capacity in the 1980's and 1990's. This is a demonstration that Malawi is greatly faced with serious economic challenges.

When the economy of the country is not sound, it defiantly affects the education sector because it will be difficult to provide primary schools with the necessary resources. According to the Ministry of Education and the Malawian Commission for UNESCO (2004:9), the country went through a smooth transition to a multiparty political system in 1994 when the country held its first multiparty presidential and parliamentary general elections since independence in 1966. The new government took over, promised free primary education and the population of primary school children improved (Guest, 1998:83).

#### 3.5.4.2 The objectives of the education system

The Ministry of Education and the Malawian National Commission for UNESCO (2004:12) indicate that Malawi has a high rate of illiteracy, which is reported to be 42%. This is an indication that there is a serious backlog in as far as primary education provision is concerned. The Ministry of Education and the Malawian National Commission for UNESCO (2004:12) explains that:

*The fundamental objective of primary education is to instil basic literacy, numeracy and life skills to over 95% of the school-going age population by 2020. This is an effort to achieve Universal Primary Education through the abolition of school fees and school uniform costs, the provision of free instructional materials and the establishment of schools within reasonable walking distance for every community in the country. Apart from committing itself to open and free access to primary education for school age children, government continues to pay special*

*attention to the quality and lasting nature of the primary education given. Efforts are made to improve the level of resources and quality of facilities provided for primary education as well as its internal and external efficiency.*

The Ministry of Education and the Malawian National Commission for UNESCO (2004:10) further add the following principles and objectives:

- To develop an efficient and high quality system of education.
- To equip the learners with skills and the desire for self-employment and entrepreneurship.

According to the Government of Malawi, education programs are required to equip learners and provide them with knowledge and experience that are relevant to the social, economic, cultural and political conditions of Malawi (Maluwa-Banda & MacJessie-Mbewe, 2005:258). The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development is responsible for the provision of primary, secondary and tertiary education.

#### 3.5.4.3 The structure, organization and the management of the education system

The Malawian Education system is based on the British model with eight years of primary, four years of secondary and four years of tertiary schooling (Schafer, 2005:75). The provision of the technical and vocational skills is the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training. In providing education for its citizens, the government is assisted by other sectors such as business and non-governmental organizations.

The main objective of the government in providing vocational and technical education is to eradicate lack of skills in the country. In order to try and make the system more accessible and efficient, the Malawian education system was divided into three levels of education, namely: primary, secondary and post secondary education.

It takes eight years to complete primary education in Malawi. Learners should be six years old before gaining admission in primary schools. The primary education is divided into three phases, namely the infant phase which is standards one to two, the junior phase from standards three to standards five and the senior phase from standard six to standard eight. At the end of standard eight, the learners are to write the primary school leaving certificate.

According to the Ministry of Education and the Malawian Commission for UNESCO (2004:16), the following administrative structure is responsible for the day to day running of the Malawi Education System: The Ministry of Education and Human Resource Development under the Minister of Education is the head office. It is assisted by the agency called Principal Secretaries that has administrative, financial and academic control of primary, secondary and teacher training centres. Provision, improvement and assessment of quality is the competency of the following organizations: Malawi Institute of Education, Malawi National Examinations Board, The National Library Service, the Teaching Service Commission and the Malawian National Commission for UNESCO.

#### 3.5.4.4 Educational challenges

Malawi is still faced with considerable challenges after many years of independence. Guest (1998:83) mentions that when more learners were admitted to primary schools, there was a huge shortage of facilities, such as classes, and untrained educators. The implementation of universal primary education brought with it physical and human resource related challenges. The education sector was forced to appoint unqualified educators in some schools, particularly primary schools.

The country is also faced with the scourge of HIV/AIDS, massive poverty, debilitating population growth and many other difficulties (Guest, 1998:84). Malawi also depends on loans and grants from foreign donors to establish new schools. The other challenge facing Malawi is a high rate of dropout and repetition in primary schools. For girls, drop out is caused by pregnancy and early marriages. With regard to boys, herding of livestock and child labour are responsible for a high drop out rate.



### 3.5.5 Primary education in Namibia

With regard to the selection of Namibia, the researcher saw it fit to include this country because the RSA and Namibia were at one stage ruled by the same government. South Africa was given the mandate of trusteeship by the League of Nations (Harber, 1993:415). The South African government forced its education policies on Namibia and is partly responsible for some of the challenges the education system of Namibia is facing.

#### 3.5.5.1 Historical background

Like Malawi, Namibia was a colonial state. Its colonial master was Germany and it was colonized in 1890. It ceased to be German colony as result of the First World War and South Africa marched into Windhoek in 1915. The objectives of the education system during the colonial period did not benefit the learners at school. Meyer (2002:116) explains that the Namibian education is best described as education to meet the needs of others. The main objective of the provision of education was mainly to improve and produce a manual labour force as opposed to the general improvement of society (Godana & Ashipala, 2006). The emphasis was on the achievement of basic primary education.

The education system of Namibia was separated on racial lines. The state paid for the education of whites that was compulsory and blacks were expected to pay for their own education (Harber, 1993:418). Because blacks could not afford school fees, it was difficult for parents who could not afford to register their children for primary education. Those who could least afford later dropped out. Godana and Ashipala (2006) and Harber (1993) list the following characteristics of education before independence in Namibia:

- The majority of black educators did not have school qualifications beyond standard six.
- The majority of black educators had no educator training qualifications.
- The quality of education provided was based on racial lines.

- Education was guided by the policies of Christian National Education.
- The education system emphasized an assessment system that focused on failure and rote learning.
- The education system perpetuated the master-servant relationship.

Namibia became independent in 1990 from South Africa. It held its first democratic elections in November 1990 after which the South West African People's Organization (SWAPO) took control of the government and set its leadership goals (Meyer, 2002:114).

#### 3.5.5.2 The objectives of the education system

Immediately after the installation of the new government, Namibia embarked on the process of reorganization and rebuilding the new education system. It started the rebuilding process by repealing the laws and policies that created an economic and educational stagnation. Given the fact that education before independence in Namibia was characterized by inequality, segregation and other apartheid conditions, upon independence, the government introduced a policy of education for all as a constitutional right for all Namibians (Godona & Ashipala, 2006).

Godona and Ashipala (2006) further mention that the Government of Namibia produced a document outlining the government's vision for education. The document was entitled, *Towards Education for All*. The document stated five main goals of the education sector namely: access, equity, quality, democracy and efficiency (Dahlstrom, Swart & Zeichner, 1999; Meyer, 2002; Godona & Ashipala, 2006).

#### 3.5.5.3 The structure, organization and the management of the Namibian education system

The German and South African educational structures and institutions in Namibia created problems (Meyer, 2002:116). According to Godona and Ashipala (2006), the following changes were effected to bring educational transformation:

- Public expenditure on education was increased.
- Primary education was made free and compulsory for all children of school going age.
- Many educational institutions were unified into one.
- Twenty-six educational districts were re-aligned into seven educational regions.

The restructuring process was focused on educator development programmes. Because of the shortage of qualified educators, it was necessary for the Ministry of Education to prioritize the educator's professional development. The training provided to educators was to spearhead this educational reform with the development of a new educator-training programme, new institutional practices and new relationships with local schools (Meyer, 2002:114). This educator-training programme was state funded. The table below demonstrates the training programmes educators received before and after independence.

**Table 3.3: The differences between Namibian pre-independence and post-independence educator programmes**

Previous programmes	Current programmes
The studies in most cases were educator/and or content centred.	There is emphasis on a learner-centred philosophy.
Most if not all studies took place at college with little teaching practice and contact with schools.	A significant part of the programme is school-based studies.
Knowledge was considered as a given and transferable commodity and understanding defined as a successful repetition of what was transferred.	Knowledge and understanding follow a constructive process and are dependent on contextual.
Initial educator education was, at best, for diploma certification, but for the majority of black students, it was an exercise in failure.	Initial educator education is part of lifelong learning within a policy of continuous assessment.

Education practices were examination and test driven.	Assessment practices are carried out in a variety of ways within a policy of continuous assessment.
There was an emphasis on academic learning and subject studies.	There is a balance between professional and subject studies.

(Source: Dahlstrom et al, 1999:153)

The education programmes for educators after independence were an attempt to redress the gap created by the previous colonial masters. One of the objectives of the new educator training programmes was to produce the type of educators who had been extensively exposed to the real school experience. The new program also departed from the exam-driven practices and emphasized continuous assessment.

In order to improve the quality of education, the Namibian government regulated policies and programmes that were used as the legislative mandates for education management. According to Godona and Ashipala (2006), these policies and programmes are the following:

- The constitution of the Republic of Namibia, article 20.
- Towards Education for All of 1993.
- Report of the Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (1999).
- The Education Act of 2001 was formed to provide for the establishment of the National Advisory Council on Education, the National Examination Assessment and Certificate Board, Regional Educational Forums, School Boards and the Educational Development Fund.

#### 3.5.5.4 Educational challenges

Namibia relied on education as a mechanism for dismantling institutional inequities created under the previous system and for the development of the nation's people (Meyer, 2002:114). Like other developing and formerly colonized states, Namibia was faced with

impediments and barriers in the road towards transformation. In order to dismantle the apartheid engineered education system, Namibia focused on educator development because most black educators were either badly trained or not trained at all (Hopfer, 1997:47).

There was a huge backlog of professionally qualified educators. The former colonial master of Namibia, South Africa, deliberately ensured that educators were inadequately trained to perpetuate subservience (Meyer, 2002:116). When the new government took over in 1990, it was faced with the challenge of upgrading the country's educators. Coupe and Goveia (1999) mention that since independence, the Namibian education system struggled to upgrade the qualifications of the overwhelming majority of its in-service educators who prior to independence, were neither granted access to, nor encouraged to pursue academic or educator-training credentials. The other challenge of upgrading these educators is that the current targets for in-service professional training tend to be older educators working in rural schools.

The Namibian government, supported by the external development funds, invested heavily in the development of a new education system, which set out goals of access, equity, quality and democracy (Meyer, 2002:114). Because of the declaration of access to education and in trying to fulfil the call of the United Nation's UPE, primary schools experienced an upsurge in the number of learners. Increased numbers meant that the schools had to provide enough space for these learners. Large numbers do not only impact on classes, but also the number of educators and learner support materials had to be increased. Dahlstrom et al. (1999:150) report that after independence primary schools' class size averaged 59 pupils per teacher. The increase of learners in schools meant that the authorities had to provide enough quality learner support materials in the form of textbooks. Physical resources were insufficient for the country to sustain itself educationally.

The previous Namibian colonial masters left a lasting legacy on the organs of the state and education in particular. Meyer (2002:116) mentions that after many years since

Namibia became independent, the local practices still reflect the authoritarian structure under which the education practitioners, many now in leadership positions, had been trained. Even though Namibia is facing educational challenges, there is evidence that progress has been registered in some areas such as educators' development programmes .

### **3.5.6 Primary education in Lesotho**

Lesotho is one of the closest neighbours of South Africa. Like Malawi and Namibia, Lesotho and South Africa share some of the educational challenges. These challenges include the lack of adequate resources and a high educator-pupil ratio. Both countries also aim to achieve free basic primary education for all children of school going age. Because of its closeness to the RSA and the educational challenges it faces, the researcher selected Lesotho.

#### **3.5.6.1 Historical background**

Lesotho was formerly known as Basutoland. In 1818, Moshoeshe I was the king of the Basotho. There were fierce battles fought between the Boers and the Basotho. In order to protect his people, Moshoeshe I appealed to the British government for assistance (History of Lesotho, 2008). In 1868, Basutoland was placed under the British protection and the Boers were ordered to leave.

The British government took control of Lesotho. This caused clashes and later in 1966, the Kingdom of Lesotho attained full independence, governed by a constitutional monarchy with a bicameral Parliament consisting of a senate and an elected National Assembly (History of Lesotho, 2008). From there, Lesotho was characterized by incidents of infighting for the control of the country. This included rulers like Leaboa Jonathan, Lekhanya and Ntsu Mokhehle. Lesotho is presently a stabilized country with an improving economy.

### 3.5.6.2 The objectives of the education system

After receiving its independence, like Malawi and Namibia, Lesotho embarked on the process of improving the education system. The Ministry of Education and Training (2008) in its mission statement indicates that it aims to develop and implement policies which ensure acquisition of functional literacy among all the Basotho and development of a productive quality human resource base through education and training. The objectives of education were designed to provide learners with the kind of education that will improve their lives. The Ministry of Education and Training (2004:10) identifies the following objectives:

- The content of education ought to be geared towards fostering participation in democratic processes so as to promote peace, stability and prosperity and to prepare the people to take control of their own destiny.
- Education should further be skills-based in conserving and maintaining the environment and sustainable development.
- Education should equip learners with entrepreneurial skills necessary for participation in the national, regional and international economic arenas.
- It should provide technological skills to learners.
- Education should integrate emerging issues such as HIV/AIDS, gender, population and family life education, human rights and democracy.

The Lesotho education department also introduced Free Primary Education (FPE) and its objectives are the following (Lerotholi, 2001:14):

- Basic education was made accessible to all pupils and was made relevant to their needs.
- Making education equitable in order to eliminate disparities and inequities.
- Providing basic and necessary resources to enable the primary school learner to enter and complete the primary cycle of education.

- Ensuring that education is affordable to the majority of children of the school going age.
- Providing and maintaining quality education as a basis for promoting human resources development, economic development and societal advancement, thus fulfilling the government's broad policy of eradicating poverty and illiteracy.
- Equipping learners with basic skills and knowledge to live a meaningful life and cope with his or her environment.

### 3.5.6.3 The structure, organization and the management of the education system

According to the Ministry of Education and Training (2004:6), the education system of Lesotho is structured and organized as follows:

- The Minister of Education together with the Assistant Education Minister head the Ministry of Education and Training. They are responsible for the management, provision and regulation of education.
- The principal secretary is the administrative head and the chief accounting officer of the ministry. He or she is assisted at the executive level by the deputy principal secretary, five chief education officers, two directors and the secretary general of the national commission for UNESCO. The responsibilities of these officials include the development of curriculum, technical and vocational education.

The system of education consists of the 7+3+2 structure, which simply means seven years of primary education, three years of junior secondary education and two years of senior secondary education. Primary education starts from standard one up to standard seven for learners aged between six years and twelve years. Lerotholi (2001:14) mentions that at the end of a seven-year cycle, all the standard seven learners write the national primary school leaving examination that determines their progression into the junior secondary schools.



#### 3.5.6.4 Educational challenges

Lesotho is faced with numerous educational challenges. According to the Ministry of Education and Training (2006), the following are some of the challenges:

- Overcrowded classes due to free primary education.
- Inadequate physical infrastructure such as classrooms, science and home economics laboratories.
- Insufficient qualified educators.
- Inadequate quality textbooks.
- Lack of bursaries for orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC).
- Weak leadership styles of principals.
- Inability to set the school vision by the school leadership.
- Inability to formulate school development plans.
- Poor financial management.
- The impact of HIV/AIDS on both educators and learners without parents.
- Increased demand for educator supply due to attrition caused by factors such as retirement and transfers to other sectors.

The Ministry of Education and Training (2004:19) further adds the following challenges:

- Efficiency in primary education has remained poor in spite of the gains in access due to free primary education.
- Socio-economic patterns such as the migrant labour system and livestock herding by boys.
- Due to the insufficient qualified educators, the system had to resort to unqualified educators and expatriates.

The discussion of Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho was focused on the four crucial areas, namely, the historical background of each country, the objectives of primary education, the structure, organization, the management of the education system and the primary education challenges these countries face. The overview indicates that the primary

education challenges facing these countries are inadequate technical resources such as classrooms, finances, learner support materials, unqualified and under-qualified educators, weak leadership, high drop out rate of learners and HIV/AIDS pandemic.

### **3.6 COMPARING PRIMARY EDUCATION CHALLENGES FACING MALAWI, NAMIBIA, LESOTHO AND LIMPOPO PROVINCE (RSA)**

The primary education challenges facing Limpopo (RSA), Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho were dealt with in sections 3.4, 3.5.4, 3.5.5 and 3.5.6 respectively. In this section, it is fundamental that a glimpse of the comparison of the primary education challenges of the four member states of SADC be given in table 3.4. Through this table, a general overview of the common primary challenges will be identified. These challenges are grouped into the following: technical challenges, personnel challenges and other challenges (Which include curriculum change, HIV/AIDS, high drop out rate, abnormal educator learner ratios, overcrowding).

**Table 3.4: Summary of primary school challenges facing RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho**

Country	Technical challenges	Personnel challenges	Other challenges
<b>RSA</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate resources such as lack of finances, classrooms, offices, laboratories, libraries, computers, fax machines, telephone and photo copy machines</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absenteeism</li> <li>Late coming</li> <li>Leaving early before actual time off</li> <li>Insufficient lesson preparation</li> <li>Failure to attend lessons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Curriculum change that includes new teaching strategies and new assessments techniques</li> <li>HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>
<b>Malawi</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate resources such as lack of finances and insufficient building facilities.</li> <li>Lack of technological resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unqualified educators</li> <li>Under-qualified educators</li> <li>Inadequate qualified educators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HIV/AIDS</li> <li>High failure rate</li> <li>High drop out due to poverty</li> <li>High Learner absenteeism</li> </ul>
<b>Namibia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate learning facilities due to UPE</li> <li>Inadequate learner support materials.</li> <li>Insufficient finances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unqualified educators</li> <li>Under-qualified educators</li> <li>Inadequate qualified educators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Abnormal educators-learner ratio</li> </ul>
<b>Lesotho</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate physical infrastructure such as classes, science and home economics laboratories</li> <li>Inadequate textbooks</li> <li>Insufficient finances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient qualified educators</li> <li>Weak leadership style by principals</li> <li>Poor financial management skills</li> <li>Educator attrition due to retirement and educator transfers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HIV/AIDS</li> <li>High drop-out rate due to migrant labour system and boys herding livestock and girls early marriages.</li> </ul>

Comment [P1]: Formatting error

The data presented in table 3.4 indicate that these countries generally have inadequate physical resources to provide quality public education. These countries also do not have sufficient funds to run the schools effectively. In section 3.4.3 it was indicated that most schools in Limpopo do not receive the grant from the government on time. The money they receive is not enough to run the schools. With regard to Malawi and Namibia, it was indicated in sections 3.5.4 and 3.5.5 that these countries receive grants from external donors to improve their education systems. In section 3.5.6 it was indicated that Lesotho

does not have sufficient funds to provide bursaries for orphaned and vulnerable children. From this discussion, the conclusion is that generally, all the four countries experience financial challenges.

Other challenges are related to the way educators conduct themselves. Table 3.4 indicates that educators in Limpopo (RSA) engage in behaviours such as absenteeism, late coming, leaving the school early before actual time off, failure to prepare their lessons and failure to attend to their classes. Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho have inappropriately trained and totally unqualified educators. The table 3.4 also indicates that there is lack of strong leadership in primary schools in Lesotho. Principals in Lesotho also demonstrate poor management skills.

Table 3.4 indicates that particularly the RSA, Malawi and Lesotho have a serious challenge with regard to the issue of HIV/AIDS. This scourge is impacting on the running of the schools because it results in absenteeism and a high rate of educator attrition. The RSA also has a problem with the new curriculum.

Malawi and Lesotho experience high drop out rates. This condition is caused by the following factors: poverty, migrant labour system, early marriage of girls, herding livestock and hunting. Fanning (2001:21) contends that many young girls are pulled out of schools through early marriages and they loose out on the opportunity to develop their own destiny through education. Family migrations also cause instability because children had to be deregistered in the middle of the academic year (Birdsall et al. 2005:338).

It is clear from the discussion that the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho face common primary education challenges to some extent. These challenges have been classified mainly into the following categories: technical, personnel and transformational.

### **3.7 THE NEED FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN MEETING THE CHALLENGES FACING PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE SELECTED SADC COUNTRIES**

In section 2.2.4, the researcher defines transformational school leadership as the leader's ability to initiate the development of a shared vision, encouraging organizational commitment through motivation and participative decision-making processes with an aim of achieving the educators' job satisfaction. Thus the elements of transformational school leadership as indicated in section 2.3 are shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making.

#### **3.7.1 Shared vision**

In section 2.3.1, Korkmaz (2006:14) indicated that leadership is the art of creating the atmosphere that motivates and directs the people working in the organization towards the achievement of the organizational aims and high performance levels. It was indicated in section 3.5.6.4, that some principals in Lesotho are unable to set the vision for the school. One of the challenges is the principals' inability to develop school development plans. This is one the educational challenges facing the country. The researcher believes that transformational school leadership is critical in addressing this challenge.

With regard to Malawi and Namibia, table 3.4 indicates that these countries do not have adequate physical resources and finances to meet their obligations. They also have educators who are either unqualified or under qualified. Even though these educators are not properly qualified, the principal as the transformational leader should involve them in the development of the school vision. By involving them, the school vision will serve as basis for encouraging, enabling, empowering, inspiring and developing them to execute their duties effectively within the expected professional ethics.

Table 3.4 indicates that educators in the RSA come to school late, are not always at school, leave during working hours, do not prepare lessons and do not attend classes. These behaviours indicate that educators do not support the vision of the school. The

principal should change these educators' mindset and attitudes towards the school. The principal as the transformational school leader should ensure that educators share in the development of the school vision. Involving them will make educators feel that they are part of the school and own the vision. By so doing, they will not be in a position to defy it but will defend it. The Department of Education (2004) argues that when you always ensure that the vision you have becomes "our vision" by consulting widely, educators are motivated to work towards the achievement of the vision.

### **3.7.2 Commitment**

The Department of Education (2007) in its manifesto on values, education and democracy, argues that the competence of educators is meaningless if there is no commitment alongside it. In section 2.3.2, it was indicated that committed educators are prepared to willingly sacrifice for the sake of the school.

Data presented in table 3.4 indicate that educators in the RSA show low commitment by late coming, being absent, failing to prepare and attending lessons. The transformational leader has the responsibility to radically transform educators and make them committed. With regard to Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho, table 3.4 indicates that these countries have inadequate qualified and unqualified educators. It is the responsibility of the principal as the transformational leader to ascertain that these educators remain committed. The transformational leader has to encourage educators to develop themselves by enrolling with institutions of higher learning.

### **3.7.3 Motivation**

In section 2.3.3, the researcher pointed out that the competence and motivation of educators are universally recognized as key determinants of the quality of education. Motivation refers to the reasons for individuals to be aroused to action (Covington, 2000:22). In section 3.4; 3.5.4; 3.5.5 and 3.5.6, the challenges facing Limpopo (RSA) Malawi, Namibia, Lesotho were mentioned.

One of these challenges is the scourge of HIV/AIDS. In section 2.3.3, it was indicated that one of the factors responsible for discouraging educators is HIV/AIDS. Bennell (2004:13) mentions that apart from the obvious impact of educators who are living with colleagues who are sick and who may eventually die is also demoralizing. The transformational school leader should demonstrate sympathy and compassion to those educators who are either infected or affected.

Organizations succeed and progress only when they have succeeded in motivating and developing their workers (Mampuru, 2001:58). Mampuru (2001:158) and Nuku (2007:79) mention that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired objectives and grow professionally. The principal should also arrange a motivational speaker to come and address his educators on a variety of subjects.

#### **3.7.4 Job satisfaction**

In section 2.3.4, job satisfaction was defined as a pleasant or positive emotional state which people experience once they have made a value assessment of their job or work experience. Before employees decide on the choice of job they choose, they make an evaluation of the things that will make them happy at work. DeMato (2001:26) in his situational theory mentions that situational characteristics are those things which workers evaluate before taking the job, such as pay, promotion, working conditions and supervision.

The researcher indicated in section 3.5 that the challenges faced by the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho are: inadequate finances, inadequate building facilities and lack of technological resources. When educators work were salaries are inadequate and technical resources are insufficient, they become dissatisfied. To support this assertion, Bennell (2004:13) explains that the working conditions of many educators are poor, which results in educators' lower esteem and dissatisfaction.

The intervention of the principal as the transformational leader is critical in ensuring that educators are satisfied even though conditions are not favourable. In section 2.4.4, it was indicated that the transformational leader should ensure that educators stay satisfied through building positive relationships, creation of an environment conducive to teaching and using innovative ways to compensate for the facilities that are not available at school.

### **3.7.5 Participative decision-making**

In trying to resolve the challenges indicated in section 3.5 as reflected in table 3.4, the transformational school leader should engage his subordinates in the decision-making processes. For example, when the school decides to embark on a fund raising programme to compensate for the inadequate funds, the principal as the transformational school leader should involve all the role-players in the process. The principal should include role players in every step of the decision-making process.

According to Duke (2005:11) as indicated in section 2.3.5, worker participation yields higher quality products and services, less absenteeism, lower turnover of staff, better decision-making, better problem solving and greater organizational effectiveness. These are the positive results of involving educators as role players through transformational leadership.

Given the primary education challenges facing the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho, the principal as the leader should attempt to include all stakeholders in solving the challenges. It has been indicated that some learners drop out of school due to rituals such as initiations and boys herding livestock. The principals as the transformational leader should include the parents, the department of education, and other role players in trying to resolve such a problem.

It is imperative to mention that the application of these elements of transformational school leadership, namely shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making is not in isolation, but cyclic, continuous and should



complement one another. The principal as the leader needs to apply the leadership approach that will ensure that educators feel that they are part of school, are motivated to consistently remain committed and support the vision of the school.

### **3.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the researcher provided an overview of the value, the significance and the objectives of primary education. It was indicated that the primary objective of the establishment and the introduction of primary education is to lay a foundation and a basis for secondary schooling. An exposition of the way primary education is organized in Limpopo Province was also given. The exposition focused on the phases the learners had to undergo to complete their primary education. The chapter also dealt with the educational challenges the province of Limpopo faces. The discussions further focused on the primary education systems of the three selected SADC countries that are Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho.

In concluding the exposition of this chapter, the researcher focused on the common educational challenges the RSA, Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho face. The challenges were represented in a tabular form and the researcher also demonstrated the need for transformational school leadership in meeting these challenges faced by the SADC countries. The next chapter will focus on the research design and research methodology and the empirical investigation into the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapters two and three, the researcher dealt with an in-depth literature review that constituted the basis for his argument. In chapter two in particular, the researcher extensively dealt with a literature review critical to the study, namely, the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. Chapter four is concerned with how the study was conducted empirically.

The rationale for conducting this empirical study was to determine the extent to which aspects of transformational leadership identified in chapter two are practiced in the sampled primary schools in Limpopo. Data that was collected from the informants was vital because it assisted in giving light to the problem under investigation. In section 2.2.4, transformational school leadership was defined as the leader's ability to initiate the development of a shared vision, encouraging organizational commitment through motivation and participative decision-making processes with an aim of achieving the educators' job satisfaction.

To be able to produce an efficient, effective and scientific research project, the research design is a vital aspect of research. The choice of an unsuitable research design and methodology results in invalid and unreliable research outcomes. Cohen et al. (2005:73) mention that the purpose of research determines the design and methodology of the research. Thus, the research design and methodology were carefully selected and the selection was based on the nature of the study, the research questions and the research aims.

Through the research method, the researcher was able to scientifically address the problem under investigation objectively, coherently, logically, clearly, persuasively and systematically. To the researcher, the research methodology answers the following questions:

- Who will be providing answers to the questions posed?
- Where will the study be conducted?
- Which instruments will be used to collect data?
- How will the data collected be organized, analysed and synthesized?
- How will the researcher ensure that data collected is reliable and valid?

#### **4.2 RESEARCH AIMS**

It was indicated in section 2.1 that since the birth of a new democratic South Africa, the education system has undergone major changes. Limpopo Department of Education (2003:1) mentions that the changes that have taken place came with challenges. Caldwell (2004:82) argues that leading transformation of schools is a complex and a challenging endeavour for principals. In chapter three, the researcher argued for the need of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. The purpose of the study was clearly outlined in section 4.1. Flowing from the above argument, the following research objectives are vital in ensuring that the study does not loose focus:

- To determine the extent to which primary school principals as leaders are involved in:
  - initiating visions that are shared and owned by other role players.
  - making sure that educators remain committed to their profession
  - ensuring that educators are motivated and
  - ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession.
  
- To investigate the strategies the principal employs in including role players in the decision-making processes.

Given the investigative nature of the study, the following research questions have been formulated to guide the investigation:

- To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in:
  - initiating visions that are shared and owned by other role players?
  - making sure that educators remain committed to their profession?
  - ensuring that educators are kept motivated?
  - ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession?
- To what extent do principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes?

#### **4.3 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:88) mention that a research hypothesis is a tentative statement of the expected relationship between two or more variables. They continue to indicate that the statement describes the predicted results. The hypotheses that were tested in this study were developed from the research questions in section 4.2. Based on the literature study conducted in chapter two, this study was intended to test the following hypotheses:

- There is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

Flowing from above, the null hypothesis states:

- There is no significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

#### **4.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

The nature of the problem dictates the choice of research design to be employed. In this study, the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing

primary schools, the researcher saw it fit to make use of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Kelle and Erzberger (2004:174) argue that even though the use of both qualitative and quantitative designs differs procedurally, they are significant in the research study.

White (2005:89) argues that the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a means by which researchers can test the strength of their interpretations to establish validity and reliability in their research findings. The rationale for selecting both approaches is to ensure that validity and reliability are not compromised but enhanced, because both approaches enabled the researcher to employ interviews, questionnaires and observation during data collection. Through the use of these two data collection tools, namely questionnaires and interviews, the researcher was able to have the views of more respondents.

White (2005:104) mentions that the qualitative research approach differs from the quantitative research approach in that the former usually does not provide the researcher with a step-by-step plan or a fixed recipe to follow. White (2003:10) further mentions that quantitative research presents statistical results represented with numbers and the ideal quantitative researcher is detached from the study to avoid bias. He further explains that in quantitative studies, there is an established set of procedures and steps that guide the researcher. There are two types of quantitative approaches, namely experimental and non-experimental. This study uses survey research that forms part of the non-experimental design.

In the subsection that follows, characteristics of qualitative research that are relevant to this study are given.

#### **4.4.1 The description of the qualitative research approach**

Interactive qualitative inquiry is an in-depth study using face-to-face techniques to collect data from people in their natural settings (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:35). The

researcher who selects this approach goes into the field and interacts with the people who supply him with information or observes their behaviour. This approach uses a number of techniques to collect data from the respondents that include observation and interviews. According to Welman and Kruger (2001:178), qualitative field studies can be used successfully in the description of groups, small communities and organizations.

#### **4.4.2 Characteristics of qualitative research significant to this study**

Qualitative research consists of numerous characteristics. The following characteristics are relevant in this research:

##### 4.4.2.1 Based on assumptions

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001:396), qualitative researchers believe that reality is a social construction. Meanings are constructed after thorough interaction with the participants. Until participants have provided researchers with qualitative data, what is in the minds of researchers is an assumption. In this study, the researcher assumed that transformational school leadership can be a solution to the challenges facing primary schools.

In backing up this view, Maykut and Morehouse (2001:46) indicate that what is important is not pre-determined by the researcher. The researcher should approach the study with an open mind and accept any emergent views during the interactions. The researcher is concerned with understanding the social phenomena from the participants' perspective, by means of their own feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:396).

##### 4.4.2.2 Multi-method strategies

The researcher made use of both observation and interviews as qualitative data collection techniques. The rationale for the selection of these two data collection tools is that they

enhanced the validity and reliability of the study. Through the use of interviews, the researcher gathered first hand information and personally understood what was in the minds of the respondents, which was valuable to this inquiry.

The use of observation ensured that the phenomenon is unfolded as it is, that reality is not compromised. Data are most often people's words and actions. The researcher collected the interview data in the form of field notes and audio taped interviews. These were later transcribed for use in data analysis. The use of numerous data collection strategies helps to gather information from various participants and gets different participant's perspectives.

#### 4.4.2.3 The emphasis is on the researcher as an instrument

The role that the researcher plays is critical in qualitative studies. Maykut and Morehouse (2001:46) mention that researchers are both collectors and analysers of data. They further indicate that while researchers are certainly pivotal in more traditional research approaches, the qualitative researcher has the added responsibility of being both the collector of relevant data, whose relevance changes as the study proceeds and the culler of meaning. In this study, the researcher himself collected data through observation and interviews without delegating this responsibility to anybody. The rationale for personally conducting the interviews and observation was to ensure that justice is done to the research purpose and all research questions are satisfactorily addressed.

#### 4.4.2.4 Data collection is in the natural context

Maykut and Morehouse (2001:45) argue that extended amounts of time with people in the places they inhabit such as the school is a critical feature of indwelling, fostering the development of both explicit and tacit knowledge. In this study, the researcher, through interviews and observation spent a considerable amount of time in the places the participants inhabit. According to Maykut and Morehouse (2001), the reasons for collecting data from the natural are as follows:

- The natural setting is a place where the researcher is most likely to discover or uncover what is to be known about the phenomenon of interest.
- The responses of the participants are tied to their personal context.
- The respondents' perceptions are characterized and influenced by the natural setting which they inhabit.

#### 4.4.2.5 Early and ongoing inductive data analysis

To avoid data overload, qualitative researchers immediately commence with data analysis. Maykut and Morehouse (2001:46) identify the following worth noting elements of qualitative research: qualitative research is ongoing and primarily inductive, analysis begins when one has accumulated a subset of data, provides an opportunity for salient aspects of the phenomenon under study to begin to emerge. This process helps the researcher to broaden or narrow the focus of the study.

Early analysis of data assisted the researcher to effectively and efficiently deal with the large amounts of data collected and reduced unattended massive data accumulation. The researcher commenced with data analysis as soon as data were collected from the respondents. Analysing data as soon as possible assisted the researcher to decrease the chances of dealing with piles of qualitative data. It was also advantageous for the researcher to immediately analyse data because he was able to remember some of the interactions that occurred in the field.

#### 4.4.2.6 It is constructivist in nature.

Constructivist researchers as qualitative researchers consider that the task of the researcher is to understand the multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge, hence they tend to use research methods such as interviews and observations which allow them to acquire multiple perspectives (Robson, 2002:27). Qualitative research is based more on what is called a naturalistic phenomenological philosophy, which assumes that multiple realities are socially constructed through individual and collective definitions of the situation (White, 2003:11). Naturalism is a critical factor in qualitative studies.



Cohen et al. (2005:137) elucidate the following elements of qualitative naturalistic inquiry:

- Humans actively construct their own meanings of situations.
- Meaning arises out of social situations and is handled through interpretive processes.
- Data are socially situated, context-related, context-dependent and context-rich.
- Realities are multiple, constructed and holistic.
- Research includes thick descriptions.
- Researchers are the instruments of the research.
- Social researchers need to examine the situations through the eyes of the participants.
- Researchers do not know in advance what they will see or what they will look for.
- Social research should be conducted in natural, uncontrived, real world settings with as little intrusiveness as possible by the researcher.
- Social reality, experiences and social phenomena are capable of multiple, sometimes contradictory interpretations and are available to us through social interaction.
- Data are analysed inductively with constructs deriving from the data during the research.

#### **4.5 RESEARCH METHODS**

In this section, the researcher deliberated on the sampling procedure, which is the selection of respondents and on how data was collected, analysed and interpreted.

##### **4.5.1 Sampling and selection of participants**

The choice of the respondents or subjects plays a determining role in the outcome of the research findings. Cohen et al. (2005:92) argue that the quality of a piece of research not only stands by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted. The researcher cannot access every member of the population he intends to study.

Reid (1987:86) is of the opinion that the primary reason for using samples is practicality. A sample is the subset of a larger population and the findings of the sampled respondents represent the total population under study. In confirming the above statement, Cooper and Schindler (2003:170) stress that the basic idea of sampling is to draw conclusions about the entire population.

In this study, the researcher made use of the following respondents: principals, educators and circuit managers. With regard to the rationale for the selection of principals, this study is focused on them as leaders and therefore they are in a better position to contribute positively towards the findings of the study. Educators are vital components of the schools and their contribution is indispensable and added value to the research. The rationale for the selection of circuit managers was based on the fact that they are in constant contact with principals and were therefore in a good position to offer data that also added value to the study. Furthermore, as supervisors of schools, they are better placed to provide information on whether schools are effectively run or not.

In the first phase of sampling, the researcher selected simple random sampling. The rationale for selecting simple random sampling was that every member or unit of analysis of a population has an equal chance of being selected or drawn for the sample (Du Plooy, 1995:49). Reaves (1992:97) describes simple random sampling as sampling in which the researcher randomly selects members one at a time out of the entire population. The choice of this sampling strategy is necessitated by the nature of the study and the research design chosen. In simple random sampling, respondents are selected from the population so that all members of the population have the same probability of being chosen (McMillan & Schumacher, 1993:161 & McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:170 & Maree, 2003:36).

In the second phase of sampling, the researcher selected respondents purposively, which is a type of non-probability sampling. Cooper and Schindler (2003:201) describe non-probability sampling as conforming to certain criteria selected by the researcher. This type of sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in that a sample is

composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population (White, 2003:65). Care was taken to exclude farm schools. Farm schools were excluded because the nature of this study focused on bigger schools and most of the farm schools have less than three educators. The motivation for the choice of this sampling was because the researcher has the freedom to select respondents based on the characteristics that will be of value to the study. In the selection of schools, care was taken not to include the farm schools.

#### 4.5.1.1 The procedure in selecting schools

This study was focused in Limpopo, which is one of the provinces in the Republic of South Africa. There are five education districts in Limpopo namely Waterberg, Capricorn, Mopani, Sekhukhune and Vhembe. The researcher selected his sample from Waterberg District. The rationale for the selection of Waterberg District is that it is accessible and has schools that possess the characteristics that are of significance to the study. According to the information supplied by Limpopo Department of Education's *Waterberg District Comprehensive Information on School (2007c)*, the district is divided into five manageable clusters or areas. The table below indicates the number of primary schools in Waterberg district:

**Table 4.1: Number of primary schools per cluster**

Cluster/Area	No. of primary schools
• Bakenberg Cluster	86
• Mahwelereng Cluster	81
• Phalala Cluster	78
• Warmbaths Cluster	107
• Total	352

(Waterberg District Comprehensive Information on Schools, 2007)

The researcher requested a list of all the primary schools in the Waterberg District. The total number of primary schools in the district is 352.

- All the names of primary schools were written down separately on pieces of paper. They were then put into a bucket and shuffled.
- A total number of 30 schools were randomly selected. The researcher trusted that the 30 schools, which were selected, enabled him to secure a sizable number of responses, particularly from the questionnaires. This was a measure to avoid minimal response rates by respondents. Ary, cited in White (2005:126) indicates that the goal in a questionnaire survey is typically a return rate of 70-80%. If there were more than 30% non-returns, one would question the value of the results. Larger samples enable the researcher to draw more accurate conclusions and make more accurate predictions.

#### 4.5.1.2 The procedure in selecting principals for questionnaire purposes

- The principals of the 30 schools mentioned in section 4.5.1.1 were used to fill in questionnaires. The use of the same schools helped the researcher because data have been collected from the same milieu and this same social environment was of great significance to the study. This also made the job easier for the researcher when questionnaires were delivered to the sampled schools.
- In addition to the 30 principals selected above, 50 more principals were selected randomly from the remaining list of 322 schools. Table 4.1 shows the population of 352 primary schools. The 322 figure came from subtracting 30 schools from 352. In total, 80 principals were used to respond to the questionnaires. The researcher assumed that the number of respondents selected was representative to give the general view of the population.

#### 4.5.1.3 The procedure in selecting educators for questionnaire purposes

- The researcher randomly selected educators from the class lists of the 30 selected schools. A total of 100 educators were selected. The researcher also assumed that the number of educators selected was representative to arrive at near accurate conclusions.

#### 4.5.1.4 The procedure in selecting principals, educators and circuit managers for interview purposes

Through purposive sampling, the researcher selected particular respondents from the population that was representative or informative about the topic under investigation. The selection was based on the questionnaire data. Purposive sampling was therefore used to select educators, principals and circuit managers. A total of five principals, five educators and five circuit managers were purposively selected. Principals are important respondents because they are better positioned as leaders and understand the challenges primary schools face. The researcher believes that the inclusion of educators in the interviews is critical because they have first hand information with regard to what is happening in schools. The circuit managers are also important role players and have the corporate understanding of challenges facing both the school leadership and the primary schools.

### **4.5.2 Data collection**

Data collection is at the heart of the research process (Phelps, Fisher & Ellis, 2007:179). The choice of data collection strategies is vital in the research process. Maree (2003:47) contends that a far-reaching decision a researcher has to make is the way in which the data will be collected. The inappropriate choice of data collection techniques invalidates and makes the research outcomes unreliable. Extra care and planning is important when dealing with data collection strategies. In this study, the researcher was extra careful in choosing data collection techniques.

The choice of data collection techniques relied heavily on the nature of the study, the research questions asked and the research objectives identified. The researcher employed interviews, observation and questionnaires as data collection strategies. Data collection was approached in two phases. In the first phase, data was quantitatively collected through the use of questionnaires. In the second phase, qualitative data collection was done through the interviews and observations.

#### 4.5.2.1 Phase one of the investigation

As indicated above, this is a phase where the researcher collected data through the questionnaires.

##### 4.5.2.1.1 The use of questionnaires

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:238) state that the questionnaire is the most widely used technique for obtaining information from respondents. White (2005:127) describes a questionnaire survey as a quantitative data collection technique that normally uses a large number of respondents. A questionnaire is a printed set of questions that respondents are asked to answer. Questionnaires are written questions that researchers ask respondents to respond in order to help them resolve the research problem under investigation.

##### 4.5.2.1.2 The rationale for the choice of questionnaires

Every researcher is exposed to a variety of scientific data collection strategies, including questionnaires. The researcher in this study carefully considered the inclusion of questionnaires as an indispensable data collection technique. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:238) state that questionnaires are relatively economical, have standardized questions, can ensure anonymity and questions can be written for specific purposes. Robson (2002:236) agrees that while all forms of data collection call for a substantial investment of time and effort in developing questionnaires, the self-completion version is substantially lower in cost to administer than face-to-face. The researcher considered the

cost effectiveness and anonymity of respondents in the selection of questionnaires. Questionnaires gather information from a wide range of respondents than interviews.

#### 4.5.2.1.3 Designing the questionnaires

Wilson (1985:66) argues that the design of questionnaires involves the following processes: preliminary design work, question wording, sequencing, physical design and layout. Welman and Kruger (2001:146) indicate that questionnaires are used to obtain the following types of information: biographical particulars, typical behaviour, opinions, beliefs, convictions and attitudes. In designing the questionnaires, the researcher took note of these factors. Reid (1987:105) mentions that before you can begin asking questions, you must think clearly about what you want to learn and make sure the questions you ask will give useful answers. Survey questions should be designed to help achieve objectives of the research and in particular, to answer research questions.

The questionnaires should have questions that will be interpreted the same by respondents (Saris & Gallhofer, 2007:6). Survey questionnaires should be written in such a way that respondents understand what the researcher wants from them and are happy to give the researcher answers. The general layout of the questionnaire should be attractive and motivate the respondents to answer it.

The researcher should make sure that the general layout of the final questionnaire is without fault, by ensuring that there are no spelling mistakes, the layout is professional, spacing is appropriate and the presentation is generally clear (Robson, 2002:254). If the questionnaires are not well designed, they will compromise the internal validity. In constructing and designing the questionnaires in this study on the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges faced by primary schools, the researcher was careful to avoid and minimize errors. The wording, the relevance and format of the questionnaire were meticulously considered and designed. The researcher ensured that the questionnaire items were relevant to the objectives and research questions and also appropriate and applicable to individual respondents.

Two types of questionnaires were developed (see appendices F and G), one for the principals and the other for educators. The researcher used closed ended questions. Closed ended questions are questions that do not allow respondents to express their independent opinions, but they are provided with predetermined responses. These questions included quite a number of options, ranging from statements, ranking alternatives and scaled items of the Likert-type. In preparing the questions, the researcher further took note of the tips to be considered when developing questionnaires (Robson, 2002:246):

- Keep the language simple and avoid jargon.
- Keep the questions short because long questions are difficult to understand.
- Avoid double-barrelled questions because they ask two questions at the same time.
- Avoid leading questions. Leading questions encourage a particular answer.
- Avoid questions in the negative because they are difficult to understand.
- Try to ensure that the questions mean the same thing to all respondents.
- Remove ambiguity. Take great care with sentence structure.
- Avoid direct questions on sensitive topics.
- Ensure that the question's frame of reference is clear.
- Use personal wording if you want the respondent's own feelings.
- Avoid unnecessary or objectionable detail.
- Avoid prior alternatives. Give the substance of the question first, then the alternatives and not vice versa.

#### 4.5.2.1.4 Pilot testing of the questionnaires

Pilot investigation is a small-scale trial before the main investigation and is intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and of the instruments to be used for data collection (Wilson & Sapsford, 2006:102). White (2005:131) mentions that it is essential that newly constructed questionnaires in their semi-final form be thoroughly pilot-tested before being used in the main investigation. He further elaborates that the main purpose of the pilot-test is to ensure that errors of whatever nature are rectified immediately at little cost.



The researcher used a small sample of four respondents in the pilot test. The respondents included two principals and two educators around the area where the researcher is employed. In the pilot test exercise, the researcher asked the following additional questions to make questionnaire corrections easier (Nuku, 2007):

- How long did it take you to complete the questionnaire?
- Were the instructions clear?
- Were there any questions unclear or ambiguous? If so, which one and why?
- Did you object to answering any of the questions?
- Was the layout of the questionnaire clear and attractive?
- Any further comments or suggestions you want to make?

According to Wilson and Sapsford, (2006:104), the pilot test helps to address the following critical questions:

- Do the respondents understand the questions as initially phrased?
- Are the potential respondents able to think of the whole range of possible responses to any particular question or do they need a particular type of prompting?
- Does the questionnaire take too long to complete so that pilot respondents are showing signs of impatience?
- What is the best order for presenting the questions? If questions that are sensitive appear too early this might jeopardize gaining the information required or even the completion of the questionnaire itself.
- Do the questions discriminate effectively between different respondents?

These questions were asked with the purpose of making corrections easier. Inappropriate questions were corrected immediately.

#### 4.5.2.1.5 Procedure in the administration of questionnaires

The main task of the researcher is to keep on top of things, making sure that the practicalities are being attended to and a carefully worked out plan followed (Robson, 2002:256). The researcher ensured that everything worked according to the plan. To expedite matters, the researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the circuit offices. The questionnaires were put in the pigeonholes of the different selected schools at their circuit offices. The circuit managers were also requested to assist with the process of the delivery of questionnaires to sampled principals and educators. Respondents were requested to return the completed questionnaires to their respective circuit offices through their principals.

In designing the covering letter, the researcher followed the hints on designing the covering letter by Cohen et al. (2005:259):

- The covering letter should provide the respondents with the title.
- Indicate the purpose of the research.
- Indicate the benefits and the importance of the research.
- Indicate the professional backing, endorsement and permission for the research.
- Indicate how to return the questionnaires and the address, where they should be returned.
- Indicate a return-by date.
- Provide assurances of confidentiality and anonymity.
- Thank respondents in advance for their co-operation.

This information was communicated to respondents in the covering letters (Appendix E) that accompanied the questionnaires. The researcher personally collected the completed questionnaires from the respective circuit offices. The researcher allocated six weeks for the entire process of delivery and the collection of questionnaires. To curb low response rate, the researcher send the letters of reminders (follow up letters) to respondents during the second week after the delivery of questionnaires.

#### 4.5.2.2 Phase two of the investigation

In the second phase of the investigation, the researcher made use of two data collection techniques, namely interviews and observations.

##### 4.5.2.2.1 The use of interviews

Interviews are regarded as valuable data collection tools. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003:450) mention that qualitative researchers use interviews as data collection techniques. They further argue that the main purpose of interviewing people is to find out what is on their minds, what they think or how they feel about something. Frankfort-Nachamias and Nachamias (1996:232) state that an interview is a face-to-face interaction in which an interviewer asks respondents questions designed to elicit answers pertinent to the research questions. In this study, the researcher used semi structured interviews.

Interviewing is a data collection tool typically involving the researcher asking questions and the participants giving answers to the questions posed. The researcher asked participants questions that were relevantly constructed to answer the research questions and address the research objectives. Interviews were semi-structured. The rationale for the selection of semi-structured interviews was to enable the research to probe and prompt in instances where the researcher felt that responses were inadequate.

Wengraf (2001:5) contends that semi-structured interviews must be fully prepared and planned. Without thorough planning and preparation, it is difficult to employ semi-structured interviews. Wengraf (2001:5) indicates that compared with structured interviews, for semi-structured interviews to be successful, they require as much preparation and planning before the actual session, more discipline and more creativity in the session and more time for analysis and interpretation after the session.

#### 4.5.2.2.2 The rationale for the selection of interviews

The selection of data collection tools depends on the nature of the study conducted. White (2003:75) argues that interviews provide access to what is inside a person's head, they also make it possible to measure what a person knows, what a person likes and dislikes and what a person thinks. From this assertion, the researcher trusted that through the interviews, the research questions posed were fully answered and the research objectives addressed. The selection of interviews was based on the following reasons as presented by White (2003:76):

- Interviews allow flexibility from both the respondents and the interviewer.
- The interviewer is present to observe non-verbal behaviour and to assess the validity of the respondent's answers.
- The interviewer has control over the environment by making sure that the process is conducted in privacy.
- The interviewer has control over the order of the questions and can ensure that the interviewee does not answer the question out of order.
- The respondent is unable to cheat by receiving assistance from others.
- The interviewer can make sure that all questions are answered.

#### 4.5.2.2.3 The interviewing process

The researcher developed an interview schedule to focus and structure the interview process. Wilson and Sapsford (2006:99) explain that a standard schedule is used for each respondent in which questions have the same wording and are asked in the same order. The advantage of using the interview schedule is to have control over the interview. Probing and prompting were used during the process of interview. Gray (2004:214) states that the use of semi-structured interviews allows the researcher to probe for more detailed responses where the respondent is asked to clarify what he or she has said. Robson (2002:276) defines probing as a device to get the interviewee to expand on a response when the researcher feels that respondents have more to give. He describes prompting as

suggesting to the interviewee the range or set of possible answers that the interviewer expects.

The researcher interviewed three groups of participants namely, principals, educators and circuit managers. Each group of respondents were asked its own questions (see appendices H, I and J). Where necessary, some questions were the same. The researcher followed the same sequence of questioning in all the respondents. There were no scaled items in the interviews. The researcher asked open-ended questions during the course of the interviews. Respondents were given the freedom to respond according to the way they perceive their own situations. In order to focus during the interviews the researcher set boundaries and ensured that the process is credible, appropriate, consistent, confirmable and neutral (Tuckman, 1994:366). The researcher endeavoured to desist from any behaviour that influenced the participants' responses.

During the process of interviews, the researcher made use of the audiotape recorder. The researcher transcribed data that was collected during the interviewing sessions. The rationale for the transcription of data was to assist the researcher during the process of data analysis. Transcribed data was easily coded. The use of audiotape made data analysis easy. In qualitative reporting, researchers have an opportunity to provide many excerpts from the actual data that let the participants speak for themselves.

During the process of interview, the researcher observed the following tips provided by White (2003:75):

- Listen more than you speak.
- Put questions in a straightforward, clear and non-threatening way.
- Eliminate cues that lead interviewees to respond in a particular way.
- Enjoy it or at least look as though you do.
- The interviewer must carefully rehearse the interview techniques before embarking on the real interview session.
- If a tape recorder is used, obtain permission.

- The interviewer should not inject his bias into the conversation.
- Do not argue with the interviewee.
- Do not stray from the main theme.
- The interviewer should not encourage or discourage the respondent's responses through body language or gestures.

#### 4.5.2.2.4 The use of observation

Cohen et al. (2005:305) note that all research is some form of observation since we cannot study the world without being part of it. According to Robson (2002:309), the actions and the behaviours of people are central in virtually any enquiry. Robson further mentions that a natural and obvious technique is to watch what they do, to record this in some way and then to describe, analyse and interpret what we have observed.

White (2003:80) mentions that participant observation is generally regarded as the principal data gathering strategy of qualitative research. Maykut and Morehouse (2001:72) mention that being a participant observer by definition requires the researcher to be present in the field or in the natural setting where the phenomenon under study takes place. Given the above assertions, observation is a critical part of qualitative research.

#### 4.5.2.2.5 The rationale for the use of observation in this study

Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:37) believe that the great advantage of the observational process is that it enables the researcher to collect direct information about human behaviour. Robson (1993:191) argues that in observation, you do not ask people about their views, feelings or attitudes, you watch what they do and listen to what they say. Observation benefited this study because first hand, reliable and dependable information was collected. This helped the researcher to discover things that participants did not freely talk about in the interview situation.

The researcher also gained personal knowledge and not data based on perception. Personal knowledge also enhanced the reliability and validity of the research. Persistent observation also ensured dependability because it enabled the evaluator to identify those characteristics and elements in the situation that are most relevant to the problem or issue being pursued (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:237). The researcher also selected observation because of the following reasons (Robson, 2002:310):

- It is direct, the researcher does not ask people about their views, feelings or activities.
- Observation is the appropriate technique for getting at real life in the real world.
- Cohen et al. (2005:305) argue that observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather live data from live situations.

According to Morrison (1993), cited by Cohen et al. (2005:305), observation enables the researcher to gather data on:

- The human setting, which is the organization of people, the characteristics and make up of the groups or individuals being observed.
- The interactional setting, that is the interactions that are taking place, formally, informally, planned, unplanned, verbal and non-verbal.
- The program setting, this includes the resources and their organization, pedagogic style, curricula and their organization.

Foster (2006: 27) elucidates the following advantages of observational research:

- Information about the physical environment and about human behaviour can be recorded directly by the researcher without having to rely on the retrospective or anticipatory accounts of others.
- The observer may be able to see what participants cannot see.
- Observation can provide information on the environment and behaviour of those who cannot speak for themselves and therefore cannot take part in interviews or complete questionnaires.

- Observation can be used to supplement or check on the information obtained from other sources.

#### 4.5.2.2.6 The applicability of observation in this study

The researcher conducted informal observation. The researcher observed the behaviour of educators related to class attendance, lateness, absenteeism and interaction amongst educators. The researcher also covertly observed some of the behaviours of educators at the schools he visited.

According to Gray (2004:239), using covert observation is advantageous because once people realize that they are observed, they change their behaviour and this threatens the validity of the results. Observation research was conducted at the schools where the interviews were conducted. The researcher conducted observation on the same day the interviews were conducted. During the process of observation, the researcher recorded his field notes in a diary during the visit and immediately after he has left the field.

### 4.5.3 Data analysis and interpretation

Data analysis is one of the challenging phases of any research study. Mouton (2001:108) argues that the analysis of data involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. Mouton further mentions that the aim of data analysis is to understand the various constitutive elements of one's data through an inspection of the relationship between concepts, constructs or variables and to see whether there are any patterns or trends that can be identified or isolated or to establish themes in the data.

After the researcher had collected data, he then engaged in rigorous and systematic data analysis, which was followed by data interpretation and data presentation. During data analysis the researcher made sense of the data collected, reduced the volume of information, ensured that significant patterns were identified and constructed a framework for communicating the essence of what the data revealed. As indicated earlier, the researcher collected data through questionnaires, interviews and observations.



The researcher analysed data into two phases, firstly quantitatively and then qualitatively. In both of these analyses, the researcher followed the two types of approaches identified by Robson (2002:393): exploratory data analysis that explores data, trying to find out what are data telling the researcher and confirmatory data analysis, that seeks to establish whether you have actually got what you expected to find.

#### 4.5.3.1 Quantitative data analysis of questionnaires

Quantitatively, data was collected through the questionnaires. When analysing data, the researcher classified it into categories. Gray (2004:286) mentions that data should be placed into sets or categories (nominal data) or ranked in some way (ordinal data). Data analysis and presentation in quantitative research indicates the statistical techniques to be used in data analysis and specifies how the data will be presented (White, 2005:168).

Once the researcher was convinced that the percentage of response rate was convincingly satisfactorily, the task of reducing data commenced. Cohen et al. (2005:265) mentions that it is important that questionnaires be edited before coding is done. The purpose of editing is to eliminate errors made by respondents. Cohen et al. (2005:265) mention three tasks of editing of questionnaires:

- Editing for completeness: A check to verify that there is an answer to every question.
- Editing for accuracy: Make sure that all questions are answered accurately. Inaccuracies result from respondents not following questionnaire instructions correctly.
- Editing for uniformity: This check ensures that respondents had interpreted instructions and questions uniformly.

In this study, the role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools, the researcher analysed data according to the research questions and objectives of the study. Quantitatively, data analysis relied mostly on the descriptive statistical method. Nuku (2007:183) mentions that quantitative and statistical techniques

help in bringing out complex relationships inherent in data to make scientific concluding statements.

During the process of analysis, the researcher checked the completeness, accuracy, consistency and the relevancy of the responses in the questionnaires. This was done in order to identify errors in the completion of the questionnaires. The responses were categorized by identifying patterns of responses in relation to particular questions and themes. The researcher converted raw data into efficient and readable data in the form of descriptive summaries. These data was then ready for inclusion in graphs and tables for presentation and discussion in chapter five.

#### 4.5.3.2 Qualitative data analysis

Qualitative data analysis is primarily an inductive process of organizing the data into categories and themes, identifying patterns (relationships) among the categories and themes. Qualitative data analysis involves arranging interview scripts and field notes. This process should be systematic and organized. The first step in data analysis is to organize data through developing a systematic mechanism to be able to deal with qualitative data collected through interviews and observations.

Risimati (2007:110) mentions that organizing all this data usually involves a process of data reduction, which is a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstraction and transforming raw data. During data analysis, the researcher perceived the emerging patterns. The researcher then categorized, compared, synthesized and interpreted data to provide explanations of the phenomenon under study.

Cohen et al. (2005:283) defines coding as the translation of the question responses and respondent information to specific categories for the purpose of analysis. Hycner (1985), in Cohen et al. (2005:285) suggests the following tips in analysing interview data:

- Transcription: This is transcribing data from the audiotape.

- Bracketing and phenomenological reduction: Suspending the researcher's meaning and interpretations and entering into the world of the unique individual who was interviewed. The researcher sets out to understand what the interviewee is saying rather than what he expects that person to say.
- Listen to the interview for the sense of a whole: This involves listening to the entire tape several times and reading the transcription a number of times.
- Delineating units of meaning relevant to the research question: Once the units of general meaning have been noted, they are then reduced to units of meaning relevant to the research question.
- Clustering units of relevant meaning: The researcher now tries to determine if any of the units of relevant meaning naturally cluster together, whether there seem to be common themes.
- Writing a summary of each individual interview: At this point it is useful to go back to the interview transcription and to write a summary of the interview incorporating the themes that have been elicited from data.
- Coding data is also a critical element of qualitative data analysis.
- Identifying general and unique themes for all the interviews: The researcher now looks for the themes common to most or all of the interview as well as the individual variations.
- Composite summary: The researcher considers it useful to write up a composite summary of all the interviews that will capture the essence of the phenomenon being studied.

#### 4.5.3.3 The process of qualitative data analysis in this study

The researcher collected data from participants through interviews and observations. The researcher personally conducted the interviews and made use of the audiotape. The interview was conducted in English. The researcher then transcribed the interviews after repeatedly listening to the recorded interviews from the audiotape. During the transcription process, the researcher checked the accuracy of the transcriptions.

The first phase of qualitative data analysis was the organization of data through coding. The researcher developed a colour coding system. Similar data from different sources were coloured the same. Data collected was grouped according to the elements of the transformational school leadership as discussed in chapter two during literature review.

During this process, the researcher selected, sifted, classified, identified, categorized, reflected and labelled the data with the purpose of reducing it. During the process of data analysis, the patterns and themes started to emerge. The same procedure of data organization also included data collected through observation. After the analysis of data, it was ready for presentation and reporting.

#### **4.6 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY**

An academic research study is a scientific investigation and should therefore be premised on scientifically acceptable research principles. The researcher should produce research findings and outcomes that have minimal errors and are generally acceptable in research circles. In trying to produce a research project that is acceptable and up to standard, the researcher considers reliability and validity as critical factors of research. It is impossible to have perfect measures of reliability and validity. The researcher should endeavour to minimize unreliability and invalidity and maximize the measures of reliability and validity (De Vaus, 2001:31).

##### **4.6.1 The description of reliability**

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993:227), reliability refers to the consistency of measurement, which is the extent to which the results are similar over different forms of the same instrument or occasions of data collecting. To Cohen et al. (2005:117) reliability is a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples. White (2003:25) mentions the following characteristics of reliability:

- Reliability is the accuracy or precision of an instrument
- Reliability is the degree of consistency or agreement between two independently derived sets of scores.

- Reliability is the extent to which independent administrators of the same instrument yield the same results under comparable conditions.
- Reliability is the repeatability and consistency of the measure.

McMillan and Schumacher (1993:385) are of the view that qualitatively, reliability refers to the consistency of the researcher's interview style, data recording, data analysis and the interpretation of participant's meanings of data. They further state that quantitatively, reliability refers to the consistency of the instrument and the test administration in the study. According to Cohen et al. (2005:120), reliability includes the use of instruments, researchers, perspectives and interpretations. There are factors that threaten reliability of the study and the researcher should establish measures to minimize those threats.

#### **4.6.2 Reliability and its applicability in this study**

Researchers should establish ways to enhance reliability in their studies. Because this study employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, reliability was therefore enhanced in both approaches. Cohen et al. (2005:117) see reliability in quantitative research as concerned with the accuracy and precision of the instrument. The instrument used to collect data must consistently yield the same results when used repeatedly. In this study, the researcher constructed the questionnaires carefully to ensure that reliability was not compromised. The questionnaires were pilot tested to assist in identifying errors. Elimination of errors before the actual administration of the instrument enhances reliability.

With regard to qualitative research reliability, McMillan and Schumacher (1993:386) and McMillan and Schumacher (2001:416) mention the following:

- The researcher's role

The researcher's social relationship with the participants requires that studies identify the researcher's role and his status within the group. In this study, the role of the researcher was made clear to participants. The researcher played a role of participant observer and interviewer.

- Information selection

The researcher should describe the rationale and criteria used in the selection of respondents. In this study, the researcher explained the rationale for selection of principals, educators and circuit managers in section 1.6.3.2.

- Social context

Social contexts influence data content and are described physically, socially, interpersonally and functionally. The social context was elaborated during the process of observation by the researcher.

- Data collection strategies

The researcher should give a precise description of data collection techniques used. The researcher should also note how different collection strategies were employed. In this chapter, the researcher dealt extensively with data collection strategies.

- Data analysis strategies

The researcher must provide the retrospective accounts of how data were synthesized and identify the general strategies of data analysis and interpretation. The strategies for data analysis were given in section 4.5.3.

- Authentic narrative

Most qualitative studies contain “thick description” in data analysis. This analysis contains brief and lengthy quotations representing participants’ language. During the interview transcriptions, the researcher recorded the participant’s opinions and perceptions. The recording of the participants’ opinions and perceptions were of great value during data analysis.

- Analytic premise

The conceptual frame of the study must be made explicit. Key concepts and operational definitions should be explicitly explained. The researcher gave thorough descriptions and definitions of key concepts used in the study in chapter one.

#### **4.6.3 The description of validity**

Neuman (2003:179) mentions that validity answers the question of how well the social reality being measured through research matches with the constructs researchers use to understand it. Vockell and Asher (1995:99) argue that validity of data collection addresses the question of whether the process itself is really measuring what it purports to be measuring. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407) define validity as the degree to which explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001), the following types of quantitative validity exist:

- Internal validity expresses the extent to which extraneous variables have been controlled or accounted for.
- External validity refers to the extent to which the results and conclusions can be generalized to other people and settings. In this study, the research findings were generalized to all primary schools in Limpopo.

#### **4.6.4 Validity and its applicability in this study**

White (2003:22) contends that quantitatively, a valid measuring instrument has been described as doing what it is intended to do and as measuring what it is supposed to measure. Maree (2003:109) mentions that the validity of a questionnaire refers to the degree to which a test succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure. In this study, the researcher constructed the questionnaires based on the content of literature conducted in chapter two based on the elements of transformational school leadership.

The questionnaires were designed with an aim of answering all the research questions and the objectives based on the study. Gall, Borg and Gall (1996:290) argue that the researcher should ensure that the questionnaires are designed in a manner that they (questionnaires) meet the same standard of validity and reliability that apply to other data-collecting measures in educational research.

Creswell (2003:195) postulates that validity is used to determine whether the findings of the research are consistent from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants and the readers of an account. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407) indicate that qualitative researchers make use of a combination of possible strategies to enhance validity. They mention the following strategies of validity that are relevant in this study:

- Prolonged and persistent fieldwork

Participant observation and in-depth interviews are conducted in natural settings to reflect the reality of life experience more accurately. In this study, the researcher spent some time in the field interviewing respondents and observing participants' behaviours and settings in which the study was conducted. The motive for spending some time doing fieldwork was to gain an understanding of how respondents interpret their environments.

- Multi-method strategies

Most researchers make use of several data collection strategies in their studies. The researcher employed three data collection techniques, namely interviews, observations and questionnaires to complement one another.

- Participant's verbatim accounts

Part of the analysis of data in this study included capturing the direct quotations of the respondents. In the qualitative analysis, the researcher quoted some respondents verbatim.



- Low inference descriptors

Concrete, precise descriptions from field notes and interview elaborations are the hallmarks of qualitative research and critical method for identifying patterns in the data. In the analysis of data, the researcher also heavily relied on field notes taken during observations and the interview transactions.

- Mechanically recorded data

Mechanical equipment enhances the validity of the study. The researcher used the tape recorder to record the interview interaction with respondents. This was done with a purpose of capturing important information that is critical to the study. The tape recorder helped during the interview transcriptions. To further enhance validity and reliability qualitatively and quantitatively, the researcher used triangulation to increase reliability and validity of the research findings. Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001:322) describe the concept triangulation as the process of using multiple referents to draw conclusions about what constitutes the truth. The use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in itself constitutes triangulation and Gray (2004:33) refers to this as methodological triangulation.

In this study, the researcher used multiple data collection techniques, namely, observations, interviews and questionnaires. According to White (2005:89), three types of triangulation include theory triangulation, data triangulation and investigator triangulation. In this research, the researcher also made use of data triangulation that refers to the use of multiple data sources such as the researcher, the respondents, observations, questionnaires and interviews. The rationale for the use of data triangulation was to ensure that more views were canvassed. To Gray (2004:33) data triangulation is collecting data over different times or from different sources.

#### 4.7 ETHICAL MEASURES

Empirical researchers are bound by research ethics. Because respondents are human beings, social researchers have to ensure that the respondents are treated with respect. Polit et al. (2001) describe research ethics as a system of moral values that is concerned with the degree to which research procedures adhere to professional, legal and social obligations to study participants. To Cooper and Schindler (2003:120), ethics are norms or standards of behaviour that guide moral choices about our behaviour and our relationships with others.

Cooper and Schindler (2003:121) state that when ethics are discussed in research design, researchers think of protecting the rights of the participants, be it in an experiment, interview, observation or survey. When the issues of research ethics have been respected, validity and reliability are enhanced. Welman and Kruger (2001:171) mention that ethical considerations come into play at three stages of a research project, namely, when participants are recruited, during the interview or the measurement procedure to which they are subjected and during the release of the results obtained.

To secure permission to conduct the study in Waterberg District, the researcher wrote the following letters: A letter to the Head of Department of the Limpopo Department of Education (Appendix A), a letter to the circuit managers (Appendix B) and a letter to the principals (Appendix C). In the subsection that follows, the researcher gives an exposition of how research ethics was observed.

- Benefits

The researcher should try to explain the benefits of the study to the respondents. In interviews, the researcher explained the benefits of study during the introduction. The researcher also indicated to participants the significance of the results of the study in the education system. Cooper and Schindler (2003:121) consider the element of research benefit as crucial. In this study, the researcher also indicated the purpose and the benefits

of the investigation in the covering letter (Appendix E) that accompanied the questionnaires.

- Deception

Deception is when respondents are not fully informed about the study. Cooper and Schindler (2003:123) state that deception is when the truth is compromised and respondents are told only part of the truth. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:422) mention that most researchers see deception as violating informed consent and privacy. The researcher did not deceive participants because the details of the research were communicated to them through letters that were sent to the circuit managers and principals (Appendices B and C).

- Privacy

To Cooper and Schindler (2003:126), privacy is more than confidentiality. They further indicate that the right to privacy means the right to refuse to be interviewed or to refuse to answer any question in an interview. In order for the researcher to achieve the right to privacy, Cooper and Schindler (2003:126) cite the following critical points: inform the respondents of their rights to refuse to answer any question or participate in the study, obtain permission to interview respondents, limit the time required for participation and restrict behaviour to public behaviour only. This right was communicated to participants through appendices B, C and D.

- Informed consent

Cohen et al. (2005:50) mention that social research necessitates obtaining the consent and co-operation of respondents who are to assist in the investigation. Diener and Crandall in Cohen et al. (2005:51) define informed consent as the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that could influence their decisions. McMillan and Schumacher (2001:421) mention that informed consent is a measure to obtain permission to use respondents.

Piper and Simons (2005:56) believe that informed consent means that those interviewed or observed should give their permission in full knowledge of the purpose of the research and the consequences for them of taking part. In this study, appendix D required respondents to indicate their consent to participate in the research.

- Confidentiality and anonymity

It is important to take all precautions that are necessary to protect the identity of the people who take part in your research (Henn, Weistein & Foard, 2006:85). Confidentiality and anonymity also mean that names and the places where data were collected are not made known to other people. The researcher used code names to refer to respondents. The issues of confidentiality and anonymity were also indicated to participants through appendices B, C and D.

#### **4.8 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, both qualitative and the quantitative research approaches were discussed. The chapter explained simple random sampling and purposive sampling which are sampling techniques selected for the study. The researcher detailed the two phases of data collection. Phase one was focused on the collection of data through questionnaires. The researcher also elaborated on how quantitative data analysis was conducted.

The second phase of the research was also explained. Data was collected through the use of both interviews and observations. The researcher also gave an exposition of how both quantitative and qualitative data was analysed. The measures of validity and reliability were also discussed. A discussion of design is not complete until research ethics are dealt with and in this chapter four, the researcher explained how ethical considerations were addressed. In the next chapter, the analysis and interpretation of data are presented.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY DATA**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter two, an in depth analysis of literature was presented. The literature review focused on the role of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. The discussion of literature in chapter two focused on the five elements of transformational leadership (see section 2.3). Chapter five will now focus on the analysis and interpretation of data collected through questionnaires administered to the educators and principals, which constituted phase one of this empirical study (see section 4.5.2.1).

To determine the extent of the confirmation or the contradiction of the arguments presented in chapter two by various transformational leadership scholars such as Bass (1985), Burns (1978), Leithwood and Jantzi (1999), Homrig (2001), Hallinger (2003 & 2004), Gray and Ross (2006), Nguni et al. (1991 & 2006), and others as indicated in chapter two (see section 2.2.4), the researcher embarked on the empirical study which focused on the elements of transformational leadership.

In chapter four, the emphasis was on the research methodology and the research design of this project. The chapter contains the practical step-by-step approach of how the project was empirically conducted. It was indicated that the research methodology deals with the research participants (sample) who responded to the research questions, the field where the responses were collected (research site), and the instruments that were used to collect data (questionnaires, interviews and observation) (see section 4.1).

The researcher administered questionnaires to both educators and principals. These data collection instruments were constructed according to the research aims and the research questions (see section 4.2). The researcher also intended to test the hypothesis that was stated as follows (see section 4.3): There is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between the identified leadership emphasis in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

Before data analysis commenced, data was electronically captured. Data are statistically represented by means of the figures and tables. The graphical representation of data is then followed by the discussion and interpretation of the findings.

## **5.2 THE DISTRIBUTION AND RESPONSE RATES OF THE QUESTIONNAIRES**

Before embarking on the research project, the researcher received letters of permission from the head office of the Limpopo Department of Education (see appendix N). As indicated in chapter four concerning the procedure in the administration of questionnaires (see section 4.5.2.1.5), the researcher personally delivered questionnaires to the circuit offices. At some of the schools, which are near the researcher's workplace, the researcher personally distributed questionnaires to the sampled schools. Attached to the questionnaires were letters of permission from the Limpopo Department of Educations' head office, covering letters and letters of informed consent (see section 4.7). The researcher also ensured that the principals and circuit managers of the affected schools received letters with attached permission letters from head office.

After two weeks as planned, the researcher went to collect the questionnaires. The response rate in some circuit offices was very low and discouraging. The researcher wrote letters of reminders and motivated the respondents to complete the questionnaires. The greatest challenge was with regard to the principal questionnaires. It is important to note that at one circuit office, the secretary of the circuit manager reported that some principals were reluctant to collect and complete the questionnaires, however she encouraged them. With regard to the educators' questionnaires, the response rate was excellent.

It took about five to six weeks to have the majority of questionnaires returned. The tables below (tables 5.1 and 5.2) indicate the summary of the distribution and the response rates of both the educator and the principal surveys.

**Table 5.1 The distribution and the response rate of the educator questionnaire according to the circuits**

<b>Name of circuit</b>	<b>No. of questionnaires distributed</b>	<b>Number returned</b>	<b>% returned</b>	<b>Number not returned</b>	<b>% not returned</b>
1. Warmbad	52	48	92	4	8
2. Nylstroom	28	28	100	0	0
3. Vaalwater	13	13	100	0	0
4. Thabazimbi	7	7	100	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>96</b>		<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>

Table 5.1 shows that the number of educators sampled for the completion of questionnaires were 100. The total response rate was 96% and enabled the researcher to confidently continue with the analysis of the findings on the basis of a high response rate. According to Ary, cited by White (2005:126), the goal in a questionnaire survey is typically to achieve a return rate of 70-80%.

Table 5.2 indicates that the total number of principals who were given questionnaires was 80. These 80 principals were selected from 10 circuit offices. This number was scattered over Waterberg district. In the selection of schools, care was taken not to include the farm schools. Farm schools were excluded because the nature of this study focused on bigger schools and most of the farm schools have less than three educators. This response rate enabled the researcher to confidently proceed with the process of analysis and interpretation.

**Table 5.2 The distribution and the response rate of the principal questionnaire according to the circuits.**

Name of circuit	No. of questionnaires distributed	Number returned	% returned	Number not returned	% not returned
1. Warmbad	8	8	100	0	0
2. Nylstroom	7	7	100	0	0
3. Vaalwater	4	4	100	0	0
4. Thabazimbi	4	4	100	0	0
5. Bakenberg	6	4	67	2	33
6. Mapela	13	9	69	4	31
7. Mokopane	11	7	64	4	36
8. Palala North	6	5	83	1	17
9. Potgietersrus	9	9	100	0	0
10. Mahwelereng	12	10	83	2	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>16</b>

### **5.3 ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY DATA (PRINCIPALS)**

#### **5.3.1 Profiling of principals**

The interpretation and analysis of data of the principal questionnaire is divided into various sections. The first section consists of the profiles of principals with regard to gender, experience, age and qualifications. The remaining section covers the items that focus on the five identified elements of transformational leadership (see section 2.3). The tables below (tables 5.3 to 5.6) indicate in summary the profiles of principals. There were some instances where respondents made mistakes when completing the questionnaires. During the editing process, in instances where participants encircled two options instead of one, such items were then eliminated. The elimination of some items resulted in the differences in tallies.



**Table 5.3 Profile of principals by gender (n=67)**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Number of principals (n)</b>	<b>Percentage ( %)</b>
Male	47	70
Female	20	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

As table 5.3 indicates, out of the 67 respondents, 47 were males, which makes 70% and 20 represent the female sample, which makes about 30%. The information on this table suggests that there are more male primary school principals in Waterberg district than female primary principals. This corresponds with data provided by statistics department of the district (*Waterberg District Comprehensive Information on School, 2007c*) The researcher has also observed that male primary school principals lead most of the primary schools around the area where the he is employed. For the purposes of this study, it was important that the views of both male and female principals be represented.

**Table 5.4: Profile of principals by years of experience (n=67)**

<b>Years of experience</b>	<b>Number of principals (n)</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
1-10	22	33
11-20	20	30
21-30	16	24
31 plus	9	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

This study is focused on the role of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. It was critical for the researcher to profile principals with regard to their experience as school leaders since this study is focused on school leadership. As table 5.4 shows, experience ranged from one to more than 31 years. In terms of the percentage distribution, 33% of principals had between 1-10 years experience, 30% of the principals were between 11-20 years of experience, 24% are between 21-30 years and 13% of the principals are 31 and more years experienced. This table gives an impression that the majority of primary school principals have sufficient experiences, particularly

when considering those from 11-31 and more years. They constitute 77%. Their experience benefited the study.

**Table 5.5: Profile of principals by age (n=67)**

Age approximation	Number of principals (n)	Percentage (%)
25-35	2	3
36-45	23	34
46-56	33	49
57 plus	9	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

With regard to the age distribution of the respondents, table 5.5 shows that age was spread between 25 and 57 years plus. The highest percentage, which is 49%, shows that most of the principals are aged between 46 and 56 years of age. The table further indicates that principals who are 35 years of age and less constitute only 3%, whereas 13% of principals are 57 years and plus old. This biographical component is critical because the views from different age groups were gathered.

**Table 5.6: Profile of principals by qualifications (n=67)**

Qualifications	Number of principals (n)	Percentage (%)
Teachers' certificate	2	3
Teachers' diploma	20	30
First Degree	13	19
Honors degree	29	43
Masters' degree	3	4
Doctoral Degree	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.6 indicates that from the 67 primary school principals who responded, the highest percentage, 43% indicated that they have an honours degree. According to data reflected on table 5.6, no principal is having a doctoral degree and only 3% are under qualified because they still hold certificates in teaching. Thirty percent of the respondents have the diploma in teaching. Data in this table shows that principals who have degrees (both first

degrees and honours degrees) constitute 62%. This demonstrates that the majority of primary school principals are well qualified.

This section focused on the profiles of the respondents who participated in the study. Respondents in the sample were primary school principals and it was therefore helpful because this study focused on school leadership. Data on tables 5.3-5.6 indicate that respondents in the sample represent a mixture of principals according to gender, age, experience and qualifications. These variables were fundamental because they enhanced the validity of the study.

The analysis and interpretation of the empirical data focused on the elements of transformational leadership, namely *shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction* and *participative decision-making* as discussed in section 2.3. The questionnaire items were based on these elements of transformational leadership. As already alluded to in section 5.1, the analysis is presented in the form of tables and figures.

### 5.3.2 Shared vision

Tables 5.7 to 5.10 show the principals' responses on the items based on the transformational leadership element, shared vision. This part of the questionnaire focused on the process that is followed in the initiation, development and definition of the school vision. In addition to that, the questionnaire touched on other important issues of the school vision, namely school goals and policy development. In each table, the researcher gave a breakdown of the responses of the participants in numbers and percentages.

**Table 5.7: Defining the school vision**

Statement	Responses (n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
Defining the school's vision is the leader's sole effort.	0	0
Defining the school's vision is a team effort.	67	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

All the respondents, 100%, fully agreed that the definition of school vision is a team effort. This confirms the view of the Department of Education (2004) that the principal should always ensure that the school vision becomes “our vision” by consulting widely (see section 2.3.1).

**Table 5.8: The development of the school vision**

Statement	Responses (n=66)	
	Number	Percentage
The principal should develop the school’s vision with other role players (Educators, SMT and SGB).	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>
The principal should develop the school’s vision alone.	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100</b>

According to data presented in table 5.8, 100% of the respondents indicated that the principal should develop the school vision with other role players, namely the educators, the school management team and the school governing body. Korkmaz (2006:14) mentions that sharing the school vision promotes a feeling of co-operation in principals, educators, learners and others to attain the future of the organization. The majority of the respondents suggested that it is not the responsibility of the principal alone to develop the school vision. This supports the assertion of Korkmaz (2006:14) indicated earlier. It was indicated in chapter two that involving staff members in the development and statement of the school vision should be the commitment of every principal if the objectives of the school are to be achieved (see section 2.3.1).

**Table 5.9: The development of the school goals**

Statement	Responses (n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of the principal.	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of the SMT.	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of all role players.	<b>54</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

The majority of the respondents, namely 81%, believe that goal setting is the distributed responsibility of all the role players in the school. This finding is consistent with the argument of *OECS Education Reform Unit* (2000:6) when it indicates that educators' participation in developing policies and goals can increase their commitment (see section 2.3.1). In addition to that, the majority view of the respondents (81%), is supported by Wilzem et al. (2002:43) when they observed that goals set in co-operation with those responsible for attaining them, ensure that employees accept full ownership and responsibility of these goals (see section 2.3.1).

To further support the view of inclusive goal setting, Hallinger (2003:345) argues that principals who share leadership responsibilities with others will be less subject to burnout than principal 'heroes' who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone. It was indicated that when the school vision is cooperatively crafted, the chances of educators sabotaging it become very slim (see section 2.3.1).

**Table 5.10: The development of the school policies**

Statement	Responses (n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
School policy development is mainly the responsibility of the principal.	6	10
School policy development is mainly the responsibility of the SMT.	7	10
School policy development is the responsibility of all role players (SMT, SGB and parents).	54	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Respondents were requested to select only one option from the three. Table 5.10 above indicates that the overwhelming majority, 80%, believes that the responsibility of the development of the school policy should be inclusive and distributed amongst all role players namely, the SGB, parents, educators, and the SMT. It was indicated in chapter

two that the school that is founded on a sound, robust and shared vision makes planning very easy for the principal and other members of the school (see section 2.3.1).

Data from tables 5.7, 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10, show that the respondents almost generally indicated that the development and the definition of the school vision, the development of school policy and the setting of goals, which are part of the broader shared vision, are the responsibility of the principal and other role players. The respondents' position seems to indicate that most primary school principals ensure that other role players are involved in developing the school vision. With regard to the development of the school vision and based on the views of the majority respondents, the primary school principals sampled seem to show transformational leadership characteristics.

### 5.3.3 Commitment

This section deals with the responses of the principals with regard to the commitment of educators. Data analysis was presented by means of tables and graphs. Tables 5.11, 5.12, and 5.13 indicate the views of the respondents on their roles in ensuring that educators are committed.

**Table 5.11: The principals' role on the educators' late coming**

Statement	Responses (n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
I discourage educators who come to school late.	0	0
I discipline educators who come to school late.	4	6
I remind educators who come late of their responsibilities.	63	94
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.11 shows that the respondents were expected to give their opinion on how they deal with educators who come to school late. They were requested to select only one option from those given. The majority of respondents (94%), indicated that they remind educators who come to school late of their responsibilities. The researcher's experience as the deputy principal of a primary school is that late coming is a problem in the circuit

where he is employed. Instead of disciplining latecomers, the majority of respondents were inclined to remind educators of their responsibility as professionals. The principal has to ensure that such educators do not come to school late. Mampuru (2001:58) mentions that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his/her staff to perform to their best voluntarily in order to ensure successful educative teaching.

**Table 5.12: The principals’ role on the educators’ absenteeism**

Statement	Responses (n=67)	
	No	%
I discourage educators who absent themselves without reasons.	4	6
I discipline educators who absent themselves without reasons.	6	9
I remind educators who absent themselves without reasons of their responsibilities.	57	85
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.12 indicates that 85% of the respondents believe that educators who absent themselves without reasons should be reminded of their responsibilities rather than being disciplined. The respondents were requested to choose only one option. The researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school has observed that absenteeism is a problem in the area where he is employed. Instead of disciplining such educators, most principals encourage them by reminding them of their responsibilities. Nuku (2007:79) mentions that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally.

Table 5.13 shows the responses of the primary school principals according to response categories. Respondents were requested to respond to items given in the questionnaire using the 5-point scale where 1= all, 2 = most, 3 = about half, 4 = few and 5 = none.

**Table 5.13: Commitment level of the educators**

**Key: 1= all, 2= most, 3= about half, 4 = few and 5= none**

Items	Response categories (no=67)										Total (n)
	1		2		3		4		5		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Educators come early to school.	20	30	31	46	8	12	6	9	2	3	67
Educators remain at school until after school.	20	30	30	45	7	10	8	12	2	3	67
Teaching performance is satisfactorily.	29	43	20	30	5	8	12	18	1	1	67
Educators accept school goals and objectives	0	0	0	0	8	12	43	64	16	24	67
Educators inspire learners.	20	30	31	46	8	12	6	9	2	3	67
Educators are committed to their profession.	9	13	30	45	16	24	11	16	1	2	67
Educators are frequently absent.	12	18	34	51	10	15	10	15	1	1	67

Respondents were firstly requested to give their opinions on the item: Educators come early to school. Given the views of respondents who responded on both keys 1 (30%) and 2 (46%), that is *all* and *most*, 76% of the respondents seem to indicate that they regard educators as responsible when it comes to time observation. According to the researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school not all the educators in the area where he is employed come to school on time. Nuku (2007) indicates that many schools do not start on time. Naledi Pandor, the previous Minister of Education also complained about educators who do not come to school on time (*Educator's Voice*, 2007b).

Concerning the item: Educators remain at school until after school, the view of most respondents was that educators remain at school until after school. When these responses are combined, they constitute 75% (30% and 45%). Time observation is not only coming



to school early, but also remaining at school until after school. One of the arguments raised by Asmal (1999) in Nuku (2007:16) is that too many schools fail to start and close on time. Asmal (1999) went on to state that too many educators believe that their obligations cease at one o' clock on a school day. The respondents' data seem to contradict the argument as pursued by Asmal (1999) in Nuku (2007:16), because 76% of the respondents' views seem to suggest that their educators observe time. According to the experience of the researcher, educators' under performance is a challenge to primary schools in the area where he works. Data shown in table 5.13 paint a different picture. Seventy three percent of the respondents (those who responded on keys *all* and *most*) suggest that educators' teaching performance is satisfactory.

In chapter two, it was indicated that commitment means developing the capacity to conform to the goals of the organization and behave in such a way that is in the best interest of the organization (see section 2.3.2). Rees, Kroon Sims, Manz and Tshenye, in Wilzem et al. (2002:43) mention that if goals are set in co-operation with those responsible for attaining them, this will ensure that employees accept full ownership and responsibility of these goals. Data in table 5.9 show that 81% of the respondents stated that goal setting is the responsibility of the principal and all role players in the school.

Data in table 5.13 show that 88% of the combined responses indicated that *few* and *none* (64% and 24% respectively) of the educators accept the goals and objectives of the school. This means that even though role players are seemingly involved in goals setting, many seem to disown these goals. Angle and Perry, in Nguni et al. (2006:150), supported by Mowday, in Jaussi (2007:53) believe that a strong belief in the acceptance of the organizations' goals and values is one of the components of commitment. The views of the majority of primary school principals in the sample suggest that the majority of educators do not accept the school goals to a satisfactory degree.

In responding to the item: Educators inspire learners, 30% of the respondents indicated that *all* educators inspire learners and 46% stated that *most* of educators do inspire learners. The views of the respondents combined (76%) seem to suggest that most

educators do inspire learners. This finding confirms what the Department of Education (2006:4) believes, when it mentions that educators should motivate and inspire learners.

When considering the respondents who indicated that *all* and *most* of their educators are committed to their profession, it was discovered that 58% (13% who indicated *all* and 45% who indicated *most*) of the respondents indicated that their educators are committed. The views of these respondents in the sample seem to imply that there is a significant number of educators who are not committed. This significant number results from the combination of 24% (*about half*) and 16% (*few*) who selected keys 3 and 4. Together they constitute 40%. In this regard, Trimble (2006:350) mentions that the current generation of educators lacks loyalty and commitment towards their schools and the supervisors are concerned about them. The finding about lack of commitment of educators thus confirms the observation made by Trimble above.

In responding to the item: Educators are frequently absent, 69% of the respondents (18%, *all* and 51%, *most*) indicated that their educators are frequently absent. This high percentage that reflects frequent absenteeism corroborates the assertion of both Kearney and Bensaheb (2006:3) when they mention that school absenteeism is a particular difficult problem that often faces schools.

Data from the principal survey suggest that educators seem to be generally committed to their profession. Respondents indicated that educators show lack of commitment in some areas such as attendance and acceptance of school goals and objectives. This was evidenced by the responses of the sampled principals on these items (see table 5.13). The researcher assumes that respondents were perhaps inclined to present a positive scenario, not necessarily always reflecting the real situation, to create an impression that their educators are committed. The researcher assumes that respondents created this scenario to present themselves as good leaders. According to the researcher's experience as the educator in the primary school, primary school educators do not always show commitment. The researcher observed that lack of commitment is demonstrated in areas such as early departure of educators, persistent late coming and frequent absenteeism.

The views of the respondents suggest that the majority of primary school principals in the sample ensure that educators are committed and this seems to indicate that primary school principals portray transformational leadership practices.

#### 5.3.4 Motivation

Tables 5.14 and 5.15 represent the responses of the principals on the statements based on motivation as third identified element of transformational leadership. Respondents were requested to rank order the items provided. There were two sets of items on motivation, as represented in tables 5.14 and 5.15. In the first group of the statements, the researcher requested the respondents to rank order the statements according to the aspects of their leadership **approach** in order of emphasis. The second group of statements requested the respondents to rank order the statements according to the aspects of their leadership **characteristics** in order of emphasis. In all the instances, the statement rank ordered number one meant that the respondent considered it to be of the strongest emphasis, the highest priority.

In determining the respondents' ranking profile, the number of respondents per item ranking 1-5 was multiplied as follows: Ranking 1:  $n \times 5$ , Ranking 2:  $n \times 4$ , Ranking 3:  $n \times 3$ , Ranking 4:  $n \times 2$  and then Ranking 5:  $n \times 1$ . The sum for each item constituted the calculated weight. In determining the calculated weight, *Appreciating the efforts of educators*, for example, the following procedure was followed: Forty-nine (49) respondents ranked the item number 1, 11 ranked it number 2, 2 ranked it number 3, nobody (0) ranked it number 4 and 4 respondents ranked it number 5. The weighing per item was calculated as follows:  $49 \times 5 = 245$ ;  $11 \times 4 = 44$ ;  $2 \times 3 = 6$ ;  $0 \times 2 = 0$ ;  $4 \times 1 = 4$ . The calculated weight for the item was thus:  $(245 + 44 + 6 + 0 + 4 = 299)$ . For items rank ordered from 1-6, the same procedure was followed, eg Ranking 1:  $n \times 6$ , Ranking 2:  $n \times 5$ , Ranking 3:  $n \times 4$  and so on.

**Table 5.14: Aspects of the leadership approach on motivation**

Statement	Ranking	Calculated weight
Appreciating the efforts of educators.	1	299
Writing personal notes for excellent work done.	2	224
Discouraging non-commitment from educators.	3	211
Disciplining educators who are not committed.	4	197
Charging educators who are not committed with misconduct.	5	120

Table 5.14 indicates that respondents ranked the item: Appreciating the efforts of educators, number one. The views of the respondents indicate that the educators' contribution should be appreciated. Appreciating what educators are doing at school motivates them to do more. This view is consistent with Mampuru's (2001:62) assertion that recognition of staff members enhances the chances of hard work. Furthermore, Kadalie (2006:222) mentions that the leader should show appreciation in little things that subordinates do because this boosts their commitment. The researcher found that the motivational role the principals play has a strong effect on the performance of educators (see section 2.3.3).

According to the statistical information provided in table 5.14, respondents also emphasized that excellent work should be appreciated. This was demonstrated by ranking the item number two. This view supports Kadalie's (2006:22) statement that a leader should show appreciation through a thank you note. Appreciating and writing personal notes to educators who are committed motivates others. In citing Lethoko (2002), Nuku (2007:79) mentions that motivation is the driving force that causes individuals to engage in positive behaviours (see section 2.3.3).

The item: Discouraging non-commitment from educators, was ranked number three. This suggests that respondents are inclined to encourage educators who do not show commitment. This finding supports the views of Mampuru (2001:58) when he mentions that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his/her staff to perform to their best voluntary in order to ensure successful educative teaching.

Nuku (2007:79) echoes the same view when he mentions that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally.

Respondents ranked the item: Disciplining educators who are not committed, number four. In chapter three, it was indicated that the struggle for liberation and freedom of South Africa resulted in the production of the type of educators who exhibit militant, arrogant and defiant behaviours (see section 3.4.1). Disciplining educators can strain relationships and lead to arrogance and defiance. *The Teacher* (2008:2) indicates that in the past, the employer imposed leadership and emphasis was on discipline and very little support for educators. In the past, the principal focused on retribution rather than on support and development.

Data in table 5.14 indicate that the calculated weight of rankings two, three and four are relatively close to each other. This indicates that principals certainly do discipline educators, but that more transformational approaches are preferred in motivating educators. The views of the respondents vindicate Mampuru's (2001:62) assertion that principals who believe in their educators treat them with respect. Data from table 5.14 suggest that the majority of respondents seems to create a pleasant working environment and assures their staff regularly of their importance to their organization. Covington (2000:22) believes that motivating subordinates leads to the arousal of positive behaviour.

According to the views of the respondents, charging non-committed educators with misconduct is not considered highest priority. This suggests that the majority of respondents are not inclined to take this route and rather motivate educators to be committed. This finding confirms the results of the study by Hertzberg-Fevis and Brighton (2006:90). They found that the principal is best positioned in playing a key role in the educators' willingness and ability to work (see section 2.3.3). Motivation leads to positive action and not resentment. In supporting this view, Ginsberg et al. (2001:2) mention that people whose actions are motivated tend to be highly active and display

greater cognition outcomes and are persistent. Mampuru (2001) mentions that mounting evidence suggests that when people are coerced, they function with diminished capacity and often react with resistance, resentment and loss of energy.

Table 5.14 presents the views of the respondents with regard to motivation of educators in terms of their leadership approach. The table shows that disciplining and charging educators are not given highest priority. This suggests that the majority of primary school principals show a considerable degree of willingness in motivating educators in their leadership approach, indicative of a transformational leadership stance.

Principals as school leaders show different attributes in their leadership. Table 5.15 shows various items that represent how principals deal with their subordinates motivationally in the daily pursuance of their responsibilities as primary school leaders. Respondents rank ordered the items from 1-6 according to the way they treat their subordinates.

**Table 5.15: Aspects of the leadership characteristics on motivation**

Statement	Ranking	Calculated weight
Considering educators as important part of the team.	1	297
Verbally thanking educators who are committed.	2	285
Strongly speaking against laziness of educators.	3	265
Consoling educators with personal problems.	4	235
Reporting educators who are not committed to their circuit managers.	5	177
Ensuring that educators who are not committed are transferred to other schools by the Department of Education.	6	106

Table 5.15 shows that the majority of respondents rank ordered the item: Considering educators as important part of the team number one. This indicates that principals in the sample appear to recognize educators as important role players in the school. Principals must realize that they cannot depend on the support of few educators in their schools. All educators must be recognized as important members of the school. When educators

realize that their leaders consider them, they become encouraged. Educators who realize that they are not considered as important role players will not take efforts to work hard. They will be discouraged members of the school. Mampuru (2001:62) mentions that if staff members receive the necessary recognition, they are inclined to work even harder.

Respondents considered the item: Thanking educators who are committed as number two. According to the majority of respondents, educators who are committed should be appreciated. Mampuru (2001:62) supported by Kadalie (2006:222) states that the recognition of staff members enhances commitment. Kadalie (2006) further indicates that leadership should show recognition for the work well done. Table 5.15 shows the item: Strongly speaking against laziness of educators was ranked number three. This item is closely ranked to items ranked number one and two. This suggests that respondents are not inclined to tolerate laziness and try to ensure that lazy educators account for such behaviour.

Kadalie (2006:222) states that leaders should show concern for the personal needs of their subordinates. Respondents considered the item: Consoling educators with personal problems as number four. This view suggests that respondents sympathize with their subordinates when they have personal challenges. In supporting this view, Ginsberg, et al. (2001:2) mention that people whose actions are motivated tend to be highly active and display greater cognition outcomes and are persistent.

The item: Reporting educators who are not committed to the circuit manager was ranked number five. The impression created is that most respondent were not inclined to rush into charging educators who are not committed. McGregor, cited in Mampuru (2001:60) developed the so-called "Theory Y" that states that when motivational factors are strong enough, the average person learns quickly and is ready to work. Ranking the item, reporting educators who are not committed to the circuit manager number five, is an indication that the majority of respondents seem to act in accordance with this theory.

Table 5.15 shows that the respondents were asked to indicate their influence as principals in ensuring that educators who are not committed are transferred to other schools by the Department of Education. The respondents ranked the item number six. This indicates that the majority of respondents do not consider this item of highest priority. The views of these respondents seem to suggest that transferring educators is not a solution to the problem and that they would rather motivate educators to change their attitudes. Mampuru (2001:58) mentions that organizations develop and progress only when they have succeeded in motivating and developing their workers.

In this section, tables 5.14 and 5.15 indicated the extent to which primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain motivated in their daily teaching activities. The views of the respondents indicated that in executing their leadership, the majority of primary school principals ensure that motivating educators receives attention. This is evidenced by the manner in which items given were ranked in both tables 5.14 and 5.15, particularly items rank ordered number one, two and three which demonstrate the characteristics of a leader who motivates. Based on the majority views of the principals in the sample, it would appear thus that the majority of primary school principals view the motivation of educators as significant and important. This signifies the meaningful application of the third constituting element of transformational leadership, which is motivation.

### **5.3.5 Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction was identified as the fourth element of transformational leadership. DeMato (2001:20) defines job satisfaction as a feeling about the job or as a constellation of attitudes about various aspects or facets of the job. In this section, the questionnaire focused on various aspects of job satisfaction (see section 2.3.4). Tables 5.16 and 5.17 show respondents' views on the items based on the transformational element, job satisfaction. Like in tables 5.14 and 5.15, respondents were requested to rank order the items provided. Respondents' views resulted in the ranking as shown in tables 5.16 and 5.17. The items were separated as indicated in tables 5.16 and 5.17 to ensure that ranking



was made easier for respondents. The procedure for ranking was the same as that explained in section 5.3.2.3.

**Table. 5.16: Aspects of the leadership practices related to job satisfaction (a)**

Statement	Ranking	Calculated weight
Distributing workload equally amongst educators.	1	297
Creating opportunities for the professional development of educators.	2	251
Ensuring that educators are busy the entire day.	3	215
Discouraging educators from forming cliques.	4	186
Maintaining a distance from the staff members.	5	113

The principal as leader of the school has the responsibility to ensure that the workload of educators is equally distributed. Table 5.16 shows that most respondents rank ordered the item: Distributing workload equally amongst educators, number one. The views of principals in the sample seem to suggest that equal distribution of workload receives the highest attention. When principals do not distribute workload evenly amongst educators, dissatisfaction will follow. One of the determinants of job satisfaction identified in chapter two was the distribution of workload amongst educators by principals (see section 2.3.4.4).

The item: Creating opportunities for the professional development of educators, was ranked number two. When educators are professionally developed, they become self-actualized and gain confidence. According to Furnham (2002:130), self-actualization is the desire to become all that one is capable of being, developing one's potential and fully realizing one's abilities. Lack of understanding of the new curriculum frustrates educators and results in job dissatisfaction. When opportunities are created for educators to become professionally developed, they become satisfied in what they are doing.

Respondents ranked the item: Ensuring that educators are busy the entire day number three.

It is the duty of the principal to ensure that educators attend to their responsibilities. If the principal does not ensure that educators are busy with their professional responsibilities, teaching will be compromised at the expense of other matters not related to their profession, such as chatting in the staffroom during teaching time. The researcher has observed that idle educators are inclined to form potential destructive cliques.

In chapter one, it was indicated that when educators form cliques at school, this contributes towards the escalation of dissatisfaction (see section 1.2.3.4). Data from table 5.16 demonstrate that respondents ranked order the item: Discouraging educators from forming cliques, number four. According to *OECS Education Reform Unit (2006:6)*, positive work related interaction among educators is important because it reduces the extreme isolation felt by many educators and provides opportunities to exchange support and assistance. When educators are organized in factions, teaching, which is the core business of educators, is going to be adversely affected. Factions make teamwork impossible and the new curriculum demands that educators work in teams. For an example, the new curriculum demands that educators should interact during their daily preparations.

In responding to the item: Maintaining a distance from the staff members, respondents ranked the item number five. According to the views of the majority of respondents, keeping a distance from the educators is not appropriate. In chapter two, the researcher mentioned that leadership is important in building up positive relationships (see section 2.3.4). It becomes difficult for the principal as the leader to built positive relationships with and amongst educators if he/she keeps a distance from them. Shield (2006:76) mentions that the educational leader should recognize that relationships are a fundamental and an intrinsic part of being and the leadership must model, encourage and demonstrate the importance of relationships and interactions. The principal who maintains a distance from the staff members and who is not easily accessible creates the fertile ground for dissatisfaction.

Data in table 5.16 indicate that respondents ranked the item: Distributing workload equally amongst educators and creating opportunities for the professional development of

educators number one and two respectively. According to their views, attending to these functions creates an atmosphere of job satisfaction. This suggests that most respondents in the sample seem to be engaged in ensuring that educators are satisfied in their schools. The views of the respondents confirm the impression that the majority of primary schools principals are transformational in leading their schools.

The principal as the leader is faced with challenges in his or her daily interaction with educators in the school. These challenges include dissatisfaction by educators in as far as the general working conditions are concerned. Table 5.17 indicates how respondents rank ordered the items from 1-5.

**Table. 5.17: Aspects of the leadership practices related to job satisfaction (b)**

Statement	Ranking	Calculated weight
Encouraging good relationships among educators.	1	299
Motivating educators to work hard even if some teaching aids are not there.	2	233
Attending to collegial staff relations.	3	213
Ensuring that educators account for low performance	4	197
Ensuring that educators who are in conflict with each other are not sharing tasks.	5	125

The majority of respondents ranked the item: Encouraging good relationships among educators number one. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the educators in his or her school enjoy cordial relationships because education cannot take place in a hostile environment. The views of these respondents vindicate Shields' (2006:76) assertion that leadership must model, encourage and demonstrate the importance of relationships and positive interactions. The significant number of the respondents who ranked this item number one seems to indicate that they realize the importance of good relations at school. When relations are good, interaction becomes easy and educators are not afraid to consult each other when they require assistance related to teaching. The researcher as a primary school deputy principal has observed that when educators are in conflict, teaching is also affected. Principals in the sample value relationships amongst educators.

The respondents ranked the item: Motivating educators to work hard even if some teaching aids are not there, number two. According to Kruger (2003:207), large shortcomings in the provision of resources, facilities and equipment are some of the most important factors that contribute to the lack of a sound culture of learning and teaching. UNESCO (2006:2) indicates that appropriate working conditions include the availability of teaching and learning materials. When educators work in the environment where the resources are insufficient, frustration results and this leads to dissatisfaction. Ranking this item number two suggest that principals in the sample are aware that it is discouraging to teach without the necessary tools.

Table 5.17 shows that respondents ranked the item: Attending to collegial staff relations, number three. According to the views of most respondents, whenever relationships are strained, principals try to resolve the differences amongst educators. Teaching cannot take place in conflict-infested institution. By ranking this item number three, respondents recognize the value of harmony amongst staff members. With regard to ensuring that educators account for low performance, respondents ranked this item number four. The ranked items one, two and three suggest that after the principals shall have ensured that they have encouraged good relations amongst educators, motivated them to work hard even if some teaching aids are not there and shall have attended to the staff relations, then it is right for principals to ensure that educators account for their low performances.

According to the views of the respondents, they are careful when allocating work to educators who are in conflict. This is clear from the response to the item: Ensuring that educators who are in conflict with each other are not sharing tasks. It was ranked number five. The views of the respondents give the impression that respondents are aware of the risk of conflict in teaching. Understandably, thus, they ranked the item: Encouraging good relationships among educators, number one. The appropriate approach should be first resolving the conflict amongst educators and then letting them work together.

According to data presented in table 5.17, most respondents indicated that they took efforts to ensure that educators are kept satisfied in primary schools. Taking the views of respondents in both tables 5.16 and 5.17, and in addressing the research question posed in

chapter two (see section 4.2) the overall impression is that the majority of principals in the survey do ensure that their educators are and remain satisfied in their professions. The view arises from the fact that respondents ranked the statements: Encouraging good relationships among educators and motivating educators to work hard even if some teaching aids are not there number one and two. These statements concur with the characteristics of transformational leadership pertaining to job satisfaction (see section 2.3.4).

### 5.3.6 Participative decision-making

The objective of this part of the questionnaire was to determine how often does the principal meet with other role players, such as the SGB, the SMT, educators and the general parent body. The responses per response categories are presented in table 5.18. This section also dealt with the analysis of the data on each item by means of figures (see figures 5.1 – 5.6).

**Table 5.18: The frequency of meetings with different role players.**

**Key: 1= seldom, 2= often and 3= mostly**

Role players	Response categories (n=67)						Total (n)
	1		2		3		
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
SGB	5	8	33	49	29	43	67
SMT	2	3	19	28	46	69	67
Educators	3	4	25	37	39	58	67
General parent body	26	39	33	49	8	12	67
SGB and educators	39	58	23	34	5	8	67
SGB, parents and educators	29	43	28	42	10	15	67

**Figure 5.1: The principals' meeting with the SGB**

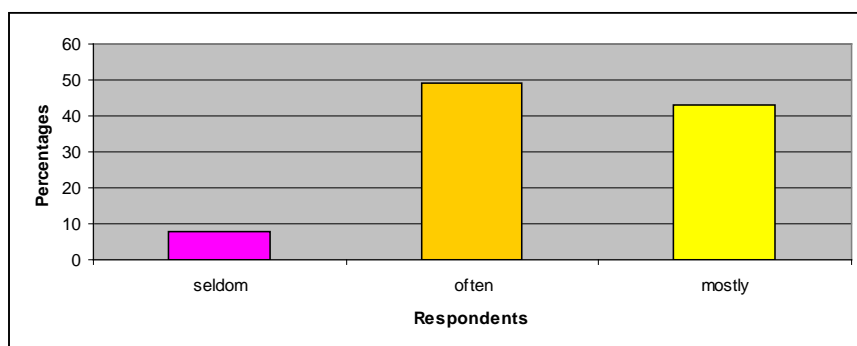


Figure 5.1 shows how principals responded to the item: How often do you as the principal meet with the SGB? One of the intentions of this study was to determine the extent to which primary school principals involve role players (including the SGB) in decision-making. Forty three percent (43%) of the respondents indicated that principals meet the SGB *mostly*. Forty nine percent (49%) of the respondents indicated they *often* meet with the SGB.

This suggests that the extent at which primary school principals involve the SGB is quite significant. When combining the responses on the keys *mostly* and *often* (49% and 43%), the majority of principals in the sample, 92% seem to indicate that they do meet with the SGB frequently. According to Duke (2005:3), participative decision-making is shared governance, which is demonstrated when principals share their governing roles with other role players.

**Figure 5.2: The principals' meeting with the SMT**

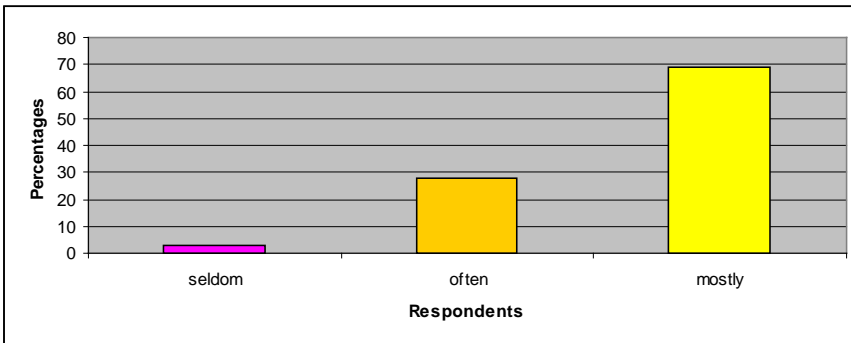
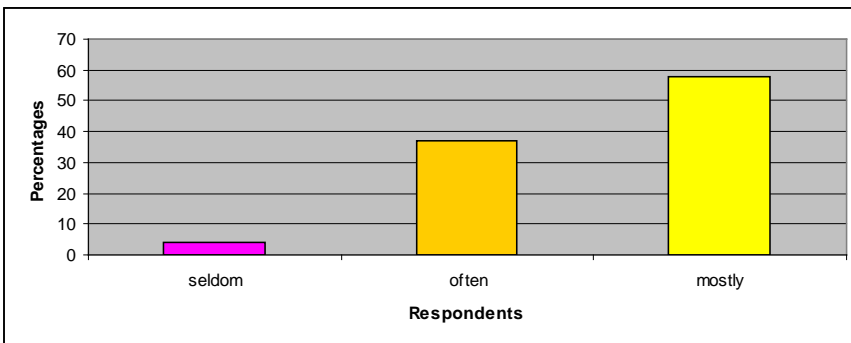


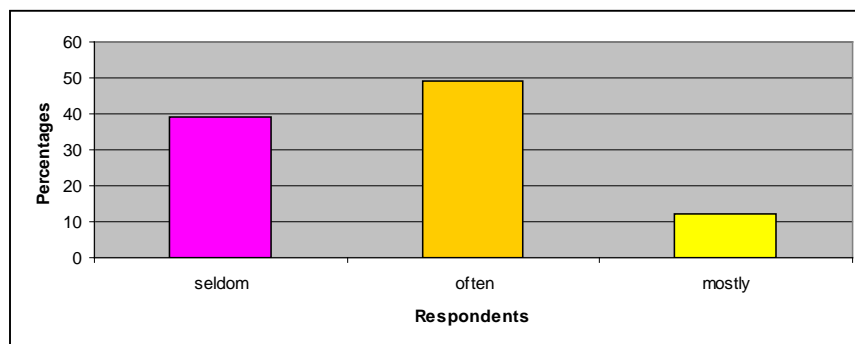
Figure 5.2 reveals the responses expressed by respondents regarding the item: How often do you meet with the SMT? Most of the respondents (69%) indicated that they meet with the SMT most of the time. This finding indicates that members of the school management team are more than often involved in decision-making processes. This finding also corroborates the assertion that principals who share leadership responsibilities with others are less subject to burnout than principal ‘heroes’ who attempt the challenges and complexities of leadership alone (Hallinger, 2003:345).

**Figure 5.3: The principals' meeting with the educators**



There are certain decisions that the principal cannot take without educators. He is compelled to hear their views on certain issues. Figure 5.3 gives an indication with regard to the frequency in which the principal and educators meet. Fifty eight percent (58%) of the respondents indicated that they *mostly* meet their educators to discuss matters related to the school. Taking into account the 37% who also indicated that they *often* meet with educators, the general position seemingly is that the respondents involve educators in the decision-making processes. The expression of the majority of the respondents concurs with Sagie et al. (1995:82) when they mention that participative decision-making is a process in which influence is shared between super-ordinates and their subordinates.

**Figure 5.4: The principals’ meeting with the general parent body**



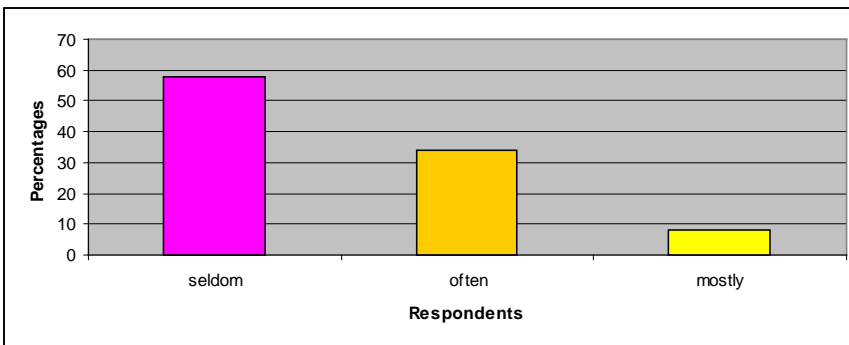
Not only does the principal have to meet with the SGB, the SMT and the educators, but also with the general parent body. The principal as the leader and the head of the institution has to ensure that the general school parent body is kept informed of the developments taking place in the school. To establish the frequency of the meetings between the principal and the general parent body, respondents were requested to indicate their responses to the item: How often do you meet with the general parent body? Figure 5.4 shows that 49% of the respondents indicated that they *often* meet with the general parent body. This suggests that the majority of principals in the sample indicate that to a lesser extent they do meet with parents. The meetings between the principals and the



general parents body are seemingly insufficient because 39% of the respondents indicated that they *seldom* meet.

According to the Department of Education (1997a & 1997b), there are a number of mandatory meetings that the SGB and the principal must hold with the general parent body. These meetings are once per quarter and four times a year excluding emergency meetings. Meetings are also called when there is a need for that. The researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school believes that it is practically challenging to meet parents from time to time. Thirty nine percent (39%) of respondents indicated that they *seldom* meet. Parents are legally represented by the SGB and table 5.18 indicates that 92% of the respondents (as earlier indicated) seem to indicate that they do meet with the SGB frequently.

**Figure 5.5: The principals' meeting with the SGB and educators**

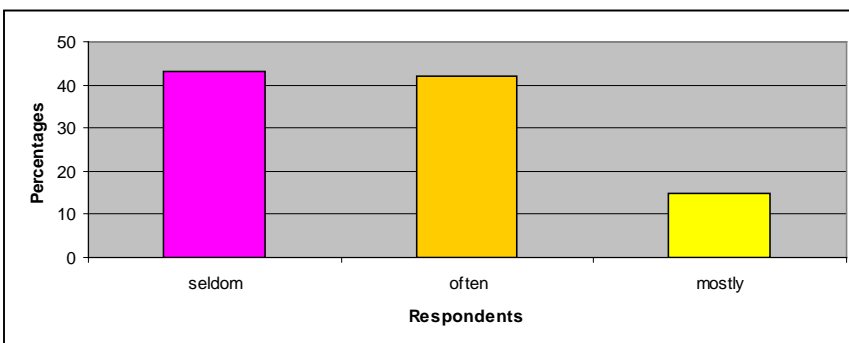


The SGB as the legal representation of the general parent body ensures that the school is governed according to the stipulated legislation, laws and policies. It is critical for the SGB to ensure that they know the people who are entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that the curriculum is delivered to the recipients and in this case, the learners. For this reason, there should be an interaction between the educators and the SGB. In order to determine the frequency of the meetings between the principal, the SGB and the

educators, principals were requested to respond to the statement: How often do you meet with the SGB and educators?

Figure 5.5 reveals that 58% indicated that primary school principals *seldom* meet with both the SGB and educators. The views of the respondents seem to suggest that primary school principals' involvement with the SGB and educators together appears to be rather limited. Once again, the researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school is of the view that it is practically challenging to often meet both the SGB and the educators together at the same time. Educators are represented in the SGB by educator component that is determined by the number of educators per school. These educators sit in the SGB meetings and have the opportunity to report to their colleagues during staff meetings

**Figure 5.6: The principals' meeting with the SGB, parents and educators**



The three critical components of the management of the school are the educators, the SGB and the general parent body. Figure 5.6 gives an indication of the response categories of the respondents to the item: How often do you meet with the SGB, parents and educators? The combined views of respondents who selected keys 2 (42%) and 3 (15%), indicated that the respondents are not inclined to often hold meetings joint meetings with the SGB, parents and educators. According to the researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school, experience indicates that facilitating the meeting amongst the SGB, parents and educators is challenging. Circumstances do not make it easy for these structures to meet often. The views of the respondents represent the reality. It is

also practically challenging to meet the three structures most of the time. Data presented in figure 5.6 suggest that the extent in which primary school principals hold joint meetings with the SGB, parents and educators is insufficient.

Figures 5.1 to 5.6 gave an indication of the frequency of the meetings the principals hold with different role players. Role players cannot be highly committed to the school decisions in which they have no say. Squelch (2003:143) mentions that leaders who are able to develop decision-making structures and processes promote rather than hinder meaningful participation and collaboration. When subordinates are not part of the process of decision-making, they are likely to undermine the decisions taken. The *National Center for Education Statistics* (1997:8) mentions that top down decision-making often fails precisely because it lacks the support of those who are responsible for the implementation and success of those decisions. The views of the respondents seem to suggest that the number of meetings between the principals and different role players is not the same.

Tables 5.19 to 5.22 show the results of the findings on the degree of the involvement of role players by the principal in matters relating to the school. The following exposition indicates the extent to which principals are inclined to discuss matters related to the school with other role players. It also focuses on the transformational leadership element, participative decision-making. Respondents were requested to select one option only.

**Table 5.19: The involvement of the SGB in school matters**

SGB	Responses	
	(n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
General school matters	39	58
Selected school matters	28	42
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.19 indicates that 58% of the respondents indicated that they involve the SGB in the *general* school matters, whereas 42% pointed out that they include the SGB in *selected* school matters. The Department of Education (1997a:15) indicates that the governing body is responsible for the laying down of broad guidelines for planning and decision making in the school. Data in this table suggest that the majority of principals in the sample invite the SGB when general school matters are discussed. This finding indicates that the majority of respondents are involved in ensuring that before decision-making is finalized, role players such as the SGB, where necessary are involved.

**Table 5.20: The involvement of the SMT in school matters**

SMT	Responses	
	(n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
General school matters	52	77
Selected school matters	15	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 5.20 indicates that 77% of the respondents indicated that they involve the SMT in general school matters and only 23% stated that they involve them in only *selected* school matters. The school management team is a very critical role player in that it is the administrative engine of the school. The 77% respondents who indicated that the SMT is consulted in the *general* school matters indicate that the majority of primary school principals in the sample do involve other role players in decision-making processes. The principal, the deputy principal, and the heads of the department and senior educators in some instances constitute the school management team. It is unwise for the principal to decide on administrative matters without consulting this fundamental structure.

**Table 5.21: The involvement of the educators in school matters**

Educators	Responses	
	(n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
General school matters	36	54
Selected school matters	31	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

With regard to educators, table 5.21 shows that 54% of the sixty-seven respondents indicated that they involve educators in the *general* school matters and 46% respondents stated that they involve educators only in *selected* school matters. It was indicated that through shared vision, the principal is able to win the commitment and compliance of the people needed to implement the developed school vision (see section 2.3.1). The SGB is a structure formed by different components, including educators. Earlier on, in table 5.19, it was indicated that 58% of the principals in the sample were of the view that they do involve the SGB in the *general* school matters. The views of the principals in the sample seem to suggest that it is not easy to involve every individual educator in the general school matters.

**Table 5.22: The involvement of the parents in school matters.**

Parents	Responses	
	(n=67)	
	Number	Percentage
General school matters	17	25
Selected school matters	50	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100</b>

Even though the SGB is the body representing parents, they have to carry the mandate of the general parent body. According to table 5.22, 25% of the respondents indicated that they involve parents in the *general* matters of the school and the majority respondents (75%), stated that they involve parents in *selected* matters. The general parent body is also represented in the SGB. The views of the majority of principals in the sample suggest that the general parent body is not significantly involved in general school matters.

This section dealt with the extent at which the primary school principals involve other role players in school matters. Data that represents the views of respondents from tables 5.19 to 5.22 give the overall impression that most respondents include role players meaningfully in deciding general school matters. Table 5.23 indicates the responses of the principals in the sample with regard to the characteristics of their school meetings.

**Table 5.23: The characteristics of the school meetings**

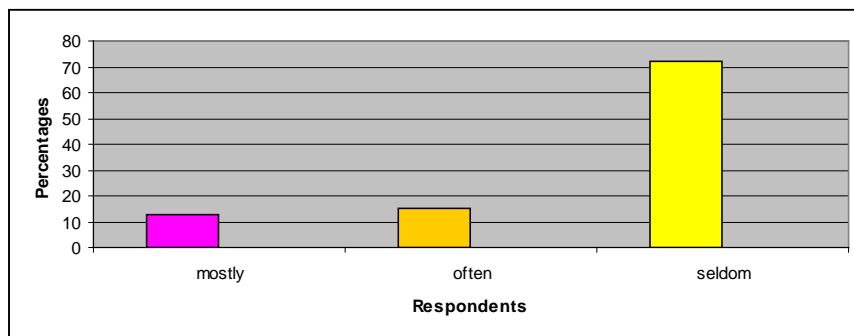
**Key: 1= mostly, 2= often and 3= seldom**

Items	Response categories (n=67)						Total (n)
	1		2		3		
	no	%	no	%	no	%	
Staff meetings are dominated by giving instructions.	9	13	10	15	48	72	67
Role players are part of decision-making.	51	76	12	18	4	6	67
Robust debates of issues characterize staff meetings.	9	14	31	48	24	38	64
Vocal educators dominate the staff meetings.	5	8	19	28	43	64	67
Decision taking is limited to the SMT.	5	7	14	21	48	72	67
Participation in the staff meetings is minimal.	11	16	18	27	38	57	67

Various factors affect the running of the meeting. Some meetings are easy-going and some are difficult to control. Some meetings are characterized by minimum participation and others by maximum participation. Participation in meetings is very important. When principals allow educators to participate optimally and freely (in school meetings) without being suppressed, participative decision-making processes are created. Such practices demonstrate transformational leadership tendencies.

Table 5.23 gives the general picture of the responses of the principals with regard to the features of their staff meetings. Respondents were requested to respond to a variety of items by expressing their opinions. The respondents were requested to select from the 3-point scale given, where 1 represents mostly, 2 = often and 3 = seldom. The responses of the respondents are further represented by means of figures 5.7 to 5.12.

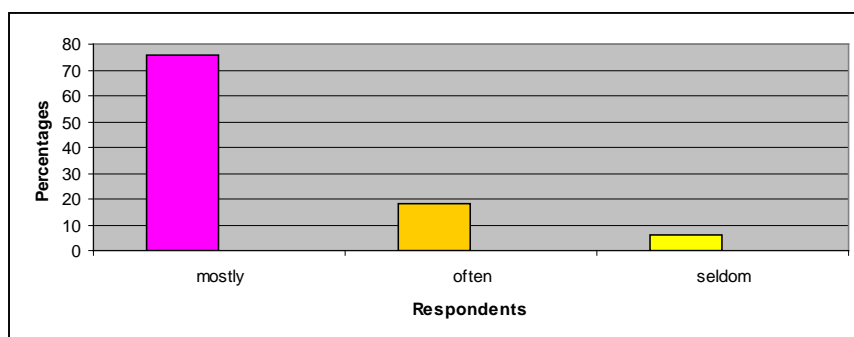
**Figure 5.7: Staff meetings are dominated by giving instructions**



To determine the approach of the principal in the general staff meetings, the respondents were requested to give their opinions on the item: Staff meetings are dominated by giving instructions. Figure 5.7 indicates that 72% of the respondents stated that staff meetings are *seldom* dominated by giving instructions. Traditionally, the principal was mainly the only person who decided the direction of the school and heavily demonstrated the autocratic leadership tendencies (see section 2.3.5). In supporting the view above, Heller et al (1981:1) mention that the traditional view of decision-making was based on

hierarchical principles. Hallinger (2004:68) further corroborates the same view when he mentions that principals naturally expected their orders to be followed with relatively little discussion. The expression of the 72% respondents represents a contradiction to the traditional hierarchical approach as discussed by both Heller et al (1981:1) and Hallinger (2004:68).

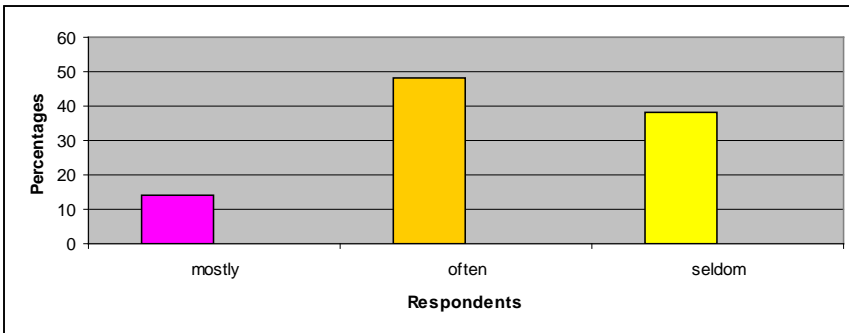
**Figure 5.8: Role players as part of the decision-making process**



The school is a person-oriented institution that is constituted by more than one role player. In taking decisions, the principal should not behave as if other role players do not exist. He should be mindful of the fact that they are critical role players and have the right to claim a portion of a stake with regard to decision-making. In determining the role of the principal in involving other role players in staff meetings, 76% of the respondents indicated that role players are *mostly* part of the decision-making process. The respondents' view (76%) is an indication that the majority of principals in the sample involve role players in the decision-making processes. This view corresponds with the finding indicated in table 5.18. Data reflected in table 5.18 show that the majority of principals indicated that they *mostly* meet with different role players such as the SGB, SMT, and educators. Duke (2005) states that participative decision-making is shared governance, which is demonstrated when principals share their governing roles with other role players.

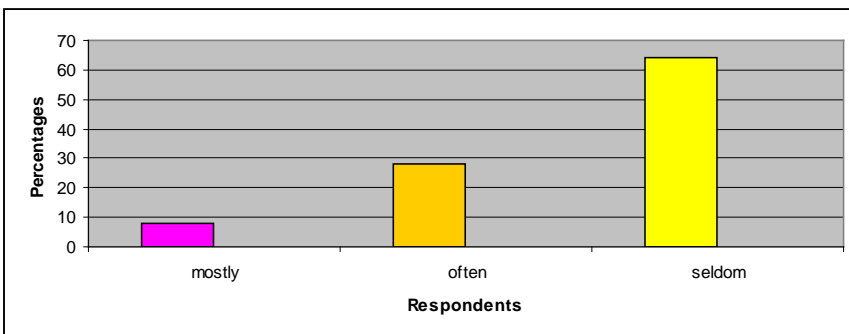


**Figure 5.9: Robust debates of issues characterize staff meetings**



In responding to the item: Robust debates of issues characterize staff meetings, 48% of the respondents indicated that staff meetings are *often* characterized by robust debates. The principal should understand and accept that educators at times see things differently. Principals should also understand that robust debate of issues does not mean that relationships are strained, but is an indication of the expressions of differences of opinions. According to the views of the principals in the sample, it seems that role players very often engage robustly in staff meetings.

**Figure 5.10: Vocal educators dominate the staff meetings**



Sixty four percent of respondents (64%) indicated that vocal educators *seldom* dominate the staff meetings. According to the views of the majority principals in the sample, it seems that other educators do not dominate others in staff meetings. Sagie et al. (1995:81) mention that the participative decision-making process ensures that decisions taken are without resistance. Dachler and Wilpert, in Duke (2005) believe that in order to prevent treatment of employees as a commodity and the resulting alienation, workers must participate in the decision-making processes.

**Figure 5.11: Decision-making is limited to the SMT.**

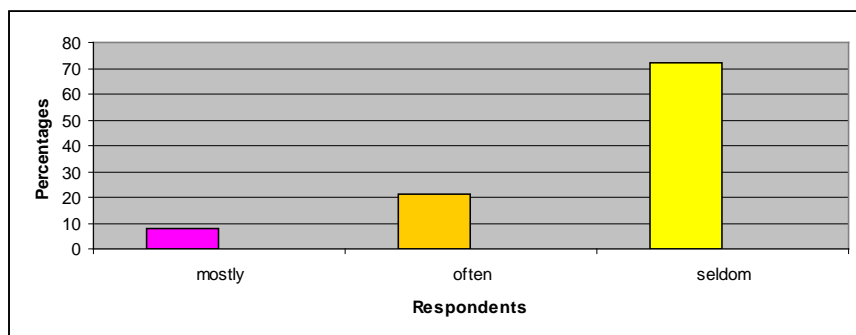
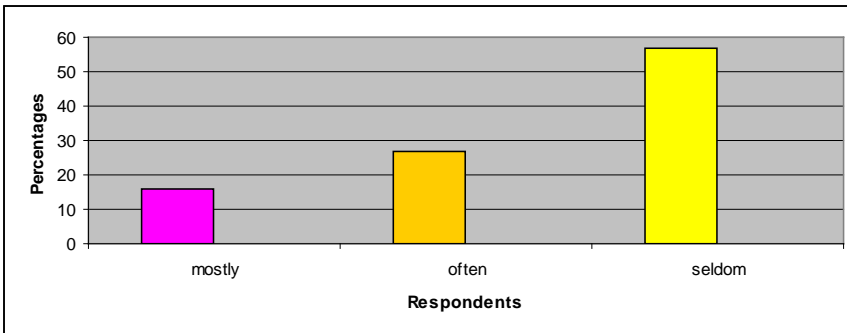


Table 5.18 indicates the frequency of meetings the principals have with different role players. They are the SGB, the SMT, educators and the parent body. According to figure 5.11, 72% of the respondents indicated that decision-making is *seldom* limited to the SMT. The implication of these views suggests that the school management team members are usually involved in matters that affect the school. Table 5.18 confirmed that principals as leaders meet with different role players such as the SGB, the SMT, educators and parents when decisions are taken. This vindicates the assertion expressed by Duke (2005:3) that participative decision-making generally refers to the sharing of decision authority among stakeholders.

**Figure 5.12: Participation in staff meetings is minimal.**



The intention of this item was to determine the degree of participation by educators in staff-meetings. According to the views of the respondents, 57% indicated that participation in staff meetings is *seldom* minimal. In figure 5.10, it was revealed that the majority of respondents indicated that vocal educators seldom dominate the staff meetings. The views represented in figures 5.11 and 5.12 are corroborated by those in figure 5.9 in which 48% of the respondents indicated that meetings are *often* characterized by robust debates. The characteristics of the meetings indicate that participation is not limited to the few preferred individuals. Duke (2005:11), citing Mohram, Lawler and Mohram mentions that when subordinates are highly involved in decision-making, significant participation by all members of the organization at all levels is encouraged.

One of the objectives of this inquiry was to determine the extent to which primary school principals ensure that other role players are involved in the decision-making processes. According to the views of the respondents, the overall impression is that the majority of primary school principals in the sample involve other role players when taking decisions and therefore decision-making seems to be mostly participative. The views of the principals in the sample correspond with the transformational leadership feature, participative decision-making.

### 5.3.7 Summary

In chapter four, it was indicated that data were collected in two distinct phases, namely through questionnaires (phase one) and interviews (phase two). Section 5.3.1 focused on profiling of principals (Biographic information). The following sections focused on the interpretation, analysis and the discussion of the empirical data based on the transformational leadership elements *shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction* and *participative decision-making*. What follows now is the summary based on the findings from the empirical data of the principal questionnaire. The presentation was done in accordance with the five elements of transformational leadership as indicated above.

With reference to the transformational leadership element, shared vision, the survey data suggested that sampled principals mostly create opportunities for all the role players in initiating, developing and defining the school vision. This view is in direct contrast with Oplatka's (2004:427) finding that the role of the principal is limited to top-down approach and principals have a tendency to employ autocratic rather than participative leadership style. The respondents' approach accords with Hallinger's (2003:335) assertion that transformational school leadership is concerned with the distribution of authority in that it focuses on the development of shared vision and shared commitment to school change. Balster (1992:2) further supports the view when he mentions that principals should involve their staff members in deliberating on school goals and visions at the beginning of the year.

In determining the role of the primary school principals in influencing educators to demonstrate commitment, the researcher posed the research question: To what extent are primary school principals involved in ensuring that educators remain committed? Data in section 5.3.3 indicate that the majority of the principals in the sample ensure that educators remain committed. This corresponds with Hallinger's (2003:335) view that in transformational school leadership, the principal is creating the conditions under which others are committed and self-motivated to work towards the improvement of the school. In chapter three, various challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo were identified

(see section 3.4). Lack of commitment was one of the challenges, but according to the views of respondents, primary school principals seem to play an active role in ensuring that educators remain committed to their teaching professions.

Bennell (2004) mentions that motivation has a psychological impact on the performance level of subordinates. Neglecting to motivate staff members will result in lowly motivated educators. Nuku (2007:79) mentions that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally. The position of most respondents (see section 5.3.4) concurs with the assertion made by Nuku (2007). The respondents view the issue of motivation as a major responsibility. Given the views of the respondents above, most principals in the sample ensure that educators are kept motivated.

DeMato (2001:20) indicated that job satisfaction is simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of those jobs. One of the objectives of conducting this investigation was to determine the extent to which primary school principals are involved in ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession as educators. The views of the respondents suggested that the majority of the sampled primary school principals create enabling environments where educators feel satisfied. Data revealed that during the ranking process, the majority of respondents indicated that employee satisfaction is emphasised and given priority (see section 5.3.5). It becomes very difficult for subordinates to give their best when they are not satisfied at their work places. It is therefore the responsibility of the leader, in this case the principal to ensure that educators are motivated to stay satisfied. Mampuru (2001:58) states accordingly that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his staff to perform at their best to ensure successful educative teaching.

Decision-making is one of the challenges facing school principals (see section 2.3.5). The principal as the leader should create an environment in which educators are able to participate in crucial decision-making processes. Empirical data seem to indicate that the majority of principals in the sample involve role players in all the decision-making

processes. This view vindicates the assertion of Balster (1992:2), when he indicates that when hiring staff, principals should let them know that they want them to be actively involved in decision-making processes. Hallinger (2003:335) further mentions that the transformational school leadership model seeks to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than top-down. The leader attempts to stimulate change through bottom-up participation.

According to the views of the respondents, it would seem that the majority of primary school principals in Limpopo are transformational in their leadership approaches, because the majority views of the respondents demonstrate the features of transformational leadership as indicated in chapter two.

In the next section, the researcher will focus attention on the presentation, analysis and the discussion of empirical data based on the educator questionnaire.

## **5.4 ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF SURVEY DATA (EDUCATORS)**

### **5.4.1 Introduction**

In section 5.1, it was indicated that questionnaires were completed by the principals and the educators. The researcher has already dealt with the analysis and interpretation of data based on the principal questionnaire in section 5.3. Unlike with principals where their biographical data was given, educators were not profiled biographically. The researcher did not see it imperative because the focus of the study was primarily on leadership. This section focuses on the analysis and interpretation of the educator survey data. The interpretation and the analysis of the empirical data was focused on the five identified elements of transformational leadership namely, *shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction* and *participative decision-making*. Data are numerically represented by means of tables. Table 5.1 shows data on the response rate of educators' questionnaires. The response rate of educators was high, as indicated in table 5.1, 96% of the questionnaires were returned (see section 5.2). When completing the questionnaire, some

respondents committed errors. During the editing process, items with errors were eliminated. This resulted in some inconsistencies when tallies were made.

#### **5.4.2 Shared vision**

Vision is fundamental in ensuring that schools as organizations deliver on their promises, which are the delivery of the curriculum to learners (see section 2.3.1). The Department of Education (2004) sees vision as the grand future purpose that describes the optimally functioning schools, that provides an overall direction or reason for the existence of these schools and used as a marketing tool to attract learners and employees.

Table 5.24 represents the respondents' opinions on the transformational leadership element, shared vision. In determining the role of primary school principals in initiating and developing shared vision, respondents responded to various items. Table 5.24 gives a reflection of the respondents' views based on the different items given. Respondents selected from a five-point scale as indicated in the table below.

**Table 5.24: Transformational leadership element, shared vision**

**Key: 1 = always, 2 = most of the time, 3 = sometimes, 4 = rarely and 5 = never.**

Items	Response categories (n =96)										Total
	1		2		3		4		5		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
The principal does planning in advance.	35	37	34	35	21	22	5	5	1	1	96
School goals are clear.	29	30	33	34	20	21	11	12	3	3	96
School goals are achievable.	16	17	30	32	39	41	8	8	2	2	95
Methods to achieve goals are effective.	17	17	29	31	36	38	11	12	2	2	95
The school has an effective academic programme.	30	31	33	34	25	26	7	7	1	1	96
What has been planned is successfully implemented.	20	21	30	31	33	34	9	9	4	4	96
Educators know what is expected from them.	43	45	32	33	15	15	5	5	1	1	96
School policy development includes all structures.	45	47	25	26	11	12	13	14	1	1	95
Educators support the vision of the school.	28	29	44	46	18	19	2	2	4	4	96
Shared vision takes the school forward.	26	27	33	35	25	26	7	7	4	4	95
Vision ensures that resources are effectively utilised.	23	24	35	37	26	27	7	7	4	4	95

Planning is essential in the development of vision. Planning is also critical in school leadership. It is fundamental that principals do planning to ensure that what they have envisioned becomes successful. Respondents were requested to indicate their opinions on the item: The principal does planning in advance. The table indicates that few respondents tended to respond to the keys 4 and 5. Data show that 71% of respondents suggest that the majority of primary school principals appear to plan in advance. This finding is based on the combination of respondents who selected *always* (37%) and *most of the time* (35%).



With regard to school goals, 30% indicated that they are *always* clear and 34% stated that they are in *most of the time* clear. Combining these views, 64%, respondents appear to indicate that the majority of principals ensure that school goals are clear. Wilzem et al (2002:43) mention that clearly formulated goals prevent misunderstanding amongst staff members. Forty one percent (41%) of the respondents indicated that these goals are *sometimes* achievable and 38% indicated that methods to achieve these goals are *sometimes* effective. According to the views of the majority respondents, even though that the primary school principals try to ensure that school goals are clear, achieving these goals remains a challenge. The Department of Education (2004) mentions that one of the attributes of leadership is influencing and steering groups towards the achievement of goals. Achieving school goals seems to be problematic. When combining responses from keys 3, 4 and 5, 52% of the respondents seem to suggest that methods used to achieve the school goals are not effective.

In responding to the item: The school has an effective academic programme, 31% indicated that the schools *always* do have these programmes. Thirty four percent (34%) indicated that the academic programme is functioning *most of the time*. Based on the combination of the views of respondents who selected both the keys *always* and *most of the time*, 65% of the respondents seem to indicate that the schools have effective academic programmes.

With regard to the item on planning, the majority of respondents (71%) indicated that the principals do planning in advance. In responding to the item: What has been planned is successfully implemented, 34% indicated that this is *sometimes* successful. Thirty one percent stated that the implementation of plans happens *most of the time*. The views of the respondents in the sample seem to suggest that the implementation of school plans is not always successful.

Clearly formulated goals avoid misunderstanding amongst staff members (Wilzem et al. 2002:43). In responding to the item: Educators know what is expected from them, 45% indicated that they *always* know what is expected from them and 33% stated they know

this in *most of the time*. When combining the respondents' views, 78% seem to indicate that to a significant extent, educators know exactly what is expected of them.

The school is an organization that is made up of different structures such as the SGB, the SMT, educators and parents. All these structures play an important role in the effective and efficient running of the school. Forty seven percent (47%) of the respondents indicated that school policy development *always* includes all the structures. In combining this response with 26% who indicated that school policy development is in *most of the time* inclusive, 73% of the respondents in the sample gave the impression that the majority of primary school principals ensure that school policy development to a larger extent include all structures.

Korkmaz (2006:14) observes that sharing the school vision promotes a feeling of co-operation in principals, educators, learners and others to attain the desired future state. Sharing the initiation and the development of the school vision decreases the chances of disowning and sabotaging that vision (see section 2.3.1). In responding to the item: Educators support the vision of the school, 46% of the respondents indicated that educators support the vision of the school *most of the time*. When combined with the 29% respondents who indicated that educators *always* support the school vision, this results in 75%. Their views suggest that principals ensure that educators to a significant extent support the vision of the school. The Department of Education (2004) mentions that one of the attributes of leadership is influencing and steering groups towards accomplishing goals. Rees, Kroon, Sims, Manz and Tshenye, in Wilzem et al. (2002:43) further mention that if goals are set in co-operation with those responsible for attaining them, employees easily accept full ownership and responsibility for these goals.

With regard to the item: Shared vision takes the school forward, 27% indicated that this happens *always*. Thirty five percent (35%) of the respondents indicated that in *most of the time*, shared vision takes the school forward. When combined, the responses of both respondents who selected keys 1 and 2, add up to 62%. This suggests that shared vision

seems to benefit the school. Shared school vision enables the school to achieve its objectives. Through the shared vision, the school is able to function optimally.

The Department of Education (2004) mentions that in developing your vision, leadership should ensure that the school resources are focused on key priorities. Rees, Kroon, Sims, Manz and Tshenye, in Wilzem et al. (2002:43) further mention that the school goals should always fit with the school's budget. In responding to the item: Vision ensures that resources are effectively utilized, 61% of the respondents indicate that through vision, school resources are effectively utilized. This 61% results from the combination of 24% and 37%. When the schools do not have proper visions, both human and physical resources are not effectively utilized. Even though 61% of the respondents seem to suggest that vision ensures that the resources are effectively utilized, there seem to be some respondents who indicated otherwise. These respondents constitute 34% (27% plus 7%).

In view of the data presented by the respondents during the empirical study, it appears that the majority of educators in the sample indicated that role players are to a larger extent involved in the initiation, definition and development of the school vision. On the basis of these findings, the overall impression is that the majority of the respondents' primary school principals are transformational in their leadership practices.

#### **5.4.3 Commitment**

In chapter three, one of the challenges facing primary schools was identified as lack of commitment by educators (see section 3.4.1.2). No school can achieve its objectives without the dedication of its educators. The *National Centre for Education Statistics* (1997:2) indicates that the degree of educator commitment is one of the most important aspects of the performance and quality of the school staff. Table 5.25 gives the views of respondents regarding the extent to which primary school principals are involved in ensuring that educators are committed.

**Table 5.25: Transformational leadership element, commitment**

**Key: 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4= frequently and 5 = almost always.**

Items	Response categories (n =96)										Total
	1		2		3		4		5		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
The principal effectively motivates educators to be on time.	4	4	2	2	13	14	24	26	52	54	95
The principal effectively discourages absenteeism.	8	8	3	3	11	12	22	23	51	54	95
The principal motivates educators to teach according to the new curriculum.	3	3	8	9	10	11	22	23	51	54	94
The principal motivates all educators to be involved in school sports.	4	4	5	5	27	28	20	21	39	41	95
The principal rewards committed educators for their efforts.	17	18	14	15	23	24	20	21	21	22	96
The principal encourages educators to give learners feedback on time.	5	5	9	9	15	16	28	29	38	41	95
The principal encourages educators to be creative.	4	4	9	10	13	14	32	34	36	38	94
The principal encourages educators to remain after school to assist in extra curricular activities.	10	11	7	7	23	24	27	28	28	30	95
The principal encourages educators to work harder.	8	8	3	3	10	11	27	28	47	50	95

Asmal (1992:2) indicates that there is indiscipline on the part of educators because too many schools fail to start and close on time. This indicates the challenges schools face as far as time observation is concerned. In determining the role of primary school principals in ensuring that educators respect time, data in table 5.25 indicate that 80% of the respondents were of the view that their principals effectively motivates educators to be on time. This is evident from the combination of the views of respondents who selected both keys *almost always* (54%) and *frequently* (26%).

Absenteeism was also identified as another challenge facing primary schools in Limpopo. Data in table 5.25 show that 54% of the respondents indicated that principals are *always* effective in discouraging absenteeism. Twenty three percent (23%) indicated that

principals are *frequently* effective in doing the same function. On the basis of these joint responses, 77% of the respondents appear to suggest that principals are effective in discouraging absenteeism.

In chapter two, it was indicated that educators who are not committed create strategies to cover their laziness (see section 2.3.2). One of the factors educators blame is the introduction of the new curriculum and lack of being professionally developed. In trying to determine whether principals motivate educators to teach according to the new curriculum, 77% (54% who indicated that this happens *almost always* and 23% who indicate that this takes place *frequently*) indicated that the majority of primary school principals seem to motivate the educators effectively in teaching the new curriculum. Nuku (2007:79) indicates that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally.

Participation in extra curricular activities and school sports by educators is important. Regarding this issue, 41% indicated that the principal *almost always* motivates educators to be in sports and 21% stated that this is done *frequently*. Jointly, 62% of the respondents seem to indicate that the majority of primary school principals do motivate educators to participate in sports. Even though 62% of the respondents seem to express themselves positively on this issue, the researcher as a primary school deputy principal has observed that very few educators are motivated to participate in sports. This is evidenced in instances where educators leave learners during practice sessions without supervision. Even though there are those who supervise learners, they are in the minority.

There are educators who demonstrate a high degree of commitment and those who do not show the same passion for their profession. Those committed educators are valuable to the profession and principals should show appreciation to these educators. To determine the role principals play in ensuring that such educators are rewarded for their efforts, the respondents were requested to respond to the item: The principal rewards educators who are committed. Twenty two percent (22%) indicated that principals *almost always* reward committed educators for their efforts, 21% indicated that this function is *frequently* done. Combined, 43% of the respondents seem to give an impression that committed educators

are not sufficiently rewarded. Thirty nine percent (24% for *sometimes* and 15% for *rarely*) of the respondents from the sample seem to portray a scenario that indicates that rewarding of committed educators does not receive proper attention. Comparing 43% and 39%, a relatively larger percentage of respondents are seemingly not inclined to reward their committed educators sufficiently. Kadalie (2006:222) argues that leadership should always show appreciation in little things and also recognize educators who are committed at work.

The primary objective of teaching is the delivery of the curriculum by the educators. The recipients in this case are learners. One of the basic conditions of teaching is that educators should from time to time provide learners with feedback. This is done to inform learners of their performance. After every assessment learners should be in a position to know their progress. With regard to motivating educators to give learners feedback, 41% of the respondents indicated that principals *always* discharge this responsibility and 29% stated that this is done *frequently*. Considering the combined views of these respondents (70%), it appears that the majority of primary school principals are inclined to encourage educators to give learners feedback. The Department of Education (2006:4) mentions that the educator should always motivate and inspire learners and should also be committed to the teaching profession.

The Department of Education (2004) mentions that committed educators are identified by their creative and innovative approaches to teaching. The Department of Education also uses creativity and innovation by educators as criteria to reward excellence. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that educators sacrifice and become creative in order to compensate for the resources that are not available. To find out whether principals give this responsibility attention, the respondents were requested to express their opinions on the item: The principal encourages educators to be creative. Data indicate that 34% of the respondents indicated that principals *frequently* influence educators to become creative. Thirty eight percent (38%) indicated that this function is done *almost always*. Taking the views of these respondents (72%), it appears that the majority of primary school principals encourage educators to be creative.

With regard to the item: The principal encourages educators to remain after school to assist in extra curricular activities, 28% of the respondents felt that principals *frequently* encourage educators to remain after school to assist in extra curricular activities. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents indicated that principals *almost always* encourage educators to participate in extra curricular activities. Added together, 57% of the respondents seem to indicate that the majority of primary school principals do encourage educators to remain after school to assist in extra curricular activities. However this encouragement is not always effective. The researcher as an educator has observed that a minority of educators demonstrates commitment in extra curricular activities. Many educators leave school immediately after the last period.

In responding to the item: The principal encourages educators to work harder, table 5.25 shows that 28% of the respondents indicated that principals *frequently* encourage educators to work harder. Fifty percent (50%) stated that principals *almost always* encourage educators to work harder. When the percentages for keys 4 and 5 are combined, 78% of the respondents seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals encourage educators to work harder.

Data in table 5.25 indicate that responses are clustered in keys 4 and 5. The opinions of the majority respondents in the sample on commitment give the overall impression that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain committed to their profession. Based on this finding, the majority of primary school principals demonstrate a transformational leadership trait. Leithwood (1992), in Singh and Lokotsch (2005:280) and Nguni et al. (2006:146), indicate that transformational leadership is in essence the leadership style that encourages commitment from subordinates.

#### **5.4.4 Motivation**

Table 5.26 represents the opinions of the educators in responding to various items based on transformational leadership element, motivation. In chapter two, it was indicated that keeping educators motivated is one of the challenges principals face (see section 2.3.3). The respondents were requested to express their views on the items indicated in the table

below. Respondents used the five-point scale and were requested to select only one option. Table 5.26 shows the response trends per item.

**Table 5.26: Transformational leadership element, motivation**

**Key: 1 = always, 2 = most of the time, 3 = sometimes, 4 = rarely and 5 = never.**

Items	Response categories (n =96)										Total
	1		2		3		4		5		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
The principal considers me as part of the team.	67	70	16	17	12	6	1	1	6	6	96
My principal shows concern with regard to my personal circumstances.	46	48	25	26	16	17	4	4	4	4	95
The principal thanks me for a job well done.	42	44	24	25	16	17	6	6	8	8	96
It is easy to confide to my principal when faced with problems.	45	47	23	24	18	19	7	7	3	3	96
The attitude of the principal encourages me.	38	40	25	26	19	20	7	7	7	7	96
The principal treats all educators equally.	35	37	26	27	13	14	11	12	10	10	95
The principal creates an enabling working environment for educators.	42	44	26	27	17	18	5	5	6	6	96
The principal gives educators feedback about their performance.	30	31	33	34	17	19	7	7	9	9	96
The principal sympathizes with educators who are sick.	50	52	21	22	14	15	5	5	6	6	96

It is critical for principals to make sure that educators are kept motivated. Mampuru (2001:58) states that motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his staff to perform at their best voluntarily in order to ensure successful educative teaching. Recognizing the presence of educators in the work place is fundamental. When principals do not take subordinates seriously, they become discouraged. Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents indicated that principals *always* consider educators as part of the team. Seventeen percent (17%) stated that principals execute this responsibility in *most of the time*. The 70% plus 17% responses amount to



87% and this constitutes a clear majority. Mampuru (2001:62) mentions that if staff members are involved in matters that affect them directly, they tend to show high motivation in whatever they are doing. The more involved they become, the more they are prompted to assist in the achievement of objectives. Based on the views of these 87% of the respondents, it seems that the majority of primary school principals to a significant extent consider educators as part of the team.

In chapter two, it was indicated that there are numerous factors that are responsible for discouraging educators from actively being involved in quality teaching (see section 2.3.3). Some of these challenges are personal and have nothing to do with their work. Principals are better placed to assist where possible in such cases. In responding to the item: My principal shows concern with regard to my personal circumstances, 48% indicated that principals *always* do this function. When added to the 26% who indicated that the principal shows concern in *most of the time*, 74% of the respondents seem to indicate that principals do show concern to educators who have personal problems. Kadalie (2006:222) believes that leadership should show concern for the personal needs of their subordinates, even if sacrificing time for them.

With regard to the item: The principal thanks me for a job well done, 44% stated that principals *always* thank them when they have done well. In addition to that, 25% stated that this responsibility is done in *most of the time*. Together, 69% of the respondents are of the opinion that principals appreciate and recognise the good job they are doing at school. Kadalie (2006:222) mentions that leaders motivate subordinates when they show recognition for the work well done.

Good interpersonal relationships at school are fundamental. The principal as the head of the school should be accessible not only to some educators, but to all the subordinates. Educators are human beings and are therefore confronted by challenges from within and outside the school situation. Some of these challenges will force educators to confide to the principal. In determining the accessibility and availability of the principal in assisting educators with problems, respondents were requested to respond to the item: It is easy to

confide to my principal when faced with problems. Forty-seven percent (47%) stated that it is *always* easy to confide to the principal and 24% indicated that it is in *most of the time* easy to do that. Combined, 71% of the respondents indicated that it is easy for educators to confide to principals when faced with problems. Shields (2006:76) mentions that leadership must model, encourage and demonstrate the importance of relationships and positive interactions.

In responding to the item: The attitude of the principal encourages me, 40% of the respondents indicated that the attitudes of the principals *always* encourage them. Twenty six percent (26%) indicated they are in *most of the time* encouraged by the principals' attitudes. Earlier on, in this section, 70% of these respondents indicated that it is easy to confide to the principal when faced with problems (see section 5.4.4). This indicates the consistency of the respondents in responding to this issue of relationships. When the principal-educator relationship is cordial, interaction becomes easy between these two parties. Based on the combined views of the respondents who indicated that principals' attitudes encourage them (66%), it seems that the majority of primary school principals are relating well with their subordinates.

With regard to the item: The principal treats all educators equally, table 5.26 shows that 37% of the respondents indicated that principals *always* treat all educators equal whereas 27% believe that principals, in *most of the time* treat educators equally. The combined percentage is 64%. Principals who relate with their educators by treating them differently create problems not only for themselves, but also for the school. This will have a negative bearing on the school's effectiveness and efficiency. Buber (1970) and Freire (2000), in Shields (2006:76) distinguish between interaction that treats others as objects and that which treats them as fully human. *OECS Education Reform Unit* (2000:6) further indicates that positive work-related interaction among educators is important because it reduces the extreme isolation felt by many educators and provides opportunities to exchange support and assistance. Treating other educators unfairly creates an atmosphere of discouragement. According to the views of the respondents (64%) in the sample, it seems that the majority of primary school principals consider all educators equally at

their schools. Fourteen percent of respondents indicated that principals *sometimes* treat educators equally and 12% stated that principals *rarely* do the same thing. Ten percent of the respondents indicated that principals *never* treat educators equally. Combined, all these percentages (14% for *most of the time*, 12 for *sometimes* and 10 for *never*) constitute 36%. Even though 64% of the respondents suggested that principals treat educators equally, the views of 36% respondents who selected keys 3, 4 and 5 seem to indicate that the issue of treatment of educators is not without problems. When educators are treated the same, they are motivated to perform. Nuku (2007:79) mentions that principals are best positioned to motivate their staff in order to achieve the desired results and grow professionally.

Responding to the item: The principal creates an enabling working environment for educators, data show that 44% indicated that principals *always* create an enabling working environment for educators. Twenty seven percent (27%) of the respondents believe that principals do this *most of the time*. When adding 44% and 27%, this implies that 71% of these respondents suggest that the majority of primary school principals create environments that are conducive for educators to work in. Educators spend most of their time during the day at school. It is therefore important that the environment is conducive to work in. When the relationship amongst educators at school is cordial, educators' performance increases.

When the principal provides educators with feedback about their performance, they become motivated. In determining the role of the principals in ensuring that educators receive feedback on how they perform, respondents were requested to give their opinion on the item: The principal gives educators feedback about their performance. Thirty one percent (31%) stated that principals *always* give educators feedback about their work. Thirty four percent (34%) of the respondents indicated that, in *most of the time*, principals give educators feedback. The views of these respondents (65%) resulting from combining 31% and 34%, suggest that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators receive feedback on their performance. A sizable number of respondents tended to respond in keys 3, 4 and 5. When adding all the percentages from these three

keys, they constitute 35%. Even though the views of 65% respondents appear to indicate that principals ensure that educators receive feedback on their performance, the views of 35% respondents who selected keys 1, 2 and 3 seem to indicate that there are problems with regard to the same issue.

With regard to the item: The principal sympathizes with educators who are sick, data in table 5.26 indicate that 52% of the respondents indicated that the principals *always* sympathize with educators who are sick whereas 22% believe that principals in *most of the time* do sympathize with such educators. Jointly, these respondents constitute 74%, and according to their views, it seems that the majority of primary school principals do sympathize with educators who are sick. In chapter two, it was indicated that there are numerous factors that cause educators to become discouraged (see section 2.3.3). Bennell (2004:13) mentions that apart from the obvious impact of educators who are living with HIV/AIDS, working with colleagues who are sick and who may eventually die is also demoralizing.

Respondents in the sample gave their opinions as indicated by table 5.26. The respondents' views seem to indicate that the majority of primary school principals motivate educators to a significant extent. Based on the views of these respondents, it appears that the majority of primary school principals demonstrate transformational leadership concerning the motivation of educators.

#### **5.4.5 Job satisfaction**

Job satisfaction is one of elements of transformational leadership identified in this study (see section 2.3.4.). In chapter two, the general working conditions, remuneration package, educators' workload and interpersonal relationships were identified as factors that determine job satisfaction (see section 2.3.4.4). The respondents were requested to give their views on the items that appear in table 5.27 below.

**Table 5.27: Transformational leadership element, job satisfaction**

**Key: 1= not at all, 2 = hardly ever, 3 = sometimes, 4 = mostly and 5 = always.**

Items	Response categories (n =96)										Total
	1		2		3		4		5		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
The principal encourages teamwork.	5	6	6	6	11	12	27	28	46	48	95
The principal discourages gossip at school.	5	5	6	6	12	13	26	27	46	48	95
The principal encourages good interpersonal relationships amongst educators.	15	16	5	5	18	19	12	14	43	46	93
The principal apologises when he/she has wronged educators.	4	4	8	8	12	13	25	27	45	48	94
I have a good relationship with most educators.	13	14	6	6	23	24	21	22	32	34	95
I have a good relationship with the principal.	5	5	2	2	7	7	29	31	52	55	95
The principal encourages me to continue with my career as an educator.	5	5	6	6	8	8	26	27	50	52	95
The principal encourages me to be creative in acquiring teaching aids.	9	10	5	5	16	17	21	22	44	46	95
The principal distributes work equally.	5	5	9	10	18	19	27	28	35	38	95
The principal ensures that educators work in a safe environment.	7	7	9	10	21	22	31	33	27	28	95
The principal respects all the educators at school.	7	7	5	5	15	16	25	26	43	45	95

In chapter two, it was stated that leadership is important in building up positive interpersonal relations (see section 2.3.4). According to Shields (2006:76), the educational leader needs to recognize that relationships are a fundamental and an intrinsic part of being. Positive work related interaction among educators is important because it reduces the extreme isolation felt by many educators and provides opportunities to exchange support and assistance (*OECS Education Reform Unit, 2000:6*). In responding to the item: The principal encourages teamwork, 48% of the respondents in the sample indicated that principals *always* encourage teamwork. Twenty eight percent (28%)

indicated that principals do this function *mostly*. When combining these percentages (48% +28%) it indicates that 76% of the respondents seem to indicate that the majority of primary school principals do encourage teamwork.

One of the behaviours that encourage factions in schools is speaking badly about other educators. The attitudes of educators towards their colleagues and that of the principals in encouraging healthy interpersonal relationship are fundamental. Gossip destroys relationships. When educators are not in good speaking terms, it is very difficult for them to work together as a team. This impacts negatively on teaching. In determining the extent in which the principals are involved in discouraging gossip at schools, 48% indicated that principals *always* discourage it whereas 27% stated that principals *mostly* discourage gossip. The views of the majority respondents in the sample 75% (48% and 27%) seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals do discourage to gossip.

It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that educators always maintain a good relationship and demonstrate a high degree of respect (see section 2.3.4.4). Shields (2006:76) states that leadership must model, encourage and demonstrate the importance of relationships and positive interactions. Educators have the tendency to belong to different groupings. In determining the role of the principal in encouraging good interpersonal relationships amongst educators, 46% of the respondents indicated that principals *always* encourage good interpersonal relationships. When combined with the 14% who indicated that this function is done *mostly*, 60% of these respondents appear to indicate that primary school principals encourage good interpersonal relationships amongst educators. When combining the responses of the respondents who selected keys 1, 2 and 3, they constitute 40%. Their responses seem to suggest that schools are experiencing challenges as far as interpersonal relations are concerned.

Leaders are not perfect and are inclined to make mistakes. It is important for school leaders to demonstrate the ability to model the behaviour that he/she wants from his/her subordinates. Respondents were requested to indicate their opinions on the item: The

principal apologises when she/he has wronged educators. Forty eight percent (48%) indicated that principals *always* do apologise and 27% stated that this happens *mostly*. When added together, these respondents make 75%. The views of these respondents seem to indicate that the majority of primary school principals apologise when they have wronged educators.

In responding to the item: I have a good relationship with most of the educators, data in table 5.27 show that 22% of respondents selected key number 4 (mostly) and 34% selected key number 5 (always) and they jointly constitute 56%. The other respondents selected keys 1 (not at all), 2 (hardly ever) and 3 (sometimes). Together, these respondents constitute 38%. Shield (2006:76) mentions that teaching should be built on the relationship of respect and absolute regard. When relationship amongst educators is relatively good, complains against each other decrease. Factions or cliques in schools strain relations. When educators do not speak to each other, teaching will be negatively affected. The extent of negative views amongst respondents (38%) seems to suggest that educators have relationship problems.

The principal should ensure that unity is maintained amongst educators. Educators should feel free to confide to him whenever they have problems. The principal should provide and demonstrate pastoral leadership. When the principal maintains a neutral position and treats everybody at school the same, chances of co-operating are there. The principal-educator relationship should be cordial. Principals should not treat educators inconsistently. They should maintain a neutral position in every conflict. To determine whether the relationship between principals and educators is cordial or not, respondents were requested to give their opinions on the item: I have a good relationship with the principal. Fifty two percent (55%) indicated that they *always* have a good relationship with educators and 31% stated that their relationship with the principal is *mostly* good. Combining their views, 86% of the respondents seem to suggest that the majority of educators have cordial relationships with their principals.

Educators are arguably the most important group of professionals for the nation's future development, but it is disturbing to find that many of them today are dissatisfied with their jobs (Bishay, 1996:147). This state of affairs is affecting the recruitment and retention of educators (see section 2.3.4). The Sunday Times (2007:45) reports that every year, hundreds of educators, particularly new graduates, leave South Africa because they don't get paid enough by the Department of Education. In trying to determine the role of principals in encouraging educators to remain in their profession, 52% indicated that principals *always* encourage them to continue with their careers as educators and 27% stated that this happens *mostly*. In combining these responses (79%), it seems that the majority of principals encourage educators to continue with their careers as educators.

Lack of resources contributes towards job dissatisfaction. The new curriculum demands a lot of resources and when such resources are not available, educators are discouraged and complain. The availability of technical resources contributes towards improved performance and boosts the culture of learning and teaching. Kruger (2003:207) mentions that lack of resources has a negative impact on learning and teaching. This creates dissatisfaction amongst educators. Respondents gave their opinions on the item: The principal encourages me to be creative in acquiring the teaching aids. Forty six percent (46%) indicated that the principals *always* execute that responsibility and 22% indicated that principals encourage them to be creative *mostly*. Collectively, the views of these respondents constitute 68%. Considering the views of these respondents, it appears that primary school principals encourage educators to be creative in trying to acquire teaching aids. Ten percent (10%) of respondents indicated that the principals do *not at all* encourage them to be creative in acquiring teaching aids. Five percent (5%) indicated that this *hardly ever* happens and 17% stated that this happens *sometimes*. When combined, thirty two percent (32%) of the respondents seem to suggest that even though 68% of the respondents indicate that primary school principals do encourage educators to be creative in acquiring teaching aids, this issue appears to be problematic.

The Department of Education (1999) clearly stipulates the responsibilities of educators, both co-curricular and extra-curricular. The researcher as an educator and manager at a



primary school has observed that when work is not equally distributed amongst educators, dissatisfaction and disgruntlement result. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that workload is evenly distributed amongst educators. In responding to the item, the principal distributes work equally, 28% of the respondents indicated that principals *mostly* distribute work equally. Thirty eight percent (38%) of them indicated that the principals *always* distribute work equally. Collectively, they constitute 66%. The other respondents on the same item did not express themselves positively and their responses have a bearing on the views of the 66% respondents. These respondents responded on keys 1, 2 and 3. Combined, they constitute 34%. Based on the views of all the respondents on this item, it seems that even though 66% of the respondents indicated that principals distribute work equally, there seem to be challenges in as far as the issue of distribution of work is concerned.

According to Furnham (2002:129), safety needs refer to the need for a secure, predictable, habitable, non-threatening climate, free from threats of either physical or psychological harm. The safety and security of employees is fundamental in ensuring that they remain satisfied in the jobs they are employed in (see section 2.3.4.2). The principal should ensure that the security of their educators receives the necessary attention. According to Marvin et al. (1998:98), schools are at times centres of potential dangerous violence. In determining the role of principals in ensuring that educators work in a safe environment, 28% indicated that principals *always* do this function and 33% stated that this is *mostly* done. Together, these responses constitute 61%. Seven percent of the respondents indicated that principals do not care about their safety. Ten percent indicated that principals *hardly ever* consider their safety whereas 22% stated that principals do the same function *sometimes*. All these three percentages constitute 39%. This indicates that a disturbing percentage (39%) of respondents expressed themselves negatively on the item. The implication of the views of these respondents seems to suggest that many educators are exposed to working environments that do not guarantee their safety. When educators work in environments that do not guarantee their safety, they are likely to become dissatisfied. Principals should ensure that educators work in a safe environment. Despite the views of 39% of these respondents, 61% on the other hand, gave an

impression that primary school principals are engaged in ensuring that educators work in a safe environment.

When the relationships at schools are not based on mutual respect, employees are likely to feel dissatisfied. Buber (1970) and Freire (2000), in Shields (2006:76) distinguish between interaction that treats others as objects and that which treats them as fully human. In responding to the item: The principal respects all educators at school, 45% of the respondents indicated that principals *always* demonstrate an element of respect when interacting with subordinates. When adding this 45% to the 26% respondents who indicated that principals *mostly* respect all educators, their views constitute 71%. Based on the 71% views of the respondents, the majority of primary school principals seem to respect all the educators at schools. When educators are fairly treated, they become motivated and this keeps them satisfied.

Data from the table 5.27 above indicate that the majority of respondents responded on keys numbers 4 and 5. These keys portray the behaviours of principals positively as indicated by each item. The views of the majority respondents seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain satisfied in their schools and this finding gives an overall impression that the majority of primary school principals demonstrate transformational leadership characteristics concerning job satisfaction even though there are some areas that seem problematic.

#### **5.4.6 Participative decision-making**

This section deals with the last identified element of transformational leadership element namely, participative-decision making. In chapter two, it was indicated that one of the challenges facing primary schools and principals during the twenty first century is decision-making (see section 2.3.5). Table 5.28 indicates the views of the respondents on the decision-making of their principals.

**Table 5.28: Transformational leadership element, participative decision-making**

**Key: 1= strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = not sure, 4 = disagree and 5 = strongly disagree**

Items	Response categories (n =96)										Total
	1		2		3		4		5		
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
The principal involves me in the decision-making processes.	22	24	45	47	16	17	8	8	4	4	95
The principal adequately informs me about every decision that is taken.	15	16	45	47	19	20	12	13	4	4	95
The principal involves educators in the allocation of responsibilities.	39	41	32	34	11	12	9	9	4	4	95
The principal allows debates about important issues during school meetings.	45	47	28	30	8	8	8	8	6	6	95
The principal involves all role players (SMT, SGB and parents) in the decision-making processes.	29	31	35	37	15	16	9	9	7	7	95

For educators to take ownership of the decisions primary schools take, it is fundamental that principals involve them in those processes. Principals should play leading roles in ensuring that joint decision-making structures are created. In responding to the item: Principals involve me in decision-making processes, 71% of the respondents seem to suggest that principals do involve them in such processes. This finding emanates from the combination of 47% respondents who indicated that they *agree* that principals involve them in decision-making and the 24% who stated that they *strongly agree* with the statement. According to Squelch (2003:143), leaders who are able to develop decision-making structures and processes promote rather than hinder meaningful participation and collaboration.

Not all educators have the opportunity to sit in all meetings where decisions are taken. However, the principal as the leader has the responsibility to inform all educators about decisions that affect them because they are also important members of the school. Forty

seven percent (47%) of the respondents indicated that they *agree* that they are adequately informed of the decisions taken. Sixteen percent indicated that they *strongly agree* with the item. When the two responses from both keys 1 and 2 are combined, they constitute 63%. Twenty percent (20%) indicated that they are *not sure* as to whether principals adequately inform them. Combining this 20% and the other 17% who expressed themselves negatively in keys 4 and 5, they constitute 37%. Even though the views of 63% of the respondents suggest that primary school principals do inform educators about every decision taken, 37% of the respondents who expressed themselves on keys 3, 4 and 5 indicate that the matter of informing educators on decisions is problematic.

Traditionally, principals relied on the top-down style of leadership (see section 2.1). This system of leadership was exclusive in nature because principals were the sole decision makers. Hallinger (2004:68) argues that principals naturally expected their orders to be followed with relatively little discussion. To determine the role of principals in involving educators in the allocation of responsibilities, 41% of the respondents indicated they *strongly agree* that they are involved in the allocation of responsibilities. Thirty-four percent (34%) indicated that they *agree* that they are involved in the allocation of responsibilities. Considering the collective views of these respondents (75%), it seems that the majority of primary school principals involve educators when allocating responsibilities.

With regard to the item: The principal allows debates about important issues during school meetings, 47% of the respondents indicated that they *strongly agree* that principals do allow debates whereas 30% stated that they *agree* with this view. Combined, 77% of these respondents seem to give an impression that the majority of primary school principals do allow debates about important issues during school meetings. Sagie et al. (1995:82) indicate that participative decision-making is a process in which influence is shared between super-ordinates and their subordinates.

In determining the role of the principal in involving other role players in the decision-making processes, 31% of the respondents *strongly agree* that the principals involve all

role players in decision-making processes. Respondents who selected key number 2 (*agree*) were 37%. Jointly they constitute 68%. Based on the collective views of these respondents, it appears that most primary school principals involve other role players in decision-making processes. Sixteen percent indicated that they are *not sure* that principals do involve other role players. Nine percent indicated that they *disagree* and 7% stated that they *strongly disagree* with the item. The responses in keys 3, 4 and 5 jointly constitute 32% and this suggest that even though the views of 68% respondents seem to indicate that role players are satisfactorily involved in decision-making, this matter looks to be problematic. Duke (2005:3) mentions that participative decision-making means the sharing of decision authority among stakeholders in a given context.

This section dealt with the research question: To what extent are primary school principals involved in ensuring that other role players are involved in the decision-making processes? The views of the majority respondents seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals involve other role players in decision-making processes. Based on this finding, the majority of primary school principals appear to be transformational with reference to decision-making practices in their schools.

#### **5.4.7 Summary**

In this section, the researcher presents a brief summary based on the empirical data collected through the educator questionnaires. An orientation about the notion transformational leadership was detailed in chapter two (see section 2.1). In section 2.3, the researcher identified the following elements of transformational leadership, *shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction* and *participative decision-making*.

Educators were provided with questionnaires different from that of principals. Questionnaire items were categorized according to the five identified elements of transformational leadership. In designing these questionnaires, research questions and the research hypotheses were considered. The summary based on the educator questionnaire is now given.

In order to establish the role primary school principals play in ensuring that the school vision is initiated, developed and defined by all role players, the following research question was posed (see section 4.2): To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in initiating the school vision that is shared and owned by the other role players? Based on the findings of the empirical data of the educator questionnaires, it would seem as if the majority of primary school principals initiate vision that is shared and owned. This confirms the assertion of Korkmaz (2006:14) that sharing a school vision promotes a feeling of co-operation in principals, educators, learners and others to attain the desired future state.

One of the challenges primary schools face (see section 3.4.1) was related to the extent in which educators are committed. In determining the influence of principals on the educators' commitment, questionnaire items were developed based on the research questions and the research hypotheses indicated in chapter four (see sections 4.2 and 4.3). Empirical data in section 5.4.3 show that the respondents indicate that the majority of primary school principals seem to ensure that educators are committed.

In section 4.2, this research question was posed: To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in making sure that educators are motivated? The views of the respondents in table 5.26, suggest that the majority of primary school principals significantly ensure that educators remain motivated.

With regard to job satisfaction, data in table 5.27 suggest that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain satisfied in their profession as educators.

Respondents gave their views on participative decision-making processes in section 5.4.6. The views of the majority respondents seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals create opportunities for inclusive decision-making processes. This view vindicates Squelch's (2003:143) assertion that leaders who are able to develop decision-making structures and processes promote rather than hinder meaningful participation and collaboration.

The analysis and interpretation of survey data was presented in sections 5.4.2 to 5.4.6. The views of some respondents seem to indicate that in some elements of transformational leadership, there appear to be problems. Most of the respondents in the sample give an overall impression that the majority of primary school principals demonstrate transformational leadership traits in terms of shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making.

### **5.5 SUMMATIVE CONCLUSIONS ON BOTH THE PRINCIPAL AND THE EDUCATOR QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEYS**

In sections 4.5.1.2 and 4.5.1.3, it was indicated that the questionnaires were administered to the sampled educators and principals. This constituted phase one of the investigation. (Phase two was about the interview process). The researcher separately gave the summaries of the findings based on the empirical data of the questionnaires of the principals and educators in sections 5.3.7 and 5.4.7. The intention in this section is to present the summative conclusions on both the principal and educator surveys.

Five objectives for conducting this investigation were indicated as follows (see section 4.2):

- To determine the extent to which primary school principals as leaders are involved in:
  - initiating vision that is shared and owned by other role players.
  - making sure that educators remain committed to their profession
  - ensuring that educators are motivated and
  - ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession.
  
- To investigate the strategies the principal employs in including role players in the decision-making processes.

The conclusions were presented against the backdrop of these objectives. Furthermore, to ensure that this section is clearly presented, the conclusions are given in accordance with the five identified elements of transformational leadership.

### **5.5.1 Shared vision**

The following research question was posed in section 4.2: To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in initiating vision that is shared and owned by other role players?

With reference to the role principals play in ensuring that role players participate in the process of vision crafting, both groups of respondents (principals and educators) conveyed the view that the majority of principals create opportunities for the involvement of role players in the initiation, development and the definition of the school vision. Data in table 5.24 indicated that there are some respondents (particularly educators) who indicated that there are still some challenges with regard to some elements of the school vision. The items presented as problematic by respondents in section 5.4.2 include problems in achieving school goals, methods on how these goals are achieved and the challenges with regard to the implementation of what has been planned. Despite these challenges, the findings suggest that the majority of primary school principals involve other role players in the initiation, development and the definition of the school vision.

### **5.5.2 Commitment**

In trying to determine the extent of the involvement of principals in ensuring that educators are committed to their duties, the following research question was asked: To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in making sure that educators remain committed to their profession? With regard to commitment, the views of the respondents (principals) seem to indicate that there are problems areas in this regard. Data show that absenteeism and failure to accept school goals seem to be problematic (see section 5.3.3). On the other hand, the views of respondents (educators)



also suggest that, firstly, rewarding committed educators does not receive enough attention and secondly, commitment of educators in extra curricular activities seems problematic. Even though few respondents indicated that there are challenges with regard to commitment, data in both sections 5.3.3 and 5.4.3 seem to suggest that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are committed.

### **5.5.3 Motivation**

One of the intentions of this empirical study was to determine the role of primary school principals in ensuring that educators are motivated. In determining the role of primary schools principals in this regard, the study intended to answer the research question: To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators are kept motivated? The views of the respondents in the sample seem to indicate that some primary school principals treat educators inconsistently (see section 5.4.4). Another area that seems to be problematic is the issue of feedback on educator performance (see table 5.26). Generally, it appears that the majority of primary school principals seem to ensure that educators remain motivated in their teaching profession, despite those problematic areas.

### **5.5.4 Job satisfaction**

The conclusion in this section is given against the backdrop of the research question posed as follows: To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession? Data in table 5.27 indicate that there are still areas in this element of transformational leadership where primary school principals are lacking. The views of some respondents (educators) suggest that the following matters seem problematic (see section 5.4.5):

- Relationships amongst educators.
- Encouraging educators to be creative in acquiring teaching aids.
- The distribution of workload.

- Ensuring that educators work in a safe environment.

Even though these areas remain a challenge, data from both groups of respondents provide sufficient evidence that suggest that the majority of primary school principals seem to ensure that educators are and remain satisfied in their professions.

### **5.5.5 Participative decision-making**

This empirical study was also intended to determine the extent to which primary school principals as leaders involve other role players in the decision-making processes. To achieve this objective, the following research question was posed: To what extent do principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes?

The views of educators in the sample seem to indicate that there are some problematic areas regarding decision-making in schools even though principals gave an impression that there are problems regarding decision-making. In this regard, the views of respondents (educators) in table 5.28 cast the impression that:

- some primary principals do not adequately inform educators about decisions at school (see section 5.4.6).
- the involvement of role players in decision-making is not sufficient (see section 5.4.6).

Even though some respondents expressed themselves negatively on some items on participative decision-making, the views of the majority respondents give an overall impression that the majority of primary school principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes.

In addition to answering the research questions asked, this investigation also intended to test the research hypothesis stated as follows:

- There is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphases in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

Conversely, the inquiry also aimed at testing the null hypothesis stated as follows:

- There is a no significant relationship (in terms descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphases in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership.

The findings the study produced indicate that the leadership traits demonstrated by the majority of primary school principals in Limpopo fit with the identified elements of the transformational leadership discussed in section 2.3. The findings from the empirical data collected through both the educator and the principal questionnaires seem to indicate that primary school principals in Limpopo are inclined to be transformational in their approaches to leadership. Put differently, data gathered during the empirical investigation reveals that the leadership attributes displayed by the majority of primary school principals in Limpopo are related to the identified key features of transformational leadership. Based on the views of both groups of respondents, it appears that there is a significant relationship between identified leadership emphases in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership. The extent of this significance is deduced from weighting and emphases as reflected by descriptive statistics (numbers and percentages).

Chapter 6, which follows next, will deal with analysis and interpretation of qualitative data collected through interviews.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF INTERVIEW DATA**

#### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

In chapter four, the research design and methodology were described. In the chapter preceding this one, the analysis and interpretation of survey data (principal and educators), resulted in the survey-based conclusions on the five research questions posed (see section 4. 2). This section reports on phase two of the investigation. In this phase, qualitative data was collected through interviews and observations. The interview process was guided by the interview protocol developed (see section 4.5.2.2.3). In designing the interview protocol, the five transformational leadership elements (see section 2.3) and the research questions were considered. This section reports on the analysis, interpretation and discussion of data based on the interviews and observations.

#### **6.2 THE INTERVIEW PROCESS**

Initially, the researcher planned to use two weeks to interview fifteen participants, namely five principals, five educators and five circuit managers (see section 4.5.2.2.3). The process was characterized by some frustrations, particularly with circuit managers in the sample. Letters informing participants in the sample were sent to their various destinations, namely schools and circuit offices. Attached to these letters, were permission letters from both the district and head offices of the Limpopo Department of Education (see section 4.7). Appointment dates for conducting interviews were arranged with the participants through telephone.

Participants were also informed in the letters that a tape recorder would be used and this was never a problem with the majority of participants. Where participants raised questions why the tape recorder was used, the researcher, even though the use of the tape recorder was explained in the letters, was able to supplement the explanation before the interview commenced. Selected educators and principals respected the dates and times agreed upon to conduct the interviews. During the interviews, two of the sampled

educators requested to switch to Northern Sotho (Sepedi) when it appeared that it was difficult for them to speak English. The researcher translated their responses into English during transcription process. With regard to circuit managers, it was very difficult and challenging to secure appointments right away. Dates agreed upon were to be changed from time to time. The interviews with them were ultimately conducted after about four weeks. As indicated earlier, interviews were based on the interview protocol prepared. During the interviewing process, the researcher probed and prompted to get to the bottom of issues. During probing and prompting, the findings of phase one of the investigation were constantly kept in mind.

### 6.3 THE INTERVIEWEES AND THE RATIONALE FOR THEIR SELECTION

Table 6.1 presents the profile of the participants (in terms of gender and position) who took part in interview processes and research sites visited across Waterberg district in Limpopo.

**Table 6.1: List of interviewees and the research sites**

Name of circuit	No. of Educators	Gender	No. of Principals	Gender	No. of Circuit Managers	Gender
Potgietersrus	1	Male	1	Male	1	Male
Warmbad	1	Female	1	Male	1	Male
Vaalwater	1	Female	1	Female	1	Female
Mapela	1	Female	1	Female	1	Female
Mahwelereng	1	Male	1	Male	1	Male
<b>TOTAL</b>	5		5		5	

The rationale for the selection of these respondents was based on the researcher's assumption that the respondents selected possessed the attributes that will assist in the study. The participants in Mapela and Mahwelereng circuits were selected because of

their close proximity to each other. These two circuits are situated on the same premises and each with its own circuit office and the circuit manager. Their locality was strategic and advantageous for the expeditious administration of the interviews. In addition to the selection of the participants from Mapela and Mahwelereng, the inclusion of the participants from Potgietersrus, Vaalwater and Warmbad was an attempt to ensure that participants selected were representative of Waterberg District.

As indicated in section 4.5.1.4, purposive sampling was used to select the interviewees (principals, educators and circuit managers). The researcher's knowledge and judgment was also used to select the participants, particularly educators to provide the best information to help address the problem under investigation. This assisted in determining the consistency of the participants' responses. Care was also taken in ensuring that educators and principals selected for interviews were those who also participated in the questionnaire survey. Circuit managers selected were those that manage schools that participated in the questionnaires and also manage principals who were interviewed. This assisted in determining the validity of responses provided by the principals and educators. Furthermore, it was indicated that the participation of the circuit managers was critical in this study because they have a better and corporate understanding of the challenges facing primary schools (see section 4.5.1.4).

In selecting all these participants, gender representatively was also considered. Table 6.1 above indicates the following gender distribution:

- Two male and three female educators.
- Three male and two female principals.
- Three male and two female circuit managers.

#### **6.4 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUALITATIVE DATA**

Before the process of data analysis and interpretation proceeded, the interview data were transcribed from the audiotapes after listening to the audiotapes several times. Interview transcription was done for all the principals, educators and circuit managers who

participated in the interviews. Data are presented in five sections based on the five elements of transformational leadership (see section 2.3). In section 4.5.3.2, the researcher clearly indicated how qualitative data would be analyzed. Data was firstly organized according to the coding system.

The researcher systematically (see section 4.5.3.2) selected, categorized, compared, synthesized and interpreted data to make meaning out of it (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001). Patterns and similarities were noted. Variations were also taken into consideration. For each and every element of transformational leadership, the themes were identified. Data were then organized into these themes.

#### **6.4.1 Shared vision**

The principal who attempts to transform the school without including other structures is bound to fail. For educators, the SGB, the SMT and the general parent body to embrace, support and ensure that the school vision is effectively implemented, the principal as the leader has to ensure that from the early stages of the initiation, definition and development of this vision completely involve all these role players. The Department of Education (2004) mentions that the principal should always ensure that consultation is wide when developing the school vision. In this section, data were categorized in the following two main themes, namely the establishment of committees and the involvement of other role players.

##### **6.4.1.1 Establishment of committees**

During the interview, the principal participants were requested to respond to the following question: *To what extent do you ensure that role players such as educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?*

Most of the principal participants indicated that they have established committees that are responsible for developing policies for different activities, such as sports and cultural committees. Most of these principal participants also indicated that the SGB is given the

opportunity to initiate most of the school policies. The principal participants also indicated that the visions developed are owned and embraced by educators. The views of all the five principal participants suggested that they do ensure that other role players are involved in the development of the school vision. The views of the principal participants do not deviate from the findings of the survey data (principal questionnaire) which showed that the majority of primary school principals do involve role players in the development of their school visions (see section 5.3.2).

#### 6.4.1.2 Involvement of role players in vision crafting

The educator participants were asked the following general question during the interview: *In your opinion, do you think that your principal is willing to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?*

Four of the educator participants indicated that primary school principals involve other role players in developing the school vision. Most of these educator participants, like the principal participants, indicated that there are committees at their schools. These committees deal with different issues affecting the school. They also stated that the SGB and the SMT members are also part of the developments taking place in their respective schools. One educator participant who indicated that their principal involves them in the development of the school vision explained his views as follows:

*The SMT was also included because in the first place, the principal hold the meeting with the SGB, the SGB went down to the SMT. From there, we got the views of the educators and the principal took the views of educators back to the SGB and the SGB gave us the green light to formulate and develop the school policy.*

One educator participant indicated that her principal does not involve other role players in developing the school vision. When responding to the question: *In your opinion, do you think that your principal is willing to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?*, she responded in this way:



*Ah, she does not have that willingness to let other educators share in the vision because she hired the school secretary without the knowledge of the SGB, the SMT and teachers. First there was an interview, the SGB interviewed the candidates and when the candidates later realized that was an SGB post and not the Department of Education's post, they declined. The principal then alone hired the secretary without further consulting other role players.*

The views of the educator participants indicated that their primary school principals involve role players in vision crafting. The perceptions of the educator participants support the views of the respondents (survey data) in chapter five (see section 5.4.2). In chapter two, Korkmaz (2006:14) mentioned that sharing a school vision promotes a feeling of co-operation in principals, educators, learners and others to attain the desired future state (see section 2.3.1).

During the interviews, the circuit managers were asked the following general question: *In your opinion, do you think that primary school principals are able to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of their school visions? If not, how do you as the circuit manager envisage to ensure that primary schools have shared school visions?*

The circuit managers, painted a different scenario from that of the principal and educator participants. Four of these circuit managers suggested that the majority of primary school principals are not sharing the development of visions with other role players. Only one participant indicated that primary school principals in her circuit involve role players in developing school visions. One circuit manager expressed his views in this way:

*Yah, ehh, currently, I think that principals of primary schools experience a difficulty in sharing the vision of the school with their staff. Ehh, we see this when we visit the schools. When you visit the school in the absence of the principals, the remaining officials, the HOD or the deputy principal are battling to gather the right information to give to you. They are experiencing a bit of a problem in terms of the mission and the*

*vision of the school. So, they need to be work shopped on the delegation of work at school.*

Another circuit manager indicated that principals do not include role players in the development of visions statements because they lack the in-depth knowledge of the departmental policies. One circuit manager indicated that the level of education of the SGB members is also a challenge. This circuit manager further indicated that because of these illiterate SGB members, principals are tempted to exclude them in the processes of vision development.

The views of most of the participants, particularly educators and principals seem to vindicate the survey findings, namely that most primary school principals involve role players in the development of school visions. The researcher as the deputy principal of a primary school supports these views because he has observed that in the area where he is employed, role players are meaningfully included in the development of school visions.

The views of the circuit managers contradict those of the principals and educators. The views of the principal and educator participants seem to portray a picture in which interviewees presented principals as involving role players in the development of the school visions. The researcher assumes that the principal and educator participants were perhaps inclined to be overly positive in their responses. These contradicting views of the circuit managers thus suggest the necessity of care in considering the positive stance of the participants. Even though the views of the circuit managers represent a deviation, the views of participants (particularly principals and educators) confirm the findings of the survey data in chapter five.

#### **6.4.2 Commitment**

In chapter one, commitment was defined as performing ones' duty with passion and giving oneself to the organization to achieve its objectives (see section 1.7.3). Challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo were identified and presented in chapter three (see

section 3.4). Behavioural challenges were identified as one of the forms of challenges facing primary schools (see section 3.4.1). In chapter three, it was indicated that educators who do not respect time, come to school late and depart early before the actual departure time, are often absent and also do not attend their lessons (see sections 3.4.1.1 and 3.4.1.2). The following three main themes will now be discussed: Poor work ethics, responsible professional conduct and the principals' failure to get educators committed.

#### 6.4.2.1 Poor work ethics

In determining the role of principals in ensuring that educators are committed, principal participants were asked this question: *As the principal of this school, how do you ensure that all the educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities as professionals?*

Three principal participants indicated that educators do not show commitment in sporting activities. Another area where lack of commitment was indicated by the principal participants was educators' late coming. Two other principal participants also stated that they do experience problems with educators who always absent themselves. One principal participant reported her frustration in trying to resolve the crisis as follows:

*Yes, a great challenge in the school is late coming by the teachers. It is a small group, two or three. They come late, they will come here at 7h50 and we start at 7h00 o'clock. We come at least 15 minutes before school starts. There is this problem educator who will come at school at 8h00 o'clock and record 7h30 in the time book. We have even bought a watch and it is displayed next to the time book for latecomers to see. You will call this latecomer and confront her. She will apologize, but she will do the same thing again. It is giving me a headache. Absenteeism is also a problem. Right now, we are busy with the files for leave forms. We want to show them their records. You will find that an educator takes eight days for family responsibility in one year whereas family responsibility is five days for one year. If you apply leave without pay, it will be painful for this person.*

Some of the principal participants indicated that they involve their SMT members in committing educators. One principal participant expressed his views on educators' commitment as follows:

*We always reflect on our performance everyday. Everyday I have to bring this element of reflection in the morning sessions so that educators can focus. In these morning briefings I also check whether educators are not encountering problems. We make sure that we maintain our professionalism as educators. We operate according to certain standards. There is no way I accept unprofessional behaviour. I always refer them to policy. Our core business is to deliver curriculum to learners. Every morning I remind them of their core business, why they are here.*

Even though that there are challenges on some areas such as late coming, absenteeism and lack of participation in sports, all the principal participants indicated that they try to ensure that educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities. The views of these principal participants seem to support the findings from the survey data in chapter five (see section 5.3.3).

#### 6.4.2.2 Responsible professional conduct

Educator participants were requested to elaborate on the following question: *Are the majority of educators committed to this school?* Most educator participants indicated that educators show commitment when it comes to school attendance and time observation. They mentioned that educators are only absent and late due to circumstances beyond their control. To support this view, one educator participant reasoned that:

*Late coming is there but not always. Emergencies at times make us late, but we inform the principal. Absenteeism is there but is not frequent or rife. Educators who are absent do have valid reasons.*

With regard to participation in sports, most educator participants indicated that in their schools, participation is good. However, one educator participant indicated that not all educators are committed in this area. Apart from scheduled teaching time, educators have the responsibility to ensure that they participate in extra mural activities (Department of Education, 1999).

The views of educator participants on the issue of commitment indicated that primary school principals are seemingly trying their best to ensure that educators are committed to their responsibilities. There appear to be some problems as a result of educators who do not show commitment. These views corroborate the finding indicated in section 5.4.3. In that section, it was concluded that the majority of respondents who participated in the survey indicated that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain committed.

In most of the schools visited during the interviews, the researcher observed that learners were in their classes and educators were seen teaching. Lessons seemed to be continuing normally. At one of the school visited, there was a visitor who addressed learners about water conservation. All learners were gathered at the assembly point. What the researcher observed was that the majority of educators were assisting in ensuring that order prevails. Immediately after the address, learners dispersed back to their classes and educators were seen back into their classes teaching. Minutes later, order was restored. At one school where the researcher arrived early before the school started, there were some educators who arrived five to ten minutes late.

#### 6.4.2.3 Principals' failure to get educators committed

The researcher as a primary school deputy principal has observed that in the area where he is employed, most educators demonstrate lack of commitment in some areas of their profession. The observation of the researcher was confirmed by the views of most of the circuit managers interviewed. To demonstrate the gravity of one of the problems, one circuit manager stated his views as follows:

*You know late coming in some schools is a norm. When I visit schools, I do control time registers. Teachers do not record their sign in and sign out. Some of educators who arrive late have a tendency to sign incorrect time.*

The most problematic areas are the following:

- Late coming
- Absenteeism
- Lack of willingness to participate in sports
- Unwillingness by some educators to present lessons
- Early departure of some educators
- Failure to implement the new curriculum
- Learners' failure to demonstrate skills in reading and writing

In determining the extent in which principals are involved in ensuring that educators are committed to their work, circuit managers responded to the question: *To what extent do primary school principals ensure that all their educators remain committed to their responsibilities as educators? How do you assist those primary school principals who are unsuccessful in trying to instil the culture of commitment in educators?*

The views of most of the circuit managers (four of them) indicated that principals do not do enough to ensure that educators are committed to their responsibilities. One circuit manager indicated the principals' failure to ensure that educators are committed in this way:

*Principals do not give what I will call forceful leadership. Eeh, you know if our principals can differentiate between negotiable and the non-negotiable, the better. There is lack of commitment on the part of educators. Firstly, they are not well guided and they are not given clear-cut directives. Because if we say somebody is committed what it means whatever he is given to do he does that according to plan. This lack of commitment expresses itself in the manner in which teachers are doing their job where*

*you find teachers teaching unprepared. Actually what I have realized is that teachers are just sent out there, principals do not guide them.*

Another circuit manager disappointedly stated that some of his principals are unable to cope with the challenges regarding lack of commitment by educators. One circuit manager indicated that in some schools, educators do as they wish and there is completely no control.

In responding to the question: *How do you assist those primary school principals who are unsuccessful in trying to instil the culture of commitment in educators?*, most circuit managers indicated that they do the following:

- Conduct workshops to teach principals about EEA and SASA with regard to procedures in disciplinary hearings.
- Arrange meetings with the SMT and educators and remind them of their duties.
- Request monthly reports on each individual school performance from principals

The views of the circuit managers indicate that there are challenges facing primary schools with regard to commitment. Their views represent a departure from the views of the principal participants and educator participants who indicated a lesser degree of lack of commitment. The views of some circuit managers indicate that the degree of the challenges with regard to educator commitment are serious, and not entirely in correspondence with the views of the principals and educators. The views of the circuit managers also do not support the findings of survey data in section 5.5.2.

The views of most educators and the principals seem to present a positive scenario that presents primary school principals as leaders who ensure that educators are committed. The views of most principal and educator participants confirm the findings based on survey data (see section 5.5.2). Bass (1985), in Sahin (2004:388) describes transformational leadership as increasing the interest of the staff (motivation) to achieve higher performance (commitment) and developing and revealing the commitment and beliefs in the organization.

### 6.4.3 Motivation

The school cannot achieve its objectives when its educators are discouraged. The principal as the leader and the supervisor is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that his or her educators perform to the best of their abilities (see section 2.3.3.2). The performance of educators hinges around their level of motivation. Bennell (2004) mentions that motivation is the psychological processes that influence the behaviours of individuals with respect to the attainment of workplace goals and tasks. In this section, qualitative data on motivation is presented in accordance to two main themes, namely the level of educator motivation and motivational strategies.

#### 6.4.3.1 Level of educator motivation

The perceptions of most participants (principals, educators and circuit managers) suggest that educators appear to be sufficiently motivated in their schools. Four educator participants indicated that their principals ensure that educators are motivated. To indicate that principals do motivate their educators, some of the educator participants indicated that their principals do praise educators who work hard, also give incentives for such educators and buy cards for educators who are sick. In responding to the question: *Are the majority of educators at this school motivated?* one educator participant responded in this way:

*Our principal is like a mother because sometimes she is able to detect that a teacher is not happy and disturbed by something. To us, she is also a counsellor. She always motivates us during tough times. She does not speak harshly with educators who are not performing well. Rather, she motivates them to work harder. She also encourages them to cluster with those who are doing good to help them improve.*

The views of these participants do not suggest, however, that principals experience problems with regard to keeping their educators motivated. The views of two participants (one educator and one circuit manager) contradicted the views of most participants above. They indicated that principals do not motivate educators. Their perceptions



suggest that even though most participants' perceptions indicated that motivation of educators is given attention, there are still challenges at their primary schools. One educator who sharply differed with views of the other four educators expressed her views as follows:

*The principal treats us differently when it comes to this one. You will never be visited when you are sick. Only the friends of the principal are given flowers or they receive telephone calls. I was sick for the whole month, nobody phoned, it was only one male educator. No one including the principal bothered to find out about my well-being.*

#### 6.4.3.2 Motivational strategies

During the interviews, the principal participants responded to the following question: *How do you ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in the daily pursuance of their responsibilities?*

Principal participants presented a positive scenario that suggested that they do ensure that educators are and remain motivated. These principals have cited a number of strategies that indicate that they motivate educators to work despite the challenges. Most of them indicated that they acknowledge those educators who are extra committed in front of others. Some also indicated that they do have staff lunches together, during which they verbally thank extra committed educators. The views of the principals support what most educators indicated in section 6.4.3.1, that they are praised and given incentives for their commitment. Those who are sick receive cards to encourage them to recover speedily. One principal stated that he personally reminds them that they have the potential and are capable. One principal in responding to the question: *How do you ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in the daily pursuance of their responsibilities?*, responded by saying:

*You see, these briefing sessions' strategies are twofold because we also discuss daily happenings in the school and outside the school. We do not loose the sight of what is happening outside the school environment. Anything that happens to the teacher we bring*

*that into those meetings, to motivate teachers. We also have small social meetings where during break we come together as a staff, we have a tea club. We talk about our frustrations and also joke. We also have these birthday lunches. When the teacher is doing well in the class, we acknowledge him/her in front of the other colleagues. We also help teachers who are not doing well by motivating them to do more. Annually we have staff lunches, where we visit a particular place. We give praise and incentives. We also acknowledge important teachers dates such as teachers international day.*

The views of the principal participants confirm the views of the respondents in section 5.3.4 that indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators stay motivated in their professional responsibilities. Motivation includes all the efforts on the part of the principal to encourage his staff to perform at their best voluntarily in order to ensure successful educative teaching (Mampuru, 2001:58). In the quantitative data analysis, it was found that respondents indicated that the majority of primary school principals do motivate educators (see section 5.4.4). Educator participants support the views of respondents in the survey data when their perceptions suggested that primary school principals do motivate educators.

The circuit managers were asked the following questions: *In your opinion, to what extent do primary school principals ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in what they are doing? How do you assist primary schools in motivating educators who are discouraged in their professions?*

The perceptions of the four circuit managers suggested that most primary schools principals ensure that educators are motivated. One circuit manager indicated that the atmosphere in some of his primary schools tells that educators are motivated to work. Only one circuit manager stated that principals do not give motivation sufficient attention.

Every individual has his or her own personal challenges. These challenges have a huge impact on the individuals' performance at work. In chapter two, numerous factors were identified that discourage educators. One of the many responsibilities of leadership is to

demonstrate a pastoral role. In this regard, ensuring that educators are kept motivated in their daily execution of their duties is the responsibility of the principal. Data gathered suggest that even though there are factors that discourage educators, most of the participants (principals, educators and circuit managers) indicate that primary school principals take measures to ensure that educators are and stay motivated in their jobs. This view supports the findings of survey data in section 5.5.3.

#### **6.4.4 Job satisfaction**

One of the objectives of the study was to investigate the role of primary school principals in ensuring that educators are satisfied in their teaching professions. There are a number of factors that contribute towards the dissatisfaction of educators (see section 2.3.4.4). The Limpopo Department of Education has a major role to play in creating environments that are conducive to teaching, but that does not exonerate principals from ensuring that educators remain satisfied. During the interviews, participants reflected on various matters related to job satisfaction. In this section data are presented in two main themes, namely the level of job satisfaction and the measures to ensure an acceptable level of job satisfaction.

##### **6.4.4.1 Level of job satisfaction**

The perceptions of most participants (principals, educators and circuit managers) indicated that principals do try to ensure that educators are and remain job satisfied. All the principal participants conceded that educators complain about various issues regarding teaching. One principal participant raised the issue of the new curriculum. This view was supported by three educator participants who also indicated that they do not understand the new curriculum (NCS). The views of the educator participants on the question: *Are most educators satisfied with their working conditions at this school?*, indicated that educators are satisfied with regard to the distribution of workload. They also indicated that their principals also try to ensure that relations amongst educators at their schools are cordial.

At one school visited, the researcher arrived early in the morning and was given the deputy principal's office to wait for the arrival of the principal. Educators came in the deputy principal's office to sign in the time book. Most educators greeted each other and this gave the researcher an impression that relations at that school seem to be cordial. Shields (2006:76) mentions that the educational leader needs to recognize that relationships are fundamental and intrinsic part of human being. Educators also indicated that, in their experience, the workload of educators is usually evenly distributed.

In supporting the views of the principal and educator participants, some circuit managers also raised the curriculum and lack of sufficient buildings as some of the problems that make educators unhappy.

#### 6.4.4.2 Measures to ensure an acceptable level of job satisfaction

Principal participants were requested to respond to the following: *Educators complain about many issues at their work places. How do you ensure that educators remain satisfied in their work places?*

Most principal participants stated that care is taken to ensure that the workload of educators is evenly distributed. On the issue of interpersonal relations, the views of the principal participants suggested that they do ensure that educators interact cordially in their relationships. One principal participant portrayed the following picture when requested to comment on the issue of interpersonal relations at his school:

*Ah you see, the basic of these interpersonal relations is the value of respect. Respect for various cultures is encouraged because we are a multicultural school. I encourage people to first respect themselves. Those social events I spoke about, like celebrating a birthday of a teacher together assist in building positive interpersonal relations. During breaks we come together, this builds positive relations. Our door as the SMT is open. We encourage them that if there are frustrations with the curriculum, they must openly talk. We are not so rigid with issues of protocol. These small meetings that we normally have are an advantage towards interpersonal relations. We don't have the drifts. We have a*

*sense of belonging. We have an open policy in terms of interpersonal relations. Interpersonally we believe in values such as respect, dignity and equality.*

The views of respondents (see section 5.3.5) indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied in their profession. Data gathered in this section (section 6.4.4) confirm this finding.

With regard to the educator participants, they were requested to give their views on the following question: *What is the principal doing to ensure that educators remain satisfied?* In responding specifically to the issue of understanding the new curriculum and the professional development of educators, most educators indicated that principals do invite outside people to assist. Generally, the views of educators suggested that primary school principals do ensure that they are satisfied in their work environments. These views are in line with the views of the respondents (survey data) who also indicated that primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied in their profession (see section 5.4.5). The Department of Education (2004) mentions that creating conditions for the team to be effective is one of the leadership's responsibilities.

In responding to the question: *Do you think that primary school principals are successful in creating conducive and satisfying working environments?*, most circuit managers interviewed indicated that principals do attempt to create such conditions. One circuit manager sharply differed and responded that very few principals do create environments that are conducive for educators to work in. He commented that:

*If there are any principals who are creating conducive environments, they are very few. Why do I say so? The issues of gross absenteeism and lack of planning are indicating that teachers work in atmospheres that are not conducive. Principals are just not doing anything. Where people are doing as they wish, everything happens. Principals are not implementing policy. They are not enforcing discipline. Educators must know that for any wrongdoing, they will have to face the consequences. You know teachers are working in*

*damaging working atmospheres. The working environments for many primary schools are not conducive.*

The experience of the researcher as a primary school deputy principal has shown that there are challenges with regard to the general working conditions of educators in the area where he is employed. Even though there are factors that make educators dissatisfied, primary school principals try to ensure that educators are not side tracked by such issues. Educators have to understand the core issue of why they are at school. The principal has been charged with the responsibility to ensure that learners receive the best education the school can offer.

The views of the participants suggest that even though educators' working conditions seem problematic in some areas, principals try to ensure that educators remain satisfied. This finding confirms the conclusion deduced in section 5.5.4 that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied in their jobs.

#### **6.4.5 Participative decision-making**

In the literature review in chapter two, the concept participative decision-making was explained (see section 2.3.5). The school is an organization that is constituted by different role players. These role players are critical and contribute towards the effective and efficient operation of the school. Bergman, (1992); Brouillette, (1997); Hart, 1995; Hoy & Tarter, (1993); Coldman et al., (1993); Strike, (1993); in Meyers, Meyers and Gelzheiser (2001) state that shared decision-making has the potential to encourage more democratic school organization to effect important benefits for the schools. Alienating one of these role players from the decision-making processes results in the resistance and the refusal to accept and own decisions taken. In this section, analysis of qualitative data on decision-making was categorized into three themes, namely decision-making strategies, the nature of staff meetings and lack of participative decision-making processes.

#### 6.4.5.1 Decision-making strategies

In determining the role primary school principals play in ensuring that role players are involved in decision-making, principal participants were requested to respond to this question: *To what extent do you involve other role players in decision-making processes?*

The views of the principal participants portray a scenario that presents principals as leaders who consult other role players in the decisions they take. One principal's views were captured as follows:

*Yah, you see, I think that when you have an idea, you must share it with others so that you get a broader base. Seek support and consensus. You must also go to the staff and seek ideas on issues. Seek ideas from different committees. Decision-making in our school is two ways. We go to the educators with the proposals and they also come to us with the ideas. Management will come with the suggestions and the staff makes inputs. The SGB will also be involved. That is how we normally decide on issues.*

Most principal participants indicated that they frequently meet with different role players to get their opinions on various issues affecting their schools. They also indicated that they do allow debates on matters that affect the school. The views of principals give an impression that they do involve other role players in decision-making processes. Their views corroborate the views of the principal respondents who participated in the survey (phase one). The views of these respondents suggested that the majority of primary school principals ensure that role players are involved in decision-making processes (see section 5.3.6). The transformational school leadership model seeks to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than top-down. It attempts to stimulate change through bottom-up participation (Hallinger, 2003:335).

#### 6.4.5.2 The nature of staff meetings

In determining the role of principals in ensuring that principals involve other role players in decision-making processes, educator participants responded to the questions: *Are*

*educators, the SMT and the SGB involved in the decision-making processes? If yes, how? If not, why? What is the principal doing to ensure that role players are involved in the decision-making processes?*

The views of four educator participants who participated in the interviews indicated that principals do involve other role players in decision-making processes. These educator participants' perceptions also suggest that principals hold sufficient meetings with other role players. Most of the educator participants stated that these meetings are normal and agendas are followed. According to some educator participants, robust debates are allowed in different meetings. One educator portrayed a different picture from the other participants. She indicated that her principal does not include other role players in meetings and takes decisions alone. The participant expressed her view as follows:

*As I said before, the issue of the secretary. If you can hire the secretary being alone then you can also fire alone. The SMT was surprised to see the new secretary in the school. The SGB was also not informed. Our SGB is not active, because it is always one person, the chairperson of the SGB. Other members do not attend the meetings. Some of the members withdrew from the SGB because when they have agreed on some issues, the principal alone changes what was agreed upon. One member used to accuse the principal about that issue.*

This view indicates that participative decision-making is a challenge to some schools. In section 5.4.6, quantitative data indicate that respondents' views gave an impression that the majority of primary school principals create platforms for participative decision-making. The views of most educator participants corroborate the finding that emanated from the survey data (see section 5.4.6).

#### 6.4.5.3 Lack of participative decision-making processes

In responding to the question: *To what extent are primary school principals successful in ensuring that decision-making is participative?*, three circuit managers indicated that there are challenges on this issue. One circuit manager indicated that primary schools in



her circuit are dictators and run schools alone. They take decisions alone. She indicated that these principals take advantage of the educators who submit under their authorities. Another circuit manager complained that in some primary schools, principals do not hold staff meetings. He indicated that this is evidenced by the fact that schools do not have minutes to prove that meetings are held.

Three circuit managers complained that not enough meetings are held with different structures. Another circuit manager indicated that language (English) is a barrier that limits participation in staff meetings.

To help resolve some of these problems, some circuit managers indicated that the Department of Education has appointed institutional governance officials to help principals by conducting workshops. These workshops are aimed at assisting the SGBs to participate in governing schools. Some circuit managers also indicated that they do encourage principals to involve all structures in decision-making. Two circuit managers indicated that whenever they hold meetings with principals, they ensure that one SMT member is also invited. Another circuit manager stated that principals are encouraged to submit reports on the procedures they followed in developing policies.

The views of the circuit managers do not corroborate with the finding that the majority of primary school principals do include role players in decision-making processes (see section 5.5.5). The views of the circuit managers suggest that principal and educator participants were inclined to portray principals as leaders who almost always involve role players in decision-making. The views of circuit managers represent a deviation from the common views of both the principal and educator participants. This implies that there are challenges regarding the extent in which principals engage role players in decision-making.

Based on the views of all the participants, particularly educators and principals, it seems primary school principals do involve other role players in the processes of decision-making. The researcher as a primary school deputy principal has observed that primary school principals in the area where he is employed try their best to ensure that educators

are involved in decision-making. This finding confirms the conclusions from the quantitative surveys (see section 5.5.5).

## **6.5 CONCLUSIONS ON QUALITATIVE DATA**

The conclusions that are presented in this section are based on the research questions that guided the investigation. These conclusions are also presented according to the five elements of transformational leadership identified in chapter two (see section 2.3). Before giving each conclusion on each constituting element of the transformational leadership, each research question is repeated.

### **6.5.1 Shared vision**

One of the intentions of this inquiry was to investigate the following research question: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in initiating visions that are shared and owned by other role players?* Data in section 6.4.1 indicate that the views of most participants (educators and principals) show that some primary school principals ensure that other role players are involved in the development of their school visions. This finding confirms the position as indicated in section 5.5.1 that the majority of primary school principals involve other role players in the initiation, development and the definition of the school vision.

Despite the views of the participants above, most circuit managers have identified vision sharing as the problematic area in primary schools in their circuits. The views of the circuit managers led the researcher to the conclusion that the overly positive views of the educators and principals should be regarded with some scepticism. The perceptions of the circuit manager should be taken seriously because they are supposed to closely monitor the progress of the schools they supervise. The following areas were identified as problematic:

- Principals are unable to involve the SGB in the vision development because of their (SGB) level of education.
- The principals deliberately develop school policies alone.

In trying to assist principals in resolving these problems, circuit managers indicated that with regard to the SGBs, the department has appointed institutional governance officials. These governance officials have the duty to ensure that the SGBs are inducted on how to assist in the development of school missions and visions.

### **6.5.2 Commitment**

This empirical study was also intended to determine the extent at which primary school principals as leaders are involved in ensuring that educators are kept motivated. To achieve this intention, the following research question was posed: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in making sure that educators are committed to their profession?* During the interviews, some participants, particularly principals and circuit managers identified areas in which educators demonstrate lack of commitment. Challenges include lack of commitment in participation in sporting activities, late coming and absenteeism. One circuit manager also indicated that lack of educators' commitment manifests in the learners' failure to read and write.

As indicated in section 6.4.2, all the principal participants indicated that they try to ensure that educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities. Some of the principal participants indicated that they involve their SMT members in committing educators. Despite the problems indicated above, the views of educators and principals who participated in the interviews and the researcher's observation lead to the conclusion that the participant school principals do ensure that educators are and remain committed to their professions. This finding corroborates with views of the respondents in section 5.5.2. These respondents indicated that the majority of primary school principal ensure that educators are committed to their responsibilities (see section 5.5.2).

### **6.5.3 Motivation**

The conclusion in this section is given against the backdrop of the research question posed as follows: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators are kept motivated in their profession?* Data indicate that most of the participants (educators, principals and circuit managers) were of the view that

primary school principals do ensure that educators are and remain motivated in their profession (see section 6.4.3). However, one of educator participant complained about favoritism from the side of the principal (see section 6.4.3). One circuit manager also indicated that principals neglect the issue of motivation. The views of most participants in the interviews (principals, educators and circuit managers) support the finding indicated in section 5.5.3, that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators are and remain motivated.

#### **6.5.4 Job satisfaction**

In trying to determine the extent of the involvement of principals in ensuring that educators are satisfied in their profession, the following research question was asked: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession?* Most views of the participants (educators, principals and circuit managers) gave the impression that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied in their profession.

This conclusion does not mean that there are no problems on this issue. Some educators, principals and the circuit managers agreed that the new curriculum (NCS) is problematic to some educators. One circuit manager cited the issue of lack of sufficient buildings as problematic (see section 6.4.4). The conclusion therefore is in line with what was indicated in section 5.5.4. The survey data indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators are and remain satisfied.

#### **6.5.5 Participative decision-making**

This inquiry was also intended to determine the extent at which primary school principals as leaders involve other role players in the decision-making processes. To achieve this objective, the following research question was posed: *To what extent do principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes?* The views of most participants particularly (educators and principals) indicated that they do involve other role players in decision-making processes. One educator complained of her principal. She

indicated that she does not include other role players in decision-making processes. Some circuit managers also indicated that principals take decisions alone. One of the circuit managers went to the extent of calling some of the principals dictators. Despite the problems mentioned, the views of the majority participants (educators and principals in particular) indicated that the majority of principals create opportunities where role players are involved in decision-making processes (see section 5.5.5).

## **6.6 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The rationale for employing qualitative research was to verify the findings of the survey data in chapter five. Through this qualitative research, the researcher had an opportunity to interact with participants. Participants were able to freely and openly respond to the questions posed. The researcher was also able to probe in order to elicit information-rich data from the participants. To a large extent, the participants positively verified the findings of the survey research in chapter five. The inclusion of circuit managers was valuable in the sense that they were able to add value through a more critical stance on the transformational attributes of primary school principals.

The following were identified as some of the limitations of this qualitative investigation:

- Participants mostly tended to portray principals as good leaders. The researcher believes that some participants, in particular educators, did not want to present their principals as school leaders who are unable in many areas of their leadership.
- As indicated in section 6.2, it was sometimes very difficult for the researcher to secure appointments with the circuit managers to conduct the interviews with them.
- In some of the interviews with the participants, there were minor incidences of short interview disruptions.
- The exclusion of the SGB members as important role players was a weakness because their views in the interviews could have contributed in this investigation.

Generally, the qualitative research process was valuable to the study in terms of its rationale. Through it most of the participants positively verified the findings produced from the survey data in chapter five. Simply put, the findings in section 6.5 confirmed the findings in section 5.5.

The following chapter presents a summary of literature and empirical findings, followed by the research conclusions and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

The intention of this study was clearly indicated in both chapters one and four (see sections 1.4.2 and 4.1). This study was based on the assumption that the challenges facing primary schools require the kind of the principals who demonstrate transformational leadership attributes. The rationale for conducting the empirical study was to determine the extent in which aspects of transformational leadership identified (see section 2.3) in chapter two are practiced in the sampled primary schools in Limpopo. It is also appropriate and fundamental at this point to indicate that this study also converged on the critical research questions and research hypotheses indicated in sections 4.2 and 4.3. The summary, conclusions and recommendations are given in this chapter.

#### **7.2 SUMMARY**

It is proper and appropriate at this point to reflect in summary on what was discussed in the previous chapters. Chapter one introduced the entire study. In chapter two, the researcher critiqued literature relevant to this study. The Department of Education (2001) mentioned that since the birth of a democratic new South Africa, the education and training sector has undergone major changes and one of these changes included the way schools in general and their management and governance structures in particular have been repositioned (see section 2.1).

It was also pointed out that the current restructuring initiatives and the demands of the 90s in the education sector necessitated the review of the notion of school leadership. The period after apartheid was characterized by robust educational transformation. The transformation that swept through the entire education system was accompanied by various challenges. The origin of transformational leadership was also unpacked in chapter two. The views of various transformational leadership scholars were interrogated.

The role of transformational leadership in addressing primary school challenges and the transformational leadership model were presented in section 2.4.

Chapter three explored the education systems of South Africa and selected Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states. The structure of the primary education system of South Africa was also presented in this chapter. Focus was also given to challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo (see section 3.4). They were categorized into behavioural, transformational and technical challenges. The history, objectives of education system, the structure and organization and the educational challenges facing Malawi, Namibia and Lesotho were also give in chapter three. The motivation for the need of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in the selected SADC was also explored in this chapter. In chapters five and six, quantitative and qualitative data analyses and interpretations were presented.

This study investigated the extent to which transformational leadership contributes in meeting the challenges primary schools face. Five constituting elements of transformational leadership were identified and the entire study converged on those elements, namely shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making.

This study was based on the assumption that challenges facing primary schools can never be resolved unless primary school principals continuously, consistently and cyclically employ these identified elements (shared vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making) of transformational leadership. Subsequently, the study proposed the transformational leadership model, which was informed by those five identified constituting elements of transformational leadership (see figure 2.1). The following section presents summative reflections on the literature considerations (see chapters two and three) and the crucial findings of the empirical research (both quantitative and qualitative) on each constituting element of transformational leadership.



### **7.2.1 Shared vision**

Creating vision requires commitment from every level of leadership in the school (educators, parents, SMT, and SGB) and the support from the side of the education department. Sharing of goals, values and beliefs by all role players is fundamental and beneficial for schools (see section 2.3.1). In the absence of this commitment, embracing the vision created remains a pie in the sky. Ncube (2002), citing Levin & Lockhead, (1993) mentions that unless effort is devoted to building common vision, confusion for some or many is likely to result. Vision sustains the life of any organization, primary schools included.

In chapters five and six respectively, survey and qualitative data indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that role players are involved in the development of school visions (see sections 5.5.1 and 6.5.1). This finding confirms what was indicated in chapter two by the Department of Education (2004) when it mentioned that principals should always ensure that the vision they develop becomes “our vision” by consulting widely. Research data have also pointed some challenges with regard to school visions (see sections 5.5.1 and 6.4.1).

### **7.2.2 Commitment**

The principal as the leader of the school should ensure that all his or her subordinates are committed to their responsibilities. The *National Centre for Education Studies* (1997:2) mentions that the degree of educator commitment is one of the most important aspects of the performance and quality of the school staff. It emerged from literature study that the integrity of the organization is measured by the amount of commitment the employees give to the organization (see section 2.3.2). Some of the challenges related to lack of commitment identified during literature study were absenteeism, late coming and early departure by educators.

The findings from survey data (see section 5.5.2) indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators are and remain committed. Qualitative data

(see section 6.5.2) confirmed the findings of survey data that the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are committed to their work. In accordance with the finding above, Hallinger (2003:335) observed that transformational school leadership creates the conditions in which subordinates are committed (see section 2.2.4). Despite this finding, data from both survey research and qualitative data suggested that some educators do demonstrate lack of commitment (see sections 5.5.2 and 6.4.2.1).

### **7.2.3 Motivation**

From literature study, it emerged that motivation is vital in ensuring that the schools' objectives are achieved (see section 2.3.3). It is the responsibility of the principal as the ultimate leader at school level to ensure that educators are kept motivated. In chapter two (see section 2.3.3), Bennell, (2004:8) observed that the key issues of educator motivation have been ignored all together for a long time now, and there appears to be mounting concerns that unacceptably high proportions of educators working in public schools are poorly motivated. During literature study, factors that contribute towards educator discouragement were identified (see section 2.3.3). They included the scourge of HIV/AIDS, the financial dept trap in which educators find themselves and poor leadership.

Both survey and qualitative data indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators are motivated despite the factors that discourage them (see sections 5.5.3 and 6.5.3). The findings from the empirical research contradict the assertion made by Bennell that principals do not give motivation the attention it deserves (see sections 5.5.3 and 6.5.3).

### **7.2.4 Job satisfaction**

In section 2.3.4.4, factors that determine job satisfaction were identified. They included educators' workload, remuneration package, interpersonal relations and the general working conditions. It emerged during literature study that when these factors are not

properly attended to, educators become dissatisfied. Empirical research (both survey and qualitative data) indicated that there appear to be problems with regard to the issue of job satisfaction (see section 5.5.4 and 6.4.4.1). This finding confirms Bishbay's (1996:147) assertion that even though educators are arguably the most important group of professionals for the nations' development, it is disturbing to find that many of them (educators) are dissatisfied with their jobs (see section 2.3.4). Despite the challenges identified by the respondents, both survey and qualitative data suggested that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied at their schools.

#### **7.2.5 Participative decision-making**

Decision-making is one of the fundamental and challenging aspects of leadership. Decision-making is the heartbeat of every organization. Every decision an organization takes results either in organizational progress or organizational retrogression. It was indicated in chapter two that leadership should attempt to create opportunities where subordinates are able to participate in decision-making processes. Squelch (2003:143) mentioned that leaders who are able to develop decision-making structures and processes promote rather than hinder meaningful participation and collaboration (see section 2.3.5).

Through literature study, it was discovered that traditionally, principals relied on the top-down style of leadership. This system of leadership was exclusive in nature because principals were the sole decision makers. Hallinger (2004:68) argues that principals naturally expected their orders to be followed with relatively little discussion. Evidence gathered through both survey and qualitative data suggested that even though there appear to be challenges on this issue (see sections 5.5.5 and 6.4.5.3), the majority of primary school principals seem to create opportunities where role players are involved in decision-making processes. This finding does not support the traditional approach as referred to by Hallinger (2004) above.

In section 2.2.4, it was indicated that leading transformation in schools is a complex and a challenging endeavour (Caldwell, 2004:82). The present day educators and circumstances

surrounding primary schools do not make matters easy for school leadership. In section 3.4, challenges that are faced by primary schools were presented. These challenges included absenteeism, late coming and lack of new curriculum understanding, early departure by educators. Both surveys and qualitative researches also pointed to the fact that there are serious challenges that primary schools encounter.

The rationale for undertaking this study was to investigate the role of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo. Empirical evidence (both surveys and qualitative data) suggests that transformational leadership exhibits weaknesses in some areas. These are problem areas in which attention is needed. These problem areas include late coming, absenteeism, unmotivated educators, the new curriculum and lack of consultation in decision-making (see sections 5.5 and 6.5). A number of respondents and participants in both survey and qualitative researches identified these challenges in all the five transformational leadership elements.

Despite the problem areas identified, empirical research (both surveys and qualitative study) attested to the fact that the majority of primary school principals do create opportunities where role players are involved in vision crafting and participate in decision-making. Both data sets (quantitative and qualitative) indicate that most primary school principals do ensure that educators are and remain committed, motivated and job satisfied. This demonstrates the strengths of transformational leadership. Based on the successes achieved by the majority of primary school principals regarding the identified elements of transformational leadership and as a result of the findings above (see sections 5.5. and 6.4), generally, transformational leadership does play a significant role in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo.

### **7.3 CONCLUSIONS**

This section presents the final conclusions based on each constituting element of transformational leadership. The conclusions are given against the backdrop of the findings from literature and the empirical studies (both quantitative and qualitative research) conducted. During literature study, challenges facing primary schools were

identified. These challenges were classified into technical, behavioural and transformational challenges. Challenges facing primary schools were also identified during the empirical study (see sections 5.5 and 6.5). These challenges included the following: lack of commitment, absenteeism, late coming, not understanding the new curriculum and others (see sections 5.5 and 6.5).

Literature and empirical research indicated that in meeting the challenges facing primary schools, the majority of primary school principals ensure that the processes of vision crafting and decision-making are inclusive, educators are committed, motivated and job satisfied. The conclusions are presented in accordance with the five constituting elements of transformational leadership identified in section 2.3. Before giving the conclusions, the research question and sub-questions that were posed in sections 1.3.1 and 1.3.2 are restated as follows:

- What are the most serious challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo?
- What is transformational leadership?
- What is the role of transformational school leadership with regard to the following: school vision, commitment, motivation, job satisfaction and participative decision-making?
- Which recommendations can be made regarding transformational leadership in South African primary schools?

### **7.3.1 Shared vision**

The researcher indicated that any organization that operates without a well-considered, robust and inclusive vision would be unable to achieve its objectives (see section 2.3.1). To establish the role of principals in ensuring that educators are included in the process of developing the school vision, the study explored the research question: *To what extent are primary school principals involved in initiating visions that are shared and owned by other role players?*

Data from the survey in chapter five indicated that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that role players are involved in the initiation, definition and the development of primary school visions (see section 5.5.1). Qualitative research findings supported the views of respondents in chapter five (see section 6.4.1.1). When the majority of primary school principals share their visions with other role players, this demonstrates that they (primary school principals) are transformational in the daily execution of their leadership responsibilities. This conclusion vindicates Hallinger's (2003: 330) assertion that transformational leadership is distributed in the sense that it focuses on shared vision.

### **7.3.2 Commitment**

Educators are professionals and should portray high work ethics. It is a disgrace to see educators exhibiting behaviours that do not promote professionalism. Teaching used to be a profession respected by members of the community. Educators should model positive behaviours that will holistically develop learners to become future responsible citizens. In investigating the role of primary school principals in meeting the challenge, namely lack of commitment, the following research question was asked: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in making sure that educators remain committed to their profession?*

Data gathered through both the quantitative survey and qualitative research (see sections 5.5.2 and 6.4.2.2) point to the fact that primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities. Based on the evidence from both survey and qualitative data, it appears that the majority of primary school principals exhibit transformational leadership traits. This confirms the assertion that transformational leaderships' direct effect is employee commitment (Nguni et al. 2006:146).

### **7.3.3 Motivation**

Educators are confronted with issues that discourage them on a day-to-day execution of their responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that despite the

factors that discourage educators, teaching continues. Motivation to educators is like the fuel that keeps the locomotive engine running. Mampuru (2001:58) mentions that organizations succeed and progress only when they have succeeded in motivating and developing their workers.

In determining the role of principals in motivating educators, the following research question was posed: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators are kept motivated?* The views of respondents and participants in both sections 5.5.3 and 6.4.3 suggested that despite some minor challenges, the majority of primary school principals ensure that educators are and remain motivated. On the basis of the above finding, the majority of primary school principals reflect transformational leadership tendencies.

#### **7.3.4 Job satisfaction**

When conditions at schools are not suitable, educators complain. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that educators work under conditions that are suitable. To determine the role of principals in this regard, the following research question was asked: *To what extent are primary school principals as leaders involved in ensuring that educators remain satisfied in their profession?*

Data in both sections 5.5.4 and 6.4.4 provided enough evidence to conclude that the majority of primary school principals do ensure that educators remain satisfied in their professions. Because of this conclusion, most primary school principals are seemingly transformational in their leadership approaches.

#### **7.3.5 Participative decision-making**

In determining the role of principals in ensuring that role players are involved in decision-making processes, the following research question was posed: *To what extent do principals involve other role players in the decision-making processes?* Evidence

gathered from both survey and qualitative data suggested that even though there appear to be challenges on this issue (see sections 5.5.5 and 6.4.5.3), the majority of primary school principals do create opportunities where role players are involved in decision-making processes. This conclusion implies that many primary school principals demonstrate transformational leadership traits. Hallinger (2003:335) mentions that the transformational school leadership model seeks to influence people by building from the bottom-up rather than top-down.

The rationale for conducting this empirical study was to determine the extent to which aspects of transformational leadership identified in chapter two are practiced in the sampled primary schools in Limpopo (see section 4.1). The views of respondents gathered through survey data (both principals and educators) (see sections 5.3 and 5.4) indicated that there is a significant relationship (in terms of descriptive statistics) between identified leadership emphases in Limpopo primary schools and the key features of transformational leadership. This means that the researcher hypothesis (see section 4.3) has thus been confirmed.

#### **7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Data from both the surveys and positively verified by qualitative empirical research tended to portray positive scenarios that projected the majority of primary school principals as leaders who exhibit attributes that correspond with all the five identified elements of transformational leadership. However, there were also problematic areas identified. These challenges cut across all the five constituting elements of transformational leadership (see sections 5.5 and 6.4).

The recommendations below are presented in accordance with the five transformational leadership elements indicated throughout this study. The researcher believes that the recommendations presented in this section will contribute towards the resolution of the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo. These recommendations are intended to assist the policy makers in resolving the problems (see sections 5.5 and 6.4) bedeviling



primary schools and secondly, to further capacitate primary school principals in the area of transformational leadership.

#### **7.4.1 Shared vision**

Data from both survey and qualitative researches suggested that there are some areas where primary schools encounter problems with regard to school visions. Most of the circuit managers indicated that primary school principals do not share their visions with other role players (see section 6.4.1.2). Some of the educators' views also gave the impression that there are some areas related to school vision that are problematic (see section 5.5.1). The researcher believes that schools can only find the purposes of their existence when they have strongly established shared visions. This study proposes the following recommendations:

*1. At the circuit level, the circuit manager in conjunction with the appointed deputy managers for institutional governance should once a year (beginning of second semester) organize joint induction workshops for both the SMT and SGB members in their respective circuits.*

The brief of these induction workshops should be:

- To intensively engage primary schools on the development of their school visions.
- To prepare primary schools to be able to develop their individual school visions before the end of the year in preparation for the coming year.

The researcher as a primary school deputy principal has observed that a gap exists between educators, the SMT, the SGB and the circuit office. Because of this gap, schools find it difficult to develop visions with common objectives that are aimed at quality teaching. Sufficient meetings should be coordinated amongst these structures at circuit level.

***2. At the school level, this study recommends that primary school principals facilitate frequent school-based meetings between the SMT and the SGB. The objectives of these joint meetings should be:***

- To ensure that all these structures consistently speak with one voice.
- To narrow the gap between the SGB and the SMT members.
- To evaluate whether school visions shared have been actualized or not.

***3. The circuit manager as the administrative head of the schools in his/her circuit and the deputy managers as the governance section heads should ensure that frequent school-based meetings between the SMT and SGB are afforded maximum support.***

The rationale for ensuring that joint meetings are held at school level is the same as that of the meetings arranged by the circuit office above.

#### **7.4.2 Commitment**

With regard to commitment, both survey and qualitative data indicated that there are areas where educators do not show commitment in their professions (see sections 5.5.2 and 6.4.2.1). Principals as accounting officers have to ensure that educators are committed to their responsibilities. During the interviews, circuit managers indicated that some of the principals fail to ensure that educators are committed to their duties (see section 6.4.2.3).

The study proposes that:

***4. Primary school principals should, after having identified uncommitted educators, organize school based intensive ethics workshops conducted by the officials from the education department.***

The rationale for the recommendation above is to support and develop educators professionally and to remind them of their professional responsibilities as educators.

***5. This study recommends that principals be given extra powers to ensure that educators who continuously engage in gross misconduct are disciplined. These powers should include powers to suspend educators who under perform. Currently, these powers are located either at district or head office.***

There are instances where educators come to school drunk and the researcher as a deputy primary school principal has experienced a situation where quite a number of educators conducted themselves in manners that do not promote professionalism. These measures will assist principals in ensuring that educators are committed to their responsibilities.

#### **7.4.3 Motivation**

With regard to educator motivation, the study proposes the following:

***6. Each circuit should establish its own local EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) office manned by one professional psychologist who will assist educators who need specialized assistance.***

The rationale for the establishment of local circuit EAP's is to try to bring this important directorate next to the educators where access will be easy. Currently, it is situated in the district office and experience has shown that it is very difficult for educators to receive specialized professional assistance. To make matters worse, this directorate has a limited number of staff members who do not cope with the demands of the entire district.

***7. Once every year, the circuit office should encourage primary schools to take part in celebrating educators' international day. Educators who excelled should be publicly appreciated during these celebrations.***

Educators' international day is celebrated every year through out the world. This day was specifically selected to recognize the contributions educators make in their communities. The researcher as a deputy principal of a primary school has observed that this day is not given special attention. If educators can be recognized on this special day, the researcher believes that educators will be motivated.

***8. Primary school principals should give educators who perform extra ordinarily incentives in the form of certificates of recognition and tokens of appreciation (e.g trophies or gifts).***

When educators are appreciated, they will be motivated further. When educators receive such gifts, this will motivate educators who are not encouraged to work harder.

#### **7.4.4 Job satisfaction**

Literature study and research data indicated that there are a number of factors that make educators complain in their work places. Data from both survey (see section 5.5.4) and qualitative researches (see section 6.4.4.1) indicated that there are primary school principals who face challenges on the issue of educators' job satisfaction. This study proposes the following:

***9. The Limpopo Education Department should embark on a strategic and comprehensive plan of action to urgently address classroom shortages.***

This recommendation is motivated by the fact that in section 3.4.3, it was indicated that in one school, learners attend lessons in horse stables. Some circuit manager participants confirmed the problem of lacking classroom facilities during the interviews (see section 6.4.4.1). The researcher as a primary school deputy principal observed that some of the primary schools around the area where he is employed have insufficient classrooms. Some of these schools have an average of sixty learners per classroom.

***10. Primary school principals should initiate continuous, vigorous and informative school based curriculum enrichment workshops.***

The recommendation above is motivated by the fact that in section 3.4.2, one of the challenges identified was lack of understanding of the new National Curriculum Statement. Participants also raised this matter as problematic during the interviews (see section 6.4.4.1).

**7.4.5 Participative decision-making**

The views of some of the respondents in the study show that there are challenges in some areas of decision-making in primary schools (see sections 5.5.5 and 6.4.5.3). One circuit manager indicated that some principals take decisions alone without including role players and as a result, the study recommends that:

***11. Primary school principals should establish joint decision-making structures that are represented by educators, the SGB and SMT members.***

These structures should always meet when critical decisions that affect role players (SGB, SMT and educators) are taken and should ensure that decisions taken are cascaded down to educators and parents. The rationale for this proposal is that in section 6.4.5.3, circuit managers complained that principals do not involve role players in decisions at their schools. This proposal is further motivated by the views of one educator interviewed who indicated that at her school, the SGB has disintegrated and the school is governed by the chairperson only.

***12. The National Department of Education should consider using the proposed Transformational School Leadership Model (see figure 2.1) as a guideline when inducting South African primary school principals.***

During the empirical studies (see sections 5.5.and 6.4), participants indicated instances where some primary school principals did not reflect transformational leadership traits. In

inducting the new primary school principals, transformational school leadership model should be used as a guideline because empirical data indicated that the majority of primary schools principals who exhibit transformational leadership attributes are significantly able to deal with the challenges facing their schools.

In the researchers' view, this study produced practical and detailed recommendations that can be used as guidelines in resolving some of the challenges facing primary schools. The recommendations given dealt with each of the identified constitutive elements of transformational leadership. The recommendations given were motivated by findings of both literature and empirical studies. This chapter presented the summary and the conclusions that emanated from the findings of the literature study, the survey and qualitative researches.

The findings of this study were used to respond to the research questions and the hypotheses raised in chapters one and four (see sections 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 4.2 and 4.3). The findings of the study were further used to state the recommendations. These recommendations should not be perceived as an end towards the resolution of the problems in primary schools, but as part of the solution to the problems facing primary schools.

## **7.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

The aim of this inquiry was to determine the role of transformational leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools. The researcher identified five constituting elements of transformational leadership and used those elements to focus the study (see section 2.1). Through the in-depth literature study and the empirical inquiry, significant discoveries have been made.

This inquiry is significant and valuable for various reasons. Through this study, the challenges facing primary schools have been identified (see section 3.4). The study was able to provide recommendations that can serve as the guidelines for overcoming the challenges identified. These recommendations will further help policy makers when

taking decisions on matters related to challenges facing primary schools. The study is also significant because it contributed by adding more knowledge on issues related to school leadership through the proposed transformational school leadership model (see figure 2.1).

This inquiry provided an African perspective on the potential role of transformational leadership on the challenges facing primary schools. Nguni et al. (2006:170) stated that most empirical evidence on the effects of transformational leadership has been confined to the Western world rather than in the developing world, including Africa (see section 1.5). It is trusted that this research will serve as a cornerstone for further research on transformational school leadership. The researcher trusts that this study could assist future researchers in investigating problem areas which were identified in this research as transformational leadership challenges (e.g educators' commitment and professional ethics) in more depth.

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**Appendix A**

P. O. Box 4325

Modimolle

0510

2008-07-01

Enq: Khumalo SS

E-mail: shuti.khumalo@vodamail.co

Cell:0846134257

The Head of Department

Limpopo Education Department

Private Bag X 9489

Polokwane

0700

Sir/Madam

**RE: Application for conducting research in Limpopo: Waterberg District**

I am currently doing a Ded. in Management with Unisa. I have to embark on empirical study (very soon) where I am expected to collect data from circuit managers, principals and educators. I will be using questionnaires and interviews to collect data.

My research topic is: **The role of transformational leaders in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo.** I have randomly and purposely sampled a number of schools, educators, principals and circuit managers in Waterberg district.

I am mindful of the fact that ethics are part of research and commit myself to observe issues of confidentiality and the rights of respondents. I am also willing to share the findings with the Department.

I hope that my request will be speedily considered.

Sincerely yours

---

**Appendix B**

P. O. Box 4325

Modimolle

0510

2008-04-15

The Circuit Manager

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sir/Madam

RE: Permission to conduct research in your circuit

I am currently doing a Ded. in Management with Unisa. I have to embark on empirical study where I am expected to collect data from circuit managers, principals and educators. I have requested permission from head office and attached find their response.

My research topic is: **The role of transformational leaders in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo.** I have randomly and purposely sampled a number of schools and respondents in Limpopo.

I am mindful of the fact that ethics are part of research and commit myself to observe issues of confidentiality and the rights of respondents.

I hope that my request will be speedily considered.

Sincerely your

\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix C**

P. O. Box 4325

Modimolle

0510

2008-04-15

The Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Sir/Madam

**RE: Permission to conduct research in \_\_\_\_\_ primary school**

I am currently doing a Ded. in Management with Unisa. I have to embark on empirical study where I am expected to collect data from circuit managers, principals and educators. I have requested permission from head office and the circuit manager and attached find their responses.

My research topic is: **The role of transformational leaders in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo.** I have randomly and purposely sampled a number of schools and respondents in Limpopo.

I am mindful of the fact that ethics are part of research and commit myself to observe issues of confidentiality and the rights of respondents.

I hope that my request will be speedily considered.

Sincerely your

\_\_\_\_\_

Khumalo SS

## Appendix D

### INFORMED CONSENT

#### THE ROLE OF TRANSFORMATIONAL SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN MEETING CHALLENGES FACING PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Researcher: Khumalo SS

University of South Africa

Promoter: Prof. Kamper GD

I \_\_\_\_\_ have volunteered to participate in a study being conducted by the above listed investigator. The overall study design will require that the above listed researcher interview me. The research protocol will include the following procedures:

#### 1. Answering interview questions

I will be required to answer interview questions relating to the purpose of the study.

#### 2. Confidentiality

I understand that the information provided by this study may be used for research purposes. All individual information will be coded and at no time will my personal identity be revealed.

#### 3. Voluntary Participation

I understand that participation in this study is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty. I may terminate my participation at any time I choose, without penalty. I understand that I may withdraw from participation at any point in the study with no penalty.

#### **4. Termination of Participation**

My participation in this research may be terminated if I do not adhere to the study protocol. The termination will transpire if I do not show up for the interview.

#### **5. Benefits of Participation**

The benefits of participating in this study are: My participation will shed light on the problem in question which may guide the investigator in his investigation.

#### **6. Liability**

I have voluntarily agreed to participate in this study. I release the involved researcher from any liability that I may suffer while participating in this research study, or subsequently occurring in connection with the study.

#### **7. Person to contact with Questions**

I understand that the principal researcher in this study is Khumalo SS and that I may contact him if I have any additional questions.

#### **8. Consent to participate**

I certify that I have read all of the above information and have received satisfactory answers to any questions that I asked. I willingly give my consent to participate in this research study.

Participant's name (print)                      Date\_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature                         Date\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix E**

P. O. Box 4325  
Modimolle  
0510

Sir/Madam

**REQUEST TO COMPLETE THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR A DOCTORAL RESEARCH**

I am currently a PhD student with Unisa. I am investigating the **role of transformational school leadership in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo**. You have been sampled to assist in the completion of the attached questionnaires. I have secured permission from the Head of Department to conduct the study (Attached to this is the permission letter from the HOD). The study will be of great value to the Province of Limpopo and the country at large.

I therefore request you to **PLEASE** answer this questionnaire honestly, objectively and as soon as possible and return it to your circuit office through your principal where I will personally come and collect it. Your failure to respond and return this questionnaire will limit the expected number of respondents and will therefore put the entire study in jeopardy. Please ensure that all questions are completed. Where you feel that your opinion has not been completely catered for, select the option that is closest to it.

I am aware of research ethics that must be observed and promise to respect them. The researcher will therefore ensure that your confidentiality and anonymity are respected. Do not in any event write your name on this questionnaire.

Thanking you in advance for the prompt cooperation

Faithfully yours

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## Appendix F

			V1 3
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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRINCIPALS

**IMPORTANT:** The purpose of this research is to investigate the role of principals in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo. For this study to be successful, your cooperation and honesty in answering questions will be appreciated. These questionnaires are anonymous and confidentiality will be safeguarded. In each question, follow the instructions carefully in answering. Make sure that all questions are answered. Thanking you in advance.

#### 1. Gender

**Encircle** the number provided in the blocks to indicate your gender.

Gender		For office use only	
Male	<b>1</b>	V2	4
Female	<b>2</b>		

#### 2. Years of experience

**Encircle** the number provided in the blocks to indicate your experience as principal.

Years of experience		For office use only	
1-10	<b>1</b>	V3	5
11-20	<b>2</b>		
21-30	<b>3</b>		
31 plus	<b>4</b>		

#### 3. Age approximation

**Encircle** the number provided in the blocks to indicate your age.

Age approximation		For office use only	
25-35	<b>1</b>	V4	6
36-45	<b>2</b>		
46-56	<b>3</b>		
57 plus	<b>4</b>		

#### 4. Qualifications

Encircle the number provided in the blocks to indicate your highest completed qualification.

Qualifications		For office use only
Teachers' certificate	1	V5 7
Teachers' diploma	2	
First degree	3	
Honours degree	4	
Masters' degree	5	
Doctoral ' degree	6	

5. From the group of statements below, in each case, select **ONE OPTION** that conforms with your opinion by **ENCIRCLING** the number in the blocks provided.

5.1 (Encircle ONE number only)		For office use only
Defining the school's vision is the leader's sole effort.	1	V6 8
Defining the school's vision is a team effort.	2	

5.2 (Encircle ONE number only)		For office use only
The principal should develop the school's vision with other role players (educators, SMT and SGB).	1	V7 9
The principal should develop the school's vision alone.	2	

5.3 (Encircle ONE number only)		For office use only
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of the principal.	1	V8 10
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of the SMT.	2	
Goal setting is mainly the responsibility of all role players (SMT, SGB and parents).	3	

5.4 (Encircle ONE number only)		For office use only
School policy development is mainly the responsibility of the principal.	<b>1</b>	V9 11
School policy development is mainly the responsibility of the SMT.	<b>2</b>	
School policy development is the responsibility of all role players (SMT, SGB and parents).	<b>3</b>	

6. From the group of statements below, select **ONE OPTION** in each case by **ENCIRCLING** the number in the blocks provided.

6.1 Encircle ONE of the following numbers to indicate YOUR EMPHASIS in dealing with educators who are inclined to come late.		For office use only
I discourage educators who come late.	<b>1</b>	V10 12
I discipline educators who come late.	<b>2</b>	
I remind educators who come late of their responsibilities.	<b>3</b>	

6.2 Encircle ONE of the following numbers to indicate YOUR EMPHASIS in dealing with educators who are inclined to absent themselves without reasons.		For office use only
I discourage educators who absent themselves without reasons.	<b>1</b>	V11 13
I discipline educators who absent themselves without reasons.	<b>2</b>	
I remind educators who absent themselves without reason of their responsibilities.	<b>3</b>	

7. Indicate the level of educator commitment in your school by **ENCIRCLING** one of the following numbers in the blocks provided: **1= all, 2=most 3=about half, 4=few and 5=none**

Item	1	2	3	4	5	For office use only
Educators come early to school.	1	2	3	4	5	V12 15
Educators remain at school until after school.	1	2	3	4	5	V13 15
Educators' teaching performance is satisfactory.	1	2	3	4	5	V14 16
Educators accept the goals and objectives of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	V15 17
Educators inspire learners.	1	2	3	4	5	V16 18
Educators are committed to their profession.	1	2	3	4	5	V17 19
Educators are frequently absent.	1	2	3	4	5	V18 20
Educators are frequently absent.	1	2	3	4	5	V18 20

8. **Rank order** the items below by inserting the numbers **1-5** in the blocks provided. 1= **strongest** emphasis, **highest** priority. **Ensure that all the 5 blocks provided are inserted with numbers 1- 5**, according to your order of emphasis.

Aspects of my leadership approach in order of emphasis	For office use only
Appreciating the efforts of educators.	V19 21
Disciplining educators who are not committed.	V20 22
Writing personal notes for excellent work done.	V21 23
Discouraging non-commitment from educators.	V22 24
Charging educators who are not committed with misconduct.	V23 25

**9. Rank order** the items below by inserting the numbers **1-6** in the blocks provided to describe your leadership characteristics in order of emphasis. 1= **strongest** emphasis, **highest** priority. **Ensure that all the 6 blocks provided are inserted with numbers 1-6**, according to your order of emphasis.

Aspects of my leadership characteristics in order of emphasis		For office use only
Reporting educators who are not committed to the circuit manager.		V24 26
Considering educators as important part of the team.		V25 27
Consoling educators with personal problems.		V26 28
Strongly speaking against laziness of educators.		V27 29
Verbally thanking educators who are committed.		V28 30
Ensuring that educators who are not committed are transferred to others schools by the Department of Education.		V29 31

**10. Rank order** the items below by inserting the numbers **1-5** in the blocks provided. 1= **strongest** emphasis, **highest** priority. **Ensure that all the 5 blocks provided are inserted with numbers 1- 5**, according to your order of emphasis.

Aspects of my leadership practice in order of emphasis		For office use only
Distributing workload equally among educators.		V30 32
Ensuring that educators are busy the entire day.		V31 33
Creating opportunities for the professional development of educators.		V32 34
Maintaining a distance from staff members.		V33 35
Discouraging educators from forming cliques.		V34 36

**11. Rank order** the items below by inserting the numbers **1-5** in the blocks provided. 1= **strongest** emphasis, **highest** priority. **Ensure that all the 5 blocks provided are inserted with numbers 1- 5**, according to your order of emphasis.

Aspects of my leadership practices in order of emphasis		For office use only
Ensuring that educators account for low performance.		V35 37
Attending to collegial staff relations.		V36 38
Encouraging good relationships among educators.		V37 39
Motivating educators to work hard even if some teaching aids are not there.		V38 40
Ensuring that educators who are in conflict with each other are not sharing tasks.		V39 41

12. Indicate the frequency in which meetings are held with different role players in your school by **ENCIRCLING ONE** of the following numbers in the blocks provided. **1 = seldom, 2 = often and 3 = mostly.**

Role players	1	2	3	For office use only
SGB	1	2	3	V40 42
SMT	1	2	3	V41 43
Educators	1	2	3	V42 44
General parent body	1	2	3	V43 45
SGB and educators	1	2	3	V44 46
SGB, parents and educators	1	2	3	V45 47

13. In each of the following pairs of statements, **ENCIRCLE** the number provided in the block to indicate the involvement of role players in school matters.

13.1 SGB (Encircle ONE number only)		For office use only
General school matters.	1	V46 48
Selected school matters only.	2	

<b>13.2 SMT (Encircle ONE option only)</b>		<b>For office use only</b>
General school matters.	<b>1</b>	V47 49
Selected school matters only.	<b>2</b>	

<b>13.3 Educators (Encircle ONE option only)</b>		<b>For office use only</b>
General school matters.	<b>1</b>	V48 50
Selected school matters only.	<b>2</b>	

<b>13.4 Parents (Encircle ONE option only)</b>		<b>For office use only</b>
General school matters.	<b>1</b>	V49 51
Selected school matters only.	<b>2</b>	

**14. Indicate the characteristics that best describe your meetings by ENCIRCLING the number in the blocks provided. Selecting from: 1= mostly, 2= often and 3= seldom.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>For office use only</b>
Staff meetings are dominated by giving instructions.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V50 52
Role players (SMT, SGB and parents) are part of decision-making.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V51 53
Robust debates of issues characterize staff meetings.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V52 54
Vocal educators dominate the staff meetings.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V53 55
Decision taking is limited to the SMT.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V54 56
Participation in staff meetings is minimal.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	V55 57

**Thank you for your cooperation**

## Appendix G

			V1	3
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### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

**IMPORTANT:** The purpose of this research is to investigate the leadership role of the principal in meeting the challenges facing primary schools in Limpopo. For this study to be successful, your cooperation and honesty in answering questions will be appreciated. The questionnaires are anonymous and confidentiality will be safeguarded. To indicate your opinion, **encircle the number in the appropriate block provided**, do not mark with X or a tick. Make sure that all questions are answered. **Select only one option from each statement given.** Thanking you in advance.

**1. From the statements below, select one to express your opinion. 1= Always, 2= most of the time, 3= sometimes, 4= rarely and 5= never.**

Item	1	2	3	4	5	For office use only	
The principal does planning in advance.	1	2	3	4	5	V2	4
School goals are clear.	1	2	3	4	5	V3	5
School goals are achievable	1	2	3	4	5	V4	6
Methods to achieve school goals are effective.	1	2	3	4	5	V5	7
The school has an effective academic programme.	1	2	3	4	5	V6	8
What has been planned is successfully implemented.	1	2	3	4	5	V7	9
Educators know what is expected from them.	1	2	3	4	5	V8	10
The development of policy documents includes all role players (SMT, SGB and parents).	1	2	3	4	5	V9	11
Educators support the vision of the school.	1	2	3	4	5	V10	12
Shared vision takes the school forward.	1	2	3	4	5	V11	13
Vision ensures that resources are effectively utilised.	1	2	3	4	5	V12	14



**2. Select one option to express your opinion.**

**1 = never**

**2= rarely**

**3= sometimes**

**4= frequently**

**5= almost always.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>For office use only</b>
The principal effectively motivates educators to be on time.	1	2	3	4	5	V13 15
The principal effectively discourages absenteeism.	1	2	3	4	5	V14 16
The principal motivates educators to teach according to the new curriculum.	1	2	3	4	5	V15 17
The principal motivates all educators to be involved in school sports.	1	2	3	4	5	V16 18
The principal rewards committed educators for their efforts.	1	2	3	4	5	V17 19
The principal encourages educators to give learners feedback on time.	1	2	3	4	5	V18 20
The principal encourages educators to be creative.	1	2	3	4	5	V19 21
The principal encourages educators to remain after school to assist in extra curricular activities.	1	2	3	4	5	V20 22
The principal encourages educators to work harder.	1	2	3	4	5	V21 23

**3. Indicate your opinion by choosing from the statements below.**

**1= always**

**2= most of the time**

**3= sometimes**

**4= rarely**

**5= never.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>For office use only</b>	
The principal considers me as part of the staff.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V22	24
My principal shows concern with regard to my personal circumstances.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V23	25
The principal thanks me for a job well done.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V24	26
It is easy to confide to my principal when faced with problems.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V25	27
The attitude of the principal encourages me.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V26	28
The principal treats all educators equally.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V27	29
The principal creates an enabling working environment for educators.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V28	30
The principal gives educators feedback about their performance.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V29	31
The principal sympathizes with educators who are sick.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	V30	32

**4. From the following statements, select one option from those given.**

**1 = not at all**

**2 = hardly ever**

**3 = sometimes**

**4 = mostly**

**5= always**

Item	1	2	3	4	5	For office use only
The principal encourages teamwork.	1	2	3	4	5	V31 33
The principal discourages gossip at school.	1	2	3	4	5	V32 34
The principal encourages good interpersonal relationships amongst educators.	1	2	3	4	5	V33 35
The principal apologises when he/she has wronged educators.	1	2	3	4	5	V34 36
I have a good relationship with most educators.	1	2	3	4	5	V35 37
I have a good relationship with the principal.	1	2	3	4	5	V36 38
The principal encourages me to continue with my career as an educator.	1	2	3	4	5	V37 39
The principal encourages me to be creative in acquiring teaching aids.	1	2	3	4	5	V38 40
The principal distributes work equally.	1	2	3	4	5	V39 41
The principal ensures that educators work in a safe environment.	1	2	3	4	5	V40 42
The principal respects all the educators at school.	1	2	3	4	5	V41 43

5. To what extent are the following statements applicable to your principal with regard to involving educators in decision-making? Select only one option.

**1= strongly agree**

**2= agree**

**3= not sure**

**4= disagree**

**5= strongly disagree.**

<b>Item</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>For office use only</b>
The principal involves me in the decision-making processes.	1	2	3	4	5	V42 44
The principal adequately informs me about every decision that is taken.	1	2	3	4	5	V43 45
The principal involves educators in the allocation of responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	V44 46
The principal allows debates about important issues during school meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	V45 47
The principal involves all role players (SMT, SGB and parents) in the decision-making.	1	2	3	4	5	V46 48

**Thank you for your cooperation**

**INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR PRINCIPALS**

**Introductory question**

- Briefly tell me about yourself, your teaching experience and how long you have been with this school.

**Shared vision**

- To what extent do you ensure that role players such as educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?

**Commitment**

- As the principal of this school, how do you ensure that all the educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities as professionals?

**Motivation**

- How do you ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in the daily pursuance of their responsibilities?

**Job satisfaction**

- Educators complain about many issues at their work places. How do you ensure that educators remain satisfied in their work places?

**Participative decision-making**

- To what extent do you involve other role players in decision-making processes?

## Appendix I

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR EDUCATORS

#### Introductory question

- Briefly tell me about yourself, your teaching experience and how long you have been with this school.

#### Shared vision

- In your opinion, do you think that your principal is willing to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?

#### Commitment

- Are the majority of educators committed to this school? Please elaborate.

#### Motivation

Are the majority of educators at this school motivated? Please elaborate

#### Job satisfaction

- Are most educators satisfied with their working conditions at this school? If yes, what satisfies them? If not, why are they not satisfied? What is the principal doing to ensure that educators remain satisfied?

#### Participative decision-making

- Are educators, the SMT and the SGB involved in the decision-making processes? If yes, how? If not, why? What is the principal doing to ensure that role players are involved in the decision-making processes?

## **Appendix J**

### **INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR CIRCUIT MANAGERS**

#### **Introductory question**

- Tell me about your experience as a circuit manager, the greatest and the worst moments in your career as the circuit manager?

#### **Shared vision**

- In your opinion, do you think that primary school principals are able to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of their school visions? If not, how do you as the circuit manager envisage to ensure that primary schools have shared school visions?

#### **Commitment**

- To what extent do primary school principals ensure that all their educators remain committed to their responsibilities as educators? How do you assist those primary school principals who are unsuccessful in trying to instil the culture of commitment in educators?

#### **Motivation**

- In your opinion, to what extent do primary school principals ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in what they are doing? How do you assist primary schools in motivating educators who are discouraged in their professions?

#### **Job satisfaction**

- Do you think that primary school principals are successful in creating conducive and satisfying working environments? If not, what role do you as the circuit manager play in ensuring that educators experience their working environments as satisfying?

### **Participative decision-making**

- Participative decision-making is critical in running a school. To what extent are primary school principals successful in ensuring that decision-making is participative?
- What role do you as the circuit manager play in ensuring that primary school principals engage role players in decision-making?



## Appendix K

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR PRINCIPALS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

**Q** stands for question

**A** stands for answer

**P** stands for probing

#### INTERVIEWEE NUMBER FIVE

##### Shared vision

**Q:** To what extent do you ensure that role players such as educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?

**A:** Eh, as A school we have the basics in place. We established internal measures in terms of policies, in terms of our operational management or operational plan. The SGB has its own annual plan that is also interpreted in the schools' annual plan where we have various activities put together in terms of the schools' plan. We have different groupings in our school where you have sporting teachers having sporting programmes and cultural teachers. We also have different committees that are set up to make sure that programmes are in place and the activities are running. Each year we plan together, the staff, the SGB and the parents to see how we can achieve all these things.

**P:** Can you briefly take me through a process, for an example, on how your code of conduct for learners was developed?

**A:** In developing it, the SGB came together, then parents and educators also contributed and a framework was then in place. Delegates from all those structures developed a draft. This was taken to the broader forum and the final product came into being. This is how we produce policies at school. Consultation is broad.

**P:** Having included all the role players, in your opinion, do they own this product?

**A:** They do own it because learners know that there are certain areas and rules they have to respect. Each parent is given a copy to peruse and sign. Parents own it.

## **Commitment**

**Q:** As the principal of this school, how do you ensure that all the educators are and remain committed to their responsibilities as professionals?

**A:** Ehh, we all share the same principles that we professionals in our own field as teachers, we don't have to loose focus on commitment. We always reflect on our performance everyday. Everyday I have to bring this element of reflection in the morning sessions so that educators can focus. In these morning briefings I also check whether educators are not encountering problems. We make sure that we maintain our professionalism as educators. We operate according to certain standards. There is no way I accept unprofessional behaviour. I always refer them to policy. Our core business is to deliver curriculum to learners. Every morning I remind them of their core business, why they are here.

**P:** Having said that, late coming and absenteeism seem to be problems in some schools. To what extent do you as a principal ensure that that does not affect your school?

**A:** Yah in those two areas, we do not have late coming. If it does happen it comes with an explanation. We report almost 30 minutes before. Our contact time starts at 8h00. So, there is no way a teacher can be late in class, because we have an hour to report first and we have briefing sessions about activities of the day. If there is anything that happens to teachers, he/she will phone or sms or give a message to the colleague.

**P:** Comment on educator absenteeism.

**A:** I normally talk to teachers about that. The teachers are not absent without reasons. If teachers have personal commitments, they have leave entitlements and they know the procedure. When a person has an appointment, normally that should happen after school and they respect that. If there are pressing family matters, teachers do apply for leave to attend the family problem. Where people go absent where we don't know we don't have that. There is a sense of responsibility from the side of teachers. So, that is another element where teachers have commitment.

## **Motivation**

**Q:** How do you ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in the daily pursuance of their responsibilities?

**A:** You see, these briefing sessions' strategies are twofold because we also discuss daily happenings in the school and outside the school. We do not lose the sight of what is happening outside the school environment. Anything that happens to the teacher we bring that into those meetings, to motivate teachers. We also have small social meetings where during break we come together as a staff, we have tea club. We talk about our frustrations and also joke. We also have these birthday lunches. When the teacher is doing well in the class, we acknowledge him/her in front of the other colleagues. We also help teachers who are not doing well by motivating them to do more. Annually we have staff lunches, where we visit a particular place. We give praise and incentives. We also acknowledge important teachers dates such as teachers international day. The SGB supports these days and provide lunch for teachers.

## **Job satisfaction**

**Q:** Educators complain about many issues at their work places. How do you ensure that educators remain satisfied in their work places?

**A:** You have conditions of service where the environment should be conducive for the teachers. Their classrooms should be clean. They need to have the basics, where the delivery of the curriculum will be enhanced. Even though some factors are beyond my control, I always try to give them hope. I also communicate their frustrations with the SGB and they come up with what they afford. I try to make their classroom conducive to learning despite the small classrooms. During summer these classrooms are very hot. We try to provide fans to alleviate hot conditions. I listen to the teachers' problems and I try to resolve them. We pull all structures together including the governing council to try to resolve the problem. If it is something that needs external assistance, we do rope in other people, the community and the business community. Somewhere we do get assistance. Together around the table we find the solution.

**P:** Comment on the interpersonal relations amongst educators and with the SMT.

**A:** Ah you see, the basic of these interpersonal relations is the value of respect. Respect for various cultures is encouraged because we are a multicultural school. I encourage people to first respect themselves. Those social events I spoke about, like celebrating a birthday of a teacher together assist in building positive interpersonal relations. During breaks we come together, this builds positive relations. Our door as the SMT is open. We encourage them that if there are frustrations with the curriculum, they must openly talk. We are not so rigid with issues of protocol. These small meetings that we normally have are an advantage towards interpersonal relations. We don't have the drifts. We have a sense of belonging. We have an open policy in terms of interpersonal relations. Interpersonally we believe in values such as respect, dignity and equality.

### **Participative decision-making**

**Q:** To what extent do you involve other role players in decision-making processes?

**A:** Yah, you see, I think that when you have an idea, you must share it with others so that you get a broader base. Seek support and consensus. You must also go to the staff and seek ideas on issues. Seek ideas from different committees. Decision-making in our school is two ways. We go to the educators with the proposals and they also come to us with the ideas. Management will come with the suggestions and the staff makes inputs. The SGB will also be involved. That is how we normally decide on issues. We all have ownership. However, there are certain issues where we consult and certain issues we don't consult. It is not always necessary to take the input of the staff particularly if they are not building or are not positive. We do have top down and bottom up approaches to decision-making. In all these processes, we have protocol to follow. Basically we do consult, that is why we have daily briefing sessions.

**P:** Can you tell me about the characteristics of those meetings? Are there arguments, debates or are your meeting smooth?

**A:** It depends on the items, or the agenda or the programmes. Sometimes we have those debates and are robust, but the meeting must have a focus and an issue must be dealt with and a resolution must be found even if the debate is robust. The resolution must be based

on consensus or the majority. We use democratic principles in our meetings. The nature of the meeting also counts, is it a policy meeting, is it a briefing session meeting, or informative meeting. It depends on the nature of meetings. But we do not encourage silence in meetings but we encourage participation. We don't have secretes, but tell educators everything that affect them in the school. There are certain issues that do not need debates, like issues long planned, example due date for submissions.

**P:** How often do you meet with the SMT and SGB?

**A:** Okay, with the SGB, we have scheduled meetings per quarter. Those are mandatory meetings. You have your first term, second term, third term and closing meetings, where you do your budget and financial meeting. There are other meetings which are meetings held per request, like for example we have a tour to Durban, so we need to meet to deal with the nitty-gritties of the tour. But our normal meetings will be four in a year. Those are mandatory meetings. You also have subcommittee meetings such as financial subcommittee meeting. With teachers, we have monthly meetings. We don't want to be enslaved by weekly meetings. If systems are in place you don't need the meeting, *for what?* If there is something that needs your attention, I attend it. In the SMT we also have mandatory meetings and we do meet weekly. We also meet quarterly to check on performance of teachers.

## Appendix L

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR EDUCATORS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

**Q** stands for question

**A** stands for answer

**P** stands for probing

#### INTERVIEWEE NUMBER 1

##### Shared vision

**Q:** In your opinion, do you think that your principal is willing to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of the school vision?

**A:** Yes as educators we are involved.

**P:** Can you take me through a process in which your school policies like for example, code of conduct for learners are developed?

**A:** Eh, we sat together as the staff and discuss about the school policy. We are then divided into groups, the other group was dealing with discipline, the other one was dealing with school uniform and the other one was dealing, you know, so many aspects and finally we came out with the school policy. What I want to say is that we are together in making this school policy.

**P:** What about the involvement of the SGB, was it sidelined or involved?

**A:** The SGB was involved because before we developed the school policy, eh, if I still remember, the SGB held the meeting with principal together with the teacher component and they agreed upon the school policy. From the SGB, we sat together and we developed the school policy.

**P:** What about the role of the SMT in the whole process?

**A:** The SMT was also included because in the first place, the principal hold the meeting with the SGB, the SGB went down to the SMT. From there, we got the views of the

educators and the principal took the views of educators back to the SGB and the SGB gave us the green light to formulate and develop the school policy.

**P:** After having developed this school policy, do all those role players own it?

**A:** I can't say that, but what I can say is that we are trying to work according to the school vision. I mean the school vision is for us all, the SGB, educators, the SMT and parents. We are developing this vision and we are pursuing it all of us.

### **Commitment**

**Q:** Are the majority of educators committed to this school? Please elaborate.

**A:** Yah all educators, I can say we are committed at this school. We want to see the progress of the school.

**P:** Can you indicate some of the examples of commitment where commitment is shown by some of the educators?

**A:** Ehh, with regard to the learning area policies, as educators we developed these policies together so that we can work according to the school curriculum. Again in the extra mural activities educators are doing their best. Everybody is involved, there are educators responsible for school uniform, the school environment, education matters and so on. Every HOD is taking care of his department.

**P:** What about the issue of late coming by educators?

**A:** Ehh sometimes we have latecomers, but in our school we start at 7h50. All of us we report on or before 7h30.

**P:** Comment on absenteeism of educators.

**A:** Yah, in our school sometimes some educators are not at work, maybe because of sick leave or maybe because of problems they encounter at home. But ehh, what I can say is that we have educators who are at times not at school because of their reasons.

**P:** Are they in majority or are they just few?

**A:** During the week, maybe you find that you have one or two. But what I can say is that they are few.

**P:** Do you have those who normally have a pattern during month ends?

**A:** We were experiencing this one maybe five or seven years ago, but at this moment we don't have it.

**P:** You also commented on the issue of extra mural activities. Do all educators participate?

**A:** We are 45 educators in our school, so those who participate are those who volunteered. We don't have a problem.

### **Motivation**

**Q:** Are the majority of educators at this school motivated? Please elaborate.

**A:** We are motivated, number one, we have a principal who is always looking after us, who cares for us and then who always encourages us in everything. Our leader motivates us.

**P:** There are issues that discourage educators today, either internally or externally, from home and inside the school. What is it that the principal is doing to ensure that extra committed educators are motivated? Is there anything special the principal does to motivate such educators?

**A:** Usually our principal will call us together and tell us that some educators are committed. He does not mention names, but he encourages others to do like wise. He gives verbal thank you in a staff meeting.

**P:** No rewards, no incentives.

**A:** No, no, because some few years ago, one educator was given a reward and some educators were not happy. They wanted to know the criteria used, how did it come that teacher A or teacher X was chosen. That is why he says thank you.

**Q:** How does the principal motivate educators who are not feeling well?

**A:** He buys a card and all educators sign and he sends it to the educator concerned.

**P:** What about those who experience death cases for example, spouse or a child.

**A:** Those who lost their relatives, we organise common transport and attend the funeral.



### **Job satisfaction**

**Q:** Are most educators satisfied with their working conditions at this school? If yes, what satisfies them? If not, why are they not satisfied? What is the principal doing to ensure that educators remain satisfied?

**A:** We are satisfied, but there is problem with this NCS, because educators are not fully developed.

**P:** So, educators do not understand the curriculum and this makes them dissatisfied?

**A:** Yes

**P:** Is there anything the principal does to ensure that educators are professionally developed?

**A:** He usually invites people from outside to come and teach us and show us the way. Recently the principal bought learning support materials and all the teachers are having the learning support materials.

**P:** What about relations at school? Things such as cliquing, groupings and backbiting dissatisfy educators.

**A:** We experienced that before, maybe four to five years back, but since we have a new principal, it is better now. We don't have the opportunity to sit and talk, we are all committed. Maybe outside school, people group themselves, but during school hours, no. Each HOD makes sure that subordinates are working.

**P:** What about the distribution of educator workload?

**A:** Ah, at the moment I don't know, because I am working with grade seven. They are not complaining.

## Appendix M

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION FOR CIRCUIT MANAGERS

In this transcription, abbreviation letters used are explained.

**Q** stands for question

**A** stands for answer

**P** stands for probing

#### INTERVIEWEE NUMBER THREE

##### Shared vision

**Q:** In your opinion, do you think that primary school principals are able to let other educators, the SMT and the SGB share in the development of their school visions? If not, how do you as the circuit manager envisage to ensure that primary schools have shared school visions?

**A:** My opinion is that the way I see it, on the basis of the number of occasions I interacted with principals, there is lack of in-depth knowledge in as far as departmental policies are concerned. If you want people to share and make contribution in your vision, you need to know the guiding policies, so that when they buy in they buy something that is really exciting. Now lack of knowledge in departmental policies I see it as a hindrance. Of course they might write visions and missions on paper but it is not in their hearts. Principals lack in-depth knowledge of policies to develop the SMTs and the SGBs.

**P:** But , do you have primary schools under your authority that have developed shared visions?

**A:** Recently I gave directive that schools must submit their management plans on IQMS with their school improvement plans. It is shocking, not more than 10 schools have submitted. So you see we have a serious problem.

**P:** So it is very difficult for principals to develop these plans because they lack capacity?

**A:** Maybe, I see it in two ways. In my opinion, they are totally unable. They need to be capacitated.

**P:** What are your plans in dealing with that? Do you have strategies in mind to ensure that principals are assisted in this area?

**A:** You know, in conjunction with the quality assurance section, we have agreed that the best thing is to start from a clean slate. We must go out and advocate for the development of plans. That is why I have recently indicated to principals that they have to re-establish the school development teams that we are going to engage in training. We have realized that we have to start from the beginning.

### **Commitment**

**Q:** To what extent do primary school principals ensure that all their educators remain committed to their responsibilities as educators? How do you assist those primary school principals who are unsuccessful in trying to instil the culture of commitment in educators?

**A:** Let me start with the last part of your question. Number one, principals do not give what I will call forceful leadership. Eeh, you know if our principals can differentiate between negotiable and the non-negotiable the better. There is lack of commitment on the part of educators. Firstly, they are not well guided and they are not given clear-cut directives. Because if we say somebody is committed what it means whatever he is given to do he does that according to plan. This lack of commitment expresses itself in the manner in which teachers are doing their job where you find teachers teaching unprepared. Actually what I have realized is that teachers are just send out there, principals do not guide them.

**P:** To what extent are primary school principals ensure that educators remain committed.

**A:** Yah, you know I think that they are supported to a lesser extent, because if they were fully supported, you could see the support will manifest in the performance of learners. Right now we have serious problems because some learners could not read or write. In my principals' meetings some principals are not ashamed to state that their learners cannot read and write. To me, this an admission of lack of committed from the principals.

**P:** Comment on late coming, absenteeism and lack of participation of extra-curricular activities by some teachers.

A: You know late coming in some schools is a norm. When I visit schools, I do control time registers. Teachers do not record their sign in and sign out. Some of educators who arrive late have a tendency to sign incorrect time. For an example, if he arrives at school at 9h25, the teacher will instead of recording the time he actually arrived, record 7h30. This is cheating. Some of the educators go about indicating that at their schools, even if they were absent for days, principals do not care whether they were at school or not. There is a laissez fair kind of approach at school. Late coming is a problem and there is completely no control although the department's policy is clear. Every teacher has to report his or her presence in the time register and besides, teachers should spend at least 7 hours at school. With regard to extra-mural activities some teachers bluntly refuse to participate in those activities. They say it is outside their scope of work. They don't realize that extra curricula activities are part and parcel of their workload. It is ignorance of policy on both educators and the principals. IQMS does not assist because it is used to get money.

**P:** What about educator absenteeism?

A: You know educators just stay away from the job. Principals do not make educators fill in the forms. Principals do not recommend leave without pay for educators who have established patterns in absenteeism. Principals don't want to be unpopular with their people, they want to be nice. In some schools, you will wonder, it is 100% attendance from January to January.

**P:** Any plans in terms of assisting schools to perform according to the standards as set out by the department?

A: Yah, a turn around strategy is in place. For instance we are forcing principals to give monthly reports, example on absenteeism statistics. In collaboration with the Employment Relations section of the district, we agreed that principals must submit monthly reports on misconduct.

### **Motivation**

**Q:** In your opinion, to what extent do primary school principals ensure that educators stay motivated and encouraged in what they are doing? How do you assist primary schools in motivating educators who are discouraged in their professions?

**A:** You know what I have realized, principals do not motivate educators. I am saying this because I never heard principals organizing functions where educators' efforts were going to be appreciated or recognized. Normally I try to lead by example, sometimes I arrange with principals to allocate me 10-15 minutes in their schools just to appreciate the efforts of those educators who are doing enough. I am doing that to teach principals as site managers to do the same, to maintain a culture of appreciating the good that these teachers are doing.

### **Job satisfaction**

**Q:** Do you think that primary school principals are successful in creating conducive and satisfying working environments? If not, what role do you as the circuit manager play in ensuring that educators experience their working environments as satisfying?

**A:** Ehm, if there are any principals who are creating conducive environments, they are very few. *Why do I say so?* The issues of gross absenteeism and lack of planning are indicating that teachers work in atmospheres that are not conducive. Principals are just not doing anything. Where people are doing as they wish, everything happens. Principals are not implementing policy. They are not enforcing discipline. Educators must know that for any wrongdoing, they will have to face the consequences. You know teachers are working in damaging working atmospheres. The working environments for many primary schools are not conducive.

**P:** Other factors that contribute to dissatisfaction are related to interpersonal relations such as cliques, backbiting, gossips etc. Do you sometimes receive such reports?

**A:** What I have realized is that principals do not report cases. You know cases report themselves. If there is a conflict at school it is the responsibility of the principal I only come in if it difficult for the principal to resolve that. Principals have the tendency to nurse conflicts leaving that to develop into cliques and finally cliques generate more heat than light.

**A:** Another factor that make educators dissatisfied is lack of understanding of the NCS. Do you have any plan in mind in trying to resolve such?

**A:** Fortunately I was involved in the NCS in its during its infancy stages. You know one problem with the educators is the question of attitudes. The new NCS is cognitively

demanding. It forces you to be contextual, to think. I have realized that our educators are not readers, they use only one text book. The NCS requires that educators work together and earlier you spoke of cliques. When educators are organised into cliques, the NCS will not be effective because it demands that educators always consult and work as groups. I must state that the department has done its best in training teachers. Teachers want to wholly depend on the department and that is not possible. They must be seen to be playing their part.

### **Participative decision-making**

**Q:** Participative decision-making is critical in running a school. To what extent are primary school principals successful in ensuring that decision-making is participative? What role do you as the circuit manager play in ensuring that primary school principals engage role players in decision-making?

**A:** You know, I have realized that some principals are implementing democratic processes in a wrong way. You know in any institution there some issues that need to be discussed and on the other hand there are issues that are cut and dry, they don't need any negotiations. For example you cannot ask educators to give your ideas on how to control time register. Participatory decision-making does not mean that you leave everything in the hands of educators. You give them to make inputs but as the leader you have the responsibility to guide them within policy framework. The buck must stop somewhere. Participatory decision-making is good, you invite their views, but within the box of legislation, not outside. You don't have to allow educators to debate policy issues that have been concluded in the ELRC.

**P:** How often do principals meet with different structures?

**A:** Well, the frequency of these meetings is not in line with policy, because there are certain number of meetings legislation is stating, for example with regard to the SGB. The school itself must decide how often it intends to meet structures. When I visit schools for support, I expect schools to show me minutes of meetings held with different structures. But in some schools you will be shocked in the minute book, only the agenda reflects. In some instances principals do not call staff meetings. To me, this is avoiding tactic, maybe there are problems at schools.