

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE ROLE OF THE  
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS EDUCATIONAL MANAGER AND  
INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE**

by

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"There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous of conduct or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things".

MACHIAVELLI (1469-1527)

"Who are the leaders in this system who will have the most influence in the next decade?"

PHILLIPS (1987:38)

## DEDICATION

Dedicated to my first teachers, my parents, particularly my father, Nare Philemon Chaba who died a few months before I graduated in 1987. "Papa Chaba" instilled the love of reading and writing in me although he himself was illiterate.

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ABOVE ALL I OWE MUCH TO THE LORD MY CREATOR, WHO HAS THROUGH HIS GRACE AND LOVE KEPT ME HEALTHY AND FIT FOR THIS EXACTING TASK.

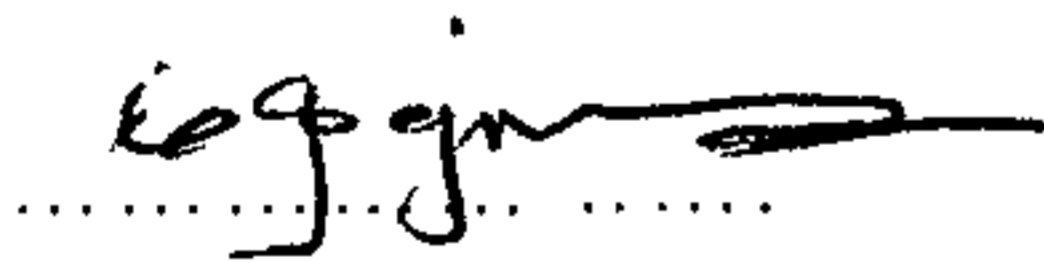
*SOLI DEO GLORIA!*

## DECLARATION

Student Number 490-346-3

I declare that

**A PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS EDUCATIONAL MANAGER AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE** is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



SIGNATURE

C. S. Mamabolo

20-05-2002.

DATE

## SUMMARY

The aim of the research was to reflect phenomenologically on the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools, and to reflect critically on this state of affairs in Limpopo Province. A literature study was undertaken to expose problems that deter principals from fulfilling these roles. Qualitative research in the form of ideograms, as well as, unstructured interviews with principals, was used to elicit principals' views concerning how they perceive their roles in an attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Research findings indicated that principalship is beset with many problems which have to be addressed in order to restore the collapsed culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Results revealed among other issues that:

- The training of principals for the introduction of Outcomes Based Education in schools was not well carried out. It was incomprehensible for the Education Department to exclude principals from the training when the whole system of teaching and learning was supposed to change with the introduction of Outcomes Based Education.
- The redeployment and rationalisation of teachers has given rise to many complicated problems in schools, leaving teachers demoralised and being a major cause of job dissatisfaction for principals.

The research findings revealed that the role of principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in Limpopo Province is not authentically enacted. Recommendations include among other issues that:

- The Department of Education in Limpopo Province review the implementation of Outcomes Based Education, particularly the training of principals.
- Attention should be given to problems arising from the process of redeployment and rationalisation of teachers in schools.
- There is a need for ongoing, effective and in-service lifelong training for teachers, principals and the School Governing Body with regard to education management.

Attention to these issues, amongst others, it is proposed, will contribute to the effective implementation of the role of school principals as educational managers and instructional leaders, particularly in Limpopo Province. This will reinforce the desired culture of teaching and learning in schools.



## OPSOMMING

Die doel van hierdie navorsing was om fenomenologies die rol van die skoolhoof as opvoedkundige bestuurder en instruksionele leier te ondersoek. Dit gaan gepaard met die doel om die veranderende kultuur van leer en onderrig en die stand van sake in Limpopo Provinsie, krities te evalueer. 'n Literatuurstudie was onderneem om die probleme te ontbloot wat skoolhoofde verhoed om hulle rolle ten volle te beoefen. Kwalitatiewe navorsing was ook gedoen in die vorm van ideogramme sowel as ongestruktureerde onderhoude met skoolhoofde om hul sienings te bevestig oor hoe hulle hulle rolle beskou.

Albei die bronne het daarop gewys dat die skoolhoofde vele probleme ondervind wat eers opgelos moet word alvorens die vervalde kultuur van leer en onderrig in skole verander kan word.

Die uitslae van die navorsing het die volgende uitgewys:

- Die opleiding van skoolhoofde in Uitkomsgebaseerde Onderwys in die skole was nie behoorlik gedoen nie. Dit is nie verstaanbaar hoekom die Departement van Onderwys die skoolhoofde uitgesluit het toe die opleiding gedoen was nie. Die hele kultuur van leer en onderwyser was veronderstel om te verander met die intree van Uitkomsgebaseerde Onderwys.
- Die verskuiwing en rasionalisasie van opvoeders het aanleiding gegee tot menige gekompliseerde probleme in skole. Dit veroorsaak dat die moraal van die opvoeders afgebreek word, wat lei tot lae werksbevrediging van beide opvoeders en skoolhoofde.

Bogenoemde bevindings het gewys dat die rol van die skoolhoof as opvoedkundige bestuurder en instruksionele leier in Limpopo Provinsie nie behoorlik uitgevoer word nie. Die volgende voorstelle word onder andere gemaak:

- Die Departement van Onderwys in Limpopo Provinsie die implementering van Uitkomsgebaseerde Onderwys, spesifiek die opleiding van skoolhoofde, herevalueer.
- Aandag moet gegee word aan die probleme wat ontstaan as gevolg van die proses waar opvoeders in skole verskuif en gerasionaliseer word.
- Dit is noodsaaklik dat voortgesette en effektiewe indiensopleiding vir opvoeders, skoolhoofde en die Beheerliggame gegee moet word. Dit is veral toepaslik op onderrigbestuur.

Indien bogenoemde aspekte tesame met ander soos voorgestel die nodige aandag verdien, sal dit 'n bydrae lewer tot effektiewe implementering van die rol wat skoolhoofde as opvoedkundige bestuurders en instruksionele leiers moet vertolk. Die kultuur van onderrig en leer, veral in Limpopo Provinsie, sal hierdeur bevorder word.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CASS	Continuous Assessment
CAT	Continuous Assessment Task
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
EAT	External Assessment Task
ELRC	Education Labour Relation Council
FET	Further Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
HSRC	Human Science Research Council
INSET	In-Service Education and Training
LLC	Language Literacy and Communication
LRA	Labour Relation Act
LRC	Labour Relation Council
NAPTOSA	National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PEU	Professional Educators' Union
PTA	Parents Teachers' Association
QLP	Quality Learning Programmes
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation.
SACE	South African Council of Educators
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SASA	South African Schools' Act
SGB	School Governing Body
TLC	Transitional Local Council

## KEYWORDS

phenomenological reflection, principal, educational manager, instructional leader, culture of teaching and learning, Outcomes Based Education, redeployment and rationalisation, instructional leadership, instructional supervision.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION, PROBLEM FORMULATION AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

### 1.1 INTRODUCTORY ORIENTATION

South Africa has entered exciting times of change within all spheres of life because of the new political dispensation (Loubser, 1997:24). The change and transformation from the apartheid era to democratic rule in South Africa had an impact on society in general and particularly on schools (Mamabolo, 1996:64 and Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:vii). The transformation and reconstruction of schooling is currently receiving considerable attention in an attempt to redress the injustices which characterised the apartheid education system (Van der Westhuizen and Legotlo, 1996:69). Equal access to education is guaranteed as a result of the South African Constitution which is based on, among other values, fundamental human rights and access to education, irrespective of colour or creed. The constitution has resulted in numerous changes – for example – an increase in black students enrolled in historically white schools, a growing number of multicultural schools and more democratic management structures within the school (Van der Westhuizen and Legotlo, 1996:69). Generally, changes in the political, social, economic and technological spheres have influenced the school, particularly the role of the school principal.

The rapidly introduced changes in the school have caused the role of the principal to become extremely complex, demanding, intense and at times surprising (Robbins and Alvy, 1995:xi). Schools are currently undergoing enormous change due to the changed educational legislation, school policies and the diverse pupil bodies and these present a tremendous challenge to

principals (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:136). Particular emphasis is placed on the role of the school principal in the translation of the new policy initiatives into practice (O'Donoghue and Dimmock, 1997:35). However, while there is no shortage of advice to principals, relatively little of it has been based on contemporary research dealing with the role of the school principal. This is not to deny the existence of a significant body of literature on principalship, rather, it is to argue that research is necessary at the present time since the context within which the contemporary school principals operate has changed markedly over the years (O'Donoghue and Dimmock, 1997:35).

Current education discourse in South Africa clearly illustrates how important society regards the role of schools to be (Higgs, 1998:204). Children are sent to school with the expectation that they will one day leave school as useful citizens. Furthermore, South Africans have immense faith in education to bring about the birth and development of a vibrant democracy. As a result it is believed that schools should produce an enlightened citizenry (Drake and Roe, 1994:5). Consequently, schools, including their principals, have been thrust into the national spotlight because society in general has high expectations that schools will transform the social landscape and equip a technical, economical, multicultural, and informed citizenry (Van der Westhuizen and Legotlo, 1996:69).

The principal has the task of leading the school and ensuring that the beliefs, goals and expectations of the society, as well as the desires and needs of different children are met. However, research confirms that most principals receive little or no training in the organisation and administration of the education and running of a school and are, therefore, unprepared to lead instruction effectively in their schools (Carter and Klotz, 1990:37). Whereas athletes normally have the time and opportunity to prepare themselves for success in the national and international games, school principals in South Africa have to face the realities of transforming schools and implementing the

new legislation with few or no specific guidelines for managing this transformation (Van der Westhuizen and Legotlo, 1996:69). For this reason, it is necessary to investigate how the principal will assist the reform and reconstruction of education by enhancing the culture of teaching and learning for the future success of pupils.

As a principal, the present researcher's wonderment has been aroused by the complexity of political change in South Africa, and by how this has impacted on the nature of schooling and more importantly, on the role of the school principal. There is abundant research to support the fact that principals are expected to fulfil a strong leadership role in the schools (see Blase and Blase, 1998; a'Campo, 1993; Erlandson and Lyons, 1995; Fullan, 1992; Futral, 1993; Hallinger, 1992; Harber, 1992; Immergart, 1994; Kenworthy, 1994; Krajewski, 1996; McEwan, 1998; Stone, 1992; Ritchie, 1996). There is, however, little research on how principals can best perform the role of managers and leaders, particularly in restoring the culture of teaching and learning in the South African school context. This leads to the realisation that gaps exist in the literature concerning the principal's managerial role in maintaining a sound educational culture in the school. If the principal is so important in the effective running of the school, and if the society has faith in schools, why are researchers not paying more attention to a sound investigation of how the principal can restore the culture of teaching and learning? The researcher wishes to contribute to what little research there is on how the principal can enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools, by means of this investigation.

Jeevanantham (1998:8) indicates that there is a special place in hell for leaders who are silent or neutral in a moral crisis. There is a moral crisis concerning the absence of a teaching and learning culture in schools today and as a leader the researcher wishes to have a voice in addressing this moral crisis. The concerns of the researcher are also succinctly expressed by Higgs and Smith (1997b:99) when they aver:

**I don't want my thoughts to die with me ... I want to have done something ... I'm not interested in power, or piles of money. I want to leave something behind. I want to make a positive contribution – know that my life has meaning.**

Consequently, the present researcher wants to engage in critical questioning, which entails reflecting critically on education problems and especially the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province. Having said this, it is important to indicate briefly the role of principals within the school situation.

#### 1.1.1 The role of the principal

The lack of documentary evidence has clouded the early developments of the position of the principal (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:2). However, the position of principalship gradually emerged as pupil enrolments increased to a point where schools demanded more than one teacher. As school enrolments grew, "head teachers" or "principal teachers" were appointed and became responsible for everything concerning the running of the school.

The term "principal" is derived from "prince" and means first in rank, degree and importance of authority (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:2). The principal can thus be said to be one with the authority to make decisions about the operation of the school. The role of the principal has evolved from its supervisory capacity to that of a manager and a leader (Bookbinder, 1992:10). The principal's position emerged as a routine administrator. The principal had to see that the building was heated, rules of procedure were followed and strict discipline was maintained.



Historically, the technology of managing a school was primitive in comparison to the administration of a modern school. Today, however, the administrative function of the principal is becoming increasingly complex (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:2). With continual development in education, the administrative task in areas such as the curriculum, instruction, pupil management, personnel management and school community relationships, has expanded so as to overburden the school principal. Additional staff became necessary, including assistant principals and heads of various departments, to assist principals in fulfilling their plethora of tasks.

Recently, the principal's role has become even more complex, ambiguous and blurred and has evolved into that of a change agent, financial planner, marketer and entrepreneur (Dinham, Cairney, Craigit and Wilson, 1995:36), leading to the modern comprehensive school being administered by a team that must cope with many problem areas. Many educationists believe that the principalship of a large school is the most difficult administrative position in the field of education (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:2).

The role of principal continues to change, gaining more attention as the key position in determining the success of a school (Ubben and Hughes, 1992:xiii). Authors such as Heck, Marcoulides and Lang (1991:115); Lipham, Rankin and Hoeh (1985:1); Marxcy (1991:45); Shah (1990:10) and Weldy (1979:1) all concur with the view that since the inception of schooling, the school principal has been regarded as the most influential individual in any school.

The recent trend towards decentralisation of decision-making for schools, combined with the move toward school based management, places even greater responsibility on the principal (Ubben and Hughes, 1992:xiii). New education legislation such as the South African Schools' Act of 1996, the Education Labour Relations Act 147 of 1993 and the Educators' Employment Act 138 of 1994, encourages teacher empowerment and therefore requires

principals to know how to enable teachers to assume more responsibility and have a greater voice in school decisions. All these responsibilities should be seen as existing together with the demand that the principal should also provide instructional leadership; have a vision for the school; and develop a mission statement in cooperation with the staff, community and students.

One of the major tasks of the principal is to create a positive organisational climate and culture. If a strong education culture exists within the school, the instructional leadership efforts of the school principal will bring about improvement in teaching and learning. On the other hand if the culture of a school is not functional or is weak, new ideas concerning improvement with regard to teaching and learning will soon wither (Ubben and Hughes, 1992:27).

The absence of a teaching and learning culture in South African schools, in particular since 1976, is well documented. In this regard the words of Marivate (1996:10) when addressing the Professional Educators' Union (PEU) Conference are most apt:

**... there is a loud outcry throughout the country that our schools especially in black areas are in short supply of the culture of teaching and learning.**

Describing the school climate and culture at the same conference, Motsepe (1996:7) contended that:

**In 1976 the students took up a challenge and made the opposition to Bantu Education a new ball game which made the nation immediately aware of the evils of the system. ... This gallant uprising played a significant role in the liberation of South Africa.**

**Unfortunately it led to much physical and spiritual suffering and to the destruction of the culture of teaching and learning.**

Mashile and Mellet (1996:22) also point out that the culture of teaching and learning in schools is an issue of concern. According to them, this culture has been eroded by the political struggle and that of teachers' organisations against the apartheid system.

The quotations referred to above, confirm that in the transformation and restructuring of the education system in South Africa, the principal's role has to take into account the environment within which schooling operates. In societies free from unrest and the disruption of schools, enhancing the culture of teaching and learning is well within the means of the principal and staff (Taunyane, 1992:29). Where schools are, however, subject to disruption, it is very difficult to restore the culture of teaching and learning because the school is a social structure which does not operate in a vacuum. A culture conducive to teaching and learning is difficult to create where such a culture does not exist at home or within the community (Taunyane, 1992:29). The principal's management and leadership roles also do not occur in a vacuum. They are affected by social, political, economic and environmental factors within the community. Certain managerial functions such as policy-making and discipline need to be adequately attended to, for an orderly and productive learning environment to exist.

According to Bookbinder (1992:11); Harris (1997:77-79); Krajewski (1996:3) and Dinham *et al.* (1995:36) the role of the modern principal as described in the current literature defines his/her primary characteristics as being a:

- shaper of school culture;
- definer of the school vision;
- co-ordinator of mission;
- goals and objectives;
- dynamic agent of change;
- catalyst of leadership and management; and
- curriculum and instructional leader.

Cheng's (1991:25) research findings indicate that the principal who is strong in these areas is able to significantly influence the function of a school. In investigating the role of the principal it also becomes necessary to examine the challenges and problems which are intrinsic and fundamental to this position.

#### 1.1.2 Challenges to principalship

With a tremendous increase in participation management resulting from new legislation and changed education policies, such as the rights of teachers to strike or engage in industrial action, principals now face new challenges and problems. Tabet (1998:3) distinguishes between problems and challenges thus:

**... problems imply something is wrong with us,  
whereas challenges infer something we have to  
stretch to acquire.**

In educational management and leadership, challenges and problems are two facets of the same reality (Tabet, 1998:8). To the principal, responding to challenges and problems implies the ability to relate the past to the present with a projection into the future. The basic issue is one of determining at which point, in schools, leadership should be exercised in order to ensure both their

existence and organisational survival (requiring social control) and organisational progress (requiring individual or group development). In other words, the basic questions to be asked are: what is the nature and degree of social control needed for school survival? What is the nature and degree of individual or group development needed for school progress (Tabet, 1998:3)? Thus, it is required of the school principal to be capable of responding to challenges and problems that hinder progress or development in the school.

Generally speaking, the principal is confronted with challenges such as:

- **having to create a culture of teaching and learning;**
- **having knowledge of current education legislation;**
- **the formulation and development of a mission, goals and objectives;**
- **the introduction of Outcome Based Education; and**
- **the integration of technology into the school structure.**

According to Tabet, (1998:3) the effective principal is able to transform these challenges into potential opportunities.

### 1.1.3 Problems particular to South African principals

In order to contextualise the present research, it is necessary to uncover the problems experienced by school principals in South Africa. Although the research is specifically intended to investigate the situation of principals in Limpopo Province, the researcher presents a picture of problems experienced by South African principals in general.

According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1993:i) a research problem is anything that the researcher finds unsatisfactory or an unsettling difficulty, a state of affairs

that needs to be changed. The following are areas of concern to the researcher as a school principal. These areas of concern direct the attention to conditions that need to be improved, difficulties that need to be eliminated and questions for which suitable answers need to be sought.

#### **1.1.3.1 Difficult working conditions**

Principals are anxious not only about their workload but also about the working conditions which make their task impossible (Murphy and Louis, 1994:40). The common complaint expressed by principals is lack of time to accomplish all the administrative duties expected of them. The apparent lack of time could be ascribed to lack of skill and knowledge of time management (Legotlo and Van der Westhuizen, 1996:406). Principals are also confronted by different, often opposing groups within the society. Responding to such groups or political forces as civic associations, tribal authorities, Transitional Local Councils (TLC), the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the National Professional Teachers' Organisation of South Africa (NAPTOSA) represents another serious problem to the principal. Principals have to be neutral, particularly if they are outsiders in the village and not sons or daughters of the soil of the region (Legotlo and Van der Westhuizen 1996:406).

One of the most aggravating problems besetting principals is the growing militancy of teachers and teachers' organisations. Dealing with militant teacher groups, who demand a role in decision-making, is posing a whole new set of problems for the principal (Jacobson, 1973:23). Much of the teachers' teaching time is utilised for picketing and "go slows" before teachers receive their salary increases. Such actions have a detrimental effect on the culture of teaching and learning in the schools and impact negatively on the effective functioning of the schools.

### 1.1.3.2 Inconsistent directives from the Education Authorities

Compounding the principal's problems is the reality that principals face multiple expectations which often seem at odds with one another (Anderson, 1991:54). Principals are dismayed by what they view as "conflicting policy directives and inconsistent management messages" from the directorate and by the discrepancy between stated policy and real procedures to be followed.

With the advent of new education legislation parents have been promised "free" education with regard to stationery and funding of the school budget. However, the current reality of a shortage of stationery and other equipment places principals in a difficult position. Most pupils are drawn from poor families who are unable to pay school fees (Legotlo and Van der Westhuizen, 1996:405). School fees are often the only source of money that can be applied to pay for teaching aids, maintenance of school buildings, staff development projects and workshops. If pupils fail to pay school fees (and most of them will), running the school might become difficult or even impossible for the principal.

Principals have to work within a more collegial climate in enforcing the bureaucratic principles of the school. Bureaucracy is in opposition to collegiality and this ambivalence leads to a high degree of uncertainty about the principal's role in a changing situation. A quote from Murphy and Louis (1994:41) clearly expresses this ambivalence:

**They are being asked not only to implement an unclearly defined innovation but also to assume new professional roles which there is no clear definition. They believe they are caught in change, to perform**

**and lead their schools without a clear understanding of their ultimate role in the newly emerging process.**

#### **1.1.3.3 Administrative Incompetence**

Most principals have been on their own (since assuming the role of principalship) without any guidance from their seniors and without the assistance of formally appointed Heads of Departments (HODs). Such neglect or mismanagement by the Ministry of Education is incomprehensible. Without the support of formally appointed HODs the principal's efforts to enhance the culture of teaching and learning may prove to be exceedingly difficult and ineffective (Legotlo and Van der Westhuizen, 1996:406).

In a parliamentary speech the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, expressed his disappointment regarding the government's shortcomings concerning administrative incompetence (Mandela in: Maseko, 1999:7). Mandela noted that certain delays in the delivery of school text-books were caused by administrative incompetence. Adding to what Mandela said, Prof Masori Mphahlele stated that the old traditional system of education was responsible for bringing incompetent officials lacking democratic culture and vision, into the new system (Israel, 1999:15). Furthermore, the lack of experience, the inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the new hand-picked "mandarins" has made education situations even worse. The departmental authorities' lack of administrative skill has an adverse influence on the day-to-day duties of the principal.

#### **1.1.3.4 Lack of discipline and authority**

The unavailability of stationery, equipment and other economic resources is not the only problem which causes conflict. Conflict also arises from the sharing of



power, playing a role in decision making, over emphasis on democracy, human rights, status and other mechanisms influencing the battle of the principal to reform the school (Milstein, 1980:8). Slogans such as "teacher power" and "student power", frequently make headlines and illustrate the conflict resulting from various groups influencing the school administration (Milstein, 1980:8). As Milstein argues, the assumption of the groups at school is that power like money is a zero-sum game: in order to receive a share it has to be taken at the expense of others and an inevitable component of such a situation is conflict.. Mandela also expressed his concern about teachers who lack discipline, saying:

**There is something wrong with a society where freedom is interpreted to mean teachers go to school drunk (Mandela in: Maseko, 1999:7).**

In addition to what Mandela stated, Ragolane (1998:1) presented numerous problems confronting principals to Prof. Bhengu, the then Minister of Education, during a consultative meeting in Polokwane.

Problems highlighted by Ragolane were:

- **Teachers' late arrivals and early departures, which cannot be accounted for.**
- **Ignorance about the School Governing Body (SGB), which is caused by the illiteracy of the majority of the parents.**
- **Wrong prioritisation of commitments by teachers and the departmental authorities, which results in duplication of meetings involving teachers during teaching time.**

- **Involving teachers in personal, civic and political issues to a point where classroom practice is handled on an ad hoc basis.**

These problems hinder the execution of the administrative and managerial duties of the school principal. Whereas the Department of Education attempted to enforce new legislation, such as the South African Schools' Act, as a support base for the culture of teaching and learning, the opposite result has been the order of the day, namely, a disregard for teaching and learning.

#### **1.1.3.5 Defiance of the education legislation**

At school, increasing attention is given to the violation of human rights and also to concepts of equality and equal dignity (*Educator's Voice*, 1998:4). Although corporal punishment is a criminal offence as stipulated in the South African Constitution, as well as by the education legislation, it is still a prevalent and pervasive practice. In a recent programme of the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) Television talk show, *Two Way*, many teachers, including principals and students, expressed their support for corporal punishment (*Educator's Voice*, 1998:4). Corporal punishment is supported as a tool to enforce discipline in schools; however, it is unconstitutional.

Teachers decide to defy the law by meting out corporal punishment. An extreme case involved a seven year old girl from Kwa-Zulu Natal, who was beaten so brutally that one of her tendons was severely injured and a bone below her elbow so badly fractured, that it could possibly necessitate amputation of the arm (*Educator's Voice*, 1998:4). This excessive punishment resulted because the child could not spell English words translated from Zulu. In many such instances, corporal punishment becomes a support for poor education practice. Following the above incident, the School Governing Body

(SGB) compounded this unlawful act by threatening the mother of the injured child for reporting the matter to the police.

Defiance of the law is a source of serious conflict between teachers, students and parents and makes the managerial duties of the principal very difficult.

#### **1.1.3.6 Outcomes Based Education (OBE ) as problem**

Teachers, particularly principals, are faced with the challenge of implementing and monitoring OBE and its new terminology without the necessary training and background knowledge (Potenza, 1999:17). A broad list of sixty-six specific outcomes have been prescribed for OBE, expecting teachers to change students' behaviour by means of learning content. Unfortunately, some teachers do not understand what is meant by these outcomes (Potenza, 1999:17).

In 2000, completely new learning areas were introduced in grade seven, such as, for example, Technology and Economic and Management Sciences and Arts and Culture. However, some principals wonder how these new learning areas are to be implemented without background knowledge (Potenza, 1999:17). Some teachers criticise OBE, claiming that it has lowered educational standards in the United States of America and in Australia (Potenza, 1999:17).

Criticism of OBE and a lack of relevant insight on the part of teachers into the OBE approach pose practical problems to the principals. A lack of knowledge of the OBE approach on the part of principals also makes it difficult for them to assist and advise teachers on the methods of teaching.

### 1.1.3.7 Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers

The process of redeployment and rationalisation of teachers in South Africa is a thorny issue for the teaching fraternity in general (Burnett, 1999:4). The redeployment plans are understandable in theory but they crumble in actual practice. The Education Labour Relations Council, together with the teachers' unions, designed the redeployment management plans, which neglected the human factor (Burnett, 1999:4). Grey (1999:4) argues that while robots may well obey any instruction, teachers as human beings are prone to complications like families and personal persuasions that may be at odds with the management plans for the redistribution of teachers.

With regard to the problematic nature of the redeployment and redistribution of teachers, Rapule Matsane, Limpopo Province Education Department spokesperson, added that:

**We're under no illusion that the process will have hiccups. The road will be bumpy but at the end we are hopeful (Grey, 1999:4).**

The redeployment process has implications for the culture of teaching and learning in schools. One principal stated that she was not sure how many students to admit because teachers were not sure where they would be appointed (Grey, 1999:4). Furthermore, principals are not sure how many teachers their schools can appoint. A confused principal, Nontsikelelo Makapula of Fizolo Primary School in the Cape, stated:

**I don't know what it means, nobody understands it (Burnette, 1999:4).**

A teacher, Frederick de Kock at Manenberg Primary School in Western Cape, felt insecure in the teaching profession as he was declared an "excess teacher" (Fox, 1999:15). The reason for De Kock's redeployment was that he was the only teacher not offering a practical subject. According to De Kock, several disputes have been raised in the Western Cape by dissatisfied "excess teachers" (Fox, 1999:15).

Some of the reasons cited for the disputes include principals declaring teachers in excess simply because of their personal feelings towards them (Grey and Mtshali, 1999:3). It is also difficult for the Department of Education to ascertain the exact statistics because principals, as Matsane put it, inflate student enrolments and do all in their power to keep teachers. Principals are intimidated and threatened by teachers for declaring them "in excess". Consequently, principals submit incorrect numbers of pupils in order to avoid declaring a post in excess (Grey and Mtshali, 1999:3).

Having to contend with the problems above, it is difficult for principals to establish a culture of teaching and learning within a climate of fear and uncertainty.

#### **1.1.3.8 Crime and vandalism at schools**

*Vandalism and theft of school property have now reached massive proportions around the country (Mtshali, 1999:6).* Despite its controversial nature the television soap opera and drama, "Yizo Yizo", depicting misbehaviour, such as rape, theft and vandalism, at the fictional Supatsela High School exposes the real crisis in the education system (Garson, 1999b:2). "Yizo Yizo" drama, as it is known, exposes the broken culture of teaching and learning in schools. "Yizo Yizo" drama is a reality because there is hostility between teachers and principals, apathy, drug abuse, sexual harrassment of girls, gangsterism and a

sense of hopelessness in many schools (Garson, 1999b:2 and Motanyane, 1999:8-9).

At schools such as B.W. Vilakazi High School in Soweto (Zola Section), apartheid graffiti like "Release Mandela" are still scrawled on the walls (Mtshali, 1999:6). Classroom notice-boards have been ripped off or burnt. Doors are either missing or broken beyond repair. Furniture is broken. Toilets are in a poor condition. Stoves, library books, television sets and computers have been stolen. Some of the school pupils regard schooling as a form of imprisonment (Mtshali, 1999:6). Being at school, it is believed, is the same thing as being imprisoned for twelve years. Thieves and suspected criminals are students and former convicts feared by the school community.

The problems of crime and vandalism as present in schools make the role of the principal very difficult.

#### **1.1.3.9 Racial problems**

Schools and universities were in the frontline of the long battle against apartheid education (Thomasson, 1999:8). Pupils and students joined the struggle to overthrow the White minority government. Five years after the country's first democratic elections, and five weeks before the second democratic elections, education was still a battle field as far as racism is concerned. Although schools were struggling to adapt to a multicultural environment there were still entrenched racial problems which hamper the role of the school principal (Thomasson, 1999:8). These issues continue to exist.

At Vryburg High School, in the North West, a black student, Babeile Andrew, was expelled after being accused of stabbing his white classmate, Christoff Erasmus, with a pair of scissors (Thompson, 1999:17). Babeile and six other students appeared in the Vryburg court on charges of public violence relating

to a sit-in at the education department offices. A group of Vryburg students took members of the School Governing Body hostage while demanding the reinstatement of Babeile and the other suspended students. Fifty students prevented the Vryburg High School principal, Theo Scholts, and Frik de Bruys, the deputy chairperson of the School Governing Body, from leaving the school building (Thompson, 1999:17). The principal and the managing body were forced to reverse their decision to expel the students.

At Kushke High School near Polokwane (in Limpopo Province), Peter de Kock was beaten by an Afrikaans student for supporting a black student. De Kock is a grade 10 student at Kushke High School (South African Broadcasting Corporation – SABC, TV News Bulletin: 1999). Racism is a problem because at Kushke there is a division between the black and the white hostel. During meals, students sit at separate tables. Peter's mother stated that it was not the first time that her son had been harassed because of racial conflict. For this reason, De Kock argued that he would not return to the school because even some of the teachers threatened him with racial accusations.

Human Science Research Council (HSRC) researchers interviewed teachers and students in ninety integrated schools around the country and were appalled at the level of "racial and violent" thinking in these schools (Garson, 1999a:4). Some of the sentiments expressed during the interviews are:

**I think kaffirs must stop thinking they are so good.**

and

**We're all mixed together but it doesn't mean we like each other.**

and

**Racism makes me feel bad like I can take AK-47 and shoot all the white boys.**

According to the HSRC researchers, teachers were also shown to be racist towards students. Generally speaking, issues of racial diversity are tackled in a very superficial way in the schools (Garson, 1999a:4).

From the above exposition, one may conclude that the school principal is confronted with serious racial problems which make the management and administration of the school difficult.

#### **1.1.3.10 Principals – an endangered species**

The situation at schools has become more and more dangerous for principals (Mtshali, 1999:6). The media, on the radio, television and in the newspapers (*The Teacher, Sowetan, The Citizen*) confirm this assertion.

An anonymous principal disclosed that teachers, including himself, were often threatened and intimidated by students who failed their examinations. He contended that:

**We are sometimes placed under severe duress that we are even compelled to condone students who do not deserve to be promoted to the next grade (Bridgraj, 1999:6).**

Principal Celia Ntombela (Ntombela, 1999:6) expressed her fears since many principals had been shot dead because they were strict and wanted to see the school work done properly. She desperately said:



**I sometimes keep quiet even if I see a teacher doing something wrong because I fear death.**

In Umtata, in the Eastern Cape, one hundred pupils stoned and beat their principal in protest against the redeployment of teachers (Garson, 1999:6). In Gauteng, the principal of Thabiseng Primary School in Soweto, Gwendoline Jele, was shot dead in the school office by unknown gunmen (Molakeng, 1999:1). In Kwa-Zulu Natal, Ragavaloo, the principal of Richmond Combined School, was forced to operate in an increasingly hostile climate (Bridgraj, 1999:6). Ragavaloo is also the mayor of Richmond. He was nearly killed in an attempted political ambush. Ragavaloo has a strong security team, often heavily armed guards, who escort him to school and remain on the school premises for the rest of the day.

In Limpopo Province (east of Polokwane), the principal of Bjatladi High School, Daniel Moabelo, was evicted by students and parents (Mopani, SABC, Television News:13 September, 1999). Moabelo was accused of being responsible for the loss of school property such as the video machine.

The problems exposed are disturbing because principals are, as Bridgraj (1999:6) puts it, under fire and targeted by criminal elements as well as students, parents and sometimes even teachers from their own schools.

#### 1.1.4 Conclusion

To summarise: the role of the school principal is beset by many problems, all of which lead to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. There is a high incidence of crime in schools and a sense of powerlessness among school principals. The principals live in fear of death. There are also disciplinary problems and a lack of means to enforce discipline. There is job

dissatisfaction and a feeling of insecurity brought about by redeployment and rationalisation among teachers and principals.

In the light of the problems exposed during the progress of the present research, the main problems of the research will now be formulated in the form of questions.

## **1.2 PROBLEM FORMULATION**

Within the school, alienation, a sense of powerlessness and self estrangement create a climate of dissatisfaction with school leadership (Truch, 1980:1). Although this cannot be generalised to all the principals, there is no doubt in the present researcher's opinion, based on the literature, that principalship is no longer what it was in the past.

The general orientation to, and setting out of the background to, the title of the present research, have exposed issues that require investigation. The problems indicated give rise to a number of questions that summarise the main problems to be addressed by the present research:

- **How can the principal intervene effectively to enhance a culture of teaching and learning against the background of the problems exposed?**
- **What role do principals play in the development of the curriculum?**
- **How does the education legislation, as a guide to educational transformation, work out in practice?**

- **How can the principal, teachers, the School Governing Body, pupils, parents and the education authorities assist in solving problems exposed in the literature?**
- **How do the education authorities assist the school principal in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools?**
- **How do principals implement instructional supervision (staff development, staff appraisal and staff motivation?)**

The present research is focused on responding to these questions which are all related to the role of the principal, the problems experienced in enforcing the changed education legislation and also to the most effective strategies and decisions that will improve the teaching and learning culture in the schools.

It is important to indicate what the researcher hopes to achieve with this research and this topic will receive attention in the following discussion of the aim of the research.

### **1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

The successful accomplishment of any task in human endeavour is dependent to a large extent upon clearly defined aims and understanding of why the task has to be done (Jones, 1926:5). Even though some people criticise the way education is undertaken, very few deny its importance to society (Slavin, 1984:4). Children's experiences at school shape their character and prepare them for the future. Thus, what goes on in the school, particularly its leadership, is of critical interest to the nation as a whole. The role of education includes efforts to assist in the solving of social problems and in the reconstruction of society (Engelhart, 1972:1). To assist education to fulfil this

function efficiently, an investigation into the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader is essential.

At school, principals are constantly trying to understand their role in the midst of educational change. They make professional decisions that affect students, teachers and parents and ultimately communities and the nation as a whole (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:3). Most principals rely on personal experience, tradition, intuition, common sense and beliefs about what is right or wrong. Each of these sources may be inadequate as the sole basis for making decisions. Personal experience may be inappropriate for new problems while tradition is useful as long as it is not based on the idealised past (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:3). Intuition may be subject to bias, while logic may be based on a false premise. It becomes obvious then, that in a school characterised by cultural pluralism, determining what is right may be very difficult for the principal.

Having said this, research is of vital importance to support principals in their decision-making processes. Such research can be used to understand the role of the principal within the given organisational problems, to evaluate new instructional programmes or to see how various aspects of society – political, economic, technological and social – affect the school administration (Slavin, 1984:1).

The results of this research will not only be of use to principals and teachers, but more importantly also to participants in education institutions, policy makers and society in general. This research not only adopts a general focus on the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools, but also more specifically directs attention in this regard to the state of affairs in Limpopo Province. In terms of this specific focus the aim of the research is to:

- **Reflect on the nature of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools; and**
- **To evaluate the state of affairs in Limpopo Province regarding the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader.**

Moving from the above exposition, the aim of the present research is formulated as an attempt to reveal what might be necessary for principals to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools by way of the role that they are expected to play in their appointed task. In practical terms this means that the present research aims at:

- supporting principals with a theory that sheds light on existing practical problems that hamper change in education;
- helping principals challenge the status quo and become critical of their positions and roles rather than being uncritical functionaries in the education system (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993:14);
- assisting principals with conceptual tools necessary for creative and independent thought and action (Higgs, 1998:13). In short, the present research aims to be a frame of reference for influencing decisions about the managerial and instructional activities of principals.

Stated in another way, the present research aims to describe the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader in order to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools. The aim of the present research is based on a wish to break with the past and the present, especially where feelings of discontent exist. Many

schools within which principals work have become places of discontent (Ellis and Fouts, 1993:i).

However, the impression should not be created that the present research prescribes what is right – on the contrary, it is based on what is meaningful and worthwhile rather than on being one hundred percent right (Toffler, 1970:15). According to Toffler, theories do not have to be "right" in order to be useful. In this regard, Toffler refers to the maps of the medieval cartographers which were hopelessly inaccurate, filled with factual error. Yet the great explorers could have not discovered the New World without them.

It is within the above optimistic spirit of future exploration that the present research is presented not as a final prescription of the role of the school principal, but as an attempt to reveal what might be necessary for principals to be able to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Before the approach to be followed in the research is discussed, there is a need to explain the key terms in the title of the research that are to be used throughout this thesis.

## **1.4 EXPLICATION OF KEY TERMS**

A number of terms used in the title have already been used and will receive further attention in the following paragraphs, in order to define them clearly so as to eliminate any misunderstanding (Mamabolo, 1996:10).

### **1.4.1 Phenomenological reflection**

The word *phenomenology* can be split into two words: *phenomenon* and *ology*. "Phenomenon" means an event or an object and "logos" means word or knowledge and refers to a methodical revealing, unveiling or showing (Higgs

and Smith, 1997b:137 and Robb, 1997:33). Originally *phenomenology* derives from the Greek *phainomenon* which means "that which appears", and the verb *phainastai* means "to reveal" or "to show". Put differently, *phainastai* means that which shows itself or that which manifests itself and can be brought to light (Higgs, 1983:18). The Greek verb *phainoma* in turn means, "I appear" or "I reveal myself". *Phainoma* is also connected with words which mean to explain, to believe, to shine and to enlighten (Chesler, 1983:18). Thus a phenomenon is that which shows itself in the manner in which it is (Higgs, 1983:18). Hammond and Howard (in Roberts, 2000:146) aver that phenomenology aims to "describe objects just as one experiences them". Taken quite literally, phenomenology means the study of a phenomenon or that which appears.

The word "phenomenon", therefore, means that which reveals itself. Phenomenology is the approach which can be implemented to permit the phenomena to reveal themselves as they are, that is, in their given-ness or original mode. Therefore, the researcher who uses the phenomenological approach must describe the phenomenon as it appears or as it would describe itself. In the context of the present research, the researcher claims that the way to deal with the uniqueness of the phenomenon of principalship is to concentrate on the principals' experiences rather than on what people say about them (Higgs and Smith, 1997b:209).

Reflection derives from the verb "reflect" which means going back in thought, in other words to think seriously (Fowler and Fowler, 1976:139). Reflection therefore means meditation, considering the phenomenon (of principalship) very carefully and thoughtfully.

In the present research, a phenomenological reflection is embarked upon to describe the role of the principal as it appears in the school context with reference to the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in

Limpopo Province. Stated differently, the researcher seeks to allow the essences of the principalship to emerge and be described as they are.

#### 1.4.2 Role

The *Oxford School Dictionary* (1994:442) defines "role" as a noun referring to a performer's part in a play. In Mkhize's view (1980:15), "role" refers to a set of expectations, a set of value standards of education applied to an incumbent of a particular position. Both explanations are acceptable in the context of the present meaning of the word "role".

The role of the principal refers to the part played by the principal in the school context, including the expectations of one occupying a principal's post.

#### 1.4.3 School principal

The *Dictionary of True Etymologies* (1986:154) traces the origin of the word "school" from a Greek word "schole" meaning leisure. In addition to this meaning, the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1944:1805) further defines school as a verb: "to school" means to educate or to teach, to give a lesson, to admonish or to reprimand, to discipline, to bring under control or to correct one's mind, feelings and thoughts.

"School" is further defined as a place in which ancient Greek or Roman philosophers taught their hearers. The school is an institution in which instruction of any kind is given (whether to children or to adults). Adding to this meaning, Hawes and Hawes (1982:197) define school as an institution primarily for education in all its forms, for example, law school, medical school and business school. The present research employs the meaning of "school" as an institution in which instruction of any kind is given, whether to adults or children.



The word "principal" has been used as an adjective to qualify the noun teacher (Hawkins, 1994:401). In this context principal means chief or the most important teacher. Blake and Hanley (1995:128) concur with this meaning, as they simply refer to the principal as the chief officer of an institution.

The American Educator's Encyclopedia (1991:447) also concurs with the definition offered by Hawkins (1994:401) and Blake and Hanley (1995:128), since it defines "principal" as an executive officer of a school. When school sizes were relatively small, one teacher was designated as the head or "principal teacher". As school enrolments grew, the principalship evolved into a full time management position and the word "teacher" dropped from the title.

From the explanations above, it becomes clear that the "school principal" is the head employed as the leader of the school, either at pre-primary, primary or secondary school level. In the present research, the word "principal" is used in the place of head teacher, vice chancellor, rector or director for institutions of higher learning in order to avoid confusion (Blake and Hanley, 1995:128). In other words the school principal is the chief or leader of a school, who embodies the purpose, programmes and atmosphere of a particular school. The school principal is not only the controlling authority by virtue of his/her position, but also the instructional leader.

#### 1.4.4 Educational manager

Like all formal instituted organisations the school exists to achieve specific objectives-effective teaching and learning (Bush, 1995:2 and Edem, 1982:15). In order to achieve this aim, principals have the responsibility of performing the functional task of managing schools and they are therefore educational managers. The role of the principal as an educational manager is to plan strategies for the effective achievement of educative teaching (Edem, 1982:15).

These strategies include working out details of what needs to be done and the methods of doing school activities. The details so worked out will include the setting up of a formal school structure which permits the hierarchical allocation of responsibilities and the communication flow. The school structure also provides for decision-making and a division of labour according to specialisation.

Glatthorn (1990:84-86) defines the work of an educational manager as that of coordinating supervisory leadership, curriculum leadership and organisational leadership. As an educational manager, the principal is the supervisor of the key areas: instruction, curriculum development, in-service education, staff development and action research. According to Bookbinder (1992:59-63), the principal is an educational manager who embodies the ultimate achievement of school management – organising responsibilities of people, programmes, services, facilities, as well as daily operation of the school.

#### 1.4.5 Instructional leader

Glatthorn (1990:84) defines an instructional leader as an individual whose behaviour is officially designated by the school and directly affects the behaviour of teachers in such a way as to facilitate pupils' learning and achieve the goals of the school. In the present research, the principal is viewed as an educational manager and an instructional leader whose responsibility is to create a trusting relationship between teachers and pupils, and to explain the vision/goal of the school. According to Bush *et al.* (1999:183), the principals in highly productive schools are not only educational managers but they are instructional leaders as well, because these principals spend more time in direct classroom supervision and support of teachers.

As instructional leaders principals give greater attention to working with teachers to coordinate the school's instructional programme, solving

instructional problems collaboratively, helping teachers secure resources, and creating opportunities for in-service and staff development. An instructional leader should believe in the capabilities of the whole staff and should be able to communicate this belief to other people. Smith (in McEwan, 1998:10) has briefly defined the role of the principal as an instructional leader, stating that this role:

**... is directly related to the processes of instruction where teachers, learners and the curriculum interact.**

When defining the principal as an instructional leader, McEwan (1998:10) also referred to Jones (a principal for eight years), who was passionate about his philosophy of instructional leadership:

**To be an instructional leader, you must be a person who eats and sleeps teaching and learning. Instructional leaders must constantly think about how to organize a school and instruction so all children can learn.**

In short, the role of the principal as an instructional leader is to create a culture conducive to teaching and learning, or a culture where teachers, learners and parents work together to accomplish the task of education (McEwan, 1998:6).

#### 1.4.6 Limpopo Province

“Limpopo” is the new name that has been given to the former Northern Province. When he announced the new name of the province the premier, Advocate Ngoako Ramatlhodi, indicated that in the process of colonisation the colonists took everything from the Africans, including the right to their African

names (*Sunday Sun*, 2002:9 and South African Broadcasting Corporation, News Bulletin, 18:00 hrs 11, February 2002). In this period of transformation, as Ramatlhodi indicated, it was appropriate for the Africans to reclaim their names and reaffirm their humanity. Contrary to some opinions, renaming the province and some towns is not aimed at humiliating the Afrikaners. During the official opening of the second legislature of the province Ramatlhodi (in *Internews*, 2002:6) said:

**What we seek to achieve, is to elevate the status of the Africans to that of their fellow compatriots.**

Apart from the fact that Limpopo is the name of the second largest African river that forms a boundary between South Africa and Botswana in the west, South Africa and Zimbabwe to the west and South Africa and Mozambique to the east, the literal meaning of the word "Limpopo" is not very clear. However, it is believed that the name "Limpopo" originates from the Ndebele-Sotho word, "ilimphopho", "diphororo" in Pedi, which means "a place of waterfalls", known to the Zulus as "ukupopoza", to the Venda as "vhembe" and to the tribes of Mozambique as "mogombene mbele" (Mushwana in *Internews*, 2002:6, *Great North News*, 2002:1)

In order to demarcate precisely and clearly the field of this study, the name Limpopo is used in the present context to denote the province which was previously known as the Northern Province (see appendix i) stretching from Belabela (Warmbaths) in the south to Musina (Messina) in the far north and from Steenbokpan in the west to Letaba in the east (Mamabolo, 1996: 32).

## **1.5 THE POINT OF DEPARTURE, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, AND METHODS OF RESEARCH**

### **1.5.1 The point of departure**

The point of departure for the present study is the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in the school context. In other words, the interest and concern of the researcher has been awakened by the phenomenon of principalship in the context of the school. However, it must be noted that the point of departure in this study does not stand alone as a neutral entity, above the ideological conflicts in society (Carspecken and Apple, 1992:175). Vandenberg (in Higgs, 1995:175) warns that taking the object of research out of context and thereby omitting salient features is fallacious. Such a model of research will turn into an ideology. Rather, the researcher seeks to investigate the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader as it appears and speaks for itself, in the literature and in the principal's life-world, in an effort to discover what is authentic in terms of this enactment. In attempting to achieve this aim, the researcher adopts a phenomenological approach as theoretical framework for the research to be undertaken.

### **1.5.2 Theoretical framework: a phenomenological approach**

In Philosophy of Education, a pluralistic problem-centred approach identifies a number of theoretical frameworks that influence the way educational researchers could approach their research projects. These theoretical frameworks are identified as: Logical Empiricism, Critical Rationalism, Critical Theory, Feminism, African Philosophy, Phenomenology, Hermeneutics, Systems Theory and Postmodernism (see Higgs, 1995, 1997, 2000). Each of these theoretical frameworks determines the nature of educational discourse in

terms of the methods used to conduct research into education and in the formulation of theory and practice.

In the present research, the phenomenological approach will be employed as a theoretical framework to determine the nature of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province. Furthermore, because the phenomenological approach is already well established and well known, it is unnecessary to discuss it at length (for extensive discussion on the use of a phenomenological approach in education see, Higgs and Smith, 1997a: 192-225; Higgs and Smith, 1997b:208-237; Higgs and Smith, 1997c:194-123; Higgs and Smith, 2000:109-121; Higgs, Smith, van Heerden and Higgs, 1998:147-204; Flynn, in Higgs, 1995:197-200; Roberts, 2000:145-170; Vandenberg, in Higgs, 1998:141-146; Vandenberg, in Higgs, 1995:175-196; Bensusan, in Higgs, 1998:167-174; Robb, 1997; Vandenberg, 1997; Schipper, 1999; Willis, 1999). Only a number of relevant aspects to indicate the suitability of this approach for the purposes of the present study will be described.

The present investigation is concerned with the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in the school context, so as to determine how principals can enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools. In other words, within a phenomenological framework, the research being undertaken aims at describing the nature of that human activity taken in the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader.

As a theoretical framework, a phenomenological approach is considered the most appropriate for purposes of undergirding the present research. This is because a phenomenological approach, as theoretical framework, is concerned with the question of authenticity and that which is distinctively human in nature. Higgs (1983:18) describes this orientation in the phenomenological approach

as, "... an anthropological penetration and exploration of the nature of human existence which is essence directed". As far as the present research is concerned, this implies that the researcher, in adopting a phenomenological approach, will attempt to describe the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader, as this phenomenon appears in the school context. Ripinga (1979:22) maintains that in phenomenology the researcher interrogates the phenomenon itself with a view to discovering and disclosing what the phenomenon in reality and essentially is. In other words, a phenomenological approach in this sense, attempts to penetrate the *eidos*, the nature of what is, by fathoming, reflecting, describing, and elucidating the authentic features of a particular phenomenon.

The researcher not only desires to describe the enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader, but she also wishes to disclose and understand its meaningfulness. Understanding is needed to know why the role of the principal in the school has become what it is today, and how this role can be improved in order to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools (Robb, 1997:34). To this end a phenomenological approach will be employed to arrive at such an understanding.

Robb (1997:34) notes that Edmund Husserl gave extensive reasons why he found the naturalistic empirical sciences to be inappropriate ways to investigate the human experience in terms of its authenticity. Husserl found that if applied indiscriminately to the study of human experience, naturalistic empirical science yielded inaccurate results. He, therefore, introduced the phenomenological approach to avoid such an inauthentic practice in the investigation of the nature of human experience. Such inauthentic practice was largely due to the naturalistic empirical sciences reducing humans to the level of things or objects, by ignoring those areas of human experience that we

cannot see and measure. As Higgs and Smith (2000:114) point out, phenomenology asserts that we cannot reduce human beings to the level of things and objects because there is an essential mystery at the heart of each human life.

In the present research, therefore, the researcher will employ Husserl's dictum, of "**going back to the thing itself**", which is only possible by using a phenomenological approach. This implies as Higgs (1983:18) points out, that the researcher must return to the immediate, original data of her consciousness, and also to the world of her experience and wealth of meanings that can be found there.

The enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader is clearly encompassed by a distinctively human experience and activity. Consequently, it is evident that the present research is embedded in an anthropological context which in turn, makes the adoption of a phenomenological approach appropriate because phenomenology, as Higgs and Smith (2000:109-121) point out, focuses on the authenticity and distinctiveness of being human in the world.

In adopting a phenomenological approach in her investigation of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader in the school context, the researcher will apply three steps which are distinguished in a phenomenological approach to addressing the problem in a research project, namely:

- **the intuitive investigation of the phenomenon,**
- ***epoche* or the bracketing out stage, and**
- **the identification and description of categories and criteria which articulate authentic practice.**



The *Oxford School Dictionary* (Hawkins, 1995:272) defines "intuition" as the power to know or understand things without thinking hard. Spiegelberg (in: Schipper, 1999:476) in addition contended that the phenomenological steps are taken in order to intuit the phenomenon under investigation. Intuitive investigation means investigating a particular phenomenon without reference to previous learning or theories. As Merleau-Ponty (in: Robb, 1997:36) found, phenomenology is an approach for which the world is already there before reflection begins. In her present research as a phenomenologist the researcher had an implicit conceptual formulation about the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader, because in phenomenology Heidegger found that humankind has an implicit conceptual formulation before reflecting on the phenomenon. Indeed one could say that it is just this implicit understanding of the principalship that the researcher attempts to bring to explicit understanding by intuitive investigation. Husserl indicated that phenomenology is concerned with clarification which is intended to "**overcome the one-sided surrender of mankind to the expansion of the sciences as techniques of thought**", without falling into "mysticism" (Schipper, 1999:477). Husserl's view of intuition in phenomenology is a clarification which starts with the perception (actual or in lively fantasy) of the phenomenon and proceeds by changing – as far as possible – all kinds of aspects to see what is essential.

If this researcher, in adopting a phenomenological approach, is to discover those essences that categorise the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province, then she should first set aside or bracket her prejudices and views on the matter. Phenomenology suggests that researchers lay aside, as well as possible, the prevailing understanding of the phenomena and revisit their experiences of them (Roberts, 2000:147). In so doing, it is possible that a new understanding of the phenomenon will emerge. Phenomenology requires that the researchers place their own understanding in abeyance and have a fresh

look at things; it requires a change of attitude that may throw suspicion upon past understanding. If this may be achieved, it may lead to reinterpretation – as new meaning, or fuller meaning, and this is what phenomenologists are after (Crotty in Roberts, 2000:147). Kvale (1996:38) is concise here:

**A phenomenological perspective includes a focus on the life world, an openness to the experience of the subjects, a primacy of precise descriptions, attempts to bracket foreknowledge, and a search for essential meanings in the description.**

The bracketing of personal views has given rise to many objections from non-phenomenologists (see Nel, 1984), who have erroneously presumed that the researcher is prepared to suspend her personal views and in the process negate them in the course of pursuing her research. The bracketing of personal views and prejudices, however, does not imply that the researcher's personal views and prejudices are totally excluded from her research endeavours. Rather, it is a temporary measure adopted by the researcher to prevent views and prejudices from influencing research findings in a significant way. Such a bracketing of the researcher's personal views and prejudices is known as *epoche* (Higgs, 1983:18 and Higgs, 1995:10). For purposes of the present research, the researcher will then provisionally attempt to set aside her personal views and prejudices, in order for the phenomenon of the principalship in terms of its authentic enactment as educational manager and instructional leader to "speak" freely to her. This implies that in describing and interpreting the phenomenon the researcher sets out to work intentionally and critically. It is possible to impute meanings to the phenomenon which do not belong to it (Mamabolo, 1996:54), and, therefore, the researcher will attempt to confine herself to an unprejudiced description of the phenomenon of principalship in terms of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as

educational manager and instructional leader. In so doing, she will avoid speculative and unverified pronouncements and concentrate on the careful formulation of essential findings.

Another important step in the phenomenological approach adopted by the researcher, is that in order to access the phenomenon being researched, the researcher should separate the essential from the non-essential aspects of the phenomenon. Once this is done, categories by way of description of the phenomenon can then be formulated. Such categories can then be restructured into question form and become criteria for the critical evaluation of a specific human act or enacted role. For purposes of the present research, the researcher will attempt to formulate such categories of description for the enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader. Such a formulation will then be used subsequently to arrive at criteria for purposes of critically evaluating present practices of principalship in terms of educational management and instructional leadership. Arising from this critical evaluation, the researcher will then, in terms of her findings, make certain recommendations as to how the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader can enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

### 1.5.3 Methods of research

In order to obtain relevant data pertaining to the research, certain methods are used and these will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

The choice of methods is not a question of the superiority of one method over another but of the appropriateness of the method for a particular problem (Burgess, 1985:3). In any study undertaken in the human sciences the method to be employed should be considered carefully. Reeler (1985:24) warns that in an investigation in the human sciences it is important that the method should

not lead to human beings being objectified and dehumanised. The researcher in the human sciences should avoid the restrictions of the natural sciences that make the study of the human phenomenon impossible. Research methods based on the natural sciences and their particular theoretical framework(s) strive towards objectivity and consequently make the disclosure of the human phenomenon impossible. The complexity of any human phenomenon demands, therefore, that research methods appropriate to the human sciences be used, for as Sprague (1992:181) maintains,

**The practice of scientific research is not bound by a single method, but relies on several assumptions about the nature of the enquiry and may, therefore, require the use of multiple and appropriate research methods.**

In the present research, the researcher will not limit herself to a certain fixed research method, but will consider a number of research methods, such as the phenomenological reflection on the human enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader may demand. A single research method could offer a one-sided set of findings, and in this regard, Burgess (1985:3) cites Wax, who warned that:

**Strict and rigid adherence to any method, technique or doctrinaire position for the field worker, becomes like confinement in a cage ... if he finds himself where he is limited by a particular method, theory or technique he will do well to slip through the bars and try to find out what is really going on.**

In this context, the research methods to be used in the present research are discussed in what follows:

### 1.5.3.1 Literature review

A literature review can be defined as an extensive, exhaustive, systematic and critical examination of publications relevant to the research project (Lobiondo-Wood and Haber, 1986:62).

To conduct the present research, reports of research studies and theoretical or philosophical papers characteristic of professional and disciplinary writing as background will be needed (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:43). A thoughtful and insightful discussion of related literature, it is hoped, will build a logical framework for the present research. The literature review also sets the present research within a tradition of inquiry and a context of related studies (Marshall and Rossman, 1995:3).

By reviewing the literature the researcher hopes to accomplish the following objectives.

- The literature review is significant initially for the guidance and planning of the whole research project. If the research questions are too broad or vague to be put into practice a careful review of literature helps the researcher to alter and revise the preliminary questions so that the theme can be easily investigated (Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh, 1990:67).
- The literature review determines whether the researcher's endeavour would be likely to add to the existing knowledge of school leadership in a meaningful way (Ary *et al.*, 1990:67). According to Ary *et al.*, knowledge in any given area consists of accumulated outcomes of numerous studies conducted by generations of researchers. One should therefore review the literature for the purpose of finding a link between one's research and the accumulated knowledge in one's field of

interest. Marshall and Rossman (1995:3) emphasise that the literature review should indicate that the research will fulfil a demonstrated need in the particular field. A research project with no link or which is not rooted in the existing literature will produce bits of information that are of limited usefulness (Ary *et al.*, 1990:67).

- The literature review assists the researcher to assess whether the research has potential for answering the questions posed in the research problem (Lobiondo-Wood and Haber, 1986:162).
- The literature review assists in choosing the appropriate methods relevant to the theme of the research (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:51).
- The literature review enhances the researcher's sensitivity, thus assisting in knowing what to look for and helping to formulate critical questions which give the research the empirical dimension it deserves.
- The exposition of the findings and recommendations of the research are guided by means of the literature review.
- The literature review is used as a reference to support the validation of the accuracy of the research findings (Lobiondo-Wood and Haber, 1986:162).

### **1.5.3.2 Observation**

The *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* (1995:798) defines the method of observation as:

**... the action of watching carefully so as to notice things scientifically, especially the careful watching and noting of a phenomenon in regard to its cause, or effect, of phenomena in regard to their mutual relations.**

In education the sense of watching or observing the causes of educational problems is a highly effective research activity. Furthermore, Carspecken (1996:11) stresses that learning occurs through observing the world.

As a principal, the researcher's interest has been aroused by observing principals, particularly when they are holding meetings with school inspectors. She chooses the role of the participant observer, participating fully in the activities of the group of principals being studied. Within the group, the researcher makes it clear that she is doing research (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1993:384). The researcher focuses intensively on the observed problem and applies herself conscientiously to answering questions she has formulated.

The main reason for using the method of observation is that as phenomenological, the research requires interpersonal interaction, in which the researcher observes her own behaviour as well as the behaviour of her subjects. Self-report "measures" such as questionnaires and interviews are often inadequate for dealing with activities and behaviours of which participants may themselves be unaware, or which they are unable to verbalise (Polit and Hungler, 1983:281). Consequently, for certain research questions there may be no substitute for observation. Furthermore, Marshall and Rossman (1995:77) assert that through observation the researcher learns about human behaviour and the meaning attached to such behaviour. In the present research the method of observation assumes that behaviour is purposive and expressive of deeper values and beliefs. The assumption is that understanding of the inner

perspectives of principals can only be achieved by actively participating in the principals' world and gaining insight by means of introspection.

However, mere observation without collecting information from the participants themselves is futile and therefore, data collection by means of qualitative interviews is also necessary.

### **1.5.3.3 Qualitative interviews**

Following the interpretive nature of the present research, the researcher employs qualitative interviewing techniques as a data collecting tool. Being currently the principal of a primary school in Limpopo Province, the researcher has access to schools across the region to a degree that makes possible the evaluations of the opinions and subjective experiences of school principals. Personal qualitative interviews based on unstructured questionnaires (cf. appendix iii) were conducted to evaluate the role of the principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in Limpopo Province. These interviews will be presented in the form of ideograms in chapter four.

The *Oxford English Dictionary*, cited by Chirban (1996:xi), traces the etymology of the term "interview" to the old French, "entre-voir" which means, "to have a glimpse of" or "to see each other". Edenborough (1996:16), in turn, relates the early use of the term "interview" to meetings, particularly conversations, of a ceremonial nature. Authors such as Kvale (1996:4), Rubin and Rubin (1995:34) also maintain the idea of interviews as a form of conversation.

In a broad sense, interviews are related to a common everyday understanding of conversations in the modern social science of knowledge as "given" (Kvale, 1996:4). However, the interviews employed in the present research differ from the everyday conversations as they depict a post-modern constructivist



understanding of interviewing in social research. The recent interest in qualitative interview research is, in the present analysis, not merely a result of internal developments in social science methodology. As qualitative research, interviews reflect a broader historical and cultural questioning of social realities (Kvale, 1996:4).

Interviewing as conversation is an ancient form of obtaining knowledge. For example, Thucydides interviewed participants from the Peloponnesian Wars to write the history of these wars, while Socrates used dialogues to obtain philosophical knowledge (Kvale, 1996:8). The emphasis on interviewing as conversation and on the interpretive nature of its meaning, brings qualitative interviewing closer to the domain of the humanities. When emphasising the significance of interviews in education as a human science, Polkinghorne (1983:264) contends that:

**Access to the human realm is gained through its expression. The principal form of expression is linguistic although facial expressions, and bodily gestures including dancing are also sources. But the richest form of information is linguistic expression.**

These facts have prompted this researcher to employ interviews that are qualitative, because interviews are not an exact scientific method used in a technological age. Rather, the qualitative interviews aim at obtaining nuanced descriptions from the different qualitative aspects of principals (Kvale, 1996:35). Qualitative interviews employ words and not numbers. Phrased differently, Knafl and Howard (1984:17) aver:

**Qualitative research is equated with those methods or data gathering techniques which generate narrative as opposed to numerical data.**

Principals in Limpopo Province are required to describe as precisely as possible what they experience, feel, and how they act, to enable the researcher to understand the meaning of educational settings in the lives of these principals.

Within qualitative research, qualitative interviews do not search for principles that are true all the time and in all conditions, like the laws of physics (Rubin and Rubin, 1995:38). Rather, the goal of qualitative interviews is understanding the specific circumstances and conditions under which the principals work. Knowledge in the qualitative interview is situational. The approach adopted in the present study assumes a continually changing world and recognises that what is heard and said depends on when and of whom the question is asked. Such an approach is better than the positivist mode of creating a mental construct called an "average" or a "typical" person or event that may exist nowhere and blurs distinctiveness (Rubin and Rubin, 1995:39).

Furthermore, it is primarily the task of the researcher to evaluate the question of a critical investigation of why principals experience what they do or act as they do (Kvale, 1996:34). The aim of the interviews remains the obtaining of descriptions in order to have relevant and precise material from which to draw conclusions. The researcher needs to acquire a rich understanding of the meaning of the principals' lives. When discussing the principal as educational manager and instructional leader from a phenomenological perspective the researcher avoids the quantitative empiricist descriptions which:

**... hide[s] from us in the first place "the cultural world" or "human world" in which nevertheless our whole life is led ... (Merleau-Ponty in: Vandenberg, 1997:152).**

From the quote above, it is clear that in Merleau-Ponty's view the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in particular should include activities that support human meaning drawn from experience. To do otherwise is to create dehumanising relationships. It could be said that the researcher collects the information gleaned from qualitative interviews, interprets their meanings and then forms explanations, criticisms and theories that are grounded in detail and evidence supplied by the principals themselves. Such theories clarify the role of the principal in Limpopo Province and form the basis of the research findings and recommendations (Rubin and Rubin, 1995:4).

The structure of the qualitative interviews employed in the present research comes close to that of an everyday conversation, but for the purpose of research, the interview involves a specific approach called a semi-structured approach. A semi-structured interview is neither an open conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire (Kvale, 1996:27). The semi-structured interview is conducted according to a loosely structured guide that focuses on certain themes covering questions formulated in the research problem. The interviews are openly tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewee, for subsequent interpretation (LeCompte, Millroy and Preissle, 1992:23).

## **1.6 SUMMARY AND FURTHER PROGRAMME ANNOUNCEMENT**

In chapter one the problems that are imposing an ever changing set of demands on the role of the school principal are identified and discussed. These problems eventually contribute to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The present research attempts to address this problem by reflecting critically on the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province, in an attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The point of departure,

therefore, for the present study is the enactment of these roles of the principals in the school context. As far as a theoretical framework is concerned, the researcher has adopted a phenomenological approach to undergird the study. This is because the research to be undertaken is concerned with the authentic and distinctively human enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader. In conclusion, research methods to be employed in the present investigation were identified and discussed. These research methods were to be used to assist the researcher in her critical reflection on the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

Chapter two gives consideration to a phenomenological reflection on the role of the principal as an educational manager. The focus of the chapter is a discussion of the major educational management theories in an attempt to reveal the essential characteristics of the role of the principal as educational manager, in order to identify categories and criteria which are used to evaluate the role of the principal in chapter four.

Chapter three reflects on the role of the principal as an instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning, in an attempt to reveal the essential characteristics of the role of the principal as instructional leader, in order to identify categories and criteria which can be used to evaluate the role of the principal in chapter four.

In chapter four a critical evaluation is undertaken of the issues affecting principals in Limpopo Province in the authentic enactment of their role as educational managers and instructional leaders in promoting a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Questions posed as semi-structured interviews will be answered by a sample of principals in order to evaluate the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional

leader in Limpopo Province. The criteria that are formulated in chapter two and chapter three will be used to evaluate the findings of the interviews, and to determine whether the role of principals in Limpopo Province are authentically enacted or not.

Finally, because educational theory is of little value if not translated into practice, chapter five posits the feasibility of using the findings and the recommendations in practical situations. Suggestions are included regarding further research into specific areas of concern that may be needed.

## **1.7 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the research is to reflect on the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province in order to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools. This chapter exposed the problems that beset the principal and how these problems led to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Following the interpretive nature of the research, the researcher chose the following research methods, – literature review, observation and qualitative interviews to obtain information from a wide range of sources and from principals as interviewees. A phenomenological approach was discussed as the theoretical framework to determine the nature of the authentic role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader. A phenomenological approach was chosen because phenomenology is concerned with what is authentic, and consequently such an approach will assist the researcher to reveal essential characteristics of what is authentic in the enactment of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader. The revealed essential characteristics will be used in chapter four to evaluate how the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader is realised in education practice.

## CHAPTER TWO

### A PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION: THE PRINCIPAL AS AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGER

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter an introductory orientation was given to the research problem being investigated. It was stated that the role of the school principal was beset by many problems, all which have contributed to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. What the present research is concerned with is to identify the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader, for the purposes of restoring a culture of teaching and learning in schools. A phenomenological approach is adopted as theoretical framework to undertake this research project. This is done, because a phenomenological approach is concerned with that which is authentic in the enactment of the role of the school principal as an educational manager and instructional leader.

In this chapter, the researcher will focus on the question of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager in enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in schools. When seeking for possible causes of defects in educational management the researcher finds it necessary to investigate a wide range of literature about management theories and the main management tasks of the principal as educational manager. By so doing the researcher will attempt to reveal what is considered authentic in the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager. In the last section of this chapter the essential characteristics of educational management as revealed, will be verbalised as criteria which will then be used to evaluate the role of the principal as it operates in educational practice, in chapter four. The revealed

essential characteristics of educational management will be used to guide principals in the practice of educational management, to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

## **2.2 THEORIES OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Although the phenomenological method distinguishes itself from other scientific methods by trying to eliminate theory, the present researcher finds theory relevant as it gives the topic being researched the theoretical background it deserves. The researcher is aware that critical readers may object to the inclusion of theory in this research. However, Van Manen (in: Vandenberg, 1997:41-42) indicated that theory has a place in phenomenology because phenomenological researchers claim to have discovered the "essences", yet their works lack that special quality capable of evoking and provoking the reader's sensibility and reflections in terms of the way in which everyday situations and relations may be experienced. Based on such arguments, the researcher included education management theories in the chapter because such theories will assist in shedding light on the search for the authentic role of the principal as educational manager, in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. The researcher will then make use of phenomenological reduction to assist her in systematic and careful reflection on issues and questions that are central to the principal as an educational manager.

### **2.2.1 The relevance of theory in educational management**

Management is regarded as a practical activity. The tasks of defining aims, making decisions and evaluating effectiveness all involve actions. Simply repeating these actions might be thought to lead to managerial excellence – practice makes perfect (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:33). This assumption, as Hughes (1994:31) pointed out, led some teachers and principals very often

to regard theory with suspicion because according to them, theory is unclear and lacks detailed suggestions when decisions are made.

If practitioners shun theory then they must rely on experience as a guide to action. In deciding on the most appropriate response to a problem, principals, teachers and educationists draw on a range of options suggested by previous encounters with the issue (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:33). If pressed to explain the decisions teachers are likely to say that they are just "common-sense". However, such "common-sense" decisions are often based on implicit theories, unacknowledged but nonetheless influential. Common-sense knowledge, according to Hughes (1994:31):

**... Inevitably carries with it unspoken assumptions and unrecognised limitations. Theorizing is taking place without it being acknowledged as such.**

Theory enables educational managers to consider why their actions have the results they do and to try and find ways of doing better. Therefore there is a theory of management which informs principals' judgements about the quality of their practice. Theory provides a rationale for decision-making (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:33). Theory helps educational managers by giving them a basis for action. Without a frame of reference, decisions could become purely arbitrary. It is not sufficient simply to rate the facts of a situation and to make a decision based on those facts. All such evidence requires interpretation. Theory provides the framework for understanding and interpreting events. Good practice, as Kydd, Crawford and Riches (1997:60) put it, rests on the understanding of what the managerial duties of the principal should entail, which is then compared with what the principals actually do.



The arguments in support of the systematic acquisition of theory have been stated by authors such as Higgs (1995:245) and Carr (1995:35). Higgs maintains that educators, particularly principals, should consider theory as careful reflection upon the relationship between thought and action in any particular practice, including the practice of educational management. In any human endeavour, thinking precedes action. In this regard Taylor (in: Higgs, 1998:45) has pointed out that a social theory (such as the management theory) should enable principals to formulate explicitly what they are doing, describe what is constitutive of that practice and say what it is about that practice that makes it worthwhile. By articulating the underlying self-descriptions and norms of the practice, the principals start to see the practice more clearly and are then able to start solving some of the puzzles of that practice.

Owen and Shakeshaft (1992:11) argued that the central reason for teaching management theory is to help practitioners, particularly principals, to develop ways of "reading" schools: that is, to make sense of what goes on in the schools. Managerial practices should be based on insight that is informed both by theoretical knowledge and by reflection on the uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflicts that often comprise the actual school context in which organisational managerial work is performed. In other words, the notions of reflective practice provide a perspective for understanding how theory may be useful to the principals in their school management tasks (Owen and Shakeshaft, 1992:11). It would thus appear that management theories are very relevant to the study of the principal as an educational manager and that theories give principals a foundation for an understanding of what it is that they are doing in schools.

According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994:34) the following are the factors that support the relevance of theory to educational management:

- **Reliance on facts as the sole guide to action is unsatisfactory because all evidence requires interpretation.** Principals cannot make decisions simply on an event by event basis if decision-making is to be consistent and not simply arbitrary and disconnected. A frame of reference is needed to provide insight for decision-making.
- **Dependence on experience alone in interpreting facts is narrow because it discards the accumulated experience and ideas of others.** School principals can be more effective if they deploy a range of experience and understanding in resolving problems.
- **It is only fools who learn by experience. Wise men do not have to learn of the existence of every brick wall by banging their nose into it** (Jennings in: Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:34).
- **Disastrous errors of judgement can occur while experience is being gained.** Mistakes are costly in both material and human terms. Money is scarce but the needs of students and pupils are even more important than financial considerations.
- **Experience in one situation is not necessarily applicable in another.** Organisational variables may mean that practice in one setting has little relevance in the new context. To interpret behaviour and events in the fresh situation, a broader awareness of possible approaches is necessary. Launders and Myers (in: Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:34) stress the relevance of theory to practice:

**There is nothing more practical than a good theory. ... It can help the practitioner to unify and focus his views on an organisation, on his**

**role and relationships within an organisation,  
and on the elusive phenomena of leadership  
and achievement.**

From the foregoing discussion, it can be concluded that theories are relevant to the present research problem because they will assist the principals with fresh insights to solve some of the problems which have led to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Theories will be used to identify new ways of understanding practice and will lead to a significant reduction in the theory/practice divide. Theories will assist the present researcher to reveal what is authentic in terms of the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Theories cannot therefore be dismissed as irrelevant to the needs of the educators and of school principals in particular.

### **2.2.2 Educational management theories**

The following paragraphs will expose theories of educational management that, according to the researcher, are relevant to this research as an attempt to search for a better understanding of the role of the school principal as educational manager and for how the principal can enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

#### **2.2.2.1 The scientific management theory**

The **scientific management theory**, which is also referred to as Taylorism (after the American, Frederick W. Taylor), or the classical theory, emerged from the thinking and work of Frederick Taylor and his followers during the early 1900s (Hanson, 1979:37-38 and Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:11).

Many of Taylor's ideas that shaped the scientific management theory, stem from his experience and research in the American steel industry.

This theory sees humans as essentially lazy and interested in obtaining maximum reward in return for minimal effort (Beck and Murphy, 1993:16 and Kydd *et al.*, 1997:62-63). Consequently, a manager has to exercise close supervision over all aspects of a subordinate's work in order to ensure that each job is completed satisfactorily. This requires a detailed specification of what each job involves, and a separation of each aspect of work into a multiplicity of smaller, tightly bounded tasks, each of which is to be completed respectively by an individual. Thus the classic production line was born and a start was made with the so-called scientific management theory.

The scientific management theory emphasised streamlined efficiency of organisation, management control of objectives and processes of production, rigid control of workers, piece-rate principles for wages, a task-oriented concept of leadership, scientific study of performance, and little if any concern for the psychological needs of workers (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:35). Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993:12) emphasised that scientific management represents a classic, autocratic philosophy of supervision within which workers are viewed as appendages of management and hired to carry out specified duties in accordance with the wishes of management. Everard and Morris (1996:144), in addition, maintain that the scientific management theory emphasises characteristics such as rationality, high job specialisation, centralisation, a command system, a tight hierarchy, strong vertical communication, tight control, rigid procedures and an autocratic approach.

In scientific management Taylor applied to the movements of the workers' bodies, the same methods he used in studying metal-cutting machines (Edem, 1982:6 and Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:12). Taylor even went to the extent of reducing to a mathematical formula the average shovel of load per day per

worker in the coal industry. With a standardised output ratio Taylor was able to measure the individual worker's performance and calculate his remuneration accordingly (Edem, 1982:6). Taylor's scientific management theory was affirmed because the workers' output showed a tremendous increase. The scientific management theory emphasised the fact that management should make adequate provision for staff selection and training, and that financial benefits should be based on merit.

According to the scientific management theory schools, like Taylor's engineering firm, should have objectives to achieve. Therefore school principals, as managers, should ensure that teachers are duty-conscious and result-oriented. Taylor's idea of efficiency demands that the school should attain its objective and that those responsible for its management should aim at a result to achieve. Thus the scientific theory of management advocates that awards and benefits be based on merit and stresses the need to keep on working until the goal is achieved (Edem, 1982:6). The scientific management was fused with the theory of social evolution which held the view that people can control and improve their world by conscious means, notably through education (Beck and Murphy, 1993:16).

Taylor's scientific management was also heavily influenced by the belief that organisations such as schools are primarily rational entities. For example Etzioni's (in: Westoby, 1988:4) definition of organisations indicated that the central feature of any organisation is that it is a structure designed to pursue a specific goal. Thus basic to the idea of any organisation, whether it is a school, a prison, or a large corporation, is the idea of a means-end relationship of the formal social arrangements to the goals of the organisation.

Organisations themselves are assumed to have a high level of predictability, stability and consistency. This is thought to be true for the school as an organisation (Westoby, 1988:5). Through careful technical analysis, the

principal as an educational manager can figure out the best way to structure roles and tasks in pursuit of clearly defined goals (Deal and Peterson, 1994:4). From a rational perspective, schools exist to accomplish explicit and measurable objectives. Schools take raw material (pupils) from the environment (community) and transform them, through teaching and learning (the technology), into the products (well-educated and trained people) that the society desires. From this perspective, schools should be organised to achieve these technical ends as efficiently as possible (Deal and Peterson, 1994:5).

If the identification of goals is regarded as an essential factor in understanding the organisational characteristics of the school, then the nature of the structures designed to achieve these goals is equally important. In this regard reference is made to Musgrave's argument, which indicates that schools have the most salient characteristics of bureaucracies, as described by Weber (Westoby, 1988:6).

#### □ **Schools as Bureaucracies**

According to Weber the complex nature of the activities carried out by schools demands, it is argued, both efficiency and rationality as initially claimed by Weber for this form of an organisation. In order to achieve their aim, the school activities should be regulated by a consistent system of abstract rules. Furthermore, in a school as a bureaucracy, the duties of members of staff should be officially prescribed, a division of labour maintained, and a hierarchy of authority resulting in a clear delineation of status and functions between the various positions in the hierarchy established (Westoby, 1988:6).

The view of schools as bureaucracies has been somewhat modified by subsequent research and a number of authors have emphasised the problems arising from trying to make use of the Weberian approach to bureaucracy. Writers who treated schools wholly as bureaucracies have tended to be

somewhat uncritical in their application of organisational theory to schools. In so doing, such writers ignored the findings of case studies into the structure and culture of schools, which support the view that schools create, through their own organisational framework, many of the problems of disorder and complexity.

The tensions which might be produced within the school by emphasis on an impersonal application of rules, are serious enough to merit more consideration than they often receive in this type of analysis. The same may be claimed for the conflict of values which can sometimes be observed between school principals and the teachers who see their professionalism being challenged by bureaucrats.

It is worthwhile to include a summary of Taylor's work as it is the basis of many objections to the use of management as a concept in schools (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:33). The key elements of Taylor's scientific management theory are:

- **The introduction of scientific methods into the design of working practices, i.e. measuring and analysing a process to find the "best way".**
- **Selecting and training teachers to carry out work according to the "best method".**
- **Careful definition of roles and responsibilities, such as the job descriptions of teachers.**

Supporters of Taylor's scientific management theory point to greater efficiency, rational organisations and improved earnings. Opponents argue that Taylor's approach is mechanistic, dehumanising, based on power and control through hierarchy (Bradley, 1993:17 and Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:11). Peter

and Waterman (in: Everard and Morris, 1996:144) argued that scientific management theories caused organisations such as the school, to denigrate the importance of values. Also, Taylor's philosophy of management places people at the end of the pipeline, where they receive an operating system over which they have no control, and which holds them accountable for that system (Bradley, 1993:17). Little or no attention was given to the values, beliefs or personal assumptions of the people who were to implement the scientific management practices (Deal and Peterson, 1994:5).

Although scientific management such as Taylor's method, later met with public disapproval, being criticised as an attempt to reduce human beings to machines, nonetheless, his idea that management should foster the attainment of the organisation's goals and objectives, and make provision for the training and selection of staff, remains indisputably important (Edem, 1982:6). Gray and Starke (1996:9) argued that while Taylor's theory had been criticised as being insensitive to human needs and treated people like machines, it was obvious that his influence was probably still as great as it had ever been.

In this regard Hanson (1979:36) maintained that scientific theory still shaped the form and function of many factors found in the organisation of the school. This means that many of the main principles of the scientific management theory still play an important role in the organisation and administration of contemporary education. The examples below, adapted from Hanson, illustrate the significant application of such principles in the present school system:

- **The formation of a hierarchy with graded levels of authority**

Levels of control, from superintendent to chief directors to directors, assistant directors to regional directors to school inspectors to principals to vice principals to teachers and to students.



- **The scientific measurement of tasks and levels of performance**

Learners thoroughly tested in learning areas, aptitude, and achievement and classified by levels.

- **Shaping the unity of ends**

Conventional wisdom in schools dictates that teachers and principals have the same objective, doing what is best for children.

- **Establishing a division of labour**

The work to be done has to be divided among teachers.

- **Adhering to a chain of command**

Teachers have to follow protocol, first communicate with the principal before they speak to the school inspector.

- **Defining rules of behaviour**

One of the rules at a school could be: All teachers will be in their rooms by 8:00 and are obliged to remain at school for at least seven hours.

- **Establishing discipline among employees**

Students will abide by the rules of the school and norms of good conduct. Teachers will adhere to the policies of the district and the norms of the teaching profession as set out by the South African Council of Educators (SACE).

- **Conducting recruitment based on ability and technical knowledge**

To enter the profession, certification or possession of degrees is required.

- **Defining "one best way" of performing a task**

In the school system there is a continuous search for the "best way" of teaching reading, mathematics, geography or a search for the best approach to teaching (resulting in the change to Outcomes Based Education – the OBE approach).

The above examples are a clear indication of the application of the principles of the scientific management theory in contemporary education.

With the completion of significant management research such as the Western Electric Company studies, the popularity of the scientific theory waned, and another theory, the **human relations** theory of management, was introduced in educational management (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:35). But first, a renewed thinking in scientific management was introduced – the so-called **neo scientific theory**.

#### **2.2.2.2 The neo-scientific management theory**

The school reform of the 1980s suggested a renewed interest in scientific management thinking, though its shape and form in practice changed considerably from the traditional form: the so-called **neo-scientific theory** of management. Neo-scientific management theory was largely a reaction against scientific management with its neglect of the teacher in the classroom and its emphasis on accountability. The neo-scientific management, like scientific management, had an interest in control, accountability and efficiency, but the manner by which it achieved these ends was far more impersonal

(Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:13). For example, at school there was a renewed interest in closely monitoring what it is that teachers do; the subject matter they cover and the teaching methods they use. However, checking daily lesson plans and visiting classes daily to inspect teaching, often breeds resentment and results in tension between teachers and principals.

A more impersonal way to control what it is that teachers do was to introduce standardised criterion reference testing and to make public the scores achieved by classes and the school. Since it is accepted that what gets measured gets taught, tests serve as an impersonal method of controlling the teachers' work.

From the above it may be deduced that within neo-scientific management, the task dimension, concern for the job and concern for the highly specified objectives, all lacking in human relations management, are strongly emphasised. However, critics of neo-scientific management feel that the emphasis on the task and school objectives is so strong that the human dimension suffers. Neo-scientific management relies heavily on externally imposed authority and as a result often lacks acceptance from teachers (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:13).

### **2.2.2.3 The humanistic management theory**

The **humanistic** concept of management became very popular in educational management during the 1940's and 1950's (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:35). As an offshoot to the **scientific theory** or to the impersonality of the formal organisation, the humanistic management theory focused on what McGregor referred to as the human side of the school as an organisation (Bush, Glatter, Goodey and Riches, 1980:133). Educative practice proves that the importance of human relations is overwhelming in a people oriented organisation such as

the school (De Witt, 1982:52). This is not surprising because, whereas most management organisations are concerned with things, school management is concerned with people.

The humanistic theory of management is characterised by respect for the individual and other human values, consultation, consensus, decentralisation, loose project organisation, flexible procedures and a participative approach (Everard and Morris, 1996:144). Interest shifted away from the efficiency of the organisational structure to emphasis upon building faculty morale, meeting the psychological needs of the staff, group-based administration authority, promotion of staff harmony and the use of concepts generated in group dynamics (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:35). The present emphasis on the idea of democracy in educational management originated from the humanistic management theory.

Critics of the humanistic management theory maintained that without care, such an approach tends to lead people to undervalue the achievement of the tasks of the school and thereby detracts from the school's effectiveness in achieving its aims (Everard and Morris, 1996:144). Furthermore, humanistic management was criticised because there were misunderstandings as to how the approach should work, and also for the faulty theoretical notions inherent in the approach itself (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:13).

Within the schools, the humanistic movement resulted in widespread neglect of teachers, and the participatory management became permissive supervision, according to Sergiovanni and Starratt (1993:19), which in practice was a **laissez-faire** form of supervision. The focus on human relations management was and still is an emphasis on "winning friends" in an attempt to influence and impress the working people. To many, the "winning friends" approach was inauthentic and dishonest and it became clear that increases in school

productivity would not be achieved merely by assuring the happiness of teachers (Sergiovanni and Starratt, 1993:13).

Owing to the above criticisms and weaknesses the popularity of the humanistic theory waned during the 1960's and 1970's, although it is still a widely accepted theory in educational management.

#### **2.2.2.4 The contingency management theory**

Fiedler is among those authors who feel that embracing one theory of management for all situations is unwise (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:36). Fiedler advocated a **contingency management** theory. According to this perspective, it is necessary to specify the conditions, or situational variables, that motivate the relationship between the manager's traits and the performance criteria (Hoy and Forsyth, 1986:128). The emerging evidence indicates that under one set of circumstances one type of leader is effective; under another set of circumstances, however, a different type of leader is needed. The intriguing question of what kind of leaders for what kind of situations is no simple answer (Hoy and Forsyth, 1986:128). There is not a "better" management style; it depends upon the situation.

The major innovation in Fiedler's work is that he takes into account the situation, including the relationship with the subordinates as well as the style of the leader (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994: 61). Such an approach attempts to predict which types of principles in the school will be effective in different types of school situations. Some school situations for example may call for a **task oriented principle** (fixation upon the tasks to be completed); whereas in other schools the **human-relation-oriented principle** may be more appropriate (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:61).

Dlamini (1995:1) emphasised the idea of the contingency approach to educational management in the task of the principal. In this regard Dlamini cited Stoner and Wankel, stressing that:

**According to the contingency approach, then, the task of the manager is to identify which technique will, in a particular situation, under particular circumstances and at a particular time, best contribute to the attainment of managerial goals.**

A school that has reached a leadership impasse and is experiencing goal displacement (pre-occupation with group maintenance activities and inattention to educational objectives) may benefit from a **task-oriented principle** (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:36). On the other hand a well organised school in which the faculty is functioning well may be more productive with a relationship-oriented or democratic principal than under a **task-oriented** leader. The central idea in the contingency theory is that one management style is not best for all schools (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:36).

Kimbrough and Burkett (1990:36) believe that the **system theory** offers the best possible general theory for incorporating the advantages of the contingency theory, humanist theory and scientific management.

#### **2.2.2.5 The system management theory**

The system theory enables the principal to understand the relationships among members of the faculty, predicting what might happen if certain decisions are taken and implemented (Kimbrough and Burkett, 1990:36). Unlike the gaps that plagued scientific management (such as neglecting the human factor) and humanistic theory (a simplistic disregard of the need for structure), the system

theory offers a realistic way of accounting for the complex process of operating a productive school.

The assumption is made that organisations such as the school can be made more effective by comparing them to the central nervous system (Everard and Morris, 1996:146), diagnosing in what respects they fall short and strengthening any subsystem that seems weakly developed. According to this view, there are three tiers in the school as a system. These tiers are associated with the functions of policy-making, managing the execution of policy and finally the actual "**doing**" operation.

The systems theory of management sounds simple but in practice the "**doing**" can be complex. For example, teachers share pupils, equipment and sometimes even classroom accommodation. Crises also arise, so there is a cloud of buzzing communication across the "doing" group: a bit of give and take, borrowing and lending, reciprocal adjustment, and ironing out problems (Everard and Morris, 1996:146). On the whole this tends to be fairly informal, but it is nevertheless vital for the smooth running of the school. Its equivalent in the human body is the subconscious co-ordination of movement; when the system fails the smooth co-ordination is lost.

Some recent writers have adopted a perspective which sees management as coping with chaos, and assumes that much human behaviour may not be rational at all (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:64). Such a non-rational management theory is referred to as **complexity** or **chaos theory**.

#### **2.2.2.6 The complexity or chaos theory**

One feature of postmodernism is its awareness of disparateness and **chaos**. Not only in social theory but also in the scientific community, change and

uncertainty are ubiquitous (Morrison, 1998:3). **Chaos theory** is a relatively new field. There are therefore some differences of opinion as to just what chaos theory entails (Treml, in: Higgs, 1998:233). The chaos theorists became interested in the untidy, unpredictable and complicated aspects of the planetary system. Such complexity in schools as educational organisations, arises not only from the fact that it is nearly impossible to separate causes from effects. Educational organisations are, in particular, characteristically beset by ambiguity arising from the fact that they are people changing organisations with remarkably uncertain technologies for bringing about intentions, and, moreover, are an integral part of the political system (Owen and Shakeshaft, 1992:11).

The school is an organisation with a structure of its own which is partly determined by the external pressures and is partly a product of the nature of the school itself (Westoby, 1988:8). Furthermore the demands which are made on schools from a variety of sources often conflict with each other, especially in a time of limited and even declining resources.

There are different views about the nature of education within the teaching profession and this has led in many schools to a situation in which it is not clear what the goals of schools are (Whitaker, 1998:191). Different members of the school may perceive goals differently or attribute different priorities to the same goals or even be unable to define goals which have any operational meaning. Thus while it is commonly expected that those who work in a school should have some overall purpose, it is likely that the organisational context of many schools renders the establishment of purpose either impossible or very difficult. Hence schools face an ambiguity of purpose, the result of which is that the achievement of goals which are educational in any real sense has ceased to be central to the functioning of the school. This has resulted in some authors characterising schools as complex or chaotic organisations (Whitaker, 1998:191).



The chaos theory offers new insight into the most complex human concerns such as the behaviour of individuals, the patterns present in human organisations such as the school and the intricacies of learning (Whitaker, 1998:191). According to Hayles (in: Higgs, 1998:233) there are two emphases in chaos theory:

**In the first, chaos is seen as order's precursor and partner, rather than its opposite. The focus here is on the spontaneous emergence of self organisation from chaos. The second branch emphasises the hidden order that exists within chaotic systems. Chaos in this usage is distinct from true randomness, because it can be shown to contain deeply encoded structures called "strange attractors".**

From the above quote, it may be inferred that chaos is not total disorder, because from chaotic situations order may emerge.

Because of changing circumstances, educational reform, particularly in management, is presently topical in many societies; however this has been the case for quite a few decades with very little success. Badenhorst (in: Higgs, 1998:238) refers to Jenlin and Carr who indicated that a number of authors have attributed this lack of success to the use of modernistic science or scientific theories, deep structures of power, rigid hierarchical organisation and the use of traditional fragmented approaches to change. These authors then continue to make a case for the application of chaos and complexity ideas in the understanding of schools as complex dynamic systems, exhibiting both order and disorder.

### 2.2.2.7 Total quality management theory

In South Africa the new democratic society is searching for a relevant school system, which is a shift away from the apartheid school system with all its deficiencies. Therefore schools should no longer exist to preserve and maintain the *status quo* or to impart the accumulated knowledge of the past, particularly in the practice of educational management (Drake and Roe, 1994:4).

In this regard the words of Count as referred to by Drake and Roe (1994:4) are relevant:

**We should however give to our children a vision of the possibilities which lie ahead. Also our social institutions and our practices all of them should be critically examined.**

Keeping the above quote in mind, educationists, particularly principals, should critically examine the philosophy on which their educational management thinking is founded. There is a need to search for new ways of thinking in educational management. One suggestion for improvement strategies in educational management is the implementation of **total quality management theory**.

Total quality management represents a change in philosophy, or put simply a change in the way of thinking about the schools system (Bradley, 1993:195). In quality management the concept of quality refers to a state of mind, a work ethic involving everyone in the school as an organisation (Swansburg, 1996:568). **Quality** is defined by Everard and Morris (1996:182) as "**meeting or exceeding the expectations of the customer**". Such a view of quality is supported by Bradley (1993:66) who added that "**quality is determined by**

**client satisfaction**". It is maintained that schools should somehow identify and pursue client satisfaction. In the case of schools there are a variety of clients or stakeholders – the parents and guardians of pupils /students, students or pupils, and government (Everard and Morris, 1996:182).

To implement total quality management, a school system should change the way it views schools, and it should be willing to challenge some of the beliefs upon which educational management has been based for decades (Bradley, 1993:195). An effective way to do this is to change the educational management **paradigm**. Higgs and Smith (1997:334) defined a paradigm as another word for "**model**" or "**framework**". In a rational inquiry a paradigm is a certain perspective which forms the basis of a certain way of thinking. According to Bradley (1993:195) **paradigms** are **models** or **patterns** of thinking and behaving. Paradigms create rules and regulations and establish the standards that define success within a field. Problems are solved within the established paradigms.

Paradigms oftentimes keep people from accepting new ideas. There is a tendency for people to adjust data and information by filtering it through scientific mindsets that agree with their paradigms (Bradley, 1993:195). Therefore, data and information that agrees with the current paradigms in education management is more likely to gain acceptance than data that disagrees with the current paradigms. This is called the "**paradigm effect**", that blinds people and organisations such as schools to new opportunities. Clinging to the old paradigm causes people to discover the future through the current paradigm. This limits people's thinking (Bradley, 1993:196).

For the school system to give total quality management theory a chance to succeed, the educational authorities, and the principal in particular, should be willing to look at new paradigms relative to school purpose and management

philosophy. Abandoning the existing paradigms is risky because all the data supports the current paradigm. Therefore to acquire more insight one should be exposed to the difference between the current education management paradigm and the new total quality management paradigm.

The current educational management paradigm emphasises:

- **hierarchical order;**
- **superordinate/subordinate function;**
- **control;**
- **command;**
- **top down communication;**
- **division of labour;**
- **delegation of authority;**
- **job descriptions; and**
- **individual responsibility** (Bradley, 1993: 198).

The total quality management paradigm on the other hand, emphasises:

- **client priority;**
- **the lack of hierarchy;**
- **self monitoring and inspection;**
- **collaboration;**
- **horizontal communication;**
- **cooperation; and**
- **team responsibility** (Bradley, 1993: 198).

The total quality management theory focuses on achieving quality: meeting and exceeding the needs and expectations of clients. A second focus is on the

acceptance of and pursuit of continuous improvement as the only useful standard or goal (Bradley, 1993:169 and Swansburg, 1996:568).

Quality management theory holds that example and experience teach little about theory, and that experience is not always useful knowledge (Bradley, 1993:109). Bush and West-Burnham (1994:172) emphasised the key points characterising quality management as:

- **Total quality management** works to ensure that every aspect of the school is focused all the time on meeting and then exceeding the parents, and the pupils' needs.
- **Inspection and evaluation** identify what has gone wrong and allow remedial action or continue activities which are known to be working well.

Total quality management covers Deming's fourteen points, which analyse how the approach attempts to visualise education management from a quality perspective (Bradley, 1993:109). According to Deming's methods it is believed that principals and teachers have a natural division of labour (Swansburg, 1996:568). As workers, teachers do the work and principals, as managers, improve the system. Thus, the potential for improving the school system is continuous and is never-ending. Two of Deming's points as presented by Swansburg (1996:569) are:

- Create constancy of purpose toward improvement of product and service. Everyone should have a clear goal every day, week and month to satisfy the customer.

- Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality, by thoroughly understanding the sources of variation in processes and working to reduce variation.

Total quality management is relevant to the present research because of its emphasis on quality or client satisfaction, which feature very little in the other traditional theories discussed. There is also an emphasis on lack of hierarchy, team responsibility and collaboration. Total quality management theory has limitations. The emphasis running through the entire theory is continuous improvement after doing away with inspection and control. In the researcher's opinion, it is however not clear how the school or education employees are going to be motivated to work in the absence of using numerical goals, evaluation, control and ranking incentives to stimulate a competitive spirit. There is only limited empirical evidence as to the appropriateness and effectiveness of total quality management in schools (Bradley, 1993:181 and Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:172).

### 2.2.3 Resumé

The **scientific, neo-scientific humanist, contingency and system theories** of management have at times slavishly followed the lead of science (Whitaker, 1998:191). These theories viewed schools as fundamentally tidy and predictable, following fixed and well understood laws. However, one of the most central, most important notions that has emerged from the last forty years of the management studies, is that human organisation in education is vastly more complex than one may think (Owen and Shakeshaft, 1992:11). It is only recently in the last decade that some educationists have recognised the harmful and limiting effects of such a simplistic rational approach.

An entirely different stance on the nature of management questions the assumption of rationality, and may also challenge the extent to which management is a control activity (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:64). Even with scientific management theory or the so-called Taylorist tradition, rationality was seen by Simon (in: Kydd, 1998:64) as necessarily limited. He argued that the principal as educational manager could never know everything about a situation – which is a precondition of full rationality.

From the above exposition, principals who proceed from the **scientific** and **neo-scientific** or classical theory will tend to build management structures and systems designed to: direct the efforts of staff; control their actions; modify their behaviour to fit organisational needs (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:12). Principals acting from a scientific management point of view will also adopt interpersonal behaviour towards staff that is characterised by persuasion; reward and punishment; instruction and command. Principals and leaders who espouse the **humanistic** theory will tend to build management structures and systems designed to make it possible for people to develop; seek responsibility; take risks; set ambitious targets and challenges (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:12).

The above propositions are clearly polarised positions but they do help to place one's experience within a powerful theoretical framework. According to Kydd *et al.* (1998:12) most of the school principals have been predominantly adherents of the scientific theory. As a result part of their career path into senior positions may have been motivated by a desire to avoid the controlling forces of scientific theory being exerted on them, and their desire to possibly be among a smaller group in society who hold power to control others.

An important element in the development of principals as educational managers is a capacity to develop an awareness that the scientific management theory has affected most managers and formed their behavioural

tendencies. For many principals the greatest challenge is to balance an intellectual commitment to the humanistic theory with the experience that has conditioned managers in the dynamics of scientific theory (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:13).

One of the problems of traditional management practice has been an assumption of simplicity – that consistency and predictability in human affairs can be relied upon by managers (Kydd *et al.*, 1998:14). For school principals there is a need for a consciousness which allows for working comfortably within the uncertainties and inconsistencies of the school as a complex structure. School principals should realise that the notion of a single fixed and unshakeable theory of educational management is no longer viable (Owen and Shakeshaft, 1992:16). As educational managers, principals should therefore be moving in new directions of thinking. For example, school principals should move away from the assumption that there is one "best" way of thinking about schools, to the assumption that there are several, valid, legitimate, and competing ways.

Many of the management practices and many of the education departmental policies for education transformation in South Africa, are based on one or a combination of three general theories of educational management: **scientific management, humanistic management and neo-scientific management**. These theories are reflected in the images of supervision portrayed by school principals (instructed by the higher departmental authorities), inspectors, and the directors of education. However, in the present researcher's view none of the three management theories on its own is adequate to provide a model for school management. Reasons for their inadequacy range from scientific limitations on the one hand to lack of compatibility with the changing and complex realities of school management on the other. The new total quality management theory with its emphasis on quality, collaboration and diminished



hierarchy also has limits of its own. Its total exclusion of supervision and control also raises questions as to how teachers, as well as learners, are encouraged to achieve and satisfy the clients without reflecting on what and how their work has been done.

Educational authorities and principals in particular, should recognise that complexity, ambiguity, and uncertainty in school life make it unlikely that a linear, rationally logical theory can provide the sole basis for informing management practice (Owens and Shakeshaft, 1992:16). The educational authorities controlling education should question their desire always to want orderliness and certainty. This needs both a new way of thought and a new way of behaviour (Whitaker, 1998:192).

A less polarised view of people and work was offered by researchers who argued that complexity is the key characteristic of people and that people tend not to behave consistently and predictably. That means principals should possess a wide knowledge of management theories which will guide them to make decisions in their attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools. No single theory of management can be regarded as relevant to all school situations. What is needed is behaviour appropriate to the needs and circumstances of varying situations. Morrison (1998:4) and Whitaker (1998:191) cite Waldrop who has suggested that complex systems like schools need principals as managers to acquire the ability to bring order and chaos into a special kind of balance; the so-called **edge of chaos**, where the components of a system never quite lock into place, and yet never quite dissolve into turbulence (Whitaker, 1988:191-2).

Besides acquiring knowledge concerning the various management theories outlined above, it is necessary that principals should have knowledge of the main management tasks that are, in the researcher's opinion, essential for enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

### 2.3 THE MANAGEMENT TASKS OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

In the present research the principal is regarded as both an educational manager and instructional leader. In order to put the management tasks into perspective the researcher finds it necessary to clarify the relationship between management and leadership, which has led to separate discussions of the role of the principal as an educational manager and instructional leader. The concepts of **management** and **leadership** are often used interchangeably (Whitaker, 1998:23). However, Grace (1995:26) argued that such concepts have a history, a politics, and a set of complex, cultural and ideological relations within a wider society. Following Grace's view it is believed that according to Greenfield's (1986) findings in the study of educational management there was a limitation of vocabulary if something could not be expressed in operational terms. One of the key areas in which this reductionist trend is most apparent, is in the study of management and leadership.

According to Grace (1995:27), the concept of leadership, like the concept of culture, is not easily defined nor analysed in operational terms. Management, on the other hand, is, ironically, a more manageable concept which can be defined in operational terms. The concept of management can be more easily commodified than can the more intangible but nevertheless "real" concept of leadership. When management was developed into a science or obtained scientific status, the effect of such status was that leadership was recontextualised as a part of management.

Lipham (in: Kimbrough and Burkett (1990:30)) and Busher and Saran (1995:11) contend that management and leadership are the major functions that the school principal has to perform. It is therefore important to distinguish between management and leadership. Management and leadership are at once separate and intertwined, and functionally they are intermingled (Kimbrough

and Burkett, 1990:30). Busher and Saran (1995:188) also added that management and leadership were two interrelated facets, assisting people in an organisation such as the school to work together effectively. There is confusion because some writers make a distinction between a manager and a leader while others regard management and leadership as the same thing. Lipham (in: Edem, 1982:40), for instance regards the former mainly as the person who initiates changes to accomplish the goals of the school, and the latter as the person whose function is to run the school and keep it going. The role of the principal in the present context should be both. While there are considerable similarities between the two concepts it may be useful to make a distinction between the emphasis of each. According to Whitaker (1998:23) management is mainly concerned with:

- **keeping the organisation running;**
- **maintaining day to day functions;**
- **ensuring that work gets done;**
- **monitoring outcomes and results; and**
- **organising efficiency.**

Leadership on the other hand is more specifically concerned with:

- **personal and interpersonal behaviour;**
- **focus on the future;**
- **visions and purposes;**
- **change and development;**
- **quality of outcome;**
- **achievement and success; and**
- **personal effectiveness.**

These are descriptive distinctions and are not intended to imply that leadership is more important than management (Whitaker, 1998:23).

The dilemmas that arise in schools every day suggest the need for new ways of thinking about how to combine leading and managing (Deal and Peterson, 1994:41). In this regard Squelch and Lemmer (1994:10) have referred to Guthrie who maintained that school principals should be both managers and leaders. As managers principals should ensure that fiscal and human resources are used effectively to achieve the aims of the school. According to the view of Kimbrough and Burkett (1992:30), principals cannot be effective leaders without performing managerial functions. On the other hand, principals cannot push aside their leadership activities while performing as managers. Neither can principals put management duties on hold while performing leadership roles.

Furthermore, as leaders principals should display the vision in the learning environment to develop goals and inspire staff, pupils and parents to achieve these goals (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:11). Therefore there is a need to think of leadership as being tied up with management into a complex knot. Such a knot is interwoven with the need to manage people, time, and instruction while at the same time infusing a school with passion, purpose and meaning (Deal and Peterson, 1994:41). According to Deal and Peterson (1994:41) in Taoist tradition, philosophers used the concepts of "Yin" and "Yang" to depict opposites that when combined make a unified whole. One thinks of man and woman, love and hate, war and peace, status quo and innovation – each making the other possible. The Taoist "Yin"- "Yang" concept represents a duality that expresses an implicit unity found in management and leadership. Watts (in: Deal and Peterson, 1994:42) noted that:

**The art of life is not seen as holding to "Yang" and banishing "Yin", but as keeping the two in balance, because there can't be one without the other.**

The same need for balance is true of the oft-cited management-leadership polarity. The concept of paradox in a principal's work stresses the ability to embrace the supposedly opposing poles, to become a technical artist or an artistic technician. By merging different, seemingly conflicting, roles principals can bring harmony and balance to the school situation and deal with complex puzzles at the same time (Deal and Peterson, 1994:42).

In the present research **management** and **leadership** will therefore be regarded as the same issue, that should be characterising the role of the school principal. But to put educational management in perspective, it becomes necessary to reflect on the various management tasks that are essential characteristics for the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Such a reflection is needed in order to allow that which is authentic in terms of the role of the principal as educational manager to emerge. According to Hoberg (1997:36) there is no consensus on the specific tasks of the school principal as educational manager. Researchers such as Busher and Saran (eds.) (1995); Sergiovanni and Starrat (eds.) (1988); and Van Der Westhuizen (ed.) (1991) concur that educational management embraces a wide range of managerial activities such as:

- **the efficient use of resources, both financial and human;**
- **the pedagogical and curriculum tasks of the school;**
- **the effective use of communication to ensure that suitable consultative structures are in place;**

- **effective processes of decision-making, including those of delegation;**
- **the promotion of warm caring, open and honest interpersonal relationships; and**
- **the implementation and development of school policies, staff development programmes and monitoring and evaluation procedures.**

It is also necessary to mention that schools are not orderly like factories (Badenhorst, 1996:7). Although school management may exhibit some similarities to the running of a factory, it is a complex activity and different authors use different schemes in order to explain it. If the orderly aspects of the school can easily be over emphasised to the detriment of teachers and children, who are human beings and not machines, conflict may arise. While different management tasks are discussed below it should be realised that management in reality does not happen in such neat steps. Trying to force it into watertight compartments may defeat the purpose.

No one particular aspect or management task should be absolutised. When viewing management from one perspective, e.g. as planning one may come to the conclusion that management is planning. However, in doing so, one may lose sight of a balanced view of management. Van der Westhuizen (1991:135-215) and Walters (1991:4) supplied the following classification of the management tasks of the principal, which is for the purpose of this chapter the best reflection of the specific tasks of the school principal: **leading, planning, organising, and control**. These are the four basic management tasks which lead to other management tasks like decision-making, delegating, motivating, and coordinating. The educational management areas included in the research are staff management, managing parents, pupil management and financial management.

### 2.3.1 Leading

The leadership of the school principal is a critical factor in the success of any programme in the school (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:178). Knowledge about leadership therefore is a prime prerequisite if an individual is to fulfil the principalship role effectively. However, to fit in with the plan for this research, **leading**, as one of the principal's management tasks, will be discussed in the third chapter as it relates to the instructional leadership role of the school principal. One of the main purposes of the present investigation is to clarify what the school culture is, what it does, and how it relates to enhancing the school's effectiveness. The researcher will attempt to reveal that much of what is mysterious about leadership becomes clearer if leadership is temporarily separated from management and linked specifically to creating and changing the school culture (Schein, 1985:xi).

### 2.3.2 Planning

Despite sustained attention of authors to **planning** as an important management activity, there is widespread disagreement over an operational definition of the term (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:150). There is a view that planning is a highly personalistic process, and a tendency to equate planning with "mental effort" from which a plan evolves.

Fayol (in: Edem, 1978: 7) defined planning as a process of studying the future and arranging the plan for action. Marx (in: Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1990:137) regards planning as the management task which is concerned with deliberately reflecting on the objectives of the organisation, the resources, as well as the activities involved, and drawing up a suitable plan for effectively achieving these objectives. Through careful planning the set objectives are realised. Planning is an integrated management task and the various tasks in

education each have a planning element (Van der Westhuizen, *et. al*, 1990:137).

With the objective of education in view, the school principal should approach the management task systematically. The world in which the school functions is plagued by pressure, complexity and confusion and to create visions of where a school wants to go is very important. There is also a need to develop ideas about the routes to be followed to reach the desired destination (Whitaker, 1998:46).

According to West and Ainscow (1991:23) it should be indicated from the onset that planning is not forecasting. Though forecasting (predicting or forecasting the future) is an important basis for planning, it is not in itself a planning activity. The plan indicates not what the future is expected to be, but what the school proposes to do in that expected future. Thus to state that the school will be implementing Curriculum 2005 or Outcomes-Based Education does not constitute a curriculum plan. What is necessary is to know what the school will be doing to implement the curriculum and when, and with what resources, and through whom. Fayol (in: West and Ainscow, 1991:23) provided a definition of the planning function which draws these strands together:

**The plan of action is, at one and the same time, the result envisaged, the line of action to be followed, the stages to go through and the methods to use.**

In addition to the above definition, Theron and Bothma (1990:181) describe planning as a theoretical reflection on policy, rules, procedures, strategies, methods, skills and competencies which is undertaken by the principal with a view to realising goals and objectives by means of people. Hodgetts (in: Theron and Bothma, 1990:181) summarised planning concisely as follows:



**The formulation of objectives and the steps that will  
be employed in attaining them.**

The emphasis in most of the definitions of planning as a management activity lies in the **formulation of the goals and objectives** which schools are trying to achieve (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:3). School principals should not look upon educational management as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. Such an end should be represented by the goals and objectives which their schools are trying to achieve.

In the context of the present research, a much broader view of planning is taken into account. Such a broader view sees planning as synonymous with the total administrative process, including stages such as: determining goals, investigating conditions and operations related to purposes and objectives, considering possible alternatives and recommending changes to be made (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:151).

It is however not the definition of planning which is important; rather, an understanding of how to set about the plan is of prime importance to school principals. Planning also ensures better co-operation, saves time and unnecessary effort and makes better supervision and control possible (Theron and Bothma, 1990:181).

Harrison (in: West and Ainscow, 1991) outlined six dimensions which, he argued, need to be understood and integrated within the planning process. These dimensions are: time; level; subject; function; external environmental elements and "**characteristics**". Harrison goes on to outline what he means by "characteristics" as follows:

- **Flexibility** – Plans must be capable of reacting to changes in circumstances, information available and opportunity.

- **Cost effectiveness** – Plans should cost less to prepare than the expected benefits of the planning process.
- **Rationality** – Plans should relate in a clear rational way to managerial objectives.
- **Comprehensiveness** – A plan should cover all the relevant functions and levels within the organisation.
- **Specificity** – A plan must state clearly what is to be done, when it is to be done, where it is to be done, how it is to be done and who is responsible for doing it.
- **Time span** – A plan should include time constraints relating to the activities it includes.
- **Relevance** – A plan should be clearly relevant to the perceived needs and priorities of the school.

According to Cadwell and Spinks' definition (in: Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:81), planning:

- **is an integrative process;**
- **involves all staff and stake holders;**
- **changes in response to evaluation;**
- **informs other management processes;**
- **is a continuous process; and**
- **works from a long-term perspective.**

According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994:81) planning is the route between the perceived present situation and the desired future situation. In the strategic plan everything is driven by the **vision** and **mission** of the school as these have been developed by the principal, the School Governing Body (SGB), heads of the departments, all the teaching and non-teaching staff (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:81). The highest priority in planning is for the principal

and the staff and the school governing body to develop managerial skills related to long-term or strategic management – being able to conceptualise the school in the future and to communicate the vision to the school community as a basis for planning and for action. Strategic management has been recognised as vital for industry and commerce for many years and it is a widely accepted management concept in schools (West and Ainscow, 1991:23).

It has become clear from these definitions of planning that in order to plan effectively, the principal has to formulate the objectives of the school very clearly (Theron and Bothma, 1990:181 and Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1990:144). The establishment of aims and objectives is a most important facet of the principal's planning task because without this there is no guideline and the result is chaos. In this regard Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider (1991:3) stated:

**Without clear goals and objectives, administrators of schools or school districts are like captains of ships without rudders. Although their ships may not sink, the progress they make toward their destination is, at best, uncertain.**

Principals should therefore not only be knowledgeable about various goals and objectives proposed for their schools but should also develop some vision and conviction about the directions that education should take in the future.

The principal as the educational manager and person held directly responsible for leading the school should see to it that everyone keeps their attention and effort directed at the goals of the school. Though teachers should have their own particular aims, these should not clash with the objectives of the school (Theron and Bothma, 1990:181). It is also important for the school employees

to be reminded that the schools are not for them and their livelihood; rather that schools are to educate children (Weldy, 1979:59). This means that each school should have clearly identified, easily understood, educational goals.

Before the goals and objectives of a school can be formulated, the school's **mission** must be clearly described. A **mission** is a statement concerning the nature of the school as an organisation and does not necessarily include what the school is striving to be. Consequently the principal should see to it that the school's objectives are put in writing and are known to every member of the staff. De Wet formulates the following guidelines for objectives:

- **they must be generally clear;**
- **they must be concrete and specific;**
- **they must be acceptable to those involved;**
- **they must be balanced; and**
- **they must be attainable.**

At school planning takes place against the background of a specific policy. **Policy** is, according to Van der Westhuizen *et al.* (1990:150), that resource by means of which goals are interpreted and certain broad guidelines are laid to serve as a basis for decision-making. Against the background of a national and provincial educational policy, formulation of objectives and decision-making at school will be done by the School Governing Body (SGB), the principal and the staff. On such a basis, a specific school policy, which is the task of every school principal, will be established and this will find expression in every educational activity in the school (Theron and Bothma, 1990:182).

To be effective principals should combine the governmental goals with their own school needs and priorities (McCauley, 1990:51). It is therefore important that in planning at school management level, the guidelines of existing

government policy should be taken into account. In the classrooms teachers can only implement planning activities in relation to school policy.

At school a clear distinction should be drawn between policy, school rules and procedures. **A policy** should be regarded as general statements or guidelines for making decisions to guide those who are involved in the implementation or execution of planning (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:150). The school policy provides guidelines and allows the implementers, be they the principals or the teachers, to make decisions within a certain framework. In this way divergent decisions may be made in the context of the same fixed decision. That is why rules are needed.

**Rules** should be regarded as specific instructions or fixed decisions which cannot be disregarded. Rules make no provision for using one's own judgement or for interpretation, as is the case with policy, and contain definite prescripts about what may and may not be done. Therefore rules are limiting in nature and should be reduced to a minimum.

**Procedure**, in turn, prescribes the method to be used for doing work and provides details on the correct way and the order of doing things. Procedures are therefore a series of related steps which should be followed when carrying out an activity (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:150).

### **2.3.2.1 Decision-making**

**Decision-making** is an integral part of planning, "**the process of making a judgement or making one's mind up**" (Kraft in: Theron and Bothma, 1990:182). Van der Westhuizen (1991:152) summarises it as a conscious choice of the most appropriate way in which to solve or deal with a specific problem or situation once the different alternative possibilities have been

consciously considered, with a view to achieving the desired goals. The issue here is that a choice has to be made and when it comes to decision-making in education the principal or any person making a decision should at all times consider the fact that the future of children is at stake. Ill-considered decisions may cause irreparable damage.

Traditionally, principals have prided themselves on being able to make decisions – especially tough decisions (Weldy, 1979:43). This was true when principals regarded themselves as titular heads of their schools, invested with considerable power, and being able to decide the destiny of and tone associated with the school. During that era the decisions were seldom challenged and sometimes not even explained. Principals were admired for "running" good schools. The principals' authority was virtually absolute. Weldy (1979:43) averred that the principal's authority included hiring and firing of teachers, making curriculum plans, organising the school day, setting teachers' assignments and, punishing students who misbehaved.

Fortunately, times have changed in decision-making as an aspect of the principals' management task. Recently principals have become very process-oriented and their decision-making process is more difficult than it used to be. Boris-Schacter (1999:36) has argued that bad administrative decisions cost more money, waste time and resources and involve more people than necessary. For example when there is a disagreement between the principal and the staff or the circuit inspector on a particular issue, the question arises: Who will make a better decision, the teachers, the circuit inspector or the principal? On minor issues, it will make no difference. On critical issues, until the staff and the principal can agree on a course of action, any decision will be likely to be wrong. Increasingly principals should acknowledge a need to be flexible in thinking, and to trust each other's judgement in order to manage effectively (Boris-Schacter, 1999:36).

There are three types of problems about which principals make decisions; technical, human and conceptual. For some kinds of analysis this tripartite concept is particularly useful, even though there is a substantial interaction among the types, particularly with the human element (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:161). There are **intermediary decisions**, deriving from above the principal in the administrative hierarchy, **appellate decisions**, deriving from below; and **creative decisions** deriving from the decision-makers themselves. According to Lipham and Hoeh (1974:161) recent theories have suggested yet a different typology for the analysis of decision making, particularly in group situations. This typology includes **routine decision-making, heuristic decision-making and participative or group decision-making.**

#### □ **Routine decision-making**

Most of the decisions that the principals make are routine – whether they are intermediary or appellate, deriving from above or below in the organisational hierarchy. That a decision is routine does not imply that it is unimportant. It rather simply means that the school has established the requisite goals, rules, procedures, and technologies for dealing with the decisions. In routine decision-making the situation is usually structured hierarchically (e.g. teachers and the principal), role behaviour is characterised by specialised yet coordinated effort, the processes utilised are largely formal and the relationships themselves are likely to be somewhat stressful (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:161).

It is important to realise that at school it is difficult to make decisions, including the so-called routine decisions, where guidelines are provided. This is so because schools are unpredictable organisations. A school may be operating so differently that the departmental guideline does not embrace its particular situation. The South African redeployment and rationalisation of teachers

provided numerous guidelines for decision-making in schools, but these could not embrace all the different problems that existed in different schools. **Routine decision-making** may change to be **creative decision-making** because of unpredictable circumstances which affect teachers in different schools.

□ **Heuristic or creative decision-making**

In creative decision-making (also called heuristic or un-programmed decision-making), there is a lack of emphasis on the hierarchical structure (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:161 and Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:155). Circumstances for making these decisions are singular and unpredictable. For making creative decisions, information is not easily available. In the school, because of the unpredictable situation, the principal is free to explore all ideas bearing on the problem, the methods used are characterised by free and open problem-definition and alternative-generation (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:161). The emotional-social tone prevailing in the making of creative decisions is relatively relaxed, giving evidence of originality, and the seeking of consensus. Although it may sound simple, creative decision-making requires insight and great care on the part of principals. Because the principal does not have information as to how to approach the decision there is a risk attached to such decisions (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:155).

Working with pupils in solving a curricular issue may be an example of heuristic decision-making, particularly if there are no agreed upon methods for dealing with the issue; role behaviour is characterised by freedom for each individual to explore all ideas bearing on the problematic state the principal is facing (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:164).



#### □ **Participative or Group decision-making**

This method implies the sharing in the making of decisions or solving problems in a group. In participative decision-making the principals should involve the staff to the extent that they feel confident in the decisions that are taken at school. The impression should not be created that the staff should be involved in all the decisions taken at school. It is essential that the staff realise that the principal bears the ultimate responsibility and therefore is not compelled to carry out all the decisions made by the staff.

Circumstances may require that the principals act autocratically and take decisions on their own. In the latter case, principals have to inform the staff about the decision. Participative decision-making requires that the principals should persuade staff to fulfil their roles as partners in the task of decision-making. Participative decision-making will come about through sincere dialogue, through discussion and sharing of ideas and ideals. Group ideas are then meshed to form a coherent whole.

According to Jansen (in: Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:183) two criteria have to be met in participative decision-making, namely, **competency** and **relevancy**. The former requires that the teachers are competent and equipped in such a way that they will be able to make a significant contribution to the decision made. **Relevancy** implies that teachers have an interest in the matter, because if they do not have any interest, group participation in decision-making may result in frustration instead of satisfaction or the progress of the school (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:183).

The following guidelines should be considered in group decisions:

- **Explain the goals to be achieved.**
- **Authority figures like the principal should not dominate the meeting.**
- **Contributions by staff members should be promoted.**
- **The agenda should be flexible.**
- **Continue the meeting until consensus is reached.**

A decision which is a product of the group may be reached in the following ways:

- **By means of consensus.**
- **Through majority vote.**
- **A decision taken after input from a member of the group who has specialised knowledge.**
- **An authoritative decision by the chairperson after group discussion.**
- **An authoritative decision without group discussion.**
- **Listening to others and then taking a decision (Knoop in: Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:156).**

To summarise: it may be postulated that differences among types of **decisions** have significant implications for the amount and type of information needed, the relationship and the involvement of individuals in decision-making, and the processes or manner of proceeding in making, implementing, and evaluating the decision. In this regard Darling (in: Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:169) discovered, when observing principals, that **intermediary decisions** are handled differently from **appellate decisions**, **appellate decisions** are handled differently from **creative decisions**, and **creative decisions** are handled differently from **intermediary decisions**. The principals therefore, cannot take appropriate action unless they have knowledge of the different

decision typologies and some skill in discriminating among types of decisions (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:170).

### **2.3.2.2 Problem Solving**

Problems arise in any organisation and more so in a school where many different people are present. A characteristic of management is, according to Van der Westhuizen *et al.* (1991:159), that it should make provision for the solution of problems. There can be no effective planning if the school is plagued by problems, and for this reason, problem-solving is of great importance in the principals' planning task (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:159 and Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:183). Consequently, provision should be made for the solving of problems.

Problem-solving requires the principals to display keen insight (Theron and Bothma, 1990:183). As managers, principals should be able to distinguish between urgent and less important problems and should be able to determine their priorities. Principals should identify problem areas in time to prevent them from snowballing and getting bigger (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:183 and Theron and Bothma, 1990:183). Furthermore, principals should be able to identify the causes of the problems quickly and also be able to anticipate the consequences of the problems in order to determine the gravity of each problem, so that counter measures can be arranged in time (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:184).

Some problems require immediate attention and action while others can be dealt with according to the steps in the problem-solving cycle. Although authors disagree about these steps the differences in opinion are not serious. Basically the steps amount to the following:

- **Identify the problem.**
- **Analyse the problem and obtain all the information.**
- **Identify the causes which gave rise to the problem.**
- **Determine possible solutions to the problems.**
- **Analyse the possible solutions and choose the "best method".**
- **Apply the "method".**

It is essential that the principal takes cognisance of and informs the staff regarding certain kinds of problems which can involve the Department of Education, for example, in court cases. In such cases action should be taken according to the guidelines laid down by the department. It is necessary that the people involved, for example teachers, who are directly affected by the problem, are involved in solving the problem.

According to Weldy (1979:49), in the area of problem-solving principals should demonstrate their talents of educational statesmanship and creativity. The unique character of the school problems calls for principals' careful consideration and accurate perception of where the proposed solution might lead. There are no pat formulas or ready-made recipes available for easy reference. The principals' skills will derive from their good judgement, their consideration of feelings and opinions, their sense of fairness and their ability to take a position and to persuade those affected to understand and support it. Such an approach requires good human relation skills, good sense, and courage of their convictions (Weldy, 1979:50)

### **2.3.2.3 Allocation of time**

**Allocation of time** is not a planning activity, but allocating time to various activities is a vitally important aspect of planning, in order to ensure that the educational balance at school is maintained (Theron and Bothma, 1990:184).

According to these authors a research project undertaken by the University of Stellenbosch revealed that principals devote 42% of their time to administrative tasks, whereas 20% is considered to be the ideal. These authors also maintained that the same trend, although to a lesser extent, was revealed by research in the Free State, namely that secondary school principals devoted 26,7% and primary school principals 25,7% of their time to administrative tasks. If the principals allocated their time in such a way that only 20% of the time was allocated to this aspect, they would be doing justice to their fundamental task.

To reorganise time more favourably is difficult, particularly for school principals, because of the unpredictability of their management tasks. If the principals were to establish a "time log" or a priority list of their tasks, however, even with the assistance of their staff, it would be easier to allocate their time meaningfully according to priorities. If principals could regard time allocation as the most important aspect within their planning, they could have a firm basis according to which they would deal with their management task and, where necessary, delegate (Theron and Bothma, 1990:184).

### 2.3.3 Organising

**Organising** becomes necessary when two or more people are involved in the performance of a task (Badenhorst *et al.*, 1996:17). In the school, organising refers to the arranging, grouping and allocation of activities to various members of staff or subject departments. The staffing of the school is dependent on the needs and objectives of the school and it forms part of the management and organisational duties of the school principal (Walters, 1991:40). Organising, as part of the allocation, entails the delegation and assigning of duties, and the coordination of efforts among all teachers and pupils, to ensure maximum efficiency in the attainment of predetermined objectives and goals directed by

the policy of the school. Organising therefore concerns people and means (Theron and Bothma, 1990:185).

In the organising process aspects such as **delegation** and **coordination** in particular, need further elucidation.

### **2.3.3.1 Delegation**

**Delegation** of duties refers to the division of labour, assigning of certain duties to subordinates, authorising the necessary means for these fulfilment of the duties, and engendering a commitment on the part of subordinates to fulfil their duties satisfactorily and be accountable for their execution (Matsei, 1990:3). Briefly, delegation implies that a person is given the right to take decisions at a lower management level; is allowed the freedom to act in a way that he/she deems fit for attaining the goal; and has to give account to the higher authority for the implementation of the task.

At school, educational management functions (planning, organising, communication, group dynamics, providing guidance, coordination; to name but a few), are so comprehensive that the principals alone can seldom cope with them on their own and therefore are forced to delegate. Theron and Bothma (1990:32) also emphasised that principals would have to be superhuman to satisfy all the demands of managerial activities made upon them. Consequently principals have to delegate certain duties to the staff and transfer certain authority to subordinates.

Within the school delegation of duties will be done by the principal who allocates duties, such as the supervision of sports and other extra mural activities and the distribution of textbooks (Walters, 1991:40). The purpose of delegation is to lighten the workload of the principal and to utilise the talents of

subordinates in a fundamental and relevant sense; to train them in-service by developing their sense of responsibility, spirit of enterprise, insight, good human relations and organisational ability; to mould suitable successors in good time; to create a spirit of unity and a feeling of security, which will lead to self realisation and career satisfaction (Pipes, 1991:1.5 and Walters, 1991:40).

According to Pipes (1991:1.5), a basic principle of delegation is that the responsibilities to be performed by the delegatee should be set out very clearly. Delegated tasks need to be understood not only by the parties involved, that is, by the delegator and by the delegatee, but also by all the other members of the school. The principal is also required to delegate within the legal framework – this implies that principals need to take the education legislation into account when delegating duties. For this reason, principals require knowledge of their legal position in the school and the legal requirements governing their management activities (Squelch and Bray, 1996:74). Therefore, in delegation, the principal should be aware of the *delegatus delegare non potest* principle, originating from the common law, which prohibits the delegation of discretionary powers in certain circumstances. For example, the principal is not allowed to delegate the duty of drafting the school policy to a secretary or to the head of the department. Drafting the school policy is an important task to be performed within a particular administrative hierarchy (Squelch and Bray, 1996:79).

Walters (1991:40) emphasised that delegation requires a clear definition of:

- **the task to be done;**
- **the granting of authority to do the task;**
- **the assigning of responsibility and accountability;**
- **the resources available;**
- **the standards required;**

- the methods and measures to be used; and
- the acceptance of the arrangement on the part of the delegatee.

The final responsibility however, may never be delegated. Delegation is not the same thing as transfer of authority, but a correlation of authority and responsibility (Theron and Bothma, 1990:94). The most common cause of failure in delegation is an inadequate briefing and lack of understanding of how the task has to be done on the part of the delegatee (Pipes, 1991:1.5). In this regard McCauley (1990:50) avers that effective principals delegate responsibly and serve as role models for how to get things done.

In addition to clear understanding of the task, in delegation there should be both continuous control and accountability. Principals who want to do their positions justice should design a system by means of controlled delegation, to involve every member of their staff. Successful delegation requires the trust of both parties. During control the principal should show confidence and also exercise patience (Walters, 1991:41). At the same time principals should guard against, for example, burdening a teacher, who has an overfull extramural programme, with so much subject instruction that the teacher's educational task is neglected. Such an approach is a sign of poor planning.

Principals should be aware that **delegating** and **instructing** differs since the former term implies trust in the delegatee or the person to whom the task has been allocated, while the latter term is a command to carry out the task. Delegating is a more democratic method of allocating duties, and allows the persons allocated the tasks opportunities to use their own initiative (Walters, 1991:41).

At school delegation is a very important managerial task of the school principal, but the principals should see to it that delegated tasks are also coordinated.



### 2.3.3.2 Coordination

In terms of definition, coordination is concerned with the degree of functional articulation between various parts of the school as an organisation (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:66-67). The coordinating process, on the other hand, is concerned with the mechanisms through which the various component parts of a school are articulated with one another, such as mutual adjustment, organisational rules, schedules and group problem-solving meetings.

Edem (1982:9) further defines coordination as the task of uniting and correlating all the activities of all the participants in a school, channelling them towards a coherent outcome. Coordination is the process of putting the delegated tasks in place according to their value. A potential need for coordination exists whenever two or more people, activities, resources, and/ or time schedules either cooperate in conjunction with each other or should cooperate in conjunction with each other (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1996:67). The need to coordinate is particularly evident at school where the school's tasks have been divided into constituent components which are assigned to the teachers. The activities of every teacher are contingent upon those of other teachers, and appropriate mechanisms of coordination have to be devised. Edem (1982:9) suggested that these devices may have the following characteristics:

**First**, the provision for an effective exchange of information that can be achieved by the use of teachers' handbooks in which what the teacher is expected to do is listed. Such handbooks should be made available to both established and new teachers during an annual induction programme in which the newly appointed teachers or members of the school are introduced to their tasks.

**Second**, the management by committee technique may be used. This requires the allocation of responsibility for certain policies to various committees. These policies are, however, initially seen merely as recommendations which may become the established policies after they have been ratified by the whole staff.

**Third**, the school principal may coordinate the activities of the various units of the school by making regular visits to the departments or classes to ensure that all units are working together towards the same goal. In the school all subjects and subject teachers should be treated with equal value. For example, it would be an error to give pupils the idea that mathematics is more important than geography, or that the sciences are more valuable than the humanities. Coordination becomes difficult if the ideology prevailing at school is that of separateness – the science teacher is more important than the teacher responsible for the humanities or the Grade Seven teacher is more important than the Grade One teacher.

To summarise, it has been indicated that **organising** is one of the most important functions of the school principal. In addition, organising consists of subtasks like creating an organisational structure, delegating and coordinating (Dlamini, 1995:38). It is clear that the staff should know what has to be done, by whom, with what and when. Organising is concerned with a systematic achievement of goals and requires effective channels of communication. Good organising promotes team spirit. Activities should be clearly described to prevent overlapping.

The next management task of the principal to be discussed is **controlling**.

### 2.3.4 Controlling

No educational institution can function without the necessary authority. Theorists, as well as practising executives, agree that effective management requires effective **control** (Dlamini, 1995:43). A combination of well planned objectives, strong organisation, capable direction and motivation has little probability for success unless there exists an adequate system of control. Allen (in: Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:216) described control as the work a manager does to assess and regulate work in progress and work completed. Control in a school is the principal's means of checking whether the work is done. It is a systematic attempt to set standards appropriate to the objectives of the school, to observe the actual achievements, to compare them with standards, and to take corrective measures so as to ensure that all the resources of the school are used as effectively as possible, to accomplish its mission and objectives.

#### 2.3.4.1 Controlling the teachers' work

The school principal has to evaluate the work done by teachers in the following ways:

- **Class visits**

Class visits are a valuable tool for the principal to use in order to improve instruction. Dlamini (1995:49) referred to Thembela and Walters who stated that class visits should not be made by a superior person observing an inferior teacher. It should not be a situation where an expert visits the teacher on a "**fault finding**" mission. Class visits should be of a clinical nature and not be of an inspection or autocratic character.

As a supervisor the principal observes and monitors work to ensure quality and to provide helpful feedback (Deal and Peterson, 1994:21). Clinical supervision encourages the principal to support and work in collaboration with the teacher, identifying instructional problems, determining the course of problems, and jointly working towards finding the solution. The principal should display the best professional behaviour during class visits. For example the teacher should be informed about the aims and of the class visit. When viewing the teaching and learning process the principal should observe the following: methods of presenting the lesson, use of learning aids, the learners' activities, and the application of the lesson (Dlamini, 1995:49). After the visit, an informal conference should be held with the teacher concerned. The principal is further expected to control the teachers' plans of work and their daily lesson preparations. Because the principal cannot do the work alone, the heads of departments should share the responsibility of controlling the teachers' planning of work. The pupils' written work should also be checked regularly by the principal and heads of department. During examination periods, the principal is expected to control examination content and procedures. Principals should set dates for the submission of question papers and marking memoranda. The safe keeping of question papers is a very important matter which the principal has to arrange (Dlamini, 1995:50).

Teachers' performance is generally evaluated by comparing the observed patterns to pre-established models or criteria. Improvement plans, promotion, dismissal, and sometimes salary increases, are linked to how well teachers do in their work. In addition, evaluation conferences outline specific recommendations for improvement (Deal and Peterson, 1994:21).

#### **2.4.4.2 Controlling pupils**

There is no dispute over the fact that the school principal has the right to "control" student conduct. According to Reeler (1985:42),

**In a school situation discipline refers to the orderly management and control of the educational process to ensure that the transfer of knowledge, norms and values progresses towards the desired aim.**

However, the way in which discipline and punishment are perceived has changed drastically due to the changes in education legislation. The courts have always expected punishment to be reasonable in accordance with the wrong committed, but the term "reasonable" has evolved into meaning very different things to different people. According to the South African Constitution the rights of pupils are considered to be the same as those of adults (Kimbrough and Burkertt, 1990:233) and therefore principals have to take the principles of legislation into account when enforcing discipline.

In South Africa, for example, according to the Constitution and the South African Schools' Act (No. 84 of 1996), corporal punishment is prohibited by law (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:4). Teachers should be made aware of the legal implications of contravening the law. Warby (1999:6) for example warned that:

**... corporal punishment in schools is not only illegal, but also highly unethical and unprofessional. The implication is that teachers who mete out corporal punishment will be charged with assault and serious disciplinary action from the provincial department.**

Discipline, as a way of pupil control, needs to be planned and implemented in an organised manner. Planning for good discipline begins with a broad school policy empowering principals and teachers to deal with a multiplicity of possible behavioural problems. The aim of a school discipline policy will vary from school to school. Furthermore, the ideas of what constitutes good behaviour may also vary, but it is necessary to arrive at some consensus and formulate

commonly agreed upon expectations. When formulating disciplinary rules the following points should be borne in mind:

- **Limit the number of rules to a minimum.**
- **Rules should be reasonable and fair.**
- **Rules should not prescribe the impossible.**
- **State rules positively.**
- **Rules should be written down (Ubben and Hughes, 1992:46).**

Good discipline depends on effective management by the principal, both within the school as a whole and within the classroom context. Because principals are ultimately responsible for establishing a safe and orderly environment, planning for positive discipline begins with the principal.

In conclusion, it may be said that although control has been discussed as one of the principal's management tasks, one should be careful when using the term (Badenhorst, 1996:33). It has already been indicated that the school is a complex structure and can only be partially controlled. There is no way in which the principal can control every teacher's actions or every child's behaviour without their consent. Educationally speaking, it is very difficult to "control" people. It is very difficult to force children to attend school when they are playing truant.

The above comments should not suggest that what has been discussed as control is worthless. On the contrary, the management staff and the principal as the executive of the school have an obligation to see to it that the objectives of the school are realised. Furthermore, it is necessary for the principal to instruct the teachers concerning the legal implications of discipline. If there is incompetence or misbehaviour on the part of pupils or teachers, the necessary disciplinary steps should be taken. It should be noted that at a complex

organisation such as a school, the values adhered to by the staff have a greater impact on their performance than "mechanical control" has (Badenhorst, 1996:330).

### 2.3.5 Staff management

One of the most important managerial tasks of the principal is the management of personnel, of which staff development is a part (Erasmus, 1989:53). Any programme which makes provision for the development of teachers and the simultaneous upgrading of the quality of teaching and learning, is of vital importance to achieving the ultimate goals of the school. In carrying out the various management roles the principals should work with the school staff (teaching and non-teaching) and should make them perform their roles efficiently. This is referred to as **staff management**. In order to ensure that teachers do their work, the principal may either choose to depend on **enforced cooperation** or adopt a **motivational approach** (Edem, 1982:59). Enforced cooperation is used by a principal who relies heavily on a scientific management theory – emphasising the giving of commands and obeying strict rules.

The emphasis in the motivational approach to staff management is on the ability of the principal to motivate the sub-ordinates to perform their role well through:

- **allowing staff to share in policy making;**
- **procuring sufficient learning and teaching material, and work tools for staff;**
- **assigning a reasonable teaching load to individual staff members;**
- **assisting staff to improve teaching skills; and**

- **being attentive to the staff's material and social problems** (Edem, 1982:59).

Principals have the complex task of utilising the human resources of the school towards the accomplishment of the school's goals. For this reason, principals should be firm and impartial in their dealing with teachers (Stopforth, 1989:7). Even under difficult circumstances, Stopforth warned, the principal should never "**declare war**" against teachers. As educational managers principals have the legal powers to protect both pupils and teachers from unsafe situations and to resolve conflicts between the school parties. The methods that principals adopt depend on their leadership philosophy, which determines the relationship between principals and their staff. The enforcement of professionalism through an exemplary code of ethics by principals becomes inevitable (Edem, 1982:52).

### 2.3.6 Managing parents

Effective principals are active in facilitating communication between the school and the community. Parents constitute an important group that holds expectations for the role of the school principal (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:98). Parents are heterogeneous in their expectations and therefore it is difficult to generalise about the expectations of any single parent community. For the school principals to have an idea of the parents' expectations of the community they serve, is very important. Although little research has been done on the expectations of parents regarding the role of the school principal, there are nevertheless useful findings which are included in the present research.



Drake (in: Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:99) for example, found in a study of Parent Teachers' Associations (PTA) officers that they identified the following five expectations for the principal as carrying a high priority:

- **Initiating improvements in teaching techniques and methods.**
- **Making certain that curricula fit the needs of pupils.**
- **Directing teachers to motivate children to learn at their optimal level.**
- **Affording teachers the opportunity to individualise the learning programmes.**
- **Directing teachers to coordinate and articulate the subject matter taught on each grade level.**

The low-priority level expectations which PTA officers held for principals included:

- **Becoming involved in community affairs.**
- **Keeping a school maintenance schedule.**
- **Scheduling the activities of the school.**
- **Maintaining school records.**
- **Performing other administrative duties assigned by the district manager.**

Examining these two sets of expectations, the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) officers in Drake's study are clearly more concerned with the role of the school principal as an instructional leader than as a school manager (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:99). In an attempt to fulfil the parents' expectations, principals seek to establish close contacts with parents in various ways:

- **by holding meetings and conferences;**
- **by establishing parent-teacher groups; and**
- **by becoming involved in community projects** (Leithwood, and Montgomery, 1982:329).

The primary purpose for the above contacts is to gain community support for school goals and priorities. Principals may also send parents questionnaires to gather information about how they might reinforce the achievement of school goals with their children at home. Parents may also be involved in the school's fund-raising activities and field trips. On a more formal level, parents may serve as the School Governing Body (SGB), which is the most important management structure on the local level.

Besides the managing of staff and parents, the role of the principal as educational manager includes the managing of pupils.

### 2.3.7 Pupil management

According to Calitz (in: Badenhorst, 1996:61), school management should be seen as all the management activities or functions of school principals in collaboration with their management team, within specific management areas which are aimed at achieving educative teaching. According to this exposition, pupil management is therefore seen as an important area of school management. As an area of school management pupil management includes two dimensions:

- **the management of pupils and their activities; and**
- **the utilisation of the abilities of pupil leaders to participate in the management of certain activities** (Badenhorst, 1996:61).

Pupil management may therefore range from including managing the movement of pupils according to the school's timetable, and maintaining discipline for the orderly and organised control of these activities, to the involvement of the pupils themselves (through bodies such as the Learners' Representative Council) in the management of certain aspects of the school.

### 2.3.8 Financial management

The principal has the greatest influence in the life of the school. Strictly speaking, all financial responsibility is delegated by the Department of Education to the School Governing Body (SGB), of which the principal is a member. The relationship between the members of the SGB, who are charged with the effective use of the school budget, and the managerial skills of the principal, is a key issue for the effective management and the harmonious running of the school.

Principals have a duty to allocate, control or account for the financial and material resources which are under their control. Therefore, it is vital for the principal to be financially aware and competent so as to make the best use of the available funding (Pipes, 1991:2). The principal has to acquire financial management skills. In this regard specialist training is essential, if the principal, as required by contract, is to allocate, control and account for the financial resources of a school.

It is part of the principal's task to utilise all resources as efficiently as possible and to get the best value for money (Pipes, 1991:3). The majority of decisions relating to curriculum and organisation have financial implications: for instance, the choice of a particular textbook for particular learners is an obvious example.

It is also necessary for the principal and the School Governing Body (SGB) to be aware of the education legislation governing the control of school funds. For example, the South African Schools' Act (Act No. 84 of 1996) and National Education Policy Act (Act No. 27 of 1996) both stipulate equitable criteria and procedure for exemption of parents who are unable to pay school fees (Government Gazette, 1998. No. 19347:31). These regulations have to be correctly interpreted because there are serious legal implications involved in case inappropriate decisions are taken.

### 2.3.9 Resumé

The problem which the present research is attempting to address is that it appears that poor management of schools in South Africa generally; and in Limpopo Province in particular, cripples many schools and leads to the deterioration; stagnation or slow improvement of a culture of teaching and learning (Reeves, 1998:2). The managerial tasks of the school principal should constitute an attempt to improve the culture of teaching and learning in schools. Knowledge of the various management theories is essential for educational management and for the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager. It has been revealed that schools are characterised as complex structures and no single theory on its own can satisfy the needs of the learners and teachers. The various management tasks are overlapping because there will be no planning without decision-making, and no decision-making without planning.

From the exposition of management theories and educational management tasks the researcher finds it necessary to formulate the essentials of educational management as the role of the principal, characteristics without which educational management cannot be authentic.

## 2.4 FORMULATION OF CRITERIA FOR AUTHENTIC EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

The value of a phenomenological reflection on the role of the school principal lies in the way a particular principal can apply the knowledge of the revealed essentials of educational management in practice to enhance the desired culture of teaching and learning in schools.

The purpose of this chapter; as indicated earlier; is to conclude by summarising the essentials revealed in the literature study, the essences without which the managerial role of the principal cannot be authentic. Hornby (1995:392) defined an **essence** as that which makes a thing what it is, the most important quality, feature or characteristic of that thing. In educational management certain features common to true management should serve as guidelines for the practice of authentic educational management practice. The revealed essences will be verbalised as criteria which will be used in chapter four to evaluate and appraise how educational management is realised in practice.

The subsequent section will address what has been revealed as prerequisites for the principal as an authentic educational manager.

### 2.4.1 Planning in advance: **Is attention given to a wide range of planning strategies: short-term, medium and long-term planning?**

An effective principal plans in advance and revises plans according to circumstances. Most authors agree that planning is a very important characteristic of educational management. The effective principal never lets matters run their own course but purposefully plans operational actions. Through such planning, the effective principal attempts to bridge the gap between where the school is now and where it wants to be in the future. The

effective principal concentrates on doing the right thing rather than on doing things right. As criteria for authentic management planning, the following questions are important:

Is attention given to short-, medium-, and long-term planning? Is there a clear vision, mission, and policy for the school? Are there mechanisms to ensure that plans, decisions and tasks are executed? Is there room for self-control? What measures exist to hold staff co-responsible for the quality of the work? (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:235).

2.4.2 Formulation of objectives: **Are the school participants clear about the objectives of education generally and those of their school in particular?**

An effective principal sets realistic goals and objectives in consultation with subordinates and links their achievement of objectives to the satisfaction of their clients' needs. Principals who manage successfully have clear goals and are highly goal oriented (Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986:182). As a manager the principal will stimulate goal oriented behaviour in subordinates by helping them to set realistic objectives, by erecting need satisfying mile-stones along the way, by creating adequate expectations of reward for reaching the mile-stones and by smoothing the path leading to the accomplishment of the objectives.

2.4.3 Decision-making: **Do the persons involved in decision-making have competence and skills in the areas in which decisions have to be made?**

An efficient educational manager is an efficient decision-maker. In simple terms decision-making involves selecting from alternatives so that the desired

end may be achieved. A broad knowledge of various kinds of decisions is a prerequisite of effective educational management. Thus the main question is: do the persons involved in decision making have competence and skill in the areas in which decisions have to be made?

#### 2.4.4 Organising and coordinating: **Are the tasks clear to the people who should execute them? Are tasks clearly set and motivated?**

An effective principal should organise and coordinate divergent operating activities meaningfully. Organising involves the purposeful design of an operating system and the delegation of responsibilities to subordinates. As a criterion for effective management the following questions may be asked:

Does the staff know what must be done, by whom, with what, by when, and what the extent of the work should be?

#### 2.4.5 Delegation: **Is delegation used effectively to form a means for developing staff?**

An effective principal delegates tasks where possible. The manager who cannot delegate does not know the opportunity cost principle and therefore cannot manage properly. Such managers are "work horses" who never have time for themselves and for their families. In management not only drudgery should be delegated, but also challenging work should be delegated. Effective principals should be able to diagnose the strength and weaknesses of their staff and know to what extent they can entrust important work to them (Koontz and Weihrich, 1988:438). The criterion of delegation requires that the following questions be asked:

Are tasks delegated fairly or are pleasant tasks retained and unpleasant tasks delegated? Are sufficient guidelines given without being prescriptive? Are both responsibility and authority being transferred to the person executing the tasks?

**2.4.6 Effective control: Are there sufficient mechanisms for exercising control before, during and after completion of work?**

An effective principal exercises effective control over work performance and acts decisively when staff, learners and parents deviate from the set target or safety requirements. Staff is credited where credit is due. The effective principal exercises firm but sympathetic discipline at all times by remaining consistent when applying the school rules. Although planning always precedes control, it is not self-regulating. Planning, however, serves the manager as a guide for the allocation of available inputs. While control monitors the realisation of the plans, an efficient manager will not only set clear targets, but also see to the completion of what has been planned. In relation to planning as a criterion, questions to be asked include: Are there adequate mechanisms for exercising control before, during and after completion of work?

**2.4.7 Competency and knowledge: Do the tasks delegated to principals suit their competency and skills? Does the person have an interest in the task?**

An important feature of educational management is that the effective principal should have a broad knowledge of education and an interest in the school in particular. Principals should possess common sense knowledge of all aspects of the school. Furthermore principals should have knowledge of educational management principles and the law governing the country and the education legislation in particular. This knowledge should be supplemented with new



information (remaining a student) and principals should keep abreast of modern technological, political, socio-economic and cultural developments. Regarding competency as a criterion, questions to be asked are among others: Do the tasks delegated to the principals and staff suit their competency and skills (Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:234)?

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

A phenomenological reflection on the school principal as an educational manager in this chapter, provides a firm theoretical basis on which to evaluate the role of the school principal in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning. In the researcher's opinion, the emphasis on "**planning**", "**leading**", "**organising**" and "**control**" as the main management role of the principal, suggests that schools can be stable, predictable and controllable. However, the predictability and stability of schools have been refuted by "reality"; as evident in the problems experienced by principals cited in chapter one. Although schools meet some of the characteristics of organisations, according to the literature review, schools also display chaotic features. Consequently, it is evident from the literature review that there should be a paradigm shift in educational management because schools are very complex structures which cannot be controlled by rational means only.

Although most authors (Greenfield, 1986; Badenhorst, 1996; Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991 and Koontz and Wehrich, 1988) agree that it is difficult to describe the role of the school principal fully, the broad literature survey enabled the researcher to reveal the essential characteristics of educational management, those features without which authentic principalship cannot be achieved. In chapter four the essential characteristics of educational management which have been verbalised as criteria will be used to evaluate the authenticity of the principal's role as it operates in educational practice.

Before ending this chapter it is necessary to indicate that the management tasks that have been discussed should not be seen as complete or closed. Educational management covers a wide field which may produce volumes of books without exhausting the subject. For this reason, the duties of principals as outlined above are, according to the researcher, adequate for the scope of the present research.

In chapter three, because the role of the principal has been revealed in the literature as that of both an educational manager and an instructional leader, a phenomenological reflection on the role of the principal as an instructional leader in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning, will be undertaken.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION: THE PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

It was indicated in chapter two that the school principal's role is both that of a manager and a leader. While the previous chapter focused on the essential character of the principal as an educational manager, the present chapter focuses on the essential character of the principal as an instructional leader. In phenomenology when researchers employ "**a phenomenological reflection**" on a phenomenon, this implies a search for the root (radix), the essence of the phenomenon, in order to identify that which is universal for all phenomena of the type (Robb, 1997:43).

The purpose of this chapter is to ask what an instructional leader is and how instructional leadership enhances the culture of teaching and learning in schools. If the term "what something is" is used, reference is made to a fundamental or essential description. Hospers (in: Robb, 1997:43) found similarly that when someone asks for a definition of a thing he/she is seeking for the essence of the thing. A definition of a thing does not include accompanying characteristics or, phenomenologically speaking, contingent characteristics, Hospers continued. Many characteristics can change or disappear, can be replaced by others, and the thing in question will still be that kind of thing as long as the defining characteristics continue to be present. Phrased differently, the most important question in the chapter is: which characteristics (for example, strategies, behaviours, attitudes and goals) of principals have a positive influence on the teachers' classroom instruction and learners' performance?

In this chapter the researcher is seeking a description of the principal as an instructional leader which will apply to school leadership at all times in all cultures. The chapter indicates that the children's learning is central to the role of the school principal (Bolman and Deal, 1994:37 and McEwan, 1998:2). To accomplish this, there is a need to consider a wide range of issues, including the meaning of the notion of an instructional leader, instructional leadership tasks, a school culture, and most important of all, how the principal's instructional leadership enhances the culture of teaching and learning in schools. The chapter closes with the formulation of the essential characteristics on which authentic instructional leadership should be founded. These essential characteristics will be verbalised into criteria to evaluate in chapter four how the role of the principal as instructional leader is manifested in educational practice.

Although it is fully recognized in chapter two that principals need to deal successfully with a multitude of managerial functions, the primary purpose of the school, that of providing effective and productive learning experiences for its learners, should be the principal's primary emphasis (see Badenhorst, 1996; Blase and Blase, 1998; Bookbinder, 1992; Heck, 1991; Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:132; McEwan, 1998; Willis and Bartel, 1990). Changed societal conditions have resulted in conditions that make the managerial tasks of principals very difficult, but in spite of all the complexities, the principal's most important managerial task is still and always the realisation of quality educative teaching for all pupils inside the school (Badenhorst, 1996:95-96 and Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:135). Unless the instructional role of the principal is fulfilled responsibly, all other roles have little meaning or purpose. The impression should not be created that the instructional leadership role of the school principals is more important than other managerial activities. As indicated previously, the present research regards the school principal as both an educational manager and instructional leader. Chuenyane (1998:4) in this regard has stressed that management in education should not be seen as an

end in itself, but rather as an essential aspect of any education service, and that its central goal is the promotion of teaching and learning. According to Renihan and Renihan (1992:13) principals are instructional leaders, facilitators, coordinating the activities of the educational team in its pursuit of excellence. It is from such a collaborative orientation that the researcher hopes that the essential character of the principalship will emerge.

Before going any further it is necessary that the meaning of the term instructional leader and its relation with the effective school as used in the context of the present research, be clearly defined.

### **3.2 INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER AND THE EFFECTIVE SCHOOL**

To put the concept of instructional leader in perspective it is essential to clarify the meaning of leadership.

#### **3.2.1 Leadership**

It is a difficult task to give an exact description of what **leadership** is, how it is developed and how it is exercised (Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:132). Much has been written concerning the concept, and there appears to be no specific research that can be used to prepare a definite description. This may be because leadership has various meanings to different authors (Koontz and Wehrich, 1988:437).

Traditionally, leadership is defined as some sort of dominance or control over subordinates which causes them to accept orders from and control by another person, more or less voluntarily (Van Niekerk, 1994:153). This definition was formulated during the first half of the previous century and is typical of the view held of leadership for a number of decades. The focus was on the leader *per*

se. As will be indicated later the focus on the leader is misleading because it ignores two important variables: the situation and the followers.

Koontz and Weihrich (1988:437) observe that leadership is the influence, the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals. Cowley (in: Gorton, 1987:) simply stated that: " ... **the leader is the one who succeeds in getting others to follow him**".

Another well-known contemporary, broader and more comprehensive definition of leadership offered by Van Niekerk (1994:153) is as follows:

**Leadership is an influencing process, the dynamics. Which are a function of the personal characteristics of the leader, of his followers and the nature of the specific circumstances or situation.**

Most of the definitions emphasise the influence that the leader has on his or her followers. One of the problems with concentrating on the leader rather than on leadership behaviour is that one's perception of leadership may become distorted (Beard, 1988:48). Early research on leadership, which focused on the leader, suffered from a sort of myopia in that it left the impression that leadership is a one-way street – the leader influencing the group. Following such a view, it is assumed that the leader autonomously determines his or her own style of leading and imposes it on the group, which is then influenced to behave in a certain way. What this one-way concept failed to account for was why the leaders behave as they do. Only when researchers of leadership behaviour began to ask that question did they acknowledge that leadership behaviour, like most other behaviours, is not determined autonomously by the leader. Leadership is, according to Beard (1988:48), a product of many forces

acting on the leader and influencing him/her to behave in different ways. In essence, leadership is a function of the situation in which the leaders find themselves.

In Matsei's view (1990:2), to lead is to show the way by going first, to guide by example or persuasion. In terms of Van Niekerk and Matsei's views of leadership, the principal guides and directs the educational occurrence, regulates and organises, creates the educational infrastructure, plans, implements, manages, controls, and evaluates the educational programme. In its real sense leadership denotes an interpersonal relationship between those who lead and those who follow. An interesting definition of leadership was also offered by the Prentice-Hall editorial staff, cited by Van der Westhuizen (1991:187), when they showed a clear interdependence between management and leadership, which they referred to as the:

**... process of working with other people to identify and achieve common goals in a meaningful way. The one element that is absolutely necessary to any programme involving people is leadership. Without the ability to lead, a principal cannot be effective even though he may be an erudite person.**

Reflecting on the numerous definitions of leadership, one is reminded of Bennis and Nanus (1985:4-5) who discovered that decades of academic analysis have given more than three hundred and fifty definitions of leadership but still no clear and unequivocal understanding exists as to what leadership really is. According to Bennis (1959:259), much of what has been said in the leadership literature is disturbingly confusing and blurred, despite the volume of literature and research which has accumulated around the topic. In this regard Bennis emphasised that:

**Of all the hazy and confounding areas in social psychology, leadership theory undoubtedly contends for top nomination. And, ironically, ... less has been written and known about leadership than any other topic in the behavioural sciences.**

It is also not clear from the different definitions as to what distinguishes an effective leader from an ineffective leader, and effective schools from non-effective schools. Although they provide some insight the multiple definitions, are, according to Bennis and Nanus (1985:4), wholly inadequate and incomplete. In the context of this research, the many definitions of leadership indicate that leadership, like love, continues to be something everyone knows exists, but nobody can define. However, the definitions assist readers (particularly principals and education authorities) to reveal the essential character and complex nature of leadership. Although leadership cannot be comprehended fully, the wide references in the literature further illuminate its challenging nature, particularly for the enactment of the role of the principal as an instructional leader.

To understand leadership, May (in: Renihan and Renihan, 1992:10) argued that an assessment of the educational milieu, particularly its impact on the principalship, is important. The environment in which schools operate has become increasingly pluralistic and multicultural. This in turn has generated competing, and often contradictory, expectations from the various communities which the schools are serving. The schooling enterprise is expected to operate fluently within the context of rapid change in information and technology, and to do so by providing new and innovative responses to change (Renihan and Renihan, 1992:10). Bolman and Deal (1994:3) revealed a close relationship between teaching and leadership. Teaching and leadership are both about infusing life and work with passion, meaning, and purpose. Teaching and



leading are distinguishable occupations, because every effective leader, such as a principal, is clearly teaching and every effective teacher is leading.

The understanding of leadership is obscured by certain misconceptions that are worth mentioning.

### 3.7.2 Misconceptions about leadership

One of the common misconceptions concerning leadership is that a position with status, such as the principalship, automatically ensures the existence of leadership. It is true that a certain amount of prestige attaches to principals by virtue of their managerial positions. Teachers were previously inclined to accept leadership from principals but in today's society teachers will not automatically follow the principal unless leadership is present (Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:132). Thus principals cannot expect loyalty and a devoted following unless they involve teachers in planning instructional improvement and earn their position of leadership which their office tentatively allows them.

Another common fallacy is that leadership in one situation guarantees it in a different situation. This is not always the case because examples could be cited to show that someone who is an effective leader in one situation may prove to be ineffective in another. Traditionally it was assumed that leadership is an inherited trait, one that cannot be learned or developed; the so-called personal trait theory (Van Niekerk, 1994:156). According to this view, leaders are born and have at their disposal certain innate leadership characteristics, including sincerity, honesty, an attractive physique, energy, tact, strength of character, integrity, responsibility and initiative, to name but a few (Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:132 and Van Niekerk, 1994:156). In other words, according to such a view, one cannot learn leadership skills. For centuries, in their search for potential, heads of states and armies have looked at characteristics such as physique, energy levels and loudness of voice. The personal trait theory is

representative of the earliest systematic research efforts in the area of leadership. In keeping with the assumption that leaders are born, the emphasis was on what a leader is.

In the study of personal characteristics of leaders in comparison with followers, it was found that leaders were taller, more extroverted, had more self-confidence and were more intelligent than their followers. However, a specific combination of characteristics which distinguished leaders from followers, could not be identified. But it would be a mistake to assume that possession of specific traits guarantees a situation in which the individual gains acceptance as a leader (Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:133). For example, there are many people who possess a number of the characteristics mentioned before, who are not leaders. The opposite is also true, as many leaders do not possess all of the qualities mentioned. For example Napoleon was 1,68m tall, Abraham Lincoln was very moody and Winston Churchill did not always receive satisfactory school reports. Nevertheless they were all outstanding leaders (Van Niekerk, 1994:157).

Most contemporary researchers have found it far more constructive to study what leaders actually do than to focus on traits such as intelligence, friendliness and creativity. What causes one individual to lead his /her organisation (business, school, sport team) to greatness while another individual although equally intelligent, friendly and competent, manages to achieve only mediocrity as a leader? Why are some individuals highly effective leaders in some settings while in others they are only marginally successful? There are no clear answers to these questions.

The questions explored by research findings indicated that the personality traits theory has not always been reliable in characterising a leader. However, as in the case in other organisations where people have to act as leaders, Badenhorst (1996:86) has argued that leaders are found in the rank of ordinary

teachers, those who are natural leaders, who have the necessary qualities of intelligence, charisma, sympathy for others and communicative skills that make them born leaders. Van der Westhuizen (1991:187) similarly commented that certain inborn characteristics are essential for leaders, but effectiveness as a leader may be improved by learning or developing certain methods and techniques, to deal with and direct people in a specific group context. Contemporary approaches to leadership, whilst not totally rejecting the natural advantages which may be available to those with suitable physical attributes, identify three major variables:

- **the leader's attitudes towards the task;**
- **the leader's relationship with the work group; and**
- **the use of techniques to deal with the context or situation (West and Ainscow, 1988:30).**

Adding to Ainscow's points, Bass (in: McEwan, 1998:3) listed characteristics that distinguish leaders from followers as:

- **a strong drive for responsibility and task completion;**
- **vigor and persistence in pursuit of goals;**
- **venturesomeness, originality in problem-solving;**
- **the drive to exercise initiative in social situations;**
- **self-confidence and a sense of personal identity;**
- **willingness to accept consequences of decisions and actions;**
- **readiness to absorb interpersonal stress,**
- **willingness to tolerate frustration and delay;**
- **the ability to influence other persons' behaviour; and**
- **the capacity to structure a social interaction system to the purpose at hand.**

Effective leadership is determined by the way these variables fit together or interact with one another. Some theorists have hypothesised that effective leaders not only possess many of the mentioned characteristics, but they are also able to match their leadership styles to the needs of the situation and the characteristics of their followers (McEwan, 1998:3 and West and Ainscow, 1988:30). Rather than behaving the same way in every setting, effective leaders assess each situation and adjust their leadership behaviour to both the complexity of the task or goal as well as the composition and characteristics of the group they are leading. This means that there is no "best" leadership style – training for leadership is about developing a range of different behaviours and skills rather than learning "how to do it" (West and Ainscow, 1988:30).

Leadership models have traditionally been developed and tested in the business world. Educators, and school principals in particular, are encouraged to emulate business leaders such as Walton of Wal-mart or Bill Hewlett of Hewlett Packard (McEwan, 1998:4). These corporations, however, can measure their success in terms of the bottom line of increased sales and productivity, and rises in stock prices. Principals face a different set of challenges. Although many of the lessons of leadership in the corporate world are applied within the walls of the school there is a need for a model of leadership, one that incorporates the unique characteristics of teaching and learning. From this need has arisen a body of literature and research on a new topic: **instructional leadership**.

### 3.2.3 The principal and the effective school

In the present research "**an instructional leader**" embraces all the activities of a principal that assist teachers in the teaching and learning situation. Historically the school principal was at first more a manager than a leader, but it was not long before the instructional leadership dimension of the position

began to be emphasised in the educational literature. It is safe to say that instructional leadership has been widely accepted by principals as the *raison d'etre* for the continued existence of their positions at the school (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:187). However, it is worth mentioning that while the development and support of high quality teaching should be the fundamental role of the principals, managerial functions and instructional leadership are not mutually exclusive (Stronge, 1990:1). Both management and leadership functions are inextricably intertwined and are part of the cultural dynamics of the school as an organisation. Treating management and instructional leadership as separate sets of activities, which differ in kind, is an attempt to enforce an unnatural separation (Riches and Morgan, 1989:75). Suffice it to indicate that the proper issue of school improvement and the role of the school principal is not educational management versus instructional leadership; rather the focus should be the managing of productive schools. It has also been fairly commonly assumed that management and leadership are synonymous. That is not the case because it is possible to manage a situation without exercising leadership. Management is often practised by following rules and regulations; leadership cannot be exercised in quite the same manner.

According to Kruger (in: Van der Stoep *et al.*, 1994:255) instructional leadership should be conceptualised as **"an approach to school management rather than a specific set of practices"**. According to this view, all principals seem to engage in the same type of leadership tasks. However, one central difference between effective and ineffective principals is the belief that principals hold concerning their tasks. For example, effective principals use their tasks as vehicles of actualising their belief about leadership. Ineffective principals, on the other hand, tend to perform these tasks without attaching any special meaning to them (Van der Stoep *et al.*, 1994:256).

One of the problems in connection with the role of the school principal as an instructional leader is that people define the role in different ways with varying degrees of precision, thereby creating confusion for principals expected to carry out the role. To some people the principalship is a leadership position, and any activities in which the principal is engaged to improve the instruction, are leadership activities. To others, there are certain types of activities or actions, such as classroom observation, in which principals are expected to participate if they are to function as instructional leaders (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:187). Compounding the problem further, is the fact that principals are frequently encouraged to be instructional leaders, and yet they may not be perceived by teachers as possessing the subject matter expertise necessary for helping teachers to improve. Despite the problems mentioned, recent research regards the instructional leadership role as one of the main management tasks of the school principal, comprising all activities which assist one to enhance a culture of teaching and learning.

### **3.2.3.1 The principal's influence on the effective school**

The topic of school effectiveness has been receiving increased attention in the past few years. To date, the research on school effectiveness has identified a number of factors that appear important in identifying effective schools. One factor that appears consistently in most of the studies is the principal's leadership (see Arends, 1982; Dow and Oakley, 1992; Heck *et al.*, 1990; Common, 1983; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990; Leitner, 1994; Manasse, 1985; Huddle, 1984; Evans and Teddlie, 1995; Donald, 1986; Leithwood, Begley, and Cousins, 1990). Despite major conceptual and methodological advances in classroom instructional research during the last few decades, little is known about how the principal at school level affects the children's schooling experiences. However, recent work on successful schools underscores the importance of instructional leadership, especially the role of the school

principal in co-ordinating and controlling the instructional programme (Bossert *et al.*, 1982:34 and Murphy *et al.*, 1983:34). Put positively, research (see Blase and Blase, 1998; McEwan, 1998; Glasman and Heck, 1982), has proved convincingly that effective principals are first and foremost good instructional leaders. Goldhammer (in: Roberts, 1991:38) noted that the principal ought to be:

**... a specialist in teaching and learning, and be able to identify those factors which foster effectiveness in these central areas.**

Based on a comprehensive description of how instructional leadership is actually practiced and how it affects teachers, Blase and Blase (1998) provide strong support for the general premise that the principal's instructional leadership role has a powerful effect on classroom instruction. This optimism was supported by the correlation which was found between the characteristics of the principal's leadership and learning achievements. Subsequently, however, doubts were raised about the conclusiveness of such studies. In more recent research, which involved large numbers of schools and more reliable and valid instruments, these earlier effects or correlations could not be reproduced (Van Der Grift and Houtveen, 1991:54), or it was made clear that direct effects of principalship on learning were nonexistent. However, the result found earlier by Hallinger *et al.* (1990) supports the idea that indirect effects of a principalship can be expected. Hallinger found relatively strong relationships between the principalship and the existence of a clear school mission. The clear mission in turn influenced learners' opportunity to learn and teachers' expectations. This raises the important question which forms the basis of the present research and of this chapter in particular: if the instructional leadership role has a positive influence on the culture of teaching

and learning or on effective schools, which dimensions of leadership should the principal emphasise?

### **3.2.3.2 The effective school**

Researchers have been investigating the topics of school effectiveness over many years but in spite of the longevity of the construct and the popularity of the subjects, a considerable amount still has to be done to arrive at a suitable model of what characterises an effective school. While the research is extensive it has been hampered by a number of methodological problems. Criticisms by Purkey and Smith (1983) pointed to difficulties in a number of areas, including problems in generalising across differing types of school (Evans and Teddlie, 1995:4). In view of the debate that prevails about the nature of the level of effectiveness in schools, and because of the uncertainty that remains about the indicators that principals and evaluators should use in diagnosing school effectiveness, schools need to be studied in a way that will provide information about the central elements of their effectiveness (Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:166). In the present research a clear idea of effective schools is needed because the assumption is made that to be an authentic instructional leader the principal should succeed in creating an effective school. Therefore it is important to be specific in defining the concept "**effective school**".

The matter of defining effectiveness is fundamental and complex because, as Cameron and Whetten (in: Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:167) have argued, definitions, models and criteria of organisational effectiveness are so diverse that a single, clear definition is not possible. School effectiveness is a multifaceted phenomenon. Some authors define school effectiveness in terms of goal achievement; others focus on additional desired outcomes (such as staff satisfaction), processes and organisational context. Georgopoulos and



Tannenbaum's (in: Holdaway and Johnson, 1993:167) early definition embodied these conceptions; in their view organisational effectiveness is:

**The extent to which any organisation as a social system, given certain resources and means, fulfils its objectives without incapacitating its means and resources and without placing undue strain upon its members.**

Furthermore, educational researchers have identified indicators that may be used to gauge effectiveness in a variety of organisational settings (Murphy *et al.* 1983:137). Holdaway and Johnson (1993:167) and Murphy *et al.* (1983:137) referred to eight distinguishing characteristics of effective schools as:

- **high expectations of instructional effectiveness among staff;**
- **strong leadership by the principal;**
- **an orderly, quiet, and work oriented-atmosphere at school;**
- **an emphasis on academic activities and development;**
- **an emphasis on mastering learning basic skills;**
- **frequent monitoring of academic achievement;**
- **a systematic broad-based reward system for students; and**
- **strong community support.**

Although there is a general consensus about the importance of these variables, there continues to be a lack of both conceptual models and behavioural indicators to provide substance to the findings (see Bossert *et al.*, 1981 and Murphy, 1983).

This chapter is an attempt to present a conceptual framework for the role of the principal as an instructional leader, as one of the variables of school

effectiveness. Activities within the framework capture the type of interaction by the principal; from indirect policy level activity to direct interaction with teachers through instructional supervision. Processes include variables which guide school activity such as communication; issues concerning staff development, staff appraisal, staff motivation, and student discipline and essential characteristics of the leader such as being empathetic and knowledgeable.

Dwyer (1984:3) and Huddle (1984:63) have emphasised that one of the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of an effective school is the strong instructional leadership of the principal, without which the disparate elements of schooling cannot be kept together. School principals are faced with an awesome responsibility to be strong instructional leaders in this time of education reform. As managers of the learning environment, principals should interest themselves in the work of teachers and teaching strategies – even if they do not actually have a class to teach. Taunyane (Professional Educators Union, 1998:1), the president of the Professional Educators' Union, stated clearly that today's principals do not have time to teach. It is imperative, however, that principals should at all times be ready to encourage appropriate change and development in teaching methods. The principal is therefore not just a manager in the structural and bureaucratic dimension of schooling, but a leader, and a motivator in the teaching and learning situation (Ntsime, 1990: 4).

It is ironic that at the very time that so much emphasis is being placed on the importance of the instructional leadership role of the principals, they are reporting that their power and autonomy as school leaders has been eroded in recent years (par. 1.1.3.10). Principals claim that they make fewer decisions regarding instruction and that they feel isolated, marginalised and unappreciated (Dwyer, 1984:30). Principals wish that they had more time to devote to instructional leadership activities but the real world of the principal – a world of discipline referrals, strikes and boycotts, parents' complaints and bureaucratic paperwork – leaves little room, they believe, beyond the

traditional teacher evaluation process that they carry out once or twice a year (Blase and Blase, 1998:vi).

While the debate regarding this dissatisfaction continues at the theoretical level concerning the principal as an instructional leader, in 1999 some South African principals were held accountable for student achievement; a point which heightens the importance of their role as instructional leaders. Parent groups were demanding the removal of principals who lead schools in which learners performed below expectations in the 1999 matric results. This resulted in the job security of eighty-one principals, who failed to have one student passing matric in the 1999 examination, being at stake (*Legalwise Magazine*, 2000:4). There is sufficient proof that from the community's point of view the significance of the principals' managerial role, particularly their role as instructional leaders, remains indisputable.

Hallinger's research (1982:35) reiterated the importance of the principal as an instructional leader although it reflected American education during the nineteen eighties. As education authorities sought to reform the education system the emphasis was on the principal's role as a manager and greater emphasis was placed on his/her responsibilities as an instructional leader. During that period, there were occasional calls for principals to return to their roots as classroom teachers. For the most part, however, a nationwide trend towards school consolidation, the profession's emulation of corporate management, and the political nature of public institutions led the majority of principals to forswear the instructional arena as a domain of primary concern. The principals were expected to be knowledgeable about curriculum and instruction and be able to intervene directly with teachers in making instructional improvements (Hallinger, 1982:37). High expectations for teachers and students, close supervision of classroom instruction, coordination of the school curriculum and close monitoring of the students' progress became synonymous with the role of the principal as an instructional leader. Research

into effective schools has concluded that principals with strong instructional leadership skills and a willingness to actively participate in the classroom create better schools (Zigarelli, 1996:103).

The specification of instructional leadership functions by researchers and programme developers suggested a high priority for the role of the principal as an instructional leader. Yet, according to Hallinger (1982:37), a persistent weakness in the literature, cited by several critics, was the inability of studies into effective schools to document the process by which principals helped their schools to become instructionally effective. In this regard Cuban (in: Hallinger, 1982:38) argued that:

**None of the richly detailed descriptions of high performers can serve as a blueprint for teachers, principals or superintendents who seek to improve academic achievement. Constructing a positive enduring school climate remains beyond the planner's pen. Telling principals what to say or do in order to boost teacher expectations of students or to renovate a marginal faculty into one with *esprit de corps* remains beyond the current expertise of superintendents and professors. Road signs exist, but no maps are yet for sale.**

Sizer (1985:22) also asserted that it was simple for the education authorities to write and to conduct seminars to improve the instructional leadership role of the school principal; however, to provoke effective leadership into practice is a much subtler, more complicated issue.

Although such criticisms from respected academics were fairly common, the in-service training programmes developed for school leaders in many American states attempted to provide road maps for principals. Unfortunately, in the absence of clearly delineated coordinates, policymakers and programme developers unwittingly relied on their previous assumptions and beliefs as they mapped the process most conducive to school improvement. An orientation to change was central in most research into policy driven transformation of effective schools for practitioners during that period (Hallinger, 1982:38).

#### 3.2.4 Problems in instructional leadership

Lane (1992:86) argued that as the focus shifts from the management leadership role of the principal to the instructionally related leadership role, three significant problems are raised:

First, there is no guarantee that efforts to balance managerial leadership tasks with the instructionally related tasks will create significant movement towards school effectiveness. A principal's increased involvement in curriculum matters is not by itself any guarantee of significant progress towards creating a more effective school. Adding to what Hallinger (1982:38) referred to previously, there are no clearly established causal relationships among instructional leadership variables and effective schools (Lane, 1992:86). Nor is there a verifiable sequence to determine which variable should be determined first.

Secondly, a variety of obstacles have to be overcome before instructional leadership has an opportunity to be effective. If there is a belief that a focused instructional leadership activity will be effective, related contextual barriers should first be identified and removed, so as to allow the activity to succeed. Lane (1992:85) pointed out a number of variables that form barriers to the instructional leadership roles of principals, such as:

- **fragmented, unpredictable daily routines;**
- **management focused training;**
- **on the job learning obstacles;**
- **role ambiguity;**
- **managed focus evaluation;**
- **lack of support from the school superiors;**
- **resistance from teachers; and**
- **role constraining teacher contracts.**

The above barriers should be dealt with before the principal can succeed as an instructional leader.

Finally, instructional leadership is only one of the many factors associated with effective schools. Dwyer (1985:30) categorically stated that even if one ignores the idea that effective schools might indeed create effective instructional leadership rather than the reverse, one still needs to recognise that instructional leadership, implemented without other factors associated with effective schools in place, may have little or no impact on school effectiveness (Edmonds in: Lane, 1992:87). However in the midst of this ambiguity, in their research Bamburg and Andrews (1991:175) revealed evidence which suggests that effective school principals, in high achieving schools, emphasise and engage in activities related to instruction to a much greater degree than principals in low achieving schools.

The above is, according to the researcher, a confirmation that instructional leadership is, despite criticisms and obstacles, to be regarded as a primary responsibility in the complex role of school principals. Hence, it is time to focus on the broader connection between the instructional leadership role of the principal and effective schools. Therefore in an attempt to enhance the culture, of teaching and learning in South African schools, the researcher finds it

appropriate to concentrate on the tasks of the principal as an instructional leader, as well as culture, as key variables in effective schools (Hallinger, 1992:38 and Lane, 1992:87).

The investigation is not a prescription or a blueprint but an attempt to draw a suggested map which principals as well as education authorities and policy makers can use when formulating programmes to enhance the desired culture in schools. Regardless of how one views instructional leadership, the relationship between content, experience, and environment, the core of curriculum development and leadership continues to be the school's primary aim, which in turn involves the abilities and performances of the school principal. The key to school improvement is not the district office manager, school inspector or the subject advisor who should be more concerned about the management of decisions, but the school principal (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:398).

### **3.3 THE PRINCIPAL'S INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP TASKS**

Because the mission of the present research is to enhance education practice, or more specifically to enhance the culture of teaching and learning by means of examining effective instructional leadership as the role of principals, the next section examines the fundamental tasks that characterise instructional leadership.

#### **3.3.1 Establishment of school goals**

According to Jones (1926:5) the accomplishment of any human endeavour is dependent to a large extent upon a clear, definite aim and understanding of what is to be done. If there is an agreement that the primary purpose of schooling is learning, then deciding what to teach, how it should be taught, and how much of it should be taught and how it should be organised for teaching

are paramount goals for the principal as an instructional leader (McEwan, 1998:17).

A number of researchers have noted the importance of the principal's being able to lead in the formulation of school goals. Kenworthy (1994:30) cited Ralph Stogdill who noted in his review of one hundred and sixty three leaders that "**rigor and persistence in pursuit of goals**" was one of the keys to the task-related characteristics of leaders. Deciding about what to teach was easy when textbooks were the curriculum. However, establishing instructional goals for the 21st century is a far more daunting assignment. This is because schools are generally characterised by vague, unclear and multiple goals and objectives (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:21; Mamabolo, 1996:63 and Murphy *et al.*, 1983). Studies of effective schools, on the other hand, have shown that effective schools are characterised by a clearly defined mission. The overriding goal of effective schools is to improve their students' achievement. Effective schools emphasise a few highly coordinated objectives that promote this primary mission. Without the presence of clear goals and objectives, it is difficult if not impossible to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of school operation. For this reason and because of the findings (Cheng, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1990; Mc Ewan, 1998; Murphy *et al.*, 1983; Cooper, 1983) about objectives in effective schools, framing clear goals and objectives is the primary instructional leadership function.

As an instructional leader, the principal is ultimately responsible for guiding the development and implementation of a set of clear instructional goals for the school – broad general outcomes that define what the students should know and be able to do when they exit school. In addition to these goals, specific outcomes for every curricular area and grade level are needed. The specific outcomes will constitute the road maps for learning to be used by the principal and staff. Such specific outcomes guide the selection of materials and programmes, dictate the types of instructional strategies and approaches used,



and suggest the type of assessment needed to determine success (McEwan, 1998:17). According to the view expressed above, principals of effective schools set clear goals and philosophies to develop strong values and beliefs amongst teachers, pupils and parents (Goldring and Pasternack, 1994:242). Principals focus resources and teachers' activities on specific areas of learning through explicitly stated goals and a sense of shared purpose.

The principal will not set instructional goals alone. Engaging teachers, parents and even students in the process is essential and can have an energising effect on the entire learning process. The principal defines key outcomes for students and publishes them for everyone to see and use, so as to keep all participants accountable. It is important for principals as leaders to communicate these goals to parents, staff and learners. In the researcher's opinion many learners drop out of school because of unclearly defined school objectives. Focusing the attention of teachers on what students must be able to know and do, rather than on specific models of instruction that teachers must follow, will empower teachers to choose the most effective instructional strategy and programmes from among many.

### 3.3.2 Establishment of effective communication

Communication is a very important instructional leadership task for the school principal. But first it is necessary to indicate the nature of communication and how communication may assist the principal in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning.

#### 3.3.2.1 The nature of communication

Cawood and Gibbon (1985:62) have defined communication as "**the sharing of thoughts, feelings and experiences**". This concise definition underlies the

fact that communication is much more than a matter of transmitting factual information. In addition Van Schoor (in: Van der Westhuizen, 1991:205) describes communication as the mutual exchange of ideas and interpretation of messages. Van Schoor added that this mutual exchange of ideas and interpretation of messages are not only the basis of all forms of communication but are also at the root of human existence. Communication is a way of life, an ontological concept of being.

If these definitions are scrutinised carefully, both emphasise mutuality and more importantly add that the significance of communication cannot be limited to the role of principals as instructional leaders only, but is vital for human existence. According to Bush and West-Burnham (1994:245) communication is an everyday experience which all people claim to know, but in reality communication is quite a complex activity. Without communication all that people think of as human experiences would cease to exist because communication is a vital component in all spheres of life. Within the people at school, communication is described as a social activity designed to enable the school community to know one another and to cooperate for the achievement of the school objectives (Cawood and Gibbon, 1985:62).

### **3.3.2.2 The importance of communication**

Because so many changes are taking place in the school, effective communication is more than ever critical for the effectiveness of the principal as an instructional leader (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:245). General education legislation with regard to the everyday duties of teachers has brought about very many changes which require careful communication if misunderstandings are to be avoided. Van Niekerk (1994:201) has further added to what Bush and West-Burnham stated: that efficient communication is very important for two reasons. First, it is the most important aid for

transferring the details of management activities (chapter two) such as planning, organising, co-ordinating and control to others. Communication is essential for motivating participants at school, implementing planning, putting organising into practice, providing the necessary guidance and transferring the ideas of the principal to other people. Secondly, communication is the most important instrument for motivating the staff to realise the objectives of the school, the morale and motivation of the members and the productivity of the whole school. Communication is therefore regarded as a vehicle for instructional leadership.

Communication is viewed as the means by which people are linked together in a school to achieve a common purpose (Koontz and Wehrich, 1988:460 and Van Niekerk, 1994:201). In other words, the managerial and leadership tasks discussed in the research will be positively affected if effective communication occurs. As St Johns (in: Gorton, 1980:251) observed, no one can manage a modern organisation who is not knowledgeable about communication principles and techniques and skilled in their use. Gorton also cited Guarino who added that in the area of leadership there is no talent more essential than one's ability to communicate. Furthermore, Singh (1997:154) has stressed that it is because of communication that the principal feels the pulse of the various teachers, pupils and parents in order to know their activities and problems, and to transmit horizontal and vertical messages. Therefore the present researcher concurs confidently with those scholars who claim that communication is at the heart of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader.

### 3.3.2.3 Means of communication

A full discussion of means of communication and communication channels is unfortunately beyond the scope of the present investigation and only **oral**, **written** and **nonverbal** communication will be discussed.

#### □ **Oral communication**

In spite of all inventions the human voice is still the fastest means of communication (Badenhorst, 1996:30). Oral communication refers to meetings, interviews and telephone conversations while written communication includes among other media letters, reports, and memoranda. The advantages of oral communication include the following:

- **It is natural and simple.**
- **It can be used in a greater variety of ways than written communication.**
- **It is generally faster and more economical than written communication.**
- **It makes two-way communication possible, whereby uncertainties can be removed and immediate feedback can take place.**
- **It is more personal and can assume a less formal and authoritarian (threatening) form.**

The advantages of oral communication depicted above should not suggest the idea that oral communication is better than written communication. Oral and written communication both supplement each other; none can be used without the other.

□ **Written communication**

When formulating written communication on paper or as a circular to parents or teachers, principals should remember that simplicity and clarity are of the utmost importance. If this is borne in mind written communication will have the following advantages:

- **It is beneficial in respect of mass communication where the message has to be transmitted to many people at the same time.**
- **It is useful for keeping records, for example keeping minutes.**
- **It is indispensable if the message has to be sent from person to person and there is a danger that oral communication may distort it to such an extent that it scarcely resembles what was intended originally.**
- **It conveys messages to places that are difficult to reach.**
- **It can be preserved and be studied later at a more suitable time.**
- **It can be duplicated so that it can be attended to simultaneously at various communication points (Dekker, 1982:81-82).**

In becoming aware of different communication channels, principals need to recognise that as persons they in a sense also represent one type of communication channel, whether this is realised or not. Principals communicate with people orally, in a written form and also through non-verbal communication.

□ **Non-verbal communication**

By means of non-verbal communication principals can communicate surprise, anger, fear, disgust, disappointment, sadness, happiness, and other kinds of emotions and reactions (Gorton, 1994:257). Non-verbal means of

communication listed by Van der Westhuizen *et al.* (1991:212) are, among others, body language, hand gestures, eye contact and physical appearance. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991:187), in their turn, included the way people stand, the distance they maintain from each other, the way people walk, the way they fold their arms and wrinkle their brows, being late for a meeting; all these convey messages to others. Wiles and Bondi (1983:314) included symbols and demonstrations and silence in their list of non-verbal communication means. For example, a person's physical appearance forms the basic (and often everlasting) first impression which a person makes on others. Factors which play a role in the message which physical appearance carries are attractiveness, wearing spectacles (often seen as a sign of intelligence), the type of clothing or colour of clothing. According to Tubbs and Moss (in: Van der Westhuizen *et al.*, 1991:214), dress reveals something of a person's character and may convey either positive or negative perceptions.

The importance of the above is that principals who wish to communicate effectively should always consider their clothing or appearance. As long as the message communicated through non-verbal means coincides with the message principals are communicating in other ways there is no problem (Gorton, 1994:255). However, when the verbal and non-verbal messages contradict each other, problems can definitely result. For example, if a principal is informing a parent whom he/she doesn't like that he/she would like to work co-operatively with the parent, while the facial expression and the tone of voice conveys an opposite impression, then the danger of conveying contradictory messages exists. Badenhorst (1996:32) further stated that one can, for instance, try to listen in a friendly manner, but if the friendliness does not come from within, it will soon be recognised as false. Dekker (1982:84) pointed out that when the spoken message and the body language that accompanies it, contradict each other, people tend to believe in actions rather than words.

It is not always possible to be aware of how one communicates non-verbally or to control one's non-verbal messages. However as an instructional leader the principal should make an effort to develop a better understanding of this subtle channel of communication. Principals should also be aware of the possibility that an inconsistency between verbal and non-verbal messages could explain certain problems in communication (Gorton, 1994:255).

The essentials of effective communication include establishing a mutual relationship and trust with teachers, finding a common ground of experience, using mutually known words in securing the attention of the teacher or any receiver of the message (Singh, 1995:155). Lack of confidence within a principal and a lack of mutual understanding, lack of motivation to communicate, failure to realise one's emotions, loose and no adherence to the channel prescribed, an inadequate management information system, absence of monitoring and feedback are some of the barriers to communication. These barriers can be removed if the principal's leadership and management show strong will and commitment. The barriers of communication can also be minimised if the education department, as the employer, is sensitive and adheres to the essentials of communication.

#### **3.3.2.4 Communication of the school vision**

According to Manasse (1985:444) effective schools require a sense of purpose and direction, provided by well defined goals. However, to be successful in leading the goal-setting process and achieving consensus and commitment among staff, a principal must have a comprehensive understanding of the school and all its interacting parts and a clear vision of where it will be in the near future. A principal's role in leading the school is a mighty task because as instructional leaders they need a clear understanding of the school, its component parts and of how the parts fit together.

The literature often seems to use the terms vision and mission interchangeably. However the present research considers vision and mission as separate variables, to assist the instructional leader to communicate them in more meaningful ways to staff, students and parents.

McEwan (1998:69) defines vision as: **"... a driving force reflecting the instructional leader's image of the future, based on his or her values, beliefs and experiences"**. Vision is a personal view, McEwan contends, that provides the major direction an instructional leader will take. Mission, on the other hand, is **"the direction that emerges from the vision and guides the day to day behaviour of the organization"**. In order to be fully realised the mission should be developed collectively with the staff parents. Descriptors such as: **"measurable, obtainable, purposeful, directional, ultimate goal and commitment"** feature when reflecting on the concept mission.

The **"vision"** of a school is described as the desired future state of the school while the **"mission"** is the summary statement of the envisaged output of the school (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:48). Therefore there is a close relationship between the vision and mission of the school. A vision for the school can consequently be operationalised in the mission of the school. If the vision of a school is the "dream" about its future state the mission is how that dream is to be realised. The *raison d'etre* of an organisation is synonymous with the mission. The mission can be defined as:

**... the all-encompassing statement of aims which distinguishes an organisation from other similar organisations, and it is also a declaration of the main reasons why an organisation exists** (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:50).



To define the vision the principal should know where the school is heading. Harris (1997:76) has cited Stephen Covey who asserted that a vision is like: "**beginning with the end in mind**". A major potential role of the principal is the ability to communicate the vision. The principal as an instructional leader and member of the School Governing Body, and a link between all role players in a school, is in a unique position to develop a vision that encompasses all aspects of the school purpose. According to Bennis and Nanus (1985) the critical point about a vision is that:

**It articulates a view of a realistic credible attractive future for the organisation, a condition that is better in some important ways than what now exists.**

Knott (1995:127) refers to Miles who emphasised that a good vision provides shared criteria for judging movement. The vision is an intelligent foresight, the driving force of the school, forming the foundation of the overall aims of the school. The vision is an image of the future state of the school; an image of the direction and purpose the school is going to take; and the fundamental values and convictions of the principal and the management team are its foundations (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:48). Holmes (1993:19) maintains that lack of vision leads to a lack of purpose, and this is suggested as a cause of the school's failure. It is therefore, the principal's duty to reflect on a vision for the school, to formulate and develop that vision into a strategy that will provide a map of the course the school should follow.

Each school should determine a vision of its own which demonstrates its uniqueness in terms of culture, values, abilities, focus and in what it aims to achieve with its pupils. The vision that the principal as the leader of the school cherishes should take the total culture of the school into account (values, convictions, rituals, norms, ceremonies and symbols). In education the vision

describes an ideal state of affairs, built upon the beliefs and values that the school and community members hold for their school (Castallo, 1992:18). This means that before the principal, the staff and the School Governing Body (SGB) can formulate the goals of the school, each of them needs to have a vision of what the school should be (Knott, 1995:125). These individual visions then need to be translated into the combined mission statement of the school.

The mission statement should not only be compatible with the individual vision, but should also take cognisance of the shared values of all those directly concerned with the school, for instance, members of the School Governing Body, parents, staff and learners. Castallo (1992:18) added that, ideally, the vision should be developed by the principal as a school leader after much listening and many discussions with people both inside and outside the school, including parents, community members, school staff, and if possible even prospective employers and political, business, industrial, and educational leaders.

The terms "**shared values, rituals and ceremonies**" should therefore not be seen as fashionable buzz-words, but as practical aids to providing a foundation, direction and continuity to the management of the school. Shared values, rituals and ceremonies are important aspects of the school culture and thus give direction to the school leadership as they are the foundation of the vision of the school. In turn, the school culture will be based on the organisation's vision and mission, setting requirements for success: high quality, efficiency, product reliability, customer service, innovation, hard work and loyalty (Kilmann in: Castallo, 1992:8).

A good mission statement should cover all the essential components of the school, such as:

- **the school's aim or its primary nature;**
- **its interest groups;**
- **its management philosophy;**
- **the direction it is taking in respect of its image;**
- **its service;**
- **the market in which it operates; and**
- **the basic technology it employs** (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:51).

All the participants in the school should accept and conform to its mission. Every new applicant for a post at a particular school should be given a copy of both the vision and the mission of a school and given the opportunity to study them. The applicants should be asked pertinently if they feel that they can subscribe to them. A school should not appoint a teacher who cannot subscribe to its vision and mission statement. The vision and mission statement, however, should not be contrary to the South African Constitution (particularly the Bill of Rights) and the current education legislation. Under the new dispensation this will mean that the mission statement should not result in teachers being discriminated against on the ground of race, colour, religious persuasions, and gender for instance (Knott, 1995:126).

### **3.3.2.5 Communication of the value of learning**

As an instructional leader the principal has the task of communicating the value of learning to learners by being visible in classrooms, hallways, the playground, lunchrooms, athletic events and extra mural activities (see Blase and Blase, 1998; Cash, 1997; Cooper, 1983:33; Rich, 1983; Snyder, 1988). Effective instructional leaders share important ideas and concepts with their students. Whenever students are gathered together for assemblies or special events the principal emphasises the importance of learning, the value of listening or any

theme that encourages learners to learn (McEwan, 1998:75). In McCallie's study (1983:6-8) for example, the principal used the school newspaper to explain his vision and further educate the whole school and interested community about the distinction between the church and the state.

### 3.3.3 Supervision of instructional programme

In order to put the concept of instructional supervision in perspective, a brief overview of supervision is given.

#### 3.3.3.1 Supervision: an overview

Instructional supervision as a field of study and practice has never been fully investigated by historians (Glanz, 1995:96). This means that there is insufficient attention to supervision from a historical perspective, which is discouraging because the struggle to understand the unending dialogue between the past, present and future is relevant for enhancing a culture of teaching and learning. Historical practices in education supply the context in which to view current proposals concerning supervision. The past, present and the future form an undivided unity and more fundamentally shed light on the understanding of how instructional supervision has come to take the shape it has done.

Successful instructional supervision requires principals to have insight into subtle nuances of supervision. Glanz (1995:98) warned that as supervisors principals should not carry out supervisory strategies merely to solve immediate instructional problems. Instead, as instructional leaders concerned with instructional supervision, principals should continually reflect on the basis for doing what they do. The history of supervision enables principals to understand the meaning of how supervision came to be as it is, but also to

realise how current practices and theories are outgrowths of past developments. Critical historians such as Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993:xix) (in their revised research *Supervision: A Redefinition*), assert that numerous changes in understanding about schooling, teaching and leadership, among other factors, necessitate a redefinition of supervisory practice and theory.

**This redefinition includes the disconnection of supervision from hierarchical roles and a focus on community as the primary metaphor.**

In using the word "**community**" Sergiovanni and Starrat denote the fact that responsibility for supervision has widened to include not only principals as supervisors but also teachers, mentors, consultants and other school and district based personnel. Relatedly, Sergiovanni has referred to supervision as pedagogical leadership, as derived from van Manen's concept of pedagogy as a kind of "leading" that often walks behind the one who is led. Sergiovanni also brilliantly defined a community theory of leadership, as a pastoral supervision which is covenantal, reflective and care giving, as is found in ministry. Ministerial roles of principals, according to Sergiovanni, include among others:

**Purposing – bringing together shared visions into a covenant that speaks compellingly to principals, teachers, parents, and learners with a moral voice explaining – giving reasons for asking members to do certain things and giving explanations that link what they are doing to the larger picture** (Sergiovanni in: Blase and Blase, 1998:161).

Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993:xix) maintain that the principal's supervisory role remains important although it is understood and interpreted differently. Supervision is defined by criteria extrinsic to the moral qualities of teaching and learning.

□ **The principal's supervision and hierarchical influence**

According to Glanz (1993 and 1997) instructional supervision as a field, and supervisors in particular, have been susceptible to vulnerability. Lacking history, and a conceptual and theoretical centre, instructional supervision shifts from one theory to another – a field searching for meaning. Rather than, for example, conceptualising a variety of possible theories to influence practice, supervision is narrowly conceived (Glanz, 1997:199). Supervisors, particularly principals as middle management personnel, have not always had a well-defined and consistent job description. The principals' roles and duties were often ambiguous and incoherent due in large measure to their unique and vulnerable status in the bureaucratic hierarchy. As Glanz explained (1991:128):

**As middle-management personnel, supervisors were often torn between administrative obligations to the principal and superintendent and, on the other hand, to teachers ... no time remained to offer assistance and guidance to teachers.**

The supervisory role of the principal is further compounded by the fact that principals depend upon the authority of the school inspectors and at the same time upon the teaching staff to cooperate regarding instructional and curricular matters. As a result the primary role of the principal as an instructional supervisor is that of a bureaucratic functionary overseeing the day to day management of the school and acting as a "foreman" of teachers. Such a role often means that teachers are at loggerheads with the principal as a supervisor.

The frustration of and discouragement of principals over the real or perceived lack of support from those around them (school inspectors and teachers), is a

barrier to performing as an instructional leader (McEwan, 1998:12). Role ambiguity and conflict continues, leading to vulnerability, uncertainty, and anxiety within the principal's supervisory status. As supervisors, principals lack a consistent, well defined job description, delineation of duties or a way of measuring outcomes from accomplishment of tasks. Consequently, most principals may experience job dissatisfaction because of role ambiguity (Glanz, 1997:200).

One of the principals interviewed in McEwan's research (1998:12) explained this ambivalence by saying:

**The system doesn't allow you to be an educational leader. Everyone wants the power to run the school in one way or another – the central office, the union, the board, the parents, the special interest groups. What's left for the principal to decide isn't always very much. There's so little we have to control or to change.**

Continued criticisms of principals for their persistence in using autocratic methods further increase the vulnerability of their role in instructional supervision. Criticisms have focused on both autocratic forms of leadership as well as on more popular recent notions that "sell", rather than dictate, leader-held conceptions of school direction and practice (Reitzug, 1994:285). Opposition by teachers' unions to bureaucratic supervisory methods has led teachers to call for an end to the stigma of the supervisor and of supervision. Teachers criticise principals for their bureaucratic, fault-finding, inspectional, supervision, which can be summarised as "witch hunting". As early as 1930 Reeder affirmed that supervision as inspection was intensely resented by teachers and that a change in title might reduce potential conflict. The terms consultant, curriculum advisor, district manager, coordinator were introduced to

supersede the term supervisor. A source of conflict may well be the teacher's attitude towards the principal as supervisor. Teachers may find it hard to be themselves while dealing with people who outrank them in position or prestige. When this occurs, the result is often resentment towards the principal (Ryan and Cooper, 1991:445).

Although there are controversies regarding the role of the principal as instructional supervisor a tenaciously held conviction prevails that this role continues to be necessary, even essential, in an educational world now populated by teachers and educators specifically trained to be supervisors. Recent research (Blase and Blase, 1998; Glanz, 1995; Glanz, 1997; Immergart, 1994; McEwan 1998; Sergiovanni and Starrat, 1993) still supports the purpose of supervision as there is a belief that supervision contributes towards instructional improvement. Supervision should be redefined and be relocated, from something concerned primarily with enhanced competence and expert authority, to something which has to do with virtue as well.

#### □ **Taoist supervision philosophy**

Teachers and principals as supervisors should not be viewed as independent and even as opposing decision makers who calculate individually the cost of the actions and benefits of their actions, but rather as members of an educating community who respond to shared values and norms (Sergiovanni and Starrat, 1993:xviii). This is true to the Chinese Taoist tradition or philosophy which averred that the vulnerability of principals as supervisors could be seen in terms of a ying/yang balance (Glanz, 1997:202) or a sense of harmony. In the Taoist sense, conflict embodies all people as it does all aspects of life, and is thus inevitable. Acceptance of conflict can be an invaluable opportunity for growth in the field of supervision. From a Taoist perspective, then, conflicting theories or proposals in the field of instructional supervision should be welcomed, not resisted.



If the Taoist premise of complementarity and harmony among seemingly diverse, if not opposing, ideas or frameworks can be well understood and accepted, supervision can be conceived as a function that uses a wide array of strategies, methodologies and approaches aimed to improve instruction and to promote instructional leadership as well as change (Glanz, 1997:207). For a Taoist, balance as depicted in the yin/yang conceptualisation, means that seemingly opposite forces or concepts find congruence and justification in a given context. Thus, a principal may relinquish authority and still become powerful (Glanz, 1997:209). The rationale underlying site-based management, school management teams (SMT), is based on such a Taoist premise. In their study of excellent United States and Japanese principals Willis and Bartel (1990:117) found that their main responsibility was evaluating the performance of teachers, providing a supportive culture of teaching and learning. This research indicated that American principals exerted their leadership by facilitating good instruction, or, in the words of some of the principals: "... **getting the job done through people ...**", creating optimal conditions for teachers to excel.

Despite the controversy surrounding the supervisor/teacher polarity it is clear that the supervisory role of the principal is useful and will continue to feature in the instructional leadership role of the principal. The following section discusses a number of activities that principals need to undertake in order to exercise their supervisory function more effectively.

#### □ **Supervision and change**

For instructional activities, particularly instructional supervision, to become an essential aspect of the principal's duties a major change in school operation will be required both for principals and teachers. Skills with change processes thus become an important process variable in instructional leadership.

Unionism and professionalism compound the difficulty of successfully implementing educational change. It is very difficult to induce change in any loosely coupled organisations such as schools. Leitner (1994:223) states that organisations that have clear goals, a predictable technology and established communication patterns are described as tightly coupled, while organisations such as schools, which have multiple goals, unpredictable technologies and changing communication patterns are loosely linked or coupled organisations.

When implementing change for successful implementation of instructional supervision, attention should be given to communication, conflict resolution, and decision-making. Major changes in structure and curriculum are more likely to be successfully implemented if they are based on collegiality rather than on a line of authority (Murphy *et al.*, 1983; 145). Immergart (1994:28) indicated that, being human, principals cannot avoid evaluating or supervising or assessing teacher instructional activities. A unique aspect of members of the human species is their ability to value virtually everything regarding whether it is important or not important. As Immergat (1994: 27) contended:

**We are beings who value and evaluate, and we send and receive information of an assessment nature or evaluative nature regardless of whether it is asked for or not and whether it is at a conscious or unconscious level.**

People evaluate the weather, news, human relations in the work place, the restaurant, clothing, local and international developments. Whether things such as movies, concerts or football matches are potentially good or not is of little critical importance. On the other hand to supervise and evaluate the quality of classroom teaching, school experiences or teacher effectiveness is extremely important for the learners, parents, society and national interest. Tanner and

Tanner (1987:106), for example, contend that principals as supervisors are challenged daily to assist teachers "**in solving classroom problems**". As such, principals interact with teachers personally and professionally. To be effective instructional leaders, principals should maintain friendly, helpful relationships with teachers. However when evaluation ought to be done, these collegial relationships may be jeopardised. Tanner and Tanner (1987:106) state that:

**No doubt, many teachers are afraid to ask for help from supervisors because they believe that by exposing a problem with their teaching, they are inviting a low evaluation with their work.**

The point whether teachers like supervision or not ought not to be the question, and supervision should neither be done casually, accidentally or subjectively, nor be avoided or kept secret. What is done at school is very important for the growth of the nation. Principals as instructional leaders are responsible for the attainment of the school's goals. Principals want to know whether specific methods that are used by teachers are working or not in enhancing the learners' understanding of the subject matter. For the supervisory role of the principal to succeed teachers ought to be developed to assume the role of teacher leaders. According to Glickman (1991) the principal of a successful school is not the instructional leader as such but rather the coordinator of teachers as instructional leaders. Teacher leaders are individuals who exhibit leadership skills in one or more of the following areas:

- **mentoring and coaching new teachers;**
- **collaborating with all staff members, regardless of personal affiliation or preferences in learning;**

- **growing with a view to bringing new ideas to the classroom and the school;**
- **writing and presenting skills to share knowledge with others;**
- **engaging in creative problem solving and decision making;**
- **being willing to take risks in front of peers; and**
- **being willing to share information, ideas, opinions, evaluative judgements confidently with the instructional leader.**

An important characteristic of an effective school is that its teachers are knowledgeable and are given a great deal of autonomy and authority in the instructional agenda. But the teachers' individual quests and interests are balanced against the requirements that they contribute to the learning and achievement of learners. Many instructional leaders have learned the hard way that failure to develop strong teacher leaders and share the yoke of leadership will result in resistance by teachers adhering to policy and accepting instructional supervision (McEwan, 1998:102).

First, instructional supervision should begin with the formulation of policies around leadership functions, develop practices based on these policies, and exercise behaviour consistent with policies. Secondly, there are two basic methods of influencing the instructional behaviour of teachers in the classroom. Teachers' behaviour can be influenced directly through clinical supervision and indirectly by developing school level policies and enforcement practices that require teachers to perform certain tasks. While both of these methods can be effective, neither is without problems. The time needed for clinical supervision makes it difficult to use for a wide range of functions or with the large numbers of teachers generally supervised by each principal. On the other hand, policy formulation in a loosely coupled organisation such as a school is oftentimes merely an exercise which has little effect on ongoing operations (Murphy *et al.* 1983:145).

Instructional supervision necessitates a mastery of the complex process of clinical supervision which is influenced by past experiences, attitudes, and prejudice. It also demands a well-planned, organised and evaluated conference with teachers.

As instructional leaders and instructional supervisors principals may work on curriculum development, staff development, school wide reform strategies, staff appraisal, and mentoring.

In the discussion above, it has been clearly stated that the role of the principal as an instructional leader implies being a change agent. To implement change requires principals and all educational leaders to have specific abilities such as knowledge and insight into the dynamics of the school culture, managerial functions, the ability to plan, formulate and implement an effective strategy. Without the necessary skills and knowledge of the conditions of change the principals may run the risk of making poor decisions or an unplanned change. As the instructional leader the principal should be conversant with the meaning and the development of the changing curriculum and the changing education legislation.

### **3.3.3.2 The principal's supervision and change**

In a school as an organisation change is a fact of life, change is inevitable. Clack and Fairman (1987:108) contend that if principals are to be effective instructional leaders, they cannot be content to let change occur randomly. Instead, principals should be prepared to manage the inevitable succession of new conditions that will confront them. Change should be implemented particularly for the benefit of learners, because any vocational knowledge and skills acquired may well be out of date by the time the child seeks a job. Indeed, in the scientific subjects, what is being taught at school has already

been superseded as it is being taught. Consequently, the most essential needs of tomorrow's citizens are those core skills which are of general application. Such skills are, for example: personal and interpersonal skills, problem solving, creativity, communication, numeracy together with a positive and flexible attitude (Everard and Morris, 1996:173).

Although reflection on the management of change includes a lot of information about the relationship between schools and the change process, little is said about the role of the school principal in a changing, crisis situation (Tewel, 1987:101). However, there are instances of principals of schools who have changed crime ridden, racially torn schools into calm and peaceful places; and of innovative, dedicated principals who brought schools out of crisis situations to a stable school culture.

According to Pretorius (1994:75) change originates in the culture of the school as an organisation and involves change in aims, structures, attitudes, planning and strategy, in other words in the school in totality. To plan and implement change requires principals or leaders with specific abilities, such as knowledge and insight into the dynamics of culture, managerial functions and the ability to plan, formulate and implement an effective strategy.

Walker and Vogt (1987:42) add that principals are often in a good position to assess the need for changes in the school system because much of their time is spent conversing with individuals or with small groups about the issues, concerns, problems, hopes and needs of schools. Principals also know when the needs, issues, hopes, and problems should be addressed because they are constantly involved in needs assessment. When needs for change inside the school are congruent with the needs for change in the external system (for example the political factors in the society) and when those needs are high on the people's priority list, then it is time for the principals to initiate the change process (Walker and Vogt, 1987:42).

The important issue is that the principal or any leader who wishes to initiate change must be able to "hear" the need for change. While there is a difference between voluntary and imposed change, all change involves loss, anxiety, and struggle. Change, according to Fullan (in: Steyn and Squelch, 1994:181) represents a serious personal and collective experience, characterised by ambivalence and uncertainty. The meaning that the participants attach to a change effort is critical to the eventual restructuring. If the change is not understood and owned by the participants, the level of commitment to the change is diminished.

In most schools in South Africa considerable discontent and the lack of a common cause are clearly manifested in the school atmosphere, as the result of the lack of skills in managing change. The primary reason for the unhappy atmosphere is in most cases the introduction of an unplanned, imposed change (Bucko, 1994:4). To add to what Bucko has said, Reeves (1998:15) has maintained that the fundamental problem is that principals do not have adequate formal or on-the-job training to be change leaders, so the coordination and guidance needed by staff and pupils is lacking. The National Department of Education decided to change the very core of the education system almost overnight by implementing new policies and new curricula (Professional Educator's Union, 2000b:1). The unplanned change has given rise to confused provincial Departments of Education with poorly trained officials and thousands of disillusioned, sceptical, demotivated principals and teachers, as well as many frustrated parents. It has been shown in the second chapter (par. 2.3.2) that almost every task at school needs thorough planning if success is to be achieved.

Research studies support the idea of adhering to specific conditions if successful change is to be implemented (Bucko, 1994:4).

□ **Understanding of the actual situation**

It is important that during change the principal should always keep a grip on reality; this includes the fact that in a community there are a variety of factors such as social and political influences, which can lead to, empower or impede change (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:26).

□ **Feasibility**

In a school, proposed change should be acceptable, attainable, and clearly set out. Change is only feasible and therefore acceptable if there is a reasonable amount of clarity about what the change is aimed at and how it will affect the participants concerned. Lack of clarity creates insecurity and a resulting opposition to proposed changes (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:28).

□ **Marketability**

If the changes that are to be made are feasible, they should be sold to the teachers, parents, students and the community at the correct pace. This means the principal should influence the school community positively, not only to accept changes, but more importantly to commit themselves to implementing the changes successfully. This implies that:

**... die korrekte inligting wat op die regte wyse oorgedra word gesindhede en gedrag positief kan beïnvloed, en weerstand makliker oorkom kan word (Pretorius, 1994:80).**



- **Relevancy**

To meet the condition of relevancy means that the proposed changes in the school should be sensitive to the needs of the community it is serving. To be relevant means that contextual factors must be taken into account. By doing this, the school will also, naturally, have to accommodate influences and changes which come from the external environment (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:28).

- **Adaptability**

Setting adaptability as a condition for change implies that the concept of renewal and the current state of affairs cannot continue unaltered. This further requires an attitude of adaptability or flexibility in the school in order to be able to handle any future change without reserve. The principal or the authorities involved in changing the education system should be aware of the danger of implementing changes in such a way that future, necessary changes become virtually impossible (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:28).

- **Cost-effectiveness**

Cost-effectiveness is proposed as the final condition for the successful implementation of change. As modern educational institutions, schools are increasingly expected to perform, on a shrinking financial budget, an educational function which keeps growing in quality and quantity. Principals should therefore not only see that changes comply with the conditions of realism, feasibility, marketability, relevance and adaptability; principals also have to manage the superhuman task of seeing that changes are implemented in a cost-effective way. It is unfortunately true that even desirable or urgent

changes can sometimes of necessity not be implemented because of economic reasons (Van Wyk and Van der Linde, 1997:29).

### **3.3.3.3 The principal and curriculum development**

As has already been observed above (par. 3.2.3), as instructional leaders principals are expected to be knowledgeable about the curriculum and instruction and to be able to intervene directly with teachers in making instructional improvements (Hallinger, 1992:37). What is crucially lacking, however, is a clear understanding of the relationship between the principal and the curriculum. To be an effective instructional leader the principal should understand the enacted curriculum process and be able to help teachers to understand and develop the curriculum (Kanpol and Weisz, 1990:15). According to Harris (1997:78), in order to develop principles and strategies of enhancing a culture of teaching and learning that will enable students to learn and construct their own understanding of concepts, the principal should be familiar with curriculum and instructional trends. As school leaders, principals cannot effect instructional change without understanding the kinds of content and meanings conveyed to learners. A leader with insight aims to circumvent and overcome institutional constraints and barriers that may result from an uninformed approach. But first it is necessary to understand the concept of a curriculum.

#### **□ The meaning of "curriculum"**

According to Van den Berg (1989:9), any discussion about curriculum in a South African context requires some clarification of the terminology surrounding the meaning of concept curriculum. The reason for this is that the term curriculum is often used in a loose and taken for granted way, on the assumption that its meaning is well known. Paradoxically this unstructured and

ill defined view of the meaning of curriculum tends to be narrow. Generally speaking curriculum means little more than just the content of school programmes as typified by school subjects and their syllabuses, plus some vague sense of the aims that are supposed to accompany the teaching and learning of that content (Van den Berg, 1989:9). The aim of a syllabus tends to fulfil merely a rhetorical role rather than one that deliberately informs and shapes the content to be taught and learnt. For some, curriculum is the knowledge and skills, values and attitudes taught to students and a reflection of the community values. Others suggest that curriculum is an active negotiation and construction of knowledge. Of this general conception of curriculum enactment, the following may be quoted as an example:

**... the curriculum is what the students have an opportunity to learn, through both the hidden and overt curriculum and what they do not have the opportunity to learn because certain matters were not included in the curriculum (Kanpol and Weitsz, 1990:15).**

Curriculum is therefore, according to this view, the knowledge, values and beliefs, not necessarily those of the community but more of those governing the country, and it is therefore politically founded. Based on this view, there is a need to take much more seriously the need to clarify what is meant by curriculum. There is also a need to clarify the meaning of curriculum in terms much broader than simply those of syllabus content and rhetorical aims (Van den Berg, 1989:9) because:

**Any discussion of curriculum issues ... must include consideration of syllabi, but it must not limit itself to this, for such issues as teaching methods, materials,**

**school size, and organization, time tables, school terms, school architecture and a plethora of other variables which determine the selection of the culture to which the pupil is exposed must be considered** (Buckland in: Van den Berg, 1989:9).

What is taught at school tends to be a habit and leads to a failure to recognise how all these factors – and more – tend to have a huge influence on the curriculum as it is experienced by principals, teachers and learners. Moving from the above, it is important to note that the curriculum as it is taught at school has a close relationship to the existing social order. This further implies that, firstly, schools tend to promote the views of the dominant order within society. Secondly, schools tend to function to reproduce the social, economic and political order supported by those who have the power to rule – put more simply, the school will tend to promote and perpetuate inequality. The present research follows Kanpol and Weisz (1990) to indicate the various aspects of the curriculum and only the pragmatic, masked, overt, hidden and social curricula will be included in this discussion.

**The pragmatic curriculum** involves content taught, that may end up as a function of how much time there is to teach a particular content. Such subject matter ties into the unofficial or teacher constructed curriculum. **The masked curriculum** is the intended academic content taught by teachers, often in ways other than the formal or traditional lesson. Procedural activities and informal activities often masquerade as the vehicles for carrying academic content. **The overt curriculum** is the specific academic material that teachers intend to convey to students. It is overt because it is the intended fare that schools are generally expected to teach, usually in the form of a defined lesson or activity. **The social curriculum** refers to interactions and norms enacted in the classroom, between the teacher and the learners, thus providing a message to

learners. The social curriculum suggests that social interactions are part of the teacher's tasks and thus part of the curriculum. For example, a teacher greeting learners daily and using the learners' names, conveys a certain message or norm to students (Kanpol and Weisz, 1990:16).

□ **The hidden curriculum**

Another concept, **the hidden curriculum**, refers to implicit or unstated assumptions. These assume basic moral, philosophical and political world-views and are contained in the national school policy. The hidden curriculum is of particular importance because it contains values and norms that the school teaches in a subtle way without necessarily intending to do so. For example Dekker and Lemmer (1993:22) argued that girls report a bias in classroom interaction, especially in mathematics and science classes. The research evidence shows unequal teacher expectations and differential performance of girls and boys in schools, but even worse is the growing concern about the mistreatment of high school girls (Schmuck and Schmuck, 1994:23). Although only a few studies have been published there is evidence of their harassment and abuse, not only by the girls' male peers, but also by the school personnel. Moreover, South African textbooks are androcentric and omit mentioning the contribution made by South African women to South African society. In many schools, sexual division of labour is strict, with boys responsible for tasks such as removing desks while girls tidy the premises (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993:22). The hidden curriculum has serious implications because the examples given reinforce the idea of inequality between males and females or a certain stereotyping. As the instructional leader of the school the principal should be aware of the implications of the hidden curriculum and its effects on the learners' lives and try to correct the stereotyping.

Finally, the curriculum is based on certain assumptions, philosophies, or beliefs about education (Glatter *et al.*, 1988:196). Such beliefs are often critical to effective implementation of the curriculum changes because they shape the teachers' thinking and subsequent actions. The assumptions and belief are also extremely difficult to change. To cite a simple example, the teacher who believes that (whether or not explicitly recognising it) the acquisition of facts and the individual learners' memory work is basic, will think and behave very differently from the teacher who believes that the learners should be exploring knowledge, formulating and testing ideas and interacting with fellow students. According to Glatter *et al.* (1988:197) implementation of the new curriculum, therefore, may necessitate changes or adjustments in the belief system of principals and teachers alike.

It is possible to conclude that given the function of monitoring instruction, an important facet of the principal's job involves interpreting community values and ensuring that they are reflected appropriately in the school curriculum (Hallinger, 1992:43).

#### **3.3.3.4 The principal and staff motivation**

According to a'Campo (1993:119), motivation is one of the most important variables in enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in schools. A'Campo refers to Rozenholtz, who stated that of the many resources required by schools the most vital are the contributions from teachers emphasising the importance of workplace conditions, and principals' abilities to motivate teachers. Motivation is therefore central to the effective school. In an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning principals need to be mindful of staff motivation.

The fact that motivation is such an important management task of an educational leader has led Gannon (in: Van der Westhuizen, 1990:296) to say:

**Management activities such as planning, organising and decision-making are dormant cocoons until the leader triggers the power of motivation in people and guides them towards their goals.**

It is important to trace the origin of the term **motivation**. "**Motivation**" is derived from the Latin verb *movere* which means to move something. In order to understand the term motivation better, it is necessary to take note of the term motive, with which the following are synonymous: desire, incentive, driving force, inducement or urge (Van Niekerk, 1994:133). Then, according to Van Niekerk, motivation can be defined as internal invisible forces (motives or urges) which originate in a person consciously or unconsciously and activate him to achieve certain objectives in order to satisfy his unfulfilled needs or to avoid what he dislikes.

From the definitions above it is evident that man will behave in a particular way because he is motivated by the fulfilment of his needs or the prevention of that which he fears. For the purpose of the present investigation motivation refers to the complex forces, incentives, tensions, and other mechanisms which start and maintain voluntary activity for the attainment of personal aims, indicating that this is an internally generated activity (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:96).

Brown and Hawkins (1988:195-197) refer to motivation as positive confirmation or empowerment and then proceed to give examples, from experience in schools, of principals shifting the ability of teachers, learners and parents from "I can't" to "I can". Confirmation and empowerment sound like rather lofty terms but when brought to practical levels for consideration they are the stuff of which good relationships are made.

As indicated previously (in par. 1.1.3.7) motivation is an important concept for the present research because in South Africa complex forces had and still have an impact in lowering the morale of teachers. In an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning, the researcher finds it appropriate to refer briefly to motivation theories. A study of motivation theories is relevant to the research in order to give principals and the education authorities a clear picture of the needs of people, particularly the teaching corps (Matlawe, 1989:12). It should, however, be clearly stated that the question of how to develop and sustain high morale and satisfaction on the part of workers is one that has attracted many theorists (Gorton and Thierbach-Schneider, 1991:247). No single conceptual framework can totally answer such a complex question; several theories or models however have been advanced which principals ought to consider, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

It is also questionable as to whether the motivation of teachers is the sole responsibility of principals because many factors which are dis-satisfiers to teachers apply to principals as well, which means that motivating teachers involves to a large extent the principals collaborating with the Education Department authorities, as the employer.

#### □ **Maslow 's Motivation Theory**

Abraham Maslow, one of the most respected figures in the field of psychology, suggested that the driving force that causes people to join an organisation, stay in it, and work towards the organisation's goals, is a hierarchy of needs. According to Maslow's theory, some human needs are lower in the hierarchy while others are higher. The satisfaction of the needs at the lower level is a prerequisite for satisfying the needs at a higher level (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:99; Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:90; Matlawe, 1989:12 and Steyn, 1996a:6).



The following is Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

- **Basic psychological needs**

These are a person's requirements for survival and physical or biological well-being. The needs include food, shelter, gratification of sensory experience and the proper temperature range. These can only be acquired if money and employment are available (Matlawe, 1989:12 and Steyn, 1996a:6). Schools should satisfy these needs by providing a basic salary and basic working conditions such as heat, air conditioning and cafeteria services for teachers (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:90; Matlawe, 1989:12 and Steyn, 1996a:6).

The National Teacher Audit indicated that in South Africa teachers are not well paid and are therefore demotivated. In South Africa teachers have consistently been getting increases below the inflation rate after the government did away with the salary notch system and introduced broad banding and an incremental approach in 1996 (Pile, 1999:5). However, the Minister of Education, Professor Kader Asmal, justified the government stance, pointing out that the cost of teachers is more than double in South Africa, as compared to countries such as Mexico and Argentina. Asmal further argued that teachers earn more than their fellow workers with similar qualifications in the public sector. Consequently, the deadlock in salary negotiations culminated in a joint protest action by all public sector Unions on 24 August 1999, in response to the state's unwillingness to implement the union's salary demands of 7% for public sector workers and 8% for teachers (Professional Educators' Union Newsletter, 1999:8).

While there is no quick fix to the teachers' wage problem it is evident that the strikes and negotiations for salaries disrupt schooling and are highly demotivating for teachers.

#### □ **Security and safety needs**

This group of needs includes needs for protection against danger, threats and deprivation. People want to be assured that their survival is not in jeopardy. Historically, many teachers entered the teaching profession because it provided a secure and stable job (Steyn, 1996:6). However, recent literature revealed that teachers, particularly principals, are fearful of criminals, students and sometimes teachers from their own schools (par. 1.1.3). Delinquent students bring fire-arms or weapons to school, making the school environment dangerous and unpredictable (Thompson, 1991:20). It may be concluded that the need for security and safety for teachers and principals is not met under these circumstances.

#### □ **Social needs**

Social needs include acceptance and full membership in one or more groups. For example, teachers need to be accepted as members of teachers' unions and as members of other associations. Teachers also need to give and receive friendship and love, and feedback from group members confirming their belonging and significance (Matlawe, 1989:12). According to Maslow the third level, belonging, love and social needs, comprises an extremely important component in modern society. Maslow felt that maladjustment is founded in a frustration of needs (in: Hoy and Miskel, 1978:99) and averred:

**My strong impression is also that some proportion of youth rebellion groups – I don't know how many or how much – is motivated by the profound hunger for groupiness, for contact.**

- **Self-esteem or ego needs**

This group of needs is of paramount importance to principals as managers. A need for self-esteem includes a feeling of a sense of adequacy and efficiency in one's personal environment. There is also a desire to stand out among other people as specifically significant. Principals and teachers need to be recognised and appreciated (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:99 and Matlawe, 1989:12). For example, most principals were highly demotivated when they were blamed and threatened with dismissal as punishment for the low 1999 matric pass rate (Professional Educators' Union, 2000:1).

- **Self-actualisation**

This is the capstone of the hierarchy of needs. Here the employee wants to become more and more what he/she is able to be. Teachers want to be everything they are capable of becoming. These are the person's needs for an abstract form of gratification, the desire for personal and spiritual growth. The self-actualisers are driven by the desire to leave their mark on the world (Matlawe, 1989:12).

To summarise:

At the top of the list of what principals do to shape the school culture is support and motivation (Barrick, 1988; Berlina, 1990; Brown and Hawkins, 1988; Butterworth and Weinstein, 1996; Winter and Sweeney, 1994:66). Van der Stoep and others in this regard cited Maehr, Smith and Midgley (1990) who found that a school environment that emphasises accomplishment and recognition of teachers is strongly related to satisfaction and commitment. Adding to this, Cash (1997:23) pointed out that an effective principal inspires teachers on a daily basis to believe in themselves and to be optimistic that all

students can succeed in spite of their misfortunes. Teachers need their achievements to be recognised. Teachers want to be told by their principal that what they do is something worthwhile. During their research on improving the school climate Winter and Sweeney (1994:66) emphasised the importance of motivation:

**Teachers need to be told in many ways that the job they are doing is important, that it is meaningful.**

Van Wyk (1989:118) emphasised that:

**Die goeie skoolhoof wen die *lojaliteit* van sy onderwysers deur hulle te aanvaar soos hulle is, opreg belang te stel in hulle met 'n oop gemoed na hulle te luister en hulle probleme te verstaan.**

To enhance the culture of teaching and learning, staff motivation by principals and particularly the Department of Education as the teachers' employer, should concentrate on the following:

- **conditions of work such as salary increments;**
- **the negative effect of redeployment of excess teachers; teachers feel insecure and unstable in their posts;**
- **introduction of teachers' incentives as announced by the Minister for teachers who perform well in the profession; and**
- **provision of a safe environment for teachers and pupils alike – teachers and principals in particular are robbed of their valuables in broad day light – others have been shot dead (Professional Educators Union, 2000b:4-5).**

It is the Department of Education's responsibility and that of school principals to a certain extent, to protect employees by taking Maslow's hierarchy of needs into account.

Maslow's theory of motivation has indicated that the best teachers and most earnest students cannot readily succeed in an atmosphere of fear, insecurity and chaos. Therefore it is the responsibility of the state to make it clear that schools are places where disorder cannot be tolerated and further to give principals the authority and guidance they need to rebuild the culture of teaching and learning (Bennet, 1986:22).

There are a number of points in Maslow's hierarchy of needs which are, according to the researcher, relevant for the motivation process. For example, Everard and Morris (1996: 22) found that:

- If an individual is really deprived at a lower level, he or she may lose interest in the higher level needs.
- On the other hand, a satisfying job at the highest level will raise the level of tolerance and deprivation at the lower levels. Teachers are prepared to tolerate conditions of employment which would not be acceptable to someone with a boring job – though even they have their limits. Furthermore an over-satisfying of needs may produce a sense of guilt and or deliberate self-deprivation. For example, in the school situation, drop-outs and delinquents are often children of well to do families.
- Different people will feel needs with differing intensity. One person's social needs may only be satisfied when surrounded by friends, whereas another will be content simply to have the companionship and love of his/her partner (Everard and Morris, 1996:23).

From the foregoing exposition one may reach the conclusion that motivation is a search for explanations of some of the most complex mysteries of man's existence (Birch and Veroff, 1966:ix), considering human actions and seeking their determinants. Although Maslow's theory of motivation is partially helpful, there is too much that is speculative about physiological and behavioural mechanisms to explain fully such complex motivational questions.

Apart from motivating teachers, in their instructional leadership role, principals are required to develop staff.

### **3.3.3.5 The principal and staff development**

Connacher (1989: 6) strongly emphasised the uniqueness of the teacher's role although the teacher works in partnership with the parents and the community. The uniqueness of the teacher's task emanates from the fact that the teacher is expected to hand on the undiminished heritage of the past, and yet simultaneously prepare pupils for the future – the future which the teacher may never see. It is the task of the teacher to activate and encourage the miraculous human brain which is, according to Connacher (1989:6), more powerful than the computer. The educative task is not a task that can be performed in a listless manner. Highet (1976:75) explicitly stated that education as a profession was scarcely comparable to medicine, the priesthood and the law – a fact also observed by Kriel (1990:12). After twenty years of experience, as Highet explained, a doctor knows an enlarged spleen when he feels one and a priest or minister knows what to say to a mourner or a sinner. Teachers, on the other hand, do not develop such a thorough grasp of their craft because it is constantly changing and they themselves must change with it. The nature of teaching as a profession requires development, reading, experimenting, change, joy, enthusiasm, and a feeling of worth. It is essential therefore, not only for the individual teacher, but also for the children and particularly for the

principal as instructional leader, that the greatest emphasis possible is placed on professional growth and development of teachers (Connacher, 1989:60).

In an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning and motivate the demoralised teaching force, the researcher finds it appropriate to consider staff development as a significant tool for the instructional leadership role of the principal. Dogget (1987:1) maintained that the principals' instructional leadership role is largely determined by their success in maintaining ongoing, effective school-based staff development. Lipham and Hoeh (1974:248), however, warned that several impediments to providing leadership in staff development should be recognised at the outset. The first concerns the recency of classroom experience among principals. Although in an earlier era, appointed principals were recognised as the "**principal**" teachers (par. 1.1.1), present principals often have been dissociated from the classroom (which may be questionable in an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning) for so long that they no longer feel competent in their instructional role. Except in small schools, principals are seldom involved in teaching. Many principals served previously as Heads of Departments or assistant principals for several years and experiences in those positions may not have been directly related to the acquisition of expertise in teaching (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:248). Experience has furthermore indicated that the longer an educator remains in the position of principal, the harder the principal has to work to remain abreast of the recent developments in the teaching and learning process.

The second impediment to the principal's involvement in instructional improvement is the lack of sufficient administrative assistance (par. 1.1.3). The role of the principal has become one of the most demanding in the field of education in terms of time and responsibilities; unless adequate supportive administration and specialised help is provided, the principal's time may be consumed with maintenance rather than leadership activities (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:248).

The reasons for a whole chapter being reserved to deal with the role of the school principal as an instructional leader, point to the value the researcher attaches to such a role, as has already been pointed out previously (par. 3.2.1); particularly with the aim of enhancing a culture of teaching and learning. According to the present researcher, staff development is one of the most important instructional tasks, despite the problems indicated. Staff development is an obligation on the part of teachers as it is prescribed by the education legislation: for example, by Resolution 7 of 1998, which requires teachers to devote eighty hours a year to professional development (*Educator's Voice*, 1999:15). Before embarking on further discussion, it is worthwhile to reflect on the meaning of staff development.

Staff development in education has many facets, as evidenced by the numerous terms found in the literature. Such terms include personnel development, human resource development, in-service training, professional growth, continuing education, on the job training, and staff development (Steyn, 1996a:37). There is a considerable overlap in the meanings of these terms. Indeed some two decades ago, Purdy and Finch (in: Kathrada, 1989:15) observed that in-service education, in-service training, on the job training, staff development and professional growth are all terms used interchangeably for the continuing education of personnel. While the researcher is not attempting to engage in definition mongering, it is, nonetheless, essential to note how various researchers have over the years interpreted staff development.

According to Guthrie and Reed (1991:346), although staff development and in-service education are frequently used interchangeably, a logical distinction can be made between the two. Staff development refers to a continuing development programme, focused on a wide range of skills, abilities and group needs. It can further be defined as a formal, systematic programme designed to foster personal and professional growth. In-service education, on the other hand, is concerned with the acquisition of specific knowledge of a certain



procedure. In-service education can be a building block within a broader context of staff development (Guthrie and Reed, 1991:346). Obviously both staff development and in-service education are important and enhance organisational effectiveness.

Bayne-Jardine (in: Kathrada, 1989:18) cautions against viewing staff development solely in terms of the provision of in-service education and training (INSET). INSET, he argues, is not a synonym for staff development. Although this may be too simplistic an explanation, Bayne-Jardine stated that it is helpful to regard staff development as the overarching concept and INSET as the main way in which staff development may be encouraged. To Cawood and Gibbon (1985:17) staff development includes all attempts made by educational leaders, particularly the principal, to promote the personal growth of the teachers. Following such a view, any effort to improve the general teaching effectiveness of individuals, subject teams, of the total staff, forms part of such a process. A staff development programme covers a wide spectrum of contents, including, among others:

- **philosophic aspects of education;**
- **the goals of a school;**
- **the aims and objectives of subject teaching;**
- **skills and processes in teaching;**
- **teaching strategies and media;**
- **educational diagnosis; and**
- **analysis and evaluation** (Cawood and Gibbon, 1985:17).

Powell and Berlina (1992:281) explicitly stated that ten years ago staff development was described as the buzz word of the nineties because of its recognition "**as one of the important, powerful ways to assist not only teachers, but all the members of the education profession**". This continued

faith in staff development and its relationship with the task of enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in schools, is clearly echoed by Joyce (in: Powell and Berlina, 1992:281):

**The future culture of the school will be fashioned largely by how the staff development system evolves. How good schools will be as educational institutions – how humane and vital they will be as places to work – will be functions of the energy and quality of the investment in their personnel.**

Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991:225), in addition to Connacher (1989:6) and Powell and Berlina (1992:281), emphasised the importance of staff development, arguing that a teachers' knowledge base, like that of all other professionals, becomes obsolete. As one principal observed: "... **the minute new teachers report to my school, already they are outdated**". A major challenge to the principals' leadership therefore is to provide a continuous, systematic programme of professional improvement to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of teachers within the school (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974:248). The principal should therefore, bear responsibility for ensuring the currency of the teacher's professional knowledge in the areas identified as essential. Thus it can be shown that a rather consistent vision of staff development, as an integral component of educational reform, has emerged over the last ten years. Since it appears likely that the hue and cry for the improvement of the culture of teaching and learning in schools will continue through this decade, it is also likely that staff development will continue to be viewed as a necessary component of the instructional leadership of the principal (Powell and Berlina, 1992:281). Jones and Walters (1994:159) have cited Boyer who argued that:

**School improvement is people improvement. ...  
Students learn best from teachers and administrators  
who themselves are learning, thinking and growing.**

In the light of the above quotation, the school is obligated to help staff to grow and staff has the responsibility to seek opportunities for growth. Reasons for staff development, adapted from Jones and Walters (1994:159), are set out below:

- The first reason, the demands of curriculum, recognises that **the content of the curriculum has changed, is changing and will continue to change.**
- The second reason, demographic challenges, raises the need to **understand better the students of today and tomorrow.**
- The third reason, demands of methodology, **draws attention to change growing from the new pedagogical knowledge and to how students learn from various stages of development.**
- The fourth reason, job related pressures, recognises that change brings stress. Staff development **should help teachers and other employees "to maintain an equilibrium under stress".**

Time management and well designed programmes are needed to help principals and teachers to cope with change emotionally and physically (Jones and Walters, 1994:159-160).

Apart from the formal staff development programme which may comprise, *inter alia*, a week-end course and periodic development activities in the afternoons, the principal may also motivate the staff to participate in study projects, visit other schools, to present articles and lectures, to attend symposia and courses presented by training institutions, to participate in study groups, professional associations, and to utilise enriching, educational reading matter (Theron and

Bothma, 1990:127). In this regard Guthrie and Reed (1991:347) added that staff development formats may include workshop classes, demonstrations, simulations, role playing and retreats. The principal's leadership behaviour plays a significant role in staff development programmes. The principal, as the leader of the school, should win the support of the teachers for successful implementation of such a programme (Cawood and Gibbon, 1985:18 and Dogget, 1987:1). Dogget furthermore suggested that principals should adopt specific leadership behaviours to assist them in implementing an effective staff development programme.

The most important leadership behaviour suggested by Dogget (1987) is discussed in the following paragraphs.

□ **Involvement of staff**

The principal should take the initiative to work with teachers, parents, and students in assessing the strengths and needs of the school's instructional programme. Once these strengths and needs have been identified, they should be translated into written objectives in which the teachers have an interest and, therefore, see a need to accomplish. Examples of staff objectives given by Dogget (1987:1-2) are worth mentioning:

- **Reduce student tardiness by setting a good example, i.e. starting instruction activities promptly, stating expectations clearly, holding students consistently accountable, and following up with the administrator regarding persistent unexcused tardiness.**
- **Work to improve staff morale by encouraging open communication among staff members and working together to prevent and solve problems that hinder good staff morale.**
- **Recognise positive contributions of fellow staff members.**

- **Build a positive working culture by supporting curricular activities.**
  - **Rely on direct communication as much as possible to prevent problems from festering.**
  - **Promote an atmosphere of learning by inspiring the students to learn.**
  - **Equip students with better skills in note-taking, outlining, test-taking, and personal organisation skills.**
- **Exhibiting knowledge of learning theories**

Relevant theories such as Bloom's Taxonomy and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (par. 3.3.3.4) are two theories and methods that the principal as instructional leader can apply in working with teachers to improve classroom instruction. Current research on school effectiveness, such as the Carnegie Study and a study of schooling by Goodlad (in: Dogget, 1987:40), can be converted by the principal into practical staff development activities to improve classroom instruction.

- **Setting a high priority on student discipline and school attendance**

Effective student discipline and regular attendance are prerequisites to effective instruction. Unless the principal works with staff members and parents to set and enforce workable policies and procedures for student conduct and attendance, the principal will be handicapped as instructional leader. In Maslow's hierarchy of needs, as indicated earlier, safety and security needs should be satisfied before the person can concentrate on higher needs such as self-actualisation and an appreciation of aesthetics. Students' discipline and attendance needs should be satisfied so that teachers may be receptive to staff development activities that centre on improving classroom instruction.

A written step by step disciplinary procedure for teachers to follow when the need arises could be a corner stone for the future success of a school instructional program. The same is true for student attendance; the principal should show concern for students' attendance and discipline by taking the lead in developing, implementing, and evaluating practical policies that work for teachers.

The principals should establish and enforce a clear code of conduct regarding attendance and absence policy (Huddle, 1984:64). The principals' success as instructional leaders is largely determined by their success in promoting effective discipline and regular attendance.

#### **3.3.3.6 The principal and teacher appraisal**

Staff appraisal and staff development are complementary aspects of human resource development (Jones and Walters, 1994:162). Staff development provides a programme for maintaining the desired results, while appraisal reveals what the personnel are doing and how well they are performing, correcting undesired results and preparing for change.

##### **□ The meaning of teacher appraisal**

The definitions of teacher appraisal tend to reflect the different purposes it is intended to serve. The most commonly quoted definition of teacher appraisal, referred to by Mortimore and Mortimore (1991:126), defines teacher appraisal as:

**... a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development and career planning, can help ensure that**

**the in-service training and development of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual schools.**

Professionals generally agree that appraising the quality of teaching is an attempt to ensure the realisation of educational objectives or of improving instruction (Franzsen in: Steyn, 1996a:57 and Root and Overly, 1990:34). The aim of staff or developmental appraisal is to facilitate the personal and professional development of educators in order to improve the quality of teaching practice and education management (*The Education Labour Relations Council Manual*, 1999:3). Staff appraisal is a very important task in the instructional leadership of the principal.

At many schools however, formal staff appraisal is neglected or very limited, whereas it is non-existent at others. Appraisal generates anxiety for both the principal and the teachers and this may defeat its major aim. In effect, the process tends to be negative, feared, and rejected by those being evaluated (Root and Overly, 1990:35). One reason for such an attitude is that appraisal is frequently limited to the occasional classroom visit, or a principal might complete an evaluation form on a teacher's performance without necessarily having shown it to the teacher. Such an approach to staff appraisal is not always effective, is unprofessional and leads to negative attitudes towards staff appraisal (Everard and Morris, 1996:78 and Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:113). However, a recent survey (Barber *et al.*, in: Everard and Morris, 1996:79) showed that appraisal has made a major contribution to identifying staff development needs and targeting resources effectively, leading to better focused in-service education and training.

Appraisal has contributed to improved school management and school culture with seventy percent of teachers regarding it in a very positive light. An

appraisal system, which makes use of a variety of appraisal methods, should provide an opportunity for the principal to meet individual members of the staff to discuss work, performance, progress and achievement. It should enable teachers to become more effective and to improve the quality of their teaching in general (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:114). Appraisal is, or should be, the opportunity for the individual to meet with his or her principal in order to "take stock" of individual and or joint achievements. A well structured staff appraisal programme should:

- **improve the performance of individual teachers;**
- **improve working relationships; and**
- **develop the individual 's career.**

According to Everard and Morris (1996:79) appraisal systems are of considerable benefit for both the individual and the school as an organisation. In industry the industrial staff will complain if their appraisal interview is overdue. Such employees found that an appraisal system is a highly motivating process since it:

- **enables them to measure their achievements;**
- **recognises their achievements;**
- **prepares them for advancement;**
- **opens up opportunities for personal growth;**
- **clears the air of problems; and**
- **builds their relationship with the principal** (Everard and Morris, 1996:79).

The above only becomes possible if the principal, as an instructional leader, is aware of certain essential ways of implementing teacher appraisal. Root and



Overly (1990:35-36) suggested eight elements of an effective appraisal strategy, of which only the first five will be included in the present discussion.

- **Involve key stakeholders in the decision-making process**

Teachers should be actively involved in the development, operation of and periodic revision of appraisal procedures. Ownership is an important factor in the successful operation of most enterprises. Therefore, to develop a strategy for teacher appraisal that will be effective and accepted, teachers should play a vital role in its development.

- **Establish goals mutually**

An essential element of any teacher appraisal plan is a procedure that provides a process in which the principal and the teacher, as the appraisee, meet and agree on what needs to be accomplished. Without this key function teachers are asked to be accountable for something they did not agree to do.

- **Establish a time frame**

After the goals are sanctioned by both the principal and the teacher, a schedule is set for the teacher to provide both written and oral evidence of how the goals are being met.

- **Emphasise formative evaluation**

Any evaluation strategy or plan should be an ongoing process and should provide teachers with meaningful information about their strength and weaknesses to assist in their professional growth.

□ **Alter classroom observation**

An effective appraisal plan takes into consideration the use of both formal and informal teacher observations. The value of formal observations, where the principal visits the classroom semi-annually and takes notes, is minimal at best.

Curriculum development, staff appraisal and staff development or staff motivation, like any other instructional supervisory leadership task, can be successful only if the principal creates a culture that is conducive to teaching and learning. For this reason building the school culture, as the instructional leadership task of the principal, is relevant to the present research and it will be discussed in the following section.

### **3.4 CREATION OF SCHOOL CULTURE**

Schools as organisations learn from the corporate world that it is not tight management and preoccupation with rules that will enhance productivity. To enhance productivity requires a more elusive, subtle way to approach school performance, which is referred to as creating and sustaining the organisational culture (Deal and Kennedy, 1983:14 and Greenfield, 1986:3; Peterson, 1983).

The concept of organisational culture has emerged as a result of the break with a rationalist mechanistic conception of schools as organisations (Schultz, 1995:5). Such a mechanistic view of schools regarded members of the school as tools for efficient goal achievement, calculating organisational behaviour from a careful examination of various alternatives within a formal organisational structure. Instead of studying these structural and goal oriented working activities in the organisations, the culture concept emphasises the fundamental frameworks which people take for granted in their social and occupational activities (Schultz, 1995:5).

A distinction can be made between culture and climate. According to Owens (1995:81) and Van der Westhuizen (1996:92) the terms culture and climate are both abstractions that deal with the fact that the behaviour of people in organisations, such as the school, is not elicited by interaction with proximate events only, but also influenced by interaction between people themselves. In McEwan's view (1998:57), culture is the way things are done in an organisation and climate is the way people feel about the culture. Although the concepts of culture and climate differ in schools, they also have much in common. For the purpose of the present research only culture will be dealt with.

#### 3.4.1 Organisational culture

According to Schultz (1995:10), in spite of the strongest interest in organisational culture there has not yet been – and never may be – established a generally accepted conceptual framework for analysing organisational culture. However, several different definitions have been created which summarise the various differences in the school culture concept. Some are discussed here.

School culture is the pattern of beliefs and expectations of the members of the school community that guide their predominant attitudes and behaviours (Deal and Kennedy, 1983:14). Culture is what makes the organisations differ from each other. For example, it would be a very dull and uncreative world if there were only one way to design and manage a school, just as it would be a very dull and uncreative world if families were exactly the same (Glatter in: Mampuru and Calitz, 1993:52). Kingsley (1993:45) added that no two universities are the same and no two Methodist churches operate the same. The most interesting aspect of organisations such as schools is that different groups of people, and each smaller grouping, have their own qualities and characteristics. The combination of the way in which any group of people is distinctive can be called its culture (Kingsley, 1993:45). Research revealed that an environment of a

certain culture exists within the school as an organisation, and this culture affects how committed teachers are to their jobs (Van der Stoep, Aderman and Midgley, 1994:254).

The school culture is reflected in the shared beliefs, attitudes and values of the people (Winter and Sweeney, 1994:65). Although it is believed that culture is not tangible, a school culture can however be seen in the way in which different school principals organise their leadership and management. In some schools everything is very tight, tidy and precise. Students wear uniforms and education activities are done according to the stipulated timetable; individuals are addressed formally by their title (Principal) or as Mr Masenya; school rules and procedures are followed as agreed upon (Mampuru and Calitz, 1994:52). This type of culture is synonymous with the prescriptive style of leadership. In other schools life may seem much more informal, less structured and less regulated. Different people have different times of arrival. No one seems to worry about "late coming". This type of culture represents a collegial leadership style.

Most authors (Winter and Sweeney, 1994:65; Mampuru and Calitz, 1994:53; Deal and Kennedy, 1983:14; Schein, 1985:2 and Owen, 1995:82) describe culture as the norms, values, beliefs and ways of behaving that characterise the manner in which groups of people combine to get things done. The elements of culture are shared values and beliefs, heroes and heroines, rituals and ceremonies, and an informal network of priests and priestesses, story tellers, spies and gossips.

Lane (1992:87) has referred to Graham who further asserted that:

**Culture is the idea pattern or habit pattern on men's minds which gives them solutions to their problems.**

**In its broadest terms culture consists of all the values, attitudes, behaviour objects which men employ in coping with their environments.**

Although the definition of school culture seems to be straightforward, it should always be borne in mind that schools are highly complex organisations that gain their stability through role expectations and interpersonal norms (Bush *et al.*, 1980:408). Schein (1985:5) added that culture is a deep phenomenon, culture is complex and difficult to understand, and nonetheless an effort to understand culture is worthwhile because much of the mysterious and the irrational in schools becomes clear when culture is understood. Individuals in school behave according to a certain pattern because of their adherence to shared expectations of what is appropriate in schools. According to Bush *et al.* (1980:408) it is the strength of this sharedness that makes a school culture so resistant to modification but which at the same offers a tool for planned change.

A deeper understanding of cultural issues in the school as an organisation is necessary for the present research, not only to decipher what goes on in schools, but even more important, to identify what may be the priority issues for principals as instructional leaders. In Schein's (1985:2) view, organisational cultures are created by leaders and one of the most decisive functions of the principalship may well be the creation, the management, and – if that may become necessary – the destruction of culture. According to Schein, therefore, culture and leadership are the two sides of the same coin, and neither can really be understood by itself. Schein goes on to point out that:

**... there is a possibility under-emphasised in leadership research that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and**

**the unique talent of leaders is their ability to enhance culture.**

The idea of discussing the principal's leadership role, temporarily separated from management in the present research, is valuable only if the centrality of school culture functions within the leadership concept. Schein argued further that the essence of the term culture is more than the shared values, heroes and heroines and ceremonies dealt with previously. Culture should be reserved to the deeper level of:

**... basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared by members of an organisation, that operate unconsciously, and that define in a basic taken for granted fashion an organisation's view of itself and its environment.**

What is evident from the research is that a single comprehensive definition of culture is not possible, and although Schein regards shared beliefs, values, heroes, and heroines as inadequate in describing culture, nevertheless these concepts portray the essence of culture. Bolman and Deal (1984:6) support the importance of understanding organisation and school culture and in particular remark:

**Organisations are viewed as held together more by shared values than by goals and policies. They are propelled more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes and myth, than by rules, policies and managerial authority.**

The problem that faces the school principal as instructional leader is to build a strong school culture intimately tied to improving educational performance (Deal and Kennedy, 1983:14 and McEwan, 1998:58). Such a culture of teaching and learning refers to the attitudes teachers have towards teaching, and the spirit of dedication and commitment in a school which arises through the joint effort of school management and the input of teachers (Naidoo, 1999:74). Attitudes towards teaching point to the "mood", "aura", commitment and dedication with regard to the teaching task in a school.

### 3.4.2 Components of school culture

**Shared values and beliefs** are the soul components of organisational culture (Bush *et al.*, 1980:408, Deal and Kennedy, 1983:14, Mampuru and Calitz, 1994:53 and Winter and Sweeney, 1994:65; Sergiovanni and Starrat, 1993:93). Values are an important level of the dimensions of a school culture. Values provide the basis for people to evaluate the situations they face, the worth of the actions, they do.

From examples in the corporate world it may be concluded that instructional leaders, like business leaders (Ray Kroc of McDonalds Restaurants, Colonel Sanders of Kentucky Fried Chicken), can use shared values and beliefs, values which are linked with heroes and heroines of the school, to build a cohesive, positive culture in order to enhance the culture of teaching and learning (Deal and Kennedy, 1983; Koontz and Wehrich, 1988; McEwan, 1998). Creating a school culture that is conducive to teaching and learning is a challenging task for even the most effective instructional leader.

As an instructional leader the principal should explore and document a **school history**. Such an exercise can be helpful for the new principal who needs to know what values have evolved from the common experiences previously

shared by the staff, parents and learners. Deal and Kennedy (1983:14) has suggested that **heroes and heroines be celebrated** in the form of **rituals and ceremonies**. For example, some of the effective schools celebrate the retirements of teachers every year where learners give testimonials, family members and former staff are invited and presents are awarded for the good work done by these heroes and heroines. At other schools the fiftieth anniversary of the school's existence is also celebrated. Such celebrations of anointing heroes and heroines are part of the school culture.

**Story telling** is yet another way to build or revitalise a school culture. Tales of championship teams and remarkable performance can motivate both learners and teachers to become part of an effective school (McEwan, 1998:60). A final way to build culture is to encourage what Deal and Kennedy (1983:15) calls the **network of priests and priestesses, gossips and storytellers**, and other cultural players who keep the culture alive. Meaningful school practices need to be analysed and revitalised.

To summarise, school cultures are reinforced and transformed by the network of priests and priestesses who are concerned about the values, storytellers whose stories carry the values and reinforce the heroes and heroines, spies and gossips who remind every one that schools as organisations are human. From business, commerce and industry school principals learn how to build an organisational culture by celebrating ceremonies and rituals that bind their schools' participants together to achieve common goals.

An attempt is made here to reflect on how the principal can enhance the culture of teaching and learning in a school.



### 3.4.3 The principal as culture builder

The first chapter of this study exposed the causes of the absence of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, reminding one of the complexities in schools, their cultural embeddedness being an enduring challenge to the school principal. The problems tell a great deal about the nature of the school principal's work, about persistent dilemmas encountered by school principals on a daily basis. In very important ways the problems of socio-political causes, racial conflicts, conflicts between principals and the so-called "excess" teachers, undisciplined students, poor management on the part of education authorities and principals themselves, and demotivated teachers illustrate the limits of thinking about the role of the principal solely in terms of management and leadership (Greenfield, 1986:130). In this regard Greenfield contends that there should be a shift from the principal as a manager or leader to the principal as a school culture builder.

The literature study has confirmed the significance of culture in the school as an organisation. Furthermore, the problems encountered by principals in the first chapter (par. 1.1.3) and the barriers which eroded a sound teaching culture suggest that much of what the principals do falls outside the bounds of technical rationality (Greenfield, 1986:130). Such problems and factors inhibiting the smooth managing of schools as organisations are important dimensions of the principals' role and cannot be reduced to technique. Therefore taking the irrational dimensions of the role of the principal into account shifts the work of the principal to that of a culture builder.

While concepts such as leadership and management dominate discussions on the role of the principal, they, as Greenfield (1986:131) puts it, provide only partial understanding of the meaning of principalship. Such terms are, according to Greenfield, not adequately describing the nature of a principal's actual activities and behaviours. In Greenfield's view, leadership and

management are ambiguous terms and while they are useful in *prescribing* what the principal should be doing, they do not *describe* what the principal actually does, nor do they assist in seeing the meaning of the principal's actions in a given context. In the present research it is safe to regard both **prescription** and **description** of the principals' role as important in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning.

Most researchers (Deal and Kennedy, 1983; Greenfield, 1986:133; Slater, 1994:55 and Snyder, 1988:40) are agreed that a school culture is a set of taken for granted beliefs about the nature of the school mission, about student abilities, motivation, the teachers and the principal's attitude towards work and so on. Furthermore, today's knowledge and information bases are too complex for principals to control. Work behaviours found in schools are characterised by continuous bargaining over human rights, and negotiations about information and resources in a context of ambiguity, lack of clarity and opportunities to reach success (Snyder, 1985:40 and Glanz, 1997). In this complexity, in order to restructure schools and enhance the culture of teaching and learning, principals have to change patterns of interaction and influence cultural development (Slater, 1994:56).

From the analysis of culture above it can be assumed that there is an organisational culture in every school and that the principal's role is to try actively to shape and reinforce some aspects of that culture (Greenfield, 1986:134). School cultures vary considerably, some being positive, child oriented and growth producing while others are negative, teacher oriented and stultifying (Peterson, 1983:252).

According to Snyder (1985:40), in the best schools every one seems to know what is important in an attempt to achieve the aim of the school. In such schools the focus is on how development finds its way into publications, bulletin boards, hallways, ceremonies, major activities and events. In other

words the goals of the school pervade the school culture. The focus in all school activities is on the values embodied in the vision and mission of the school as reflected in the school objectives (3.3.2.4). On the other hand in schools where the culture of teaching and learning is weak, only a few of the participants know what the school goals are and a commitment to achieve these goals is lacking. While both negative and positive school cultures exist, for the purpose of the present research cultures that foster positive outcomes for students are emphasised.

Schein (1985:224-225) proposed the following examples of strategies that can be used by school principals to build and reinforce a positive culture in a school:

- **deliberate role modelling;**
- **teaching and coaching by the principal;**
- **stating values, rituals and traditions clearly;**
- **involving teachers, parents and School Governing Body in the formulation of the vision and mission of the school;**
- **formulating the objectives of the school jointly;**
- **setting criteria for recruitment, selection, promotion of staff;**
- **paying attention to measure and control; and**
- **sound reactions to critical incidents and school crises.**

According to Greenfield (1986:134), one way to understand more completely the actions of the principal is to view such actions as a constellation of activities which systematically reinforce and build the school culture. Effective instructional leaders use practically every available opportunity to build and reinforce a school culture that is child centred and nurturing, and that places a high value on students' social responsibility and their learning and development.

### 3.5 MAINTENANCE OF POSITIVE HUMAN RELATIONS

In their instructional leadership the principals' positive human relations, with support from and cooperation with interested groups such as the parents, the community, the departmental authorities, teachers' unions, and learners are often cited as contributing factors to better schooling. In the present research, only the principal's relationship with parents, learners and teachers' unions will be dealt with.

#### 3.5.1 Relationship with parents

The principals who do not pay meticulous attention to their relationship with the learners' parents – and to parent involvement in schools – are disregarding one of the most fundamental requirements of the instructional tasks of the principal (Theron and Bothma, 1990:161) because:

**Nothing can compensate for the lack of it; neither money, learning nor competence. The poorest and most illiterate and most incompetent parent has such a true interest in and love for the child that he teaches and helps him more in simple ways than all experts put together** (Van der Merwe in Theron and Bothma, 1990:161).

The above quote emphasises the significance of the relationship between the principal and parents in the form of parent involvement in schools. A prominent educationist cited by Boaduo (1990:10) once stated that education in every society, be it advanced, or primitive, formal or informal, is concerned with teaching the children how to live in that society, whether this may be a matter of bare survival or of living a good life. The significance of a school as a formal

education institution should advance the image of the society in which schools are found. Schools should assist children as future citizens to take their rightful places in the society. This includes the transmission of culture, the history of society, its religion, its values, attitudes and way of life. The subject content in schools will not only be found in books, but in first hand experience, within the life that is lived by the parent community.

It has already been indicated that lack of parental involvement in schools is a contributing factor to the absence of a culture of teaching and learning in schools (par. 2.3.6). However, until recently little more than lip service was paid to the necessity of parent involvement; on the contrary, the lack of parental involvement has become a serious problem for the school principal. The changing nature of the parent community (Wanat, 1994:631) for some principals on the one hand, and the expectations of multicultural parents on the other, emanating from an obvious cultural shift in the late nineties, have also given rise to numerous problems for principals. The prevailing materialism, overfull programmes and a deficient service motive can be singled out as the culprits; but this by no means lessens the vital importance of a sound parent/school relationship when it comes to enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in schools (Theron and Bothma, 1990:161).

Almost universally, educationists agree that the more parents are involved in a school, the better the educational experience of the students (Wanat, 1992; Wanat, 1994; Zigarelli, 1996:103). More voluntary activity on the part of parents, improves learners' performance. However, improving parent involvement, particularly among rural populations, is one of the most challenging tasks facing principals. Trying to understand why parents have such a negative attitude towards schools, researchers such as Vandergrift and Greene (1992:57) revealed that there was a fundamental problem: schools, particularly principals, do not always know what parental involvement really means. In that regard Mavhivha and Heystek (1996:6-7) have mentioned that

the problem is the fact that teachers, and principals in particular, do not know how to accommodate parents in the management of schools.

According to Brandt (1989:25) parent involvement refers to the relationship that the school has with the parents or to the communication from home to school about the school programme and children's progress. Another type of parent involvement refers to parent volunteers who assist teachers, administrators and children in the classroom or in other areas of the school. Parent involvement includes parents who come to school to support students' performances, sports, or other events or to attend workshops or other programmes for their own education and training (Brandt, 1989:25). In learning activities, parent involvement refers to the active requests from the school for help and ideas, or to instruction from teachers to parents to monitor or assist their own children at home on learning activities that are coordinated with the children's work. In governance and advocacy parent involvement refers to parents taking decision-making roles in the School Governing Body (SGB), advisory councils, or other committees at school, district or state level. In a broad context parent involvement includes parent and community activists in independent advocacy groups that monitor the schools and work for the improvement of the schools (Brandt, 1989:25).

From these definitions and types of parent involvement it is clear that parent involvement covers a wide field, but in most schools it does not exist or parents are involved on a very limited scale. The education of children today has become so complex that the participation of parents in schools can no longer be neglected. In addition, the new dispensation has placed a responsibility upon parents which may not be evaded (Theron and Bothma, 1990:159). To involve parents at school it is necessary for principals to be familiar with the various forms of parent involvement because no one can handle this instructional leadership aspect without knowing what they are managing.

Originally schools were established to take over that part of the parents' task which parents, in consequence of the special demands made by cultural society, were no longer able to fulfil. In a sense a principal has become the partner of the head of the family – not a substitute – but someone with a directive (Theron and Bothma, 1990:159). The school therefore acts *in loco parentis*, that is, in the place of parents. The school's staff has the responsibility for providing educational services and is accorded further responsibility by the state (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:202).

On the basis of the above exposition it is evident that the school is an institution stemming from the community of parents. The school is a social context which was established to lead pupils in normative activities along a desired course. The key person who should lead the children in this regard is the principal (Theron and Bothma, 1990:160). As instructional leader, the principal should establish informal as well as formal communication networks to improve school policies and teacher practices, based on the information which parents provide about family situations (Wanat, 1994:632). However, principals have more often than not found the parents' involvement in the school to be very minimal because of the problems discussed below.

#### **3.5.1.1 Lack of concern in parents**

Lack of concern is a phenomenon which often occurs in modern society and lack of interest in the parent community is no exception. Based on this, parents can be divided into three categories:

The first group of parents is too busy to devote attention to their children, or they avoid school on the basis of a personal unpleasant school experience. Vandergrift and Greene (1992:57) added that for many parents schooling brings back memories of their own failure. Some parents feel uncomfortable,

embarrassed, even guilty when they walk into the school. In addition, Ellenberg (in: Theron and Bothma, 1990:161) averred: "**Many parents dread school and teachers because they feel inadequate**". Principals often experience the most difficulty in getting those parents involved.

The second group of parents visits the school only on certain occasions, for example when particular problems arise regarding their children or when there are allegations of embezzlement of school funds by the principal. These parents may visit the school once in three years when the School Governing Body has to be elected. However, most parents are concerned about their children, but with changes in families (mothers outside the home, single parents) many are too busy (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:202 and Wanat, 1994).

The third group of parents shows active interest in their own children as well as in others' children. These parents regard it as important, for the sake of their children and the community, that things go well for the school as a whole. Such parents are actively involved in school functions and the parent association and will take it amiss if the principal does not make use of their services. Furthermore, these concerned parents will hold the principal accountable when their school fails to have a single student passing matric (eighty-one schools in South Africa had a zero matric pass rate in 1999). For example, in a recent *Legal Wise Magazine*, "*Wise Up*" (2000:3), some parents from these schools were so bold as to indicate openly that:

**The school principals are the local managers of these school and they need to be held responsible ... Everyone seems to blame every one else – leaving the parents with the problem. We cannot accept this any**



**longer. The principal is paid to be the manager of the school.**

From the above quote it seems clear that parents are concerned and confirm that it is their constitutional right to know the reasons for their children's failure. However, research has also indicated that parents are not only ignorant about assisting educating their children but also incompetent and indifferent. In some settings parents ignore, or are hostile toward, the teachers and the principal while in other settings the teachers are hostile toward the parents because the teachers lack confidence. In such instances parents cannot participate voluntarily in the school's activities (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 1991:202).

Instructional leadership should include parent involvement. The principal should design a well-planned parent involvement programme in which the role of parents is explicitly spelt out. Teachers should also be conversant with the role that parents should play within the formal education of their children.

- **Communication with parents**

Wanat 's study (1994:637) indicated that principals and parents from all family structures agreed that effective communication is essential to respond to students' needs and to involve all parents. Parents and principals agreed that communication serves two purposes: to inform parents of their children's problems and to provide positive feedback about their children's accomplishments.

When trying to encourage parents to attend school events, principals should regard pupils as the best salespeople (Smith and Piele, 1989:280). The success of such a strategy rests on communicating the importance of the event to pupils. Once this has been accomplished, the principals can rely on the

pupils to recruit their parents. The events should involve activities that would in turn encourage students to attend with their parents. Much of what the parents learn about school comes from the children: one obvious way to improve the quality of that information is to make children more effective news-gatherers. Some schools, for example, have established programmes in which lower grade children make daily entries in journals. In this way the children have a clearer, more detailed, often more interesting answer to the familiar question: "What did you do today?" Since praise is more pleasant than criticism, some principals personally contact parents about their children's successes, instead of reserving such contact for discussion of disciplinary or academic problems (Smith and Piele, 1989:281 and Wanat, 1994:637).

Additional means of establishing positive relationships with parents are the written comments by principals on students' papers, a monthly principal's newsletter, a student reading programme, the organisation of an improvement council including parents and pupils as members, and parental visits to the school.

### 3.5.2 Relationship with learners

To foster a healthy culture of teaching and learning in a school is a matter based largely on positive relationships among the school participants. Houlihan (1983:12) stated clearly that a sound school culture has as its cornerstone the notion that positive, trusting relationships or interchanges between human beings are an absolute necessity. Both principals and teachers agree that within schooling relationships, discipline is the most serious problem faced by teachers, particularly principals. In this sense, the management of pupil discipline is central to the principals' strategies in an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning.

### 3.5.2.1 Discipline

Discipline is a word that is easily understood by everyone but is difficult to define (Oliva, 1993:216). Going back 2000 years, the little Roman "**discipulus**" was a pupil, a learner who was subjected to discipline, instruction, training, or education. Hence the use of the term discipline to mean an organised body of knowledge or a subject field. Further in the biblical context, the disciples of Christ were those who had been instructed by the teaching of Christ. Though the word discipline still refers to an organised field of specialisation, discipline in its training sense signifies order, management, conduct, and even punishment. In the present research discipline refers to a state of order in the classroom or in the school environment that permits learning to proceed smoothly or productively (Oliva, 1993:216).

It is not easy for the principal to relate well with or keep order among pupils because there is no infallible formula for pupil discipline that will serve as either a vaccine or a cure for misbehaviour on part of young people. Oliva went on to say that even Socrates, a well known philosopher and one of the best teachers of historical times, had lamented disciplinary problems. It is a fantasy, therefore, for teachers and principals to think that students' behavioural problems would disappear and that teachers would go smoothly from planning to presentation to evaluation without stumbling on the pebbles of behavioural problems.

What makes discipline more complicated in schools is the fact that **many** teachers reveal a "**carefree**" attitude towards pupils which results in poor disciplinary control over their classes. There is also evidence in the literature that teachers fall in love with pupils and are therefore unable to exercise authority over their students (Mamabolo, 1996:256). Research has further revealed that after school hours many teachers do not set examples that are

worthy to be emulated. Learning thrives best in a naturally warm setting. In their leadership role principals should first, in collaboration with the education authorities, address the teachers' lack of morality and unacceptable behaviour. There is a feeling that both learners and young teachers are out of control and that principals as well as parents are defied (Mamabolo, 1996:306). Children yearn for accompaniment and sympathetic authoritative guidance since they realise a meaningful existence in response to being addressed by parents and teachers and in being under authority. At school, teachers acting in *loco parentis* cannot escape their responsibility to tell the children what is proper in the learning situation.

It is the responsibility of the School Governing Body (SGB), of which the principal is a member, together with parents, the staff and the pupils (the Learners' Representative Council at high schools) to establish a code of conduct within the framework of the education legislation. In a school where this has been done, pupils know what the school's behavioural expectations are from the beginning of the year (Dietrich and Bailey, 1996:19). It is the obligation of the principal to see that well established rules are enforced, to maintain a positive learning culture. Principals should also exemplify a caring attitude, treating learners with dignity and respect so that learners in turn may relate well to the principal (Hean and Tin, 1996:70). Harris (1987:46) asserted that successful principals are responsible to see that learners:

- **feel that the principal and the staff care about each of them;**
- **feel that it is their school;**
- **feel comfortable in their school;**
- **feel that each of them is somebody;**
- **feel that self control is an asset to achieve.**

In developing a positive culture, conducive to teaching and learning, the principals should develop study habits in the learners with the assumption that all learners can learn (Hean and Tin, 1996:7). Meaningful involvement of students in the governance of their own destinies should be more than a routine exercise. Reflecting the maturation of students, students should have ever-increasing involvement with the decision-making capacity of the school staff and administration (Burden and Whitt, 1973:132). Principals should assist learners or train them for their leadership roles in the Learners' Representative Councils. It is usual for most conflicts in relationship in high schools to occur between principals and the Learners' Representative Council (LRC) because students shoulder responsibilities for which they were not trained.

The principal has the responsibility of working with staff, students and parents to develop a satisfactory discipline policy that recognises the needs of students, desires of teachers, and the concerns of parents (Burden and Whitt, 1973:54). The principal should provide leadership in helping the educative community to make decisions regarding discipline, particularly in helping those involved to develop a sound attitude towards students coming into conflict with school rules and regulations. Setting limits is not too difficult. Nearly every reasonable group can reach a consensus regarding the limits desired in practically any given situation. However, getting young people or students to accept the set limits and having the students want to live with the rules is the problem (Burden and Whitt, 1973:54). In the end what the education situation really desires is self-discipline. The whole leadership thrust of the principal should be towards such an end.

### 3.5.3 Relationship with teachers' unions and students' organisations

Since 1990 teachers have climbed on in the political bandwagon and applied the trade union strategies of chalk-down, stay-aways and protest marches (Mda, 1993:69). Such activities have weakened the relationship between

teachers and principals. Teachers claim to be more politically knowledgeable and active, there is a new awareness of the power of organised labour to realise gains and compensation and working conditions (Wiles and Bondi, 1983:213). The political transformation of 1994 has had, and will continue to have, a dramatic impact on education. One drawback of union participation by teachers however, is the criticisms uttered by parents or the public against teachers' strikes and labour tactics which, it is believed, tarnish the image of the teachers as local public servants helping children to learn.

Another consequence of the teachers' militancy has been the teachers' reluctance to blindly follow the leadership of the principals. Teachers are often openly critical of the principal's leadership and do not hesitate to challenge poor management by the principals (Wiles and Bondi, 1983:14). The influence of politics as a factor on the culture of teaching and learning has shifted from a physical, violent and racial issue to a more subtle force. Van Wyk (1994:41) has contended that a teaching force which places overt political priorities at the top of its agenda and is openly aligned with political groupings, is unlikely to create a sound relationship with the school participants. The response of teachers to the democratic rule therefore has resulted in the absence of a teaching and learning culture, as it emphasises the "**happiness of teachers**" at the expense of the effective education of the children which the schools are destined to serve. Smit's (1990:60) criticism of the destructive activities of the teachers' unions is most relevant in his argument that:

**... Radicalism only breaks down. Man's deepest longings for excellence in education could be fulfilled if he sincerely respects order, meaning, and unity. Marxist slogans show no concern for education *per se*.**

The main focus of influential unions such as the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) and the Congress of South African Students (COSAS), in Naidoo's (1999:38) opinion, is to empower teachers and students respectively to get things done in their own way. In the process so they have the following outcomes:

- **The authority and influence of the principals are marginalised.**
- **A professional approach to teaching has been replaced by a unionist approach. Teaching is no longer viewed as a calling and a profession in which teachers and learners commit themselves to education.**
- **SADTU and COSAS act as gatekeepers through which all information and communication is channelled. Those who are not members (particularly principals) of these organisations mostly refrain from voicing their opinions for fear of retaliation (Naidoo, 1999:38-39).**
- **Most teachers thrive only in an atmosphere of anarchy, disorder and general lawlessness to conceal their ineffectiveness.**
- **Teachers instigate learners to disrupt the academic process for their own selfish goals (Mushwana in: Professional Educators' Union, 2000:7).**

The effect of the above is a monopoly of the unions, disrupting the mutual relationship which is a prerequisite for the culture of teaching and learning. Mackie (1977:36) asserted that one of the essential characteristics of a profession such as teaching is that its members are concerned for the interest of their clients. In contrast to this, what is regarded in some teachers' unions as professional ethics, are trade union tactics based on the assumption that teachers are employees engaged in a struggle against their employers. Campaigns for improved conditions, and particularly for increased salaries, are

conducted in terms of vilification which make it clear that what is involved is not something gentle but a bitter struggle against exploitation. There is often an unresolved conflict between professionalism and unionism (Mackie, 1977:36). The conflict may be resolved by establishing a sound relationship between the employing authority, the teachers' unions and the students or parents as clients.

In an attempt to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools, a proper education relationship between teachers' unions, students' unions and principals should be established. The teachers' unions should set their mission and priorities very clearly. The teachers' first mission and duty is to teach while the students' major task is to learn (Mackie, 1977:36). This does not, however, mean that teachers have an obligation to submit obediently to whatever demands the employer may make. On the contrary, teachers have an obligation to resist demands which are harmful to educative teaching. Among these are: over-crowded classes, poor physical conditions, excessive demands on the teachers' teaching time, and of course, poor salaries. A coherent ethical position can be worked out on the basis of professional obligations (Mackie, 1977:36). Teachers should always be reminded that a teachers' union is effective when it articulates the community's wishes and needs and when it seeks to improve education in the community and strengthens and upholds the community's moral and intellectual life (Munsammy, 1994:15).

The skills or behaviour identified for being most critical to the success of the principal as an instructional leader for example, staff motivation, staff development, staff appraisal and effective communication, further require certain characteristics within the person of the principal.



### 3.6 PERSONAL QUALITIES OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER

In considering the personality of the principal as an instructional leader it is important to keep in mind that each person should be seen as a unique unitary being and that his/her personality refers to the quality of his/her inner and outer traits such as character, abilities, morals, relations, ideals, philosophy of life and world view (Theron and Bothma, 1990:69). The literature on the instructional leadership role of the principal supports the idea that the personal qualities of school principals are instrumental determinants of their success in coming to terms with a school culture (Greenfield in: Griffiths *et al.* 1988:214). Therefore, the personal qualities that may enable principals to enhance the culture of teaching and learning in schools are reflected on here.

#### 3.6.1 Mutual trust

Concerning mutual trust, Bennis and Nanus (1985:43) have stressed that it is hard to imagine that the school will work without a trusting relationship between the principal, staff, parents and learners. According to these authors, trust implies accountability, predictability and reliability. Trust, like leadership, is hard to define; suffice it to state that trust is essential and is based on predictability. As instructional leaders, principals who are predictable are trusted, as they make themselves known and their position clear. Principals as leaders should be persistent despite the ambiguities, and the odds, that they often face in the schools (Bennis and Nanus, 1985:45).

Teachers expect principals to back them up when they have problems with their pupils. This support based on mutual trust is important when the teacher feels threatened by a pupil or by a parent. While teachers want unqualified support during troubled times, principals also need equal support when

troubles come their way. It is saddening to find teachers backing students against the principals in times of conflict, particularly at high schools.

Apart from a mutually trusting relationship between the principals and the school community, the principal should also have self-confidence.

### 3.6.2 Self-confidence

According to Slaughter (1989:94), effective principals expect success, not just for themselves, but for their students and staff as well. Their positive attitude shows up in their having a sense of humour, and more importantly in the quality of their working relationships. Good principals are emotionally resilient, can cope with their own lonely hours and the personal traumas that come to them on a daily basis.

### 3.6.3 Responsibility

Being responsible requires the courage to take risks or chances. Taking responsibility for anything includes an element of risk, and when people assume responsibility for their own and other people's actions their risks increase. As instructional leaders, effective principals are not just willing to accept responsibility – they seek it and welcome it (Slaughter, 1989:94).

### 3.6.4 Empathy and tolerance

At school almost every day, principals are confronted by someone asking for the satisfaction of some "special need". An unsympathetic manner leads to lowered staff morale and less enthusiastic workers. Although principals cannot grant every request, they can maintain their empathy. Furthermore, empathy goes hand in hand with tolerance. Tolerance implies an understanding that other people may have a different culture, language and religion from one's

own. It also implies accepting and respecting these differences (*Special Newsprint Edition*, 2000). In a multicultural society people need tolerant treatment and expect it. On the other hand, everyone is reputed to have prejudices – racial and sexual prejudice are just two kinds of prejudices. Effective principals may not be entirely free of prejudice, but they will have rationally examined their own prejudices and will deliberately strive not to act upon them (Slaughter, 1989:95).

### 3.6.5 Physical appearance

Physically, it is important that principals possess good health and that they are free from physical defects and deformities and serious defects in speech and hearing (Jacobson *et al.*, 1973:41). Mashau (1983:25) regards teachers, particularly principals, as models of dignity under all circumstances. Principals dress in good taste and their conduct towards learners, teachers, and parents is exemplary and commands respect because it is characterised by good manners, courtesy, tact, honesty, sincerity and modesty. There is no need to have an expensive designer wardrobe (Hessong and Weeks, 1991:10), yet it is important to be clean and neat and to wear clothing that is suitable and acceptable in school buildings.

Principals' appearance – their clothing and their conduct – is monitored constantly. Principals should realise that their apparel often mirrors their personality both inside and outside the school. Spackman (1991:81) argues that learners are undoubtedly affected by the appearance of the teachers, and more so by that of principals, and pick up messages conveyed by their dress as do colleagues and parents.

### 3.6.6 Mental capabilities

But more important than any set of physical characteristics are the principals' mental capabilities. It is essential that principals possess a high degree of intelligence to enable them to acquire the technical training required for the position; a task which is constantly increasing in complexity. It is also important that principals be broadminded and open-minded, since all types of children in society attend the school. Some practices that principals may find among certain children will require broadmindedness.

### 3.6.7 Personal charm

Jacobson *et al.*, (1973:41) mention personal charm as extremely desirable as an attribute of the principal. An even temper is also an asset to anyone who deals with the public, and even more to someone who is in constant contact with children.

### 3.6.8 Understanding and knowledge

Authors of education literature appear to believe that a competent teacher is a growing teacher (Cawood and Gibbon, 1985:12). In an age characterised by rapid changes and high specialisation in the profession, it is imperative that teachers, particularly principals, be moulded and developed, and these developments require knowledge and insight in their work. In the words of Aristotle (in: McEwan, 1998:36): "**All men by nature desire knowledge**" and there is the implication that principals have a desire to learn. McEwan also cited Barth who noted that:

**A school should be above all else a community of learners. Principals learn, teachers learn, parents learn,**

**students learn, student teachers learn, visitors learn,  
and to the degree that they learn students also learn.**

People are never too old to learn and are incomplete and fallible, but can be open to growth and constant change. Principals, teachers and education authorities are liable to common shortcomings and imperfections. Without continuing study, teacher knowledge and teacher performance soon become obsolete. No one is ever completely educated. The position of principals is highly complex; principals are educators, public officials, jurists and managers (Slaughter, 1989:91). Consequently principals wear four hats at once for the four areas of responsibility and should be knowledgeable in each area.

#### **3.6.8.1 Knowledge of education**

The primary responsibility of a school principal, as instructional leader, stated earlier (par. 3.1), is supervision of the teaching staff and its instructional efforts (McEwan, 1998). It is not always possible for principals to know the content of each course taught at school, but they need to know sound pedagogy and have a keen desire to learn. It is unlikely that the principals will encourage staff and learners to learn if they do not learn themselves. Studying education as a human science assists the instructional leader to know the world in which human beings live. And since to know the world is profoundly to be active in the world in a certain way, the act of knowing in education represents an intentional act of attachment to the world, of becoming more fully part of the world (Higgs, 1994:306). Higgs has pointed out that knowledge in education is a caring act because it desires to know that which is most essential to being. Such knowledge is directed at the fundamental qualities of human existence. To care is to share with a person's loved ones. An effective instructional leader desires to truly know the nature of students, staff, parents and the community as a whole. In order to understand the students, the principal should be a

lifelong learner. Effective instructional leaders are never satisfied. One of the reasons why instructional leadership activities are not significant components of most principals' daily schedule is their lack of a strong knowledge base about curriculum management and instruction (Hallinger *et al.*, 1983:141).

Rallis and Highsmith, cited by Ploghoft and Perkins, (1988:23), noted that

**Most principals hold degrees in administration, not advanced degrees in teaching or curriculum or philosophy of education. Thus most principals are trained as managers and are simply not prepared to meet the needs for instructional leadership.**

Furthermore, principals should be familiar with all the programmes in their school, know the curricular objectives and know the methods and categories for measurement of achievement. No school is capable of serving everyone. The special needs of some individual students and staff will be beyond the scope of any single principal. Principals need to know about the programmes and resources that are available within the school system or through state or regional departments.

#### **3.6.8.2 Knowledge of education legislation**

By virtue of the principal's authoritative position in the school environment, various legal powers, duties and responsibilities are vested in the principal. As already indicated previously, the principal is responsible for things such as:

- drafting school policy and school rules;**
- staff development;**
- staff appraisal;**

- **instructional control;**
- **the school budget, and**
- **managing the school curriculum** (Squelch and Bray, 1997:87).

As instructional leaders, principals therefore require knowledge of their legal position in the school and the legal requirements governing their instructional leadership. All principals need a broad knowledge of the law that affects the operation of the school. This implies that in their instructional leadership role, principals should be aware of the legal implications adhering to certain educational matters (Badenhorst, 1996:161). Principals who are ignorant of the law may contravene some legal provisions in the honest performance of their duties or omit to carry out the requirements of such provisions. Both contraventions and omissions may have a detrimental effect on educational matters and may also give rise to legal disputes. The extent to which the principal has insight into educational law and the way principals apply these legal principles in practice, affect the school culture. Therefore, it is necessary to include a brief review of the most important legislation related to education.

- **The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996**

The Constitution sets out the spirit and underlying values of the new constitutional system that should be incorporated in education policy (Squelch and Bray, 1998:45 and Government Gazette, 1998:5). The important principles that are found in the Preamble of the Constitution indicate that, as the supreme law of the country, the Constitution must be adopted so as to:

- **Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice, and fundamental human rights.**

- **Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person** (Squelch and Bray, 1998:45).

These principles are also basic aims of education. Chapter two of the Constitution (the Bill of Rights) enshrines the rights of all people and affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. The Bill of Rights is of immense importance to principals and teachers because several of the provisions have a direct influence on education. The relevant sections from the Bill of Rights are rights and freedoms that are protected and guaranteed to every citizen of the country, *including children*. Principals and teachers have a legal duty to uphold these rights in the school context, failing which they may be involved in legal action. For example, section 12(1) provides that no person shall be subject to torture of any kind, whether physical, mental or emotional, nor shall any person be subject to cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment (Squelch and Bray, 1998:45). Principals and teachers need to take heed of this provision when they are disciplining learners. Principals and teachers should preserve the close relationship between the Constitution and other important legislation. The Constitution is the supreme law of the country and therefore the foundation of education legislation, and no other law may be promulgated against its provisions.

#### □ **The South African Schools' Act (SASA)**

The purpose of the South African Schools' Act (SASA) is to establish a uniform system for the organisation, governance and funding of schools. The provisions set out in SASA are very important for the day to day running of the school, prompting Squelch and Lemmer (1998:29) to urge that every principal and teacher should have a copy of this act and familiarise themselves with its implications. For example, section 10 of the SASA prohibits the use of corporal



punishment in schools. According to the Constitution and SASA, corporal punishment is a cruel and inhuman degrading punishment and therefore:

**(1) No person may administer corporal punishment at a school to a learner.**

**(2) Any person who contravenes sub-section (1) is guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a sentence which could be imposed for assault**

*(Education Law and Policy Handbook, 1999:2A-11).*

Teachers who deliberately inflict corporal punishment may be liable to face legal action and they may even be dismissed (par. 1.1.3.5). Although the new education legislation seems to be easy to understand, it has unfortunately met with resistance from teachers and has hence become difficult for the principal to enforce. Glickman's findings (1991:5), from research into the effects of various discipline approaches, confirmed that there is no benefit from paddling learners. In fact, as Glickman argues, there is research that shows that the least successful schools are the most punitive. At its best, corporal punishment makes learners comply out of fear, become subversive in their misbehaviour, and learn the lesson that physical might is the way to solve problems. At the worst, the learners who are big simply rebel and attack back. The elimination of corporal punishment is an attempt to help learners to develop self-discipline. The question is: How does one teach a group of seventy pupils, through a foreign medium, a subject that one has hardly mastered himself/herself, under drab and dreary conditions with no learning media at all? The use of corporal punishment by some teachers may be a mechanism adopted to survive in such extremely difficult situations (Themabela, 1984:31).

According to the provisions in SASA it is also unconstitutional to expel pregnant girls from school, as their rights to education are guaranteed. This is

also not easy in practice because one student body at Reašoma High School, in Soweto, argued that it was against their culture to turn the school into a "hospital" for pregnant mothers (Jubasi, 1999:3). It is therefore important for the principal and School Governing Body to study the education legislation meticulously and interpret it correctly when formulating school policy and disciplinary rules.

#### □ **The Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995**

The Labour Relations Act of 1995 (LRA) is a very complex and comprehensive piece of legislation, which provides the legal framework for establishing social justice, labour peace and democracy in the work place and also in schools (Squelch and Bray, 1998:49). The LRA also applies to the education sector and its primary objectives are:

- **to give effect to and regulate the fundamental rights conferred by the Constitution;**
- **to provide a framework within which employees such as teachers and their trade unions, and employers' organisations can collectively bargain to determine wages, terms and conditions of employment and other matters of mutual interest;**
- **to provide orderly collective bargaining;**
- **to promote teachers' participation in the school as a work place;**
- **to promote the effective resolution of labour disputes** (Squelch and Bray, 1998:49).

Teachers, and principals in particular, should have knowledge of the implications of the LRA before they can embark on a strike, because it is illegal to continue with an unprotected strike. Principals should also be conversant with the guidelines that they should follow during a strike action.

## □ The Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998

The Employment of Educators Act 1998 came into effect on 2 October 1998, replacing the Educators' Employment Act 1994. The Employment of Educators Act is of importance for educators and principals in particular because it covers key areas such as: appointment and promotion of teachers, terms and conditions of employment, transfer and secondment of teachers, discharge of teachers, definition of misconduct and disciplinary investigations (Squelch and Bray, 1998:127).

The main difference between the new Employment of Educators Act and the old one is, among others, that the new Act provides for separate measures in respect of incapacity and misconduct (*Education Law and Policy Handbook*, 1999:3A-3). The Employment of Educators Act also provides for a legal foundation for the South African Council of Educators (SACE). It is an obligation on the part of teachers to register with SACE. An important aspect of SACE is the provision of a code of conduct for teachers, which includes, among other things, that teachers should acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of each learner, guiding and encouraging each to realise his/her potential (*Education Law and Policy Handbook*: 4-10). It is, however, worth mentioning that the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU) has criticised the South African Council of Educators (SACE), stating that the status of the council has been reduced to merely a disciplinary wing of the Education Department (*The Educator's Voice*, 1999:3). According to SADTU, SACE was originally established through the Education Labour Relations Council (ELRC) and its primary role was the maintenance and enhancement of the teachers' professional standards, which were to be regulated by the teachers themselves. The status of SACE has, according to SADTU, changed radically as it is now a statutory juristic entity governed by Parliament alone with few powers accorded to teachers.

## □ Common Law

Common law principles are general legal principles that are applicable to the various standards of society. For example, the principles of reasonableness and fairness apply to the law of contract, criminal law and the law of education (Badenhorst, 1996:166). When common law principles are applied to education, educational principles are taken into consideration. A few of the common law principles are: *in loco parentis*, *audi alteram partem* rule and the *ultra vires* principles. For the scope of the present research, only the *in loco parentis* principle will be discussed.

The implication of the common law principle, *in loco parentis*, as already stated (cf. 3.5.4.1), is that at school teachers act in the place of parents, particularly as regards to supervision of learners and the application of disciplinary rules (Badenhorst 1996:166 and Bondesio *et al.*, 1989:59). The teacher is *in loco parentis* in respect of, and has delegated and original authority over, children on the school ground and during normal school hours. In addition to the authority delegated to the teacher by the parent, the teacher also has authority which is delegated to him/her by the principals (to whom the Department of Education in its turn delegates certain authority). The teachers' authority over children, and therefore the duration and the area of their duty of care, may be extended to include extra curricular activities on and away from school grounds. With regard to the duration, the duty of care may include excursions and other school activities not limited to the normal school session and which may take place during weekends and even during holidays (Bondesio *et al.*, 1989:51).

The high standard of care teachers are expected to maintain in caring for the children is further expressed in the common law principle of *diligence paterfamilias*. This principle implies that the teacher is expected to exercise the same degree of care with respect to pupils as would careful and prudent

parents (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993: 245). In addition to the common law requirements the pupils' safety is also determined by statutory law which includes departmental guidelines. In this regard the department requires that schools observe the following:

- **a clear policy in respect of pupil safety;**
- **the identification of an unsafe situation, for example the physical state of the school, including torn carpets, slippery floors and electric cables. Behaviours of students that can be dangerous are, for example, running in corridors, throwing objects;**
- **the application of preventative measures;**
- **guidance to teachers and pupils in respect of safety principles;**
- **the employment of disciplinary measures where safety rules are violated and**
- **a written record of all accidents (Dekker and Lemmer, 1993:243 and Everard and Morris, 1996:190).**

### 3.6.9 Resumé

From the above information it is evident that effective principals are expected to establish clear goals and priorities, achieve a balance between task considerations and interpersonal relationships, serve as role models for school norms, communicate high expectations to teachers and learners, provide support and direction for change, and gain the support of the parents and education authorities (Jwaideh, 1984:10). Apart from being flexible and adaptable, principals should possess certain characteristics: responsibility, empathy, tolerance, mutual understanding and a wide range of knowledge, including that of education legislation. Principals will also need a greater tolerance for ambiguity by accepting that uncertainty in schools is a fact of life. Trends affecting the role of the school in relation to society make it clear that

principals need a broader perspective of increased responsibility (Tabet, 1998:45). Interwoven with society's pressure, the shift of individual values is the most significant and fast moving change facing principals.

### **3.7 FORMULATION OF CRITERIA FOR AUTHENTIC INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The value of a phenomenological reflection on the role of the school principal lies in the way principals can apply the knowledge of the revealed essentials of instructional leadership, when their managerial and leadership skills are tested in real life situations. In educational management, and within the principal's instructional leadership in particular, certain features common to all true instructional leadership should serve as guidelines in the authentic enactment of the role of the school principal as instructional leader in educational practice. An important aim of the present chapter, as indicated earlier, is to conclude by formulating the essentials revealed, the essences without which the instructional leadership of the principal cannot be authentic. As a phenomenologist the researcher's way of dealing with the uniqueness of principals is to emphasise what really happens to the school principals themselves, and it is the real world of education practice that needs to be looked at closely (Higgs and Smith, 1997b:209). The revealed essences will be verbalised as criteria which will be used to appraise and evaluate how the principal's role is manifested in practice in chapter four.

Having determined the basis of formulating essentials, the subsequent section will address what has been revealed as prerequisites for the principal as an authentic instructional leader.

3.7.1 The principal should employ effective communication: **Are principals employing effective communication?**

Since principals should, by definition, achieve instructional objectives through the actions of others, communication is central to their effectiveness and essential to their very existence (Alfonso *et al.*, 1975:138 and par. 3.3.2.1). There can be no instructional leadership and supervisory behaviour in the absence of effective communication. It follows then that communication, as an essential of effective leadership, requires principals to help teachers to understand the nature of communication as a psychological process in which principals engage with teachers, teachers with students, and students with the learning content. Principals should comprehend the unique essentials of communication in small and large groups.

3.7.2 The principal should build the school culture: **Is the principal building the school culture?**

The literature review has revealed that the leadership role of the principal is characterised by the ability to create or build and also manage the school culture (par. 3.4.3). The role of the principal as instructional leader therefore includes an understanding of the school culture because the school is held together more by shared values than by policies and rules (Schein, 1985:2). Bolman and Deal (1984:6) in addition have maintained that the building and maintenance of culture is an essential of effective instructional leadership because schools are governed more by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes, myths than by rules, prescribed policies and management activities.

3.7.3 The principal should demonstrate professional responsibility: **Do principals demonstrate professional responsibility?**

As a criterion of an effective instructional leader, professional responsibility requires that the principal sets an example through leadership. Leadership is a

highly personal function and is strengthened by the manager-leader's ability to direct staff, by providing an example of punctuality, honesty, integrity, neatness and steadfastness; by being available when there are problems and by having a sympathetic ear. The principal should ensure safety and order in the school. An orderly environment is essential for meaningful learning (par. 3.3.3.4). The school should be free from disruption, chaos and danger. Such a safe school environment implies effective school discipline (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:13). Another important feature of being a professional leader is an emphasis on high academic achievements as well as monitoring the pupils' progress continuously. The principal, who is responsible for the management and coordination of the instructional programme, should set high but attainable standards and also follow a well planned continuous assessment programme (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:13). All students should be expected to attain an established mastery of levels and all teachers should be expected to ensure that their pupils reach the required levels.

#### 3.7.4 The principal should employ instructional supervision: **Do principals employ instructional supervision?**

In the present research it has been revealed that instructional supervision refers to instructional activities such as staff motivation, staff development, staff appraisal and to how change should be implemented.

##### □ **Staff motivation: Are principals motivating staff?**

One of the essentials of the role of the principal as instructional leader revealed is that the school as an organisation should provide for the safety and security needs of its members (par. 3.3.3.4). Teachers subordinate themselves to the principal as the representative of the employer in order to gain satisfaction of needs they might not otherwise have been able to satisfy (Alfonso, Firth and Neville, 1975:115). It is therefore important for the principal



as an instructional leader, in conjunction with the Education Department, to take the motivation theories into account.

□ **Staff development: Are principals engaged in staff development?**

Staff development is an essential for the principal as an instructional leader because it is concerned with the increase of the knowledge, skill and experience of the teacher, without the evaluative connotation associated with appraisal (Fidler and Cooper, 1988:2). The changing nature of education needs the teacher to keep abreast of the developments in the subject taught and also of educational issues generally (par. 3.3.3.5).

□ **Staff appraisal: Do principals employ staff appraisal?**

Although staff appraisal is generally unpopular and perceived negatively by teachers it is a very important prerequisite for the instructional leadership role of the principal (par. 3.3.3.6). Appraisal should be seen as something positive that provides a means of expressing appreciation for teachers' work and efforts (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:115). While staff development is concerned with improving the teachers' knowledge and skills, staff appraisal concentrates on how the teacher puts the skills and knowledge into practice; so within the instructional leadership of the principal the two terms are intertwined or have become part of instructional supervision (Fidler and Cooper, 1988:2).

□ **Implementation of change: Are principals change agents?**

The principal's supervisory role includes identifying instructional programmes, serving as a resource person and serving as a change agent within the school as a complex organisation (Alfonso *et al.*, 1975:36 and par. 3.3.3.2). If a school is to be more effective its structure and design modifications should be consonant with the cultural milieu within which the school exists. The principal who proposes change should reflect beyond the idea of the environment and

people served by the school. The relative merits of a proposed change should be examined in terms of the school community's needs and standards.

### 3.7.5 The principal should be knowledgeable: **Are principals knowledgeable?**

As an essential of the effective instructional leader, being knowledgeable implies that the principal should first and foremost be a good teacher so that he or she understands the educational needs of the children and is able to develop and manage a sound instructional programme (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994:11 and par. 3.6.8). The principal should therefore remain a student, acquire knowledge of pedagogy and also be in a position to advise the staff on educational matters relating to pupils.

### 3.7.6 The principal should demonstrate positive human relations: **Do principals demonstrate positive human relations?**

To demonstrate positive human relations between the principal, parents, students, the education authorities and teachers' unions is a very important prerequisite of instructional leadership. As instructional leaders principals should be able to transform principles of human relations into substantive programmes of action. Making people feel comfortable, creating lines of communication, fostering security – all are fundamental concerns but valid only as they contribute to the improvement of the culture of teaching and learning in schools.

## 3.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter attention has been given to a fundamental reflection on the principal as an instructional leader, in an attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning. An emerging picture from the literature review is that there is no single image or formula for successful instructional leadership (Dwyer, 1984:4). The literature review revealed that school principals face

enormous challenges as they enter the new millennium. Principals need to collaborate with teachers, parents, students, and the education authorities to work hard at building the school culture in conscious and systematic ways (Mackin, 1991:16). The nature of the activities of the principals depends largely on the principals' context – the needs of their students, the pressures and opportunities posed by the provincial departments authorities and communities; the individuals who comprise their staffs; and their own personal beliefs.

The chapter has indicated that it is easy to prescribe the role of the principal as instructional leader and it is simple for the policy makers to change the education legislation, but to put the provisions of the legal principles into practice or to change the school culture is difficult for principals and teachers. This implies that to employ effective instructional leadership in practice is a much subtler, more complicated practice (Sizer, 1985:22). Critical factors such as the principal's personality, the development of self-confidence, ability to communicate and motivate the staff require not only direction but flexibility and empathy. To change the culture and the curriculum also needs a gradual shift from the traditional values and a readiness to change on the part of all school participants. The authoritative nature of the role of the principal as instructional leader also has legal implications which compel principals to have a fundamental knowledge of the law.

In chapter four a qualitative research method in the form of ideograms will be employed to investigate the authenticity of the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province. The essential characteristics of educational management (chapter two) and the essential characteristics of instructional leadership revealed in this chapter will be used as criteria to determine how these roles are being realised in practice by principals in Limpopo Province.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS EDUCATIONAL MANAGER AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The essential character of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader, and how the principal may enhance a culture of teaching and learning have been dealt with in the previous chapters. In chapter four, the role of principals in Limpopo Province will be analysed and appraised by means of a qualitative research method and the application of the criteria for effective educational management and instructional leadership which were revealed in the literature study. In this endeavour the researcher evaluates the role of principals in Limpopo Province by means of the qualitative approach in the form of an ideographic method.

To acquaint the reader with the research method to be used, a brief overview of qualitative interviewing in educational research has already been given in chapter one (cf. 1.5.3.3). To contextualise the research method to be used in this study, it is important to explain further how information is to be collected and interpreted. Furthermore, in order to give readers enough information about how the research was conducted and enable them to understand the findings in context (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:150-151), the researcher finds it necessary to include a more detailed review of the qualitative approach, by discussing the reasons for employing the qualitative approach in the form of an ideographic method, as well as drawing the attention to the advantages and disadvantages of interviewing as a research method.

In the last section of the chapter the interviews are presented in the form of ideograms. Subsequently, summarised findings and evaluation of the interviews are followed by an evaluation of the role of school principals in Limpopo Province, by means of the criteria for essential educational management and instructional leadership that have been formulated in chapter two and chapter three.

## **4.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH: AN OVERVIEW**

Qualitative research is an umbrella term used to refer to a variety of research strategies that have certain characteristics: namely, the data collected, analysed, and interpreted is rich in descriptions of people, places and conversations which cannot be easily interpreted through statistical procedures (cf. 1.5.3.3 and Tesch, 1990:55). The research questions formulated are aimed at an investigation of topics in all their complexity, especially in their context (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:2). Taylor and Bogdan (1984:5) contend that qualitative research refers in its broadest sense to research that produces rich descriptive data – people's own written or spoken words or observable behaviour. In order to understand the nature of qualitative research it is necessary to indicate the main difference between quantitative and qualitative research.

Lemmer (1992:292) and Mouton (in: Ferreira, 1988:4) concur that the roots and origin of qualitative research can be traced to the epistemological critique of the positivist tradition of the social sciences during the nineteenth century. The crucial issue among social scientists centred on whether or not the method of the physical sciences could be used to investigate social and human problems. According to the positivist, physical events and people's behaviour are the law governed result of the concatenation of many antecedent variables. The positivists seek facts or causes of social phenomena apart from the subjective

states of individuals (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:1). They therefore advocated the practice of a neutral science where the researcher assumes the role of a detached observer of an independently existing reality (Halfpenny, 1979:801). This was the basis of what is called quantitative research. In positivist thinking the researcher is to be detached and is not to interfere with the phenomenon being studied (McNeill, 1990:10).

In quantitative research the research concentrates on producing objective data in the form of statistics (McNeill, 1990:10 and Reeler and Davey, 1991:120). The researcher formulates laws that allow the description, explanation and prediction of social phenomena (Lemmer, 1992:292 and Halfpenny, 1979:801). In quantitative research, as Patton (1990) has argued, validity depends on careful instrument construction so as to be sure that the instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. There should be no suspicion that the data collected have been affected by the values of the researcher and that the data are not completely reliable. In other words it should be possible to claim that whoever collected the data would arrive at a similar conclusion. Such a position constitutes the basis of behaviourism, in which Lundberg (in: Ferreira, 1988:4), in his foundation of sociology illustrates that:

- **all phenomena are equally tangible, observable and measurable, and**
- **all subjective actions such as “mind” and “feelings” or “motives” are meaningful to the scientist in so far as they are operationalised in terms of overt characteristics; if not, they are unverifiable.**

In positivist sociology therefore, the laws that govern human behaviour and events may be predicted in an objective and value free way, thus making possible a certain amount of social engineering (McNeill, 1990:116). Franzsen (1993:250), in addition has argued that the quantitative approaches of

positivism are designed to measure the psyche and intellectual personality and that very few of them are able to measure the total person.

In contrast to the positivist ideas mentioned above, the idealist posits that the investigation of social reality is in essence a study of the product of human minds and thus cannot be separated from the thoughts, values and sentiments of the researcher (Smith and Heshusius, in: Lemmer, 1992:292 and Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:5). The aim of idealist research was not to formulate rules and laws that govern human behaviour, but to grasp the meaning that actions have for the actors involved and to describe those meanings in appropriate terms that are understandable in context (Halfpenny, 1979:802).

According to McNeill (1990:121), to the idealist a person is a conscious, active purposeful social being rather than subject to external influences over which he or she has no control. In the idealist view, therefore, science cannot be neutral but remains value and context bound. Moreover, as Lemmer (1992:292) emphasises, human experience cannot be expressed in a context free, or neutral, scientific language. The social world, and human behaviour in particular, have to be understood within their context. If an event in the social world has to be explained, that explanation has to take into account what the people involved feel and think about it (McNeill, 1990:119). It was from this idealist paradigm that a qualitative research tradition developed. Qualitative research therefore originated from a different theoretical framework, which is described as phenomenological. Positivists (quantitative research) and phenomenologists (qualitative research) take on different kinds of problems and seek different kinds of answers, and as such their research demands different methodologies (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:2).

It is evident that, essentially, qualitative and quantitative research methods use different techniques of presentation to project different assumptions about the world and employ different means to persuade the reader of their conclusions.

Yet they are not antithetical. Each approach has strengths as well as weaknesses. They present the reader with different kinds of information and can be used to triangulate so as to gain greater confidence in one's conclusions. Quantitative research is based on a positivist philosophy which assumes that there are social facts with an objective reality apart from the beliefs of individuals. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is rooted in a phenomenological paradigm which holds that reality is socially constructed through individual or collective definitions. Qualitative research is an inquiry into the personal worlds of those who are studied. According to Sears (1992:147) those who engage in qualitative research acknowledge that their choice of problem and goals is *prima facie* a question of values. A qualitative researcher acknowledges that the instruments and techniques used in the research are part of this world and that knowledge is always partly subjective (Greene, 1986:69). Higgs and Smith (1997b:50) pointed out that:

**We are in the situation we are trying to describe and, as such, any of our descriptions (including scientific ones) must have an element of subjectivity to them.**

In addition, research involving human subjects must approach the measurement of behaviour from different vantage points, due to the subjective nature of the evidence being collected (Mancell, 1986:204). Therefore in educational research in which the research subjects are human beings, complete objectivity such as the positivist argues for cannot be attained.

From the many essential characteristics of qualitative research which came to the fore in the literature, only a few which are, according to this researcher, relevant to the present research will be discussed (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:29 and Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:5-8):



- **Qualitative research seeks understanding and employs qualitative methods such as in depth interviewing and participant observation.**
- **Qualitative methods are humanistic. The methods by which people are studied affect how they are viewed. When people's words and acts are reduced to statistical equations, we lose the human side of social life. Qualitative methods enable people to learn about concepts such as pain, beauty, suffering, frustrations and love, whose essence is lost through other research approaches.**
- **Qualitative research is directed towards describing and explaining human thoughts, emotions, and behaviour, which are difficult to quantify in numerical terms. Cognisance is taken of the total person, including a study of those human features which can easily pass unseen (Masemann, 1976:378). The likelihood of some features being overlooked is lessened by the use of qualitative methods.**
- **In qualitative research the researcher has the natural setting as the direct source of data and the researcher is the key instrument. The researcher looks at setting and people holistically. The people being studied are not reduced to variables but are viewed as a whole. In contrast to a natural science approach, the qualitative researcher or a phenomenologist strives for what Max Weber called "verstehen", understanding on a personal level of the motives and beliefs behind peoples' actions.**
- **Qualitative research is descriptive and the data collected in a qualitative study are in the verbal form rather than numerical. The**

written results of the research contain quotations from the data to illustrate and substantiate the findings.

- **Meaning is of essential concern for qualitative research. Researchers who use this approach are interested in the way different people make sense out of their lives.**
- **The task of the qualitative researcher is to describe the meanings shared with the participants which, may in turn, make it possible to explain why people behave as they do.**
- **Qualitative researchers tend to analyse their data inductively (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:31). They do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove any hypothesis they hold before entering the study; rather, the abstractions are built as the particulars that have been gathered are grouped together (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:29).**

#### 4.2.1 Reasons for undertaking qualitative research

In this study the researcher employs a qualitative approach because she seeks to gauge the understandings, feelings, and attitudes of school principals towards their roles as educational managers and instructional leaders. The principals' perceptions, ideas and suggestions may be facilitated through direct interaction with them (Govender, 1997:167). In such instances the researcher is the instrument. To this extent, the researcher and the principals as the research subjects are inseparably interconnected. A methodology which employed only questionnaires was considered inappropriate for the research. Questionnaires have the potential of alienating the research subjects (school

principals in this case) and therefore could have had an influence on the findings.

Another reason for employing a qualitative approach in the present research is the close relationship that has been found between qualitative research and the phenomenological method (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:34; Firestone, 1987:16; Mouton in: Ferreira, 1988:8; McNeill, 1990:118-121). According to Reeler and Davey (1991:125):

**Both methods are more interested in the content of thinking – and within both, thinking is described in terms of what is perceived and thought about.**

Researchers in the phenomenological approach attempt to understand the meaning of events and the interactions of ordinary people in particular situations. The present research is a phenomenological reflection on the role of the principal, which is a qualitative study because it is intended to describe events, frustrations, happiness and the activities of school principals scientifically without using numerical data (Best and Kahn, 1989:89). The research avoids the offensive effects of positivist science, in which human beings are reduced to mere externality because what cannot be caught in the mathematical net of the natural science is ignored (Oberholzer, Landman, Higgs, Roelofse, Swanepoel and Barnard, 1993:24). If one is a qualitative researcher and a phenomenologist, one's first clear statement about the phenomenological method should be that human beings such as school principals cannot be understood either as things to be observed or as "purely rational" (Higgs and Smith 1997b:208).

Because phenomenology insists on penetrating to the core of matters, it refuses to take things for granted (cf. 1.5.2 and Oberholzer *et al.*, 1993:24). In

phenomenology the researcher does not assume she knows what things mean to the principals, as the people she is studying. The researcher suspends or sets aside her own beliefs, perspectives and predispositions. She views things as though they were happening for the first time. Nothing is taken for granted (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984:6). The researcher emphasises the subjective aspects of the principals' behaviour, attempting to gain entry into the conceptual world of such principals in order to understand how they construct meaning around events in their daily lives and what this meaning is (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:35). Such a study would carefully and logically analyse the responses of the participants and report those responses that are consistent as well as areas of disagreement.

Phenomenology claims that the way to deal with the uniqueness of people (here the school principals) as people being studied is to concentrate on what really happens in education or in schools in particular. Most obvious aspects of everyday life in educational settings tend to become invisible because they are so habitual. These hidden essentials need to be rediscovered in order to understand how principals may enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools (Borg and Gall, 1989:407).

The present research is an educational study that needs a more grounded realistic methodology to assess general qualitative impact, rather than a fragmentary quantitative method (Masemann, 1990:472). As a phenomenologist, the researcher realises that the research findings cannot be taken out of context and proposed as quick solutions to educational problems. The researcher therefore employs a qualitative approach in the form of an ideographic method which has the ability to shed light on the phenomenological method employed in this research, as already outlined in chapter one (cf. 1.5.2). As a qualitative approach the ideographic method allows the researcher to add to scientific research the necessary empirical dimension it deserves.

#### 4.2.2 Ideographic method

The word "ideographic" derives from the prefix "idio" which means own, peculiar, personal, private, distinct, and the Latinised Greek suffix "graphicus", meaning drawing or writing (Onions in: Reeler and Davey, 1989:121). The meaning of the term "ideographic" therefore reveals the essential nature of the qualitative approach to educational research. In contrast to quantitative research, which concentrates on the person's behaviour within the group, the ideographic method concentrates on the individual existing as an entity within the group.

The ideographic method searches for meaning within personal experience, which can differ vastly from the group's experience (Reeler and Davey, 1989:120). According to these researchers, this implies that there is a need for intimate investigations into perceptions that are unique and peculiar to the subject only. In order to delve deeply into the unique experiences of school principals the researcher employs the ideographic method in the form of unstructured interviews. The descriptive nature of this research indicates that its aim is not to explain human behaviour in terms of universally valid laws, but to rather to understand and interpret the meanings and intentions that underlie everyday human actions (Mouton in Ferreira, 1988:1).

The purpose of the ideographic method differs fundamentally from that of the positivist paradigm in that as a phenomenologist the researcher is not interested in describing objective reality but rather in people's ideas and conceptions about that reality (Parsons, 1991:125). The empirical study is concerned with the individual principals' experiences, perceptions and conceptions, understanding of their role as educational managers and instructional leaders, as they experience these tasks, not as outsiders think about, see, or perceive them.

The information in this ideographic study is collected by means of unstructured interviews, since the unstructured interview leaves the respondent much scope for interpretation (cf. 1.5.3.3 and Wiersma, 1991:190). Questions asked are formulated in such a way that the answers should shed light on the problems and challenges encountered in management of schools. From this information, evaluations and comments on the findings emerge as they depict the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader.

#### □ **Sampling**

There is a difference in sample size between qualitative and quantitative research. It has been indicated that the very logic of each approach is unique and the purpose of each strategy is different. The quantitative method depends on large samples that are selected randomly. Qualitative research, in contrast, focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposefully (Patton, 1990:169). According to Patton, there are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what the researcher wants to know, the purpose of the research and what is at stake, what will be useful and what can be done with the available time and resources.

As a researcher my ideal was to obtain information from all the principals in South Africa or in Limpopo Province but the time and resources at my disposal caused me to limit the investigation to a more accessible population. In the present researcher's opinion a small purposive sample of ten principals in the Central Region of Limpopo Province is adequate for the purpose of the present research. Purposive sampling occurs when a researcher chooses a particular group or place to study because it is known to be of the type that is wanted (McNeil, 1992:39). The researcher uses a small sample, since this type of research focuses on the detail and quality of an individual or a small group's

experience (Gay, 1992:231). In such research validity depends not so much upon the number of cases studied as upon the degree to which an informant faithfully represents a certain educational experience. In addition, small samples, according to Borg and Gall (1989:237), probe deeply into the characteristics of the respondents and they often provide more knowledge than a study that attacks the same problem by collecting only shallow information from a large sample.

According to Patton (1990:169):

**... the logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth.**

Patton goes on to say that information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research; thus the term, purposeful sampling. Bailey (1978:99) has pointed out that in purposive sampling the researcher does not just pick the nearest warm bodies; rather, the researcher uses his/her own judgement about which respondents to choose and picks only those who best meet the purpose of the research. The advantage of purposive sampling is that the researcher can use his/her own research skills and prior knowledge to choose suitable respondents.

□ **The role of the researcher**

In qualitative research, Patton (1990:14) has contended that the researcher is the instrument. Validity therefore hinges to a great extent on the skill, competence and rigour of the researcher. Implied in this is that the nature of the negotiated relationship between the researcher and the researched can have a profound impact on the data and the conclusions drawn. For this reason

the researcher needs to develop a better understanding of the skills of working with people, not only to gain and maintain access to research situations, but also to accomplish the objectives of a particular study. As explained by Becker and Geer (in: Van Wyk, 1996:129), **"the researcher's own actions are as much part of the study design as the research instruments used"**.

In essence this implies that the qualitative researcher is not an objective bystander, as quantitative researchers profess to be. In qualitative research the researcher does not attempt to appear as an **"invisible anonymous voice of authority, but as a real historical individual with concrete specific desires and interests"** (Harding in: Van Wyk, 1996:129). The researcher becomes "immersed" in the situation and the phenomenon examined (Tabet, 1997:115). A quantitative researcher seeks to explain the causes of changes in social facts, primarily through objective measurement and quantitative analysis. In contrast to this, the qualitative researcher is more concerned with an understanding of the social phenomenon from the actor's perspective, through participation in the life of the actors (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:34). In such research, the qualitative researcher empathises and identifies with the people being studied in order to understand how they see things.

Because the researcher is the instrument in qualitative research, a qualitative report must include information about the researcher (Patton, 1990:472). Tabet (1997:116) added that a qualitative study normally details the personal or professional experiences of the researcher that enable him/her to empathise with the participants, that is, how he/she recognises the participants' meanings. According to Patton the credibility of the researcher includes the experience, training and perspectives that she brings to the research. It is important to know what personal connections the researcher has to the people or topic being studied. For example, it makes a difference to know that the observer of an Alcoholic Anonymous Program is a recovering alcoholic. It is also honest to



report, for instance, that the researcher of a family counselling programme was going through a difficult divorce at the time of doing the fieldwork.

On the basis of this principle, the present researcher includes a reporting of her personal and professional information that may have affected data collection, analysis and interpretation either negatively or positively – in the minds of the users of the findings.

□ **The researcher's background and present position**

I am a Northern Sotho by birth, born and bred in Limpopo Province. I was educated in Welgelegen and Makarapeng Primary Schools in Ga-Mmankgodi Village, about eighty kilometres north-west of Polokwane. After my professional training as a teacher in Bethesda, I taught for eleven years as an ordinary teacher in Seetla Primary School (Ga-Rankhuwe, Moletji). I was promoted to the position of Head of Department in 1984 and to the principalship in 1989 at Ceres Primary School. Meanwhile I was pursuing my academic endeavours: I completed matric through private studies, and B.A., HED (PG), and B.Ed. (with specialisation in educational management) with the University of South Africa. Five years after my appointment as school principal, I obtained an M.Ed. at the same university. Currently, I am the principal of Maribe Primary School (Segopje Village) in Limpopo Province.

Throughout my experience both as a teacher and principal my core interest has been involvement with actual classroom teaching and with how to make lessons interesting to the children, how to motivate people to love learning. My comprehension of young people's realities empowered me to seek different strategies of enhancing a culture of teaching and learning, particularly as a school principal. The overall experience of being a leader of children, teachers, and the community at large taught me basic leadership skills and

managerial abilities, and also helped me to develop my capabilities, my capacities to listen and respond to peoples' need.

From my most recent experience in the profession and in educational management training in particular, I have cultivated my skills in educational management and instructional leadership. The pursuing of graduate studies, attending training seminars, professional conferences and practical experience gave me an ongoing interest in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools. I am coordinating school and community projects and programmes, effecting change for staff and community alike.

My communicative skills enabled me to be acquainted with the participants selected for this research, so I found them responsive about the research project.

□ **Ethical considerations**

In the present research, before an actual interview took place, anonymity was assured because the respondents were promised that their names would not be revealed and that the ideograms would not be connected with any name or school. The respondents were assured that the information would be used solely for the purpose of research, that it would be made accessible to the promoter and examiners and that if the respondents were interested in the study, the findings would be made available to them (Netshikweta, 1999:5).

What has been stated above concerning interviewing as a research method (cf. 1.5.3.3) may create the impression that this method is without potential errors. On the contrary, the researcher is aware that no research method is perfect; therefore it is necessary to explain both the advantages and disadvantages of qualitative interviewing as a research technique.

### 4.2.3 The advantages and disadvantages of qualitative interviews

#### □ Advantages of interviews

One of the most important aspects of the interview is its flexibility. The interviewer has the opportunity to observe the subject and the total situation in which he/she is responding (Ary *et al.*, 1985:342; Bailey, 1978:182 and Gay, 1992:203). Questions can be repeated or their meanings explained in case they are not understood by the respondents. The interviewer can press for additional information when a response seems incomplete or not entirely relevant (Ary *et al.*, 1990:342). The interview is most appropriate for asking questions which cannot be effectively structured into a multiple format, such as questions of a personal nature (Gay, 1992:203). By establishing rapport and a trusting relationship, the interviewer can often obtain data that the interviewees would not give on a questionnaire. The interview may also result in more accurate and honest responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purposes of the research and individual questions (Gay, 1992:203 and Best and Kahn, 1993:201).

A greater completion rate is another obvious advantage of the interview. Personal contact increases the likelihood that the individual will participate and will provide the desired information. In this regard Best and Kahn (1993:201) have added to Bailey's finding (1978:182) that persons who are unable to read and write can still answer questions in an interview and that others who are unwilling to expend energy to write out their answers may be glad to talk. Many people feel more confident of their speaking ability than of their writing ability. The low return rate typical for the mailed questionnaire (40% is common) not only reduces the sample size but may also bias the results. Furthermore, the interviewer is able to obtain the answer to all or most of his/her questions (Ary *et al.*, 1990:342). Missing data poses a serious problem for the mailed questionnaire.

Another advantage is the control that the researcher has over the order in which the questions are considered. In some cases it is very important that the respondents not know the nature of later questions since their responses to these questions might influence earlier responses. This problem is eliminated in an interview, where the subject does not know what questions are coming up and cannot go back and change answers previously given (Ary *et al.*, 1990:342). In an interview the respondent is unable to "cheat" by receiving answers from others or by having others complete the whole questionnaire for him/her, as often happens in mail studies (Bailey, 1978:183).

Despite the advantages listed above the researcher is aware that no research method or technique is perfect. It is therefore also necessary to stipulate the problems and drawbacks inherent in qualitative interviewing as a research method.

#### □ **Disadvantage of interviews**

The main disadvantage of interviews is that they are more expensive and time consuming and the number of interviewees that can be handled is generally less than that which can be sent a questionnaire (Ary *et al.*, 1990:342; Bailey, 1978:183 and Gay, 1992:203). Sparg, Winberg and Pointer (1999:130) maintain that interviews are one of the best ways of finding information related to the personal perceptions of individuals. However these authors concurred with Ary *et al.* (1990:342) who found that interviews are time consuming and that researchers who opt to be interviewers should plan well and set aside enough time for the interviews. It is also time consuming to process the information either typing up the notes, or transcribing the recorded interviews (Sparg *et al.*, 1999:130). Also, interviewing requires a high level of skill, beyond that of a beginning researcher. It requires not only research skills, such as knowledge of sampling and instrument development, but also a variety of communication and interpersonal skills (Gay, 1992:203).

Furthermore, the most serious problem with the interview is the tendency of the respondents to give inaccurate or incorrect responses or, more precisely, the difference between the answer given by the responses and the true answer (Borg and Gall, 1989:448). There is no guarantee that what people are saying in the interview is a true account of what they do. This is called a *response effect*. For example, respondents asked their annual income may give an incorrect reply for a great many reasons. They may forget sources of income such as stock dividends, or be ashamed of or wish to hide some income such as money won in gambling, or they may want to impress the interviewer and therefore exaggerate their income.

The interview offers less assurance of anonymity than the mailed questionnaire study, particularly if the latter includes no follow-ups. The interviewer typically knows the respondent's name and address and often his/her telephone numbers as well. Thus the interview poses a potential threat to the respondent, particularly if the information is embarrassing or sensitive (Bailey, 1978:183). In the interviews difficulties may arise if the respondent does not have the necessary information to answer the questions, or if there is an uneasy feeling about divulging the information. Respondents are sometimes inclined to exaggerate their feelings in order to make the interview interesting, thus deviating from the issue being discussed. A respondent, may, for reasons beyond the control of the researcher, give disinformation with the aim of affecting the results.

This researcher is aware that the problems mentioned are reflected in any kind of ideographic research and can make interviewing less reliable. However, Smith (1972:26) contends: "**... in spite of these sources of error, interviews remain the richest source of data in qualitative research**". According to Wiersma (1991:194) there is no methodological technique that can ensure the complete accuracy of the information. It is possible, however, to enhance

fruitful responses. Although most sources of error outlined are beyond the control of this researcher, she will attempt to take them into account to avoid any possible negative impact they may have on the evaluation of the ideograms.

By mentioning these disadvantages the researcher hopes to avoid slanting her study in favour of her own beliefs and values. As a phenomenologist the researcher employs Husserl's "epoche", which is a putting aside or a radical modification of the researcher's standpoint concerning personal views, beliefs and assumptions (cf. 1.5.2 and Pivcevic, 1970:70). The researcher will endeavour to conduct a fair and balanced inquiry, not allowing her personal, political and ideological beliefs to affect what is discovered and reported.

#### □ **Preparation for interviews**

With the aim of administering the interview to certain school principals in Limpopo Province, the researcher contacted the relevant circuit inspector, and wrote a formal application in this regard in April 2000. There was the usual delay in administration procedures concerning the application and final permission was given to the researcher on 7th January 2001. The approval was also not explicit in the researcher's opinion because the Director of Education or the Superintendent General concerned did not write a formal approval letter, but the word "approved" was merely appended to the Regional Director's recommendation (cf. Appendix ii).

### **4.3 REPORTING AND INTERPRETATION OF IDEOGRAMS**

With regard to the interpretation of ideographic information, Lofland (in: Bogdan and Biklen, 1992:193) asserts that qualitative researchers do not have a single conventional mode of presenting findings. This implies that qualitative

researchers are flexible in how to go about their studies. There are diverse approaches to reporting information, which are determined by the aim of the researcher. According to Patton (1990:429) the most important principle in the interpretation of qualitative data is "focus". Focus in Patton's view includes answering or addressing the major questions outlined in the research. To provide a sense of the immediacy of the interview, the grammatical rules regarding reported speech have sometimes been disregarded.

Not every interview in this research has been presented in full, as in certain instances information is duplicated. It is impossible to report every thing which has been collected in the interviews because even a comprehensive report will have to omit a great deal of information collected by the researcher. Researchers who try to include everything risk losing their readers in the sheer volume of the presentation. In this regard Lofland (in: Patton, 1990:429) has pointed out that:

**Unless one decides to write a relatively disconnected report, he must face the hard truth that no overall analytic structure is likely to encompass every small piece of analysis and all the empirical material that one has on hand.**

The ideograms that are presented are, in the researcher's opinion, representative of the main concerns of the area of research, the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader.

The researcher visited four districts in Limpopo Province – Bochum, Konekwena, Mankweng and Polokwane and with the assistance of the district managers was able to identify the school principals to be included in the sample of this research. The ten schools visited included those schools that

were formally white or the so-called Model C schools, urban, semi-urban, and rural schools. In the sample there are schools that have different cultural groups in the learner and teacher components. The reason for the mixed selection of schools was that the different principals experience managerial and instructional leadership roles differently, and therefore the same interview questions could elicit different findings.

The researcher is aware that critical readers, especially those who are involved with the exact sciences, or objective measurement and correlative designs, may raise objections to the subjectivity and generalisations of the findings which have been collected by means of ideograms. As regards subjectivity, it has been pointed out (cf. 1.5.2; 1.5.3.3 and 4.2) that it is precisely the subjective experience of the relevant respondents that is in the opinion of the researcher, relevant to this research. The research is primarily concerned with the experience, feelings, attitudes and views of school principals as educational managers and instructional leaders, which is an extremely personal and subjective matter.

Unlike the quantitative researcher who employs experimental design and objective tests to reduce subjectivity, the qualitative researcher searches for meaning by means of phenomenological reduction (Powdermaker, in: Firestone, 1987:17). Here, school principals express their views on how they enhance a culture of teaching and learning through educational management and instructional leadership. Such information, in the opinion of the researcher, is relevant to the research as it leads to a revelation of the hidden essentials of the phenomenon of principalship as a human event.

The researcher does not intend applying the content, views and subjective experience gleaned from each principal to all principals in Limpopo Province. Whatever comes to light in the interviews will reflect a specific individual's experience, yet is representative of school principals in a specific educational



milieu (Franzsen, 1993:256). According to Smith (1972:41): "**With a small random system of selection a small number of people can represent the opinions of the whole population being studied**". Franzsen (1993:256) further contended that it is not unusual in the human sciences for the views of the individual person to be applied to a tribe or a large group.

#### **4.4 IDEOGRAMS**

In the following section the researcher presents the school principals' responses during interviews in the form of ideograms.

##### 4.4.1 Ideogram A

#### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of Principal: Mr A

Name of school: High School No. 1

Enrolment: 230

Number of teachers: 8

Date of interview: 16-04-2001

#### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT:

According to Mr A neither the chairperson of the **School Governing Body**, the school inspectors nor the departmental authorities, such as the regional director, have a role to play in assisting the principal in the education of the learners. The chairperson of the SGB will only come to school when he hears rumours about what is happening at the school. Since 1990, when Mr A started as principal, no school inspector has ever visited his school to assist him in enhancing the culture of teaching and learning. The school inspectors

play the role of messengers because they drive to the school to deliver circulars or any urgent information.

The **educational authorities'** main duty is to make laws and pass the Acts regarding the duties of a principal. The principals are in a predicament because all the failures in education are ascribed to their lack of managerial skills. Everything wrong underpins the principal. Mr A emphatically said:

**All these people are doing a lot of talk. They are working on the principle of talk-shop instead of workshop. Perhaps if there is any role they are playing that is the only role.**

Mr A doubted as to whether the education administrative authorities had ever had any training in **the field of administration**. For example, Limpopo Province education administrators do not know how many teachers they have employed. This adds an unnecessary administrative duty to the principals because they complete statistics almost every day.

In Mr A's opinion **Outcomes Based Education** is a major problem in the system. Most of the teachers took three to four years to train as teachers. Today they are called to a meeting or a workshop lasting three hours and they are expected to change the approach they acquired over three years in three hours in order to be able to implement OBE. That is called Outcomes Based Education Training. Furthermore, the people who are training these teachers are also not clear concerning the approach. For example, they are not clear as to whether Language, Literacy and Communication (LLC) should be treated as one learning area or as three learning areas (Mother-tongue, Afrikaans and English). Some of the trainers confessed that they do not understand most of

the issues. How do they train teachers when they do not have expertise? So OBE has become a monster for some of the teachers.

The principal, as well as the teachers, are not ready to prepare OBE lessons but Mr A stated that everyone will see how to cope.

Concerning the preparation of lessons, Mr A stated that this is a major problem for teachers. OBE is an approach that needs thorough planning of lessons, but this is a pity because the principal as well as teachers are not clear about it. Yet even before the introduction of OBE from 1990, when teachers threw away their workbooks, yearning for political transformation, until the year 2001, teachers were still refusing to prepare lessons. The education authorities are very much aware of this.

When he was asked about the **problems of discipline** Mr A said that many principals are worried about discipline. According to him, discipline starts with teachers. At school 1, morning assembly has been omitted and the school starts at twenty minutes past seven. At half past seven all teachers should be beginning their lessons. The principal himself is very punctual and he locks the gate after the bell has rung. Learners who are late will unfortunately have to wait outside the school gate until break time. There are sometimes teachers who are late and the principal warns them strongly as they are role models to the learners.

Sometimes the principal indicated that he metes out corporal punishment to deal with learners who are bullies and those who transgress rules. According to Mr A, discipline also depends greatly on whether the teachers are doing their work. He emphatically said:

I noticed something ... every Tuesday in Grade 12 class. The first two periods are mine and no learner is late ... But then I'll make provision for those who may by chance be late. When the other learners go home the latecomers get the lesson they missed in the morning. Of course teachers never do that, when is "chaile is chaile".

Mr A also stressed that discipline also means starting on time. If teachers are left to chat in the staff-room about their weekend news, learners will be squabbling as they have nothing to do.

The modern school principal is very **unsafe**. Principals are killed in and also outside the school and it is sometimes difficult to trace the motive behind such killings. Fortunately in the rural areas, as Mr A stated, crime is at the lowest ebb but principals are still not safe. High School No. 1 is well fenced and normally when lessons are in progress the gate is locked. This prevents teachers from sending the children to the café during school hours.

With regard to **redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers in South Africa, generally Mr A found that the morale of many teachers was affected adversely. Mr A was the chairperson of a dispute committee in the district. He encountered many problems which were still unresolved even at the time of the interview (April, 2001). Many teachers lost hope in the profession, particularly those who were declared in excess. At High School 1 only one teacher was declared in excess, but he was a key person in the school because he was responsible for Mathematics. Mr A indicated that it was impossible to lose the teacher because they only had a staff of eight members and if one left it meant that teachers would not be able to offer the eight learning areas in OBE. Mr A wrote a motivation letter to the department. The teacher was very much

demoralised and upset. Mr A emphatically told the teacher that: "**I'll fight with all the cylinders that are at my disposal**"; and eventually Mr A won the battle, so that the mathematics teacher did not need to leave the school any more. During redeployment and rationalisation there was much conflict between principals and teachers: some principals were threatened while some were killed.

Mr A criticised the Department of Education for making so **many regulations** for the educators. As a historian Mr A recalled what happened in France during the French Revolution. There were more than three hundred decrees that created confusion. Mr A thought that maybe these laws were for trapping the principal. The departmental officials frequently refer to them. Hence it is imperative for principals to know the laws. Mr A detected some contradictions within the laws. Initially it was indicated that R and R of teachers should not be used as a tool to render teachers redundant, but actually this is what R and R is doing. If a department makes many laws the laws will confuse the very same people who made them. There is confusion in the education department, according to Mr A.

Normally one talks about **planning** but implementation of a plan is very difficult. For example, at High School 1 it is planned that by the end of the third quarter all teachers should have completed their syllabi. This is a way of encouraging teachers to work very hard. But it is accepted that:

**Agteros kom ook in die kraal.**

There will always be teachers who will be behind, who will never catch up according to the plan.

School **objectives are formulated** and, as the principal, Mr A reminds teachers about their target – 90% of the Grade 12 students passing. To achieve this objective two teachers have to remain at school for study supervision. Decision-making is shared. There are, however, two teachers who never take part in staff meeting discussions. One of these teachers resists abiding by decisions taken. This teacher does not show interest in any activity at school. Mr A discussed this behaviour with him. According to Mr A this teacher seems to be belonging to the wrong institution. It is difficult for such a teacher to inspire the love of learning in children. As far as delegation is concerned, teachers are very positive. For the past four years Mr A has delegated the task of student admissions to the potential Head of Department. The work was successfully done. Mr A delegates teachers to be responsible for a summary register and statistics. Mr A indicated that he controls what teachers did.

When Mr A was asked whether the **tasks delegated** by the department authorities were intelligible and well understood he said:

**No, not always. For example appraisal of teachers is something that teachers are vehemently against.**

Furthermore, **appraisal** is not clear. The education department is well aware that teachers are not preparing their lessons. Even those schools which claim to have dealt with appraisal only did so because of instructions from higher authority. In such schools, teachers prepared lessons only when they were due to be appraised. Afterwards lessons were again not prepared.

Mr A indicated that he **exemplified professionalism** particularly by behaviour and the way he dressed. He averred:

**The way I dress, I always tell teachers that there should be a difference between a professional and learners. I am always formally dressed, with a tie – and teachers followed what I do.**

Principals are **not involved in curriculum** development. In fact principals are the people who should be responsible for curriculum development because they are the ones who know what the needs of the community are.

Changes that were brought about by the political dispensation have alarmed many principals. Mr A encouraged some of them to apply for a severance package. Principals are afraid of the challenges that have been brought about by the new dispensation, so they had better quit the system before they are highly stressed. According to Mr A there is little effective communication between the district office and the principals. Principals do not understand what is happening. They are given forms to complete and are expected to bring the forms the same day at twelve o'clock.

#### 4.4.2 Ideogram B

##### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mr B

Name of school: High School 2

Number of learners: 102

Number of teachers: 6

Interview Date: 16-04-2001

## INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

There are serious **problems of staffing** at High School 2. There is insufficient staff, maybe because the enrolment is very low. Since the new government took over educationally, there is no change that people can feel. Mr B found that the curriculum advisors who visited their schools provided assistance. These are the former lecturers who were redeployed from the colleges of education. Mr B found that they were helpful because they came to offer support and not to find fault. However, the district managers never visited his school. An important reason may be that the roads to school 2 are very bad. There is a lot of mal-administration at the district office. Information is needed in a haphazard manner, even before the principal is able to consult any one who might help. Things do not just move the way one would expect them to move.

With regard to **OBE** Mr B pointed out that:

**OBE to me is still a nightmare.**

The Department of Education tried to offer training or seminars to teachers but OBE is still quite difficult to implement. According to Mr B, OBE is still more of a theory than a practice. According to him, OBE will be implemented in a school where there are eight teachers who concentrate on Grade 8 only. But if teachers teach Grade 8 OBE and are expected to offer subjects in other Grades also, then there is a problem. The manner of evaluating is also difficult because in theory the child should learn at his/her pace. OBE needs more time than small schools have. The allocation of periods according to OBE is impossible. For example a teacher has to be in Grade 8 for more than an hour and also in other grades that are not offering OBE (Grade 9, 10, 11 or 12).



Mr B **motivates staff** mostly by speaking to individual teachers when a need arises. He also encourages staff to remain students by reading widely. Mr B sets an example because he is a registered masters student with the University of South Africa.

The political changes resulted in lower morale in most of the principals, particularly those who started managing schools some time back in the seventies. These principals feel they do not fit any more. They were used to a situation of commands and instructions.

Teachers and their learners are different in every school. This implies that **discipline** will not be the same. Mr B indicated that in general because the school is small, and most of the parents are Christians, belonging to the Zion Christian Church, there are not many behavioural problems. For example there is no **vandalism and crime**. There is no drug abuse. Students are from a well mannered and well behaved, respectful community.

Discipline also depends upon the kind of offence the learners are engaged in. In most instances Mr B urges teachers to use a verbal warning. Most children who are offenders have family problems. Therefore counseling is very important and sometimes fruitful.

**Redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers is seen as a monster by many teachers. Teachers are not sure as to whether they will enjoy their new stations. But in general the introduction of redeployment and rationalisation was a good move on the part of the department. It is good to have an equal distribution of teachers among the schools. Most old, big rural schools were affected by demographic factors when people moved to urban areas. These schools then had more teachers and very few learners to teach. Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers was to bring equity to all schools. What is

wrong is the manner in which it was introduced to schools. It was wrong to consider only the numbers of students at a school, disregarding the subjects offered or the streams that are followed at a school.

The canceling of **corporal punishment** created problems at many schools. Many principals and teachers do not know what to do. Learners, on the other hand, take the abolition of corporal punishment as a laissez faire policy granting them more freedom to do as they please. Learners misuse the law and this is a serious problem. No teacher inflicts corporal punishment at High School 2, as they understand that it is unconstitutional. As the principal, Mr B sets an example by planning lessons, working very hard, being always on time. Teachers are encouraged to follow this. Through **motivation** all teachers are planning their lessons. Mr B also observes their lessons. The teachers are allowed to participate in **decision-making**, particularly when they review the school policy.

The SGB is involved but they are not energetic because of personal clashes at home. As to how Mr B coordinates the school work he was quick to say:

**We do not have enough manpower so we communicate openly, forging links to be a very strong team of working together every time. I delegate duties to them.**

Mr B inspires professionalism in teachers by being punctual at school and at lessons, being disciplined at all times. This is the secret of success and teachers follow the principal proudly.

#### 4.4.3 Ideogram C

##### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mrs C

Name of school: High School 3

Enrolment: 246

Number of teachers: 8

Interview Date: 21-04-2001

##### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Mrs C is **planning** for admission of learners as stipulated by the SASA. However there are problems which make the implementation of the plan very difficult. Mrs C cited a few examples. Most of the learners do not have birth certificates. Most learners fail to provide information about their parents. Learners do not know their parents' telephone numbers and addresses. This implies that the completion of admission forms is always problematic and they may never be completed. Many parents also do not give accurate information about their children. For example, teachers may only discover in the middle of the year that a particular child has a hearing problem.

The Learners' Representative Council is also elected according to the law but it is unfortunate that learners do not know their proper expected managerial role in a school. There are many problems. At High School 3 the SGB could not do a number of things because of conflict arising as members aim for power. There are plans, a mission statement and objectives. These do not function because the SGB, particularly the secretary, who was previously the SGB chairperson, who was supposed to be leading the progress of the school, held several unofficial meetings in order to canvass and be recognized as a "boss".

At this school, teachers want to progress but there is a problem with learners' absenteeism, not doing their homework and bullying. There is also a problem with enforcing proper acceptable punishment, apart from corporal punishment. Since 1994 teachers have still been reluctant to plan their daily lessons. When Mrs C started as the principal at this school the academic standard of the school was very low. The school was struggling to have one matric student passing. Teachers were reluctant to go to class. After Mrs C's arrival, all teachers are eager to assist in enhancing the academic standards of the school. There is still room for improvement. Teachers should be delegated to shoulder bigger tasks, as Mrs C observed at a neighbouring school, when a teacher was given the responsibility of addressing people at a memorial service. This was a challenge to Mrs C. Most of the teachers are still, according to Mrs C, not confident enough to chair formal meetings.

Concerning **control**, Mrs C stated that principals are aware of the importance of controlling the teachers' work. The problem is that administration seems to be taking all the principal's time. She emphatically pointed out that:

**We are unable to control teachers' plan of work and the pupils' books to see if what is planned is actually taught and being reflected in the children's books.**

Mrs C is, however, satisfied with the performance of teachers as compared to that in previous years. Mrs C arrived at the school in 1991. Teachers were used to reading newspapers, cooking at the cottage, and sending students to the shop during school hours. There was no proper teaching. In her opinion, when it comes to honouring teaching time, she puts her foot down. The most important thing at a school is coming to school every day and honouring the periods as stipulated by the timetable. She said:

**Come what may. That is first and foremost. I'm sure that is why I have hypertension. If a teacher does not go to class I feel like running mad.**

This is how the school moved from the lowest academic results to a higher standard. For example, in 2000 the school had a 79% matric pass rate.

**Redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers caused a lot of confusion because as soon as the teacher pupil ratio is lower than before, the school is in trouble. At high school 3, they had a decrease in enrolment and one of the Heads of Department, who is a key Biology teacher, was declared to be an excess teacher. Redeployment and rationalisation had a negative effect on the pupils' progress because Mrs C was not sure as to whether they would get a competent Biology teacher. Mrs C's feeling is that they should not consider the number of pupils, but they should rather consider the subjects taught at a particular school. Because even if the school is small, pupils deserve quality education, just like those who are at a large school.

**The legislation** also created difficulties for schools, particularly those with a rural population. For example, if all parents are unemployed and are exempted from paying school fees, how is the school managed? These are controversial issues that bring conflict to the school communities.

*At High School 3 there is no corporal punishment or it is discouraged, but Mrs C honestly said:*

**But we sometimes beat them particularly the Grade 8 who lack an idea that they come to school to learn.**

At school there is always a group of learners who will not do homework. According to Mrs C:

**... will you wait for the afternoon punishment? ... You get fed up and say this is laziness.**

The next day students who were previously punished will do their home work.

Mrs C was not happy with the **assistance** that is offered by **the district office**. District managers do not visit schools. At the beginning of the year they came to some of the schools to monitor whether teaching had been started. They should rather come to school with the intention of assisting the principal with the management of the school. It seems as if no one is worried about what is done at schools. When district officials visit schools regularly, most problematic teachers would be convinced that this is not the principal's affair only. But it is actually the community and the department's affair that the work of teaching the children should be done. Mrs C is also worried about the response of the district office concerning very pertinent issues that need their immediate attention. It takes a very long time for the district to reply, or give direction, when the principal needs help. The district office actually welcomes some irresponsible SGB members who go directly to the district manager and tell him/her about a bad principal.

There is **poor administration** during the running of examinations. Schools are expected to collect question papers at an agreed point. This exhausts the financial resources of poor small rural schools. It is high time that question papers should be delivered to schools. This is what free education is all about. OBE may be a good approach but to schools which have been lacking textbooks until April, it is a very major problem. OBE is like any other approach that will need resources. Otherwise OBE may not materialise as expected.

Schools such as High School 3 are **not safe**. There are a number of items that have been stolen at this school – a telephone, home economic equipment such as an electrical stove, two sewing machines and many saucepans. There is no fence. Animals walk around the school at any time. There is no money for the services of a night watch or a security guard. The SGB members argue that it is the responsibility of the Department of Education to provide the school with fencing material. The school had experienced burglary twice. It is useless to report the matter to the police because the police declared that there were no finger prints.

Generally speaking, there are numerous problems surrounding schools like High School 3. According to Mrs C's view, there is no problem with teachers, nor with learners, but the biggest problem lies with an unreliable member of the SGB who is always bargaining for power. For example, the burglary that took place at the school was used by the secretary of the SGB to accuse the principal. He told the whole community together with the students that the person who stole the school property had keys because there was no indication of breaking in. The thieves used keys to unlock the classrooms. A possible suspect was the principal because she had the keys. This is how the poor, illiterate parents and pupils are used to disrupt their own education.

According to Mrs C, enhancing a culture of teaching and learning includes the department's responsibility to train the SGB intensively, as they are the pillars of every school. The principal and the SGB will then cooperate and the school will grow. The role of the Learners' Representative Council should also be made very clear.

#### 4.4.4 Ideogram D

##### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mrs D

Name of school: Primary School 4

Number of learners: 1175

Number of teachers: 30

Date of interview: 17-09-2001

##### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

The **training of OBE** was not well done. Principals and teachers find it difficult to cope. Mrs D is one of those teachers of the old school of thought, those who are used to examinations, and to teachers taking the lead. In OBE, matters take the opposite direction because students take the lead, while the teacher is a facilitator. After an OBE course teachers had their own internal workshop to assist each other. OBE is also a good method in a well resourced school, but poor schools may find it difficult to do the amount of photocopying demanded by OBE. Primary School 4 is an urban school but it has very poor resources.

**Redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers affected this school also. As a new school, Primary School 4 had inadequate staff. The department found it fit to move twenty teachers from the old combined school to be the staff of this new school. Another ten teachers, who were excess teachers elsewhere, were also redeployed to the school. This was not a good way of staffing the school because what Mrs D discovered was that these excess teachers were lax and not used to hard work where they came from. The twenty teachers, who were initially at the new school, worked as a team for the development of the children. The so-called "excess teachers", according to Mrs D, brought more



problems to the school. They used to be absent from school and also cluster together and chat during working hours.

Mrs D said there are still problems of **racism** because reference is made to Black children, White children, Coloured children and Indian children. These identifications cause practical problems. Mrs D pointed out that if a Coloured teacher does anything wrong the Coloured teachers will never see it. But if a Black teacher does anything wrong Coloured teachers will be quick to see it. Mrs D averred that:

**We are not yet in the new South Africa, we are still in the transition.**

Concerning **discipline** Mrs D was worried about teachers:

**Once teachers are disciplined we shall not have a problem.**

In reality the absenteeism of teachers, according to Mrs D, is the cause of many disciplinary problems. If more than three teachers at a school are absent, what is happening to more than one hundred and fifty children for more than five hours without a teacher? At this school classes are overcrowded. Some of the classrooms have fifty to eighty children. What do we expect these children to be doing for the whole day? Teachers who have one or two periods without classes may attend to them but for only thirty minutes. Children who come to school to be locked into classrooms without teachers are given a chance to misbehave.

There is not much **crime and vandalism** at this school. However, one is never sure of what will happen tomorrow. For example there was a petrol bombing the previous day in the adjacent high school. Two computers were destroyed.

According to Mrs D the **district officials** are not sure of the direction schools have to follow. When principals ask for clarity concerning certain pertinent issues it is found that district officials are also not clear. Administratively speaking, whatever happens at the district office happens or is done at the eleventh hour. Submission is always done in a haphazard manner. Mrs D indicated that:

**Whatever you submit, bring it tomorrow or maybe the date has already expired. So we are always rushing ... I don't know where the delay is.**

Educationally speaking, Mrs D found that there is a lot to be done to put things right in the education system, especially in Limpopo Province.

In the Education Department **planning** starts at the top of the hierarchy. There is a slogan "People shall govern", which does not happen at the grassroots. Principals are governed from the top: theirs is to do or die because there is no questioning, and according to Mrs D, there will be no success without involving and empowering principals.

Mrs D **supervises** teachers in her own way. Teachers prepare their daily lessons. She controls the work which has been checked by heads of Departments. Mrs D is trying to work according to the school plan but there are a lot of unavoidable interruptions as she manages a big school. As the principal she still observes the teachers' lessons and teachers show a positive attitude. Parents are sometimes invited to observe their children's work.

Obviously in a school there will be two or three teachers who do not understand, who resist, that is normal.

Mrs D was not happy about the assistance that she received from the district office. For example, their **administration** is very slow. Teachers who are always absent complete leave forms but since the beginning of the year no leave form has been returned. The SGB is also not very effective. They enjoy it very much and take part if a teacher is scolded for doing something wrong. Parents understand their work to be mediators where there is a commotion.

When teachers deviate from the main course Mrs D reminds them of the vision of the school. Mrs D's opinion is that many people and teachers in particular only want to work when there is someone reminding them of their obligations. When teachers are together they behave like children.

According to Mrs D, OBE empowers teachers, particularly principals, to be **curriculum developers**. She says:

**OBE does not dictate. It gives you the overall picture of what must be done. You have to put everything in context.**

For example, at the township where Primary School 4 is situated it would not help to teach children about health education. Rather, children living in this area should be taught about sexual abuse, HIV/AIDS, because they know love or sexual friendships more than any other thing. OBE does give teachers and principals the power to design the curriculum according to the school needs but it is difficult for teachers to understand the requirements of OBE; because many are underqualified they will not be able to reason, the way Mrs D understands it. Teachers are still used to being spoonfed.

Without **corporal punishment** at school the nation is doomed to failure. Teaching young children even as parents, one sometimes needs to beat them a little. To abolish corporal punishment was the first mistake that the government made. The Constitution with its emphasis on rights without responsibilities should be reviewed. Children know that they have rights, and teachers also have rights. Teachers also say:

**Diprinsipala ga ba re sware botse (principals do not treat us well). We shall report them at the teachers' unions.**

The whole concept of democracy is just misinterpreted to mean lawlessness.

Generally the morale of teachers has been very low since 1990 when teachers joined forces to eradicate the apartheid system by rendering the country ungovernable. According to Mrs D teachers from different racial groups have been affected differently. In Mrs D's opinion Black teachers were the most negatively affected. Principals who are involved with staff of different cultural groups are confronted with a problem.

**Black teachers seem to be lacking something. Something has gone wrong along the way. I don't know what it is.**

**Motivation** of teachers is not the responsibility of principals alone. Motivation of teachers should start with the Department of Education. Principals should also try to motivate teachers, talk to and encourage them in a friendly way. Otherwise, enhancing a culture of teaching and learning will remain a pipe dream. Mrs D emphasised that there must be a sound relationship between the principal, teachers, the SGB and parents.

A challenge to Mrs D is to see the good in other people. Most of the time principals are involved in managing conflict and as such are always looking at the mistakes that people do. This interview reminds her that she should also motivate teachers for the little things they did well.

#### 4.4.5 Ideogram E

### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principals: Mr E

Name of school: High School 5

Enrolment: 984

Number of teachers: 34

Date of interview: 17-09-2001

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Although **OBE** is a new approach it is implemented intensively at High School 5. Different assessment strategies, like the Continuous Assessment Task (CAT) and External Assessment Task (EAT), are also followed. According to Mr E, OBE represents life. It is not true that children are not going to write tests in OBE. Tests are written in a different way in OBE. Actually children are going to discover things for themselves, instead of waiting for teachers to spoon-feed them. OBE can even work better if children are fluent in speaking English as the *lingua franca* of the whole world.

It appears that the curriculum advisors who train teachers in the OBE approach do not have expertise. Nobody is totally sure of what OBE is. Teachers are still struggling. OBE is not something to be found in books. It represents life itself. Hence there will be no syllabus for OBE. As a traditional teacher Mr E thought he was engaged in OBE at one stage or other in the history of his

teaching career, without acknowledging it as OBE. The nature of OBE demands that teachers read widely.

High School 5 is a multinational school, accommodating children of all cultures in South Africa. The new South Africa was not new to Mr E as the principal of the school. He grew up and lived among people belonging to different cultures. People who experienced meeting other cultures for the first time after 1994 will find it difficult to accept changes.

Concerning the issue of **racism** at this school, Mr E told teachers and the whole school community that the school aims at developing different cultures. Mr E emphasises this at the school assembly. The policy of the school also includes among other things that people shall have the right to be treated as individuals, despite differences. Different cultures and religions are developed at this school. Mr E emphatically pointed out that:

**We do not promote any one culture that seems to be superior to other cultures. We promote everybody's culture. It is after realising that there is no superior culture that people are first and foremost human beings, reading the Bible, the Universal Prayer Book, Koran and have direct communication with their creator, whoever that creator may be called.**

As with any school, there are **disciplinary problems** at High School 5. There are factors that should be taken into account when discipline is at stake. For example some of the children live alone as their parents are working. There are also differing socio-economic conditions. Some parents are poor, some are rich. Some children are just naughty for sheer naughtiness. Discipline is imposed as part of a decision-making process. The students are involved

when making disciplinary decisions. If the offence is serious the parents are called. Over all, students should be made conversant with the ethos of the school – that they come to school to learn.

The foregoing implies that children will learn if teachers are prepared to teach effectively. **Discipline** of children depends greatly on the knowledge that teachers teach. If teachers are energetic and powerful, if they cannot exhaust the knowledge they have for the children, then there will be no time for misbehaviour. Children are proud and want to emulate a teacher who is responsible and disciplined. The opposite of this is that children also hate a teacher who does not know his/her work.

At High School 5 the principal still visits teachers for lesson observations. There are regular meetings and workshops where teachers are guided and discuss issues of concern. Mr E believes that effective communication is maintained where there is mutual respect between teachers and the principal. The principals and the School Management Team (SMT) should know that they are not a higher hierarchy but that they work for the same purpose as teachers. Mr E always believes that:

**A good manager works with his team. The team does not work under him.**

People do not like to work for or under any person. Every teacher, whether experienced or inexperienced, has something to contribute to the benefit of the children. According to Mr E the district officials do assist although one has to accept that their machinery is too slow.

The school follows a well formulated **vision and mission** but this does not mean that everything is perfect. There are downfalls, pitfalls, but there are

successes also. A perfect situation in the context of a school is difficult to create. In Mr E's view, a school's success is measured by the number of pupils that succeed at tertiary institutions – not by all students passing matric.

The SGB is effective because Mr E emphasised that they should always forget about being at the top. All the participants at school work as a team for the children's progress. The SGB have the same vision and mission as teachers; we have something to do for the school. Managing the school is not a question of a power struggle between individuals. That is the fault that many people commit in a school. Power is good, but in the wrong hands and for the wrong reasons power can cause damage and retard progress. The issue at stake is that the school participants are at a school, not in Parliament where politics are in play. At a school no one is the boss of anyone else. Each individual should define his/her role very clearly. At school, at the end of the day, there is only one main purpose: the education of children.

Mr E welcomes the **education legislation**. According to him the law guides operations at school. Teachers, principals, parents, children and the community at large are human beings and not animals, hence the importance of the law in a school cannot be emphasised enough. If the law says there is no corporal punishment that means there is no corporal punishment. The main issue is that children, teachers, principals, parents should be responsible human beings. Teachers may find it difficult to operate, particularly if they are not responsible. Children are evaluators. Teachers should always try to do what is good and lead by good morals and example. As the principal, Mr E's idea is that if the school boasts of hard work there will be minimal disciplinary problems.



#### 4.4.6 Ideogram F

##### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mrs F

Name of School: Primary School 6

Number of learners: 954

Number of teachers: 22

Date of interview: 19-09-2001

##### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

At Primary School 6 they conducted their own internal **Outcomes Based Education** (OBE) workshops after attending the official workshops initiated by the district office. This was done because teachers did not understand OBE. Consequently, teachers brushed the approach aside and continued with the old traditional approach. Presently teachers are able to prepare their lessons. The Heads of Departments control the work and the principal controls the work once a quarter.

**Redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers affected the school. There are two temporary teachers who were very demoralised. These two teachers did not participate in the meetings and could not enjoy the work. There are nine hundred and fifty four learners and twenty teachers would be inadequate. Therefore the two temporary teachers are still retained. There is also the problem of inadequate accommodation. There is no administration block. One classroom is used as a staff-room and a storeroom is used as an office.

There are serious **disciplinary problems** at Primary School 6. Many children are from a so-called squatter camp. Most parents are single parents. Some of

the children are staying alone while others live as extended families. Mrs F believes that there is a problem of lack of proper parenting in the school community. Most of the learners are bullied and in serious cases parents are called to discuss the children's misbehaviour. There is not much improvement. When Mrs F assumed the role of principal at this school, there were teachers who would come to school late every day and teachers who would not attend classes regularly. As the principal, Mrs F tried to insist on what was realistic and correct. There were also conflicts and tensions when Mrs F came back from secondment and assumed the role of principalship. According to her observations:

**Every time when a new figure comes into a higher position in this school we expect anxiety which also affects the principal's managerial approach.**

There are no **problems of vandalism** and theft. When the school came into being in 1994 during the former Lebowa Government it was a project school. The school was provided with a security guard. Fortunately the new government continued to offer payments for the security services.

The district office is the first and biggest time waster and the factor which most disrupts the school in the education system. Mrs F pointed out that:

**They just phone and say bring the school stamp along because there are forms which you are expected to complete.**

In practical terms principals do not have a proper plan to follow because the district office may interrupt them at any time. It is very difficult for those who live more than seventy kilometers from Polokwane because sometimes they

have to drive to the district office twice a day. This, according to Mrs F, has serious financial implications for schools. Principals are also human beings who end up physically tired and emotionally exhausted.

There is no problem with daily and weekly plans but because of the unavoidable time wasters the plan is not fully implemented. Organising and control of work is not a problem because there are established committees – finance, fundraising, culture and sports. The principal has to control and coordinate the work of these committees.

**Staff appraisal** is difficult to implement because the Department of Education is not sure as to how appraisal should be done. There was a directive that every teacher should choose so-called peers, or in easy terms “friends”, to appraise him or her. To Mrs E, this in itself defeats the aims of staff appraisal. Appraisal is a form of supervision and should be neutral. Shifting appraisal to friends is to make it lose its value. She emphatically said:

**I cannot do it. It is not going to give us what we need.**

However, internal, informal evaluation is done at this school. When Mrs E first came as principal it was necessary to evaluate most of the school activities in order to be able to know where to begin. Indeed she could detect that there were teachers who came late. Attendance registers were not regularly marked, the playground needed attention. Mrs F also visited teachers for lesson observations. This initially met resistance from teachers. But later many of them agreed that it is the only way that they could see where corrections should be made.

Within the **SGB** there was a problem with an educator who was an SGB member. There was a misunderstanding between the teacher and Mrs F. As the principal of the school Mrs F would remind the teacher to prepare the

minutes of the SGB before the next meeting. The teacher was also expected to write invitation letters to the SGB members as required. To the teacher who was the secretary of the SGB this seemed to be excessive pressure from the principal and he subsequently resigned. It is unfortunate because some teachers at our schools are not yet ready to accept that teaching is full time work.

Mrs F is happy with the decisions made because they practice collaborative, or participatory **decision-making**. There is also a year programme indicating the time for various meetings to be held during the year. Every issue to be discussed in the parent meeting emanates from the SGB and teachers. Besides the meetings there is effective communication because the school tries to issue a newsletter once a month, but due to lack of resources the newsletter may not be as frequent. The newsletter contains joint decisions from the teachers, SGB and children. Communication with parents is good. When parents are unable to pay school fees they are requested to write letters indicating when they would be able to pay.

**Corporal punishment** is not allowed but sometimes principals are embarrassed when children misbehave and principals do not have a substitute for corporal punishment. Children know that they have a right to education, whether they misbehave or not. Parents also know that children have a right to schooling and they may be exempted from paying school fees because education is free in South Africa. All these are in the education legislation. In practice all these issues cause problems for the principal. The education legislation is not clear as to what should be done when a child misbehaves or when a parent is unable to pay school fees. It is vague to speak about the exemption principle where three quarters of the parents are unemployed.

In general the Education Department is beset with many problems, particularly in Limpopo Province. For example, many teachers who do not like work use the ignorance and lack of critical thinking among parents to cause conflict between the principal and the community. Furthermore many initiatives that the principal visualises for the school may never materialise because of the participatory decision-making. The plan has to be sold to teachers. Most teachers do not like extra work and would definitely turn the suggestions of the plan down. Taking the suggestion to the SGB is also useless. There are teachers in the SGB who have already heard about the suggestion and who will be ready to influence the poor, illiterate parents to reject the idea. So, according to Mrs F, enhancing a culture of teaching and learning is a very difficult and complicated issue.

#### 4.4.7 Ideogram G

### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of the principal: Mr G

Name of school: High School 7

Number of learners: 801

Number of teachers: 32

Date of interview: 27-09-2001

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

In the **implementation of OBE**, High School 7 is a pilot school or one of the leading schools in the district. The introduction of OBE by the Department of Education was minimal. High School 7 and Primary School 8 invited Dr Gibbon, who is a consultant and an expert in the OBE approach, to conduct courses for the staff members at the two schools. Mr G has, however, found that one is never perfect and there is still much to learn.

Concerning the **curriculum** Mr G pointed out that as the principal he had indirectly and only partly a role to play, because the curriculum is made by the Education Department. As a principal he sees his role as a curriculum guide. For example, if a headmaster is negative and is not enthusiastic about the implementation of OBE, the entire school may experience problems in succeeding in the new approach.

Concerning **rationalisation and redeployment** of teachers, Mr G said:

**It was my biggest nightmare. I think the whole process was not planned properly. It was implemented incorrectly and as far as my knowledge is concerned it did not work in the Northern Province (Limpopo Province).**

When redeployment and rationalisation started principals went to meeting after meeting but nothing tangible happened – there was no proper direction. There were no excess staff in High School 7. Mr G, however, contacted principals who were dealing with excess teachers and found that ;

**It was a morale destroying thing – a soul destroying thing. The process was tackled in a wrong way. Promotions should have been done at level four first. Because how do you know who is in excess by starting at the bottom?**

There is no place for **racism** at High School 7 and there will never be. Actually Mr G rejected identifying the students at this school as either white or black. He indicated that there are eight hundred and one students. It is a racist provocation, according to him, to identify students as White, Black, Coloured or

Indian. These students teach each other, learn from each other, play together at the cricket field as human beings not as blacks and whites. Boys and girls play as a team, winning or losing as a team.

There is no school that is without **crime and vandalism**. At this school there were many cases where students' cell-phones were stolen. There is no way in which the use of cell-phones can be denied because some of the parents live very far away and they have to communicate with their children using cell-phones. There is no vandalism, though there is vandalism in the toilets and in the bathrooms after other schools have visited during a match.

A good example of the education **department's inconsistencies** is the termination of temporary teachers' contracts.

**You get the circular saying let the temporary teachers terminate now. Then tomorrow they send another circular extending the services of temporary teachers.**

There is extremely **poor communication** between the department and schools. If principals do not visit the district office and take the papers that are lying on the table they will not receive information. Mr G went on to suggest that it is high time that the department should consider putting everything on the internet. This will save time and money. Mr G feels very sorry for his poor colleagues and principals who operate from rural areas. How do they get information? These principals are living on islands. Maybe poor communication is part of the reason why their school performance is not up to standard.

As far as **working conditions** are concerned Mr G emphasised that one does not need a computer to draft a well planned school policy. When he was asked by Mr Mashao, the district manager, to address and encourage principals, Mr G

told them that the secret of success is not having a computer, but it is hard work that produces an effective school. Of course it is true that modern technological equipment is helpful to speed up the work. Its absence should, however, not be an excuse for not having direction in the school management.

At High School 7 there is a well implemented code of conduct for learners which was approved at a general parents' meeting. The code of conduct includes a point system where students earn points when they achieve and lose points when they misbehave. For example, if a child beats another child, it is seen as assault and the child loses fifteen points immediately. On the other hand, the same child has represented the school in athletics at the national level and received forty points for the achievement. The code of conduct is very effective, especially its positive side of motivating learners. At the end of each year the top five "good" students with the most points receive prizes. There is a code of conduct for staff and for the SGB as well.

Although there is no **formal appraisal**, Mr G is very proud to work with staff that are dedicated and committed to their work, staff that work for the love of working and for the success of students. It is very difficult to work with people who have the attitude of being oppressed and of working for the principal. That is a problem. Mr G pointed out proudly that:

**I have staff here, that arrive at quarter to seven in the morning and for the first time leave at six o'clock in the evening. They don't even go home for lunch.**

The staff invited Mr G to the Grade 8 OBE exhibition. This was a display of the creative work done by the Grade 8 students, following the new approach. What Mr G stated should not create the impression of a perfect school; rather, High School 7 is beset with problems of teachers misbehaving, as in any other



school. He mentioned a teacher who came to school drunk recently. As long as one deals with human beings a possibility of experiencing problems exists.

The school is doing very well in its Grade 12 results. In 2000 they achieved a 99% matric pass. There is, however, room for improvement. Every year the school formulates a theme around which they are going to work. For example, the theme in 2000 was "year of tolerance", in 1999 it was "don't fool yourself". This year the theme is "academic excellence". Every month the principal says something to remind the school participants about the objective. Where are we? Have we started to prepare for academic excellence? A goal is something that teachers, students and parents should be reminded of, otherwise people will lose sight of what they have committed themselves to do.

Mr G wishes he could have thousands of rands to give the staff as incentive or motivation. In most instances Mr G praises the staff as a motivation. He often tells the parents and the SGB openly in a formal meeting about the good work that teachers are doing because:

**Nothing tastes as sweet as success. If you are successful you strive to get more.**

In general, parents at this school are working and some of them live very far from the school but they try by every possible means to attend parents' meetings and functions. Like any parent group, parents are funny: if things go well you never hear about them. But if something is wrong much talk comes from parents.

When he was asked about the performance of the school in general Mr G said education is part of his life. He discovered that if teachers, and principals in particular, are in the education system for the love of money then there is little

chance to succeed. Mr G is committed to his work despite obstacles, he goes extra miles, makes sacrifices for the sake of pupils and staff. It is also important to be innovative: to accept challenges, develop and make plans for the future. Principals should not allow themselves to stagnate. Teaching is a very rewarding experience. Mr G is very proud of the success of his students. During the year of the interview he hoped to have a student obtaining seven distinctions in Grade 12.

#### 4.4.8 Ideogram H

### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mr H

Name of School: Primary School 8

Number of learners: 1042

Number of teachers: 32

Date of interview: 01-10-2001

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

**Rationalisation and redeployment** affected the school to the point where it became a stressor and job-dissatisfier rather than a job-satisfier to the teachers, and particularly to Mr H as the principal. It caused insecurity among teachers. During the process of R and R two teachers were sent to Primary School 8. After a few days those teachers just asked to leave the school and be placed in a more suitable environment. According to Mr H those two teachers were not suitable for Primary School 8. They came from a rural school and their experience, their education background, their qualifications proved to be unsuitable for a school such as Primary School 8. It was not proper for the district authorities to impose teachers on the school without

negotiations. Mr H assisted these two teachers to find a suitable environment or school. In general there was poor management in the process of redeployment and rationalisation.

Certainly the imposition of teachers on schools made the staff and particularly the principal insecure. The process caused a lot of stress because the reaction of the principal, as soon as the two teachers arrived at the school, was monitored closely by those who wanted to trigger racial attitudes. This whole process was a stressor on the whole staff, the principal and more so on the unfortunate two teachers who could not cope with their new appointment.

In Mr H's view, **OBE** was one of the best approaches and strategies of teaching that has ever happened in South African education in the past forty years. This is so because it is believed to be child focused, and it makes teachers think about what they are doing. In the past teachers did what they were told. Civil servants or public employees never questioned what they were doing and why they did it. Having said that, Mr H found that OBE became another stressor to the school, especially to him as the principal. According to him the Department of Education committed an unforgivable sin by marginalizing the principal during the introduction of OBE. It was wrong for the department to sell OBE to the Grade 1 teachers rather than to the principals. Any initiative introduced in the organisation without the knowledge of the headmaster, who sets the pace and tone of the organization, is likely to be flawed. No principal would allow a Grade 1 teacher to demand money for new books, or change the timetable without the knowledge and support of the principal about what is happening. Mr H remarked:

**I really believe that the introduction of OBE left much to be desired and caused unnecessary stress.**

Mr H is very committed to OBE but because it was incorrectly introduced it was doomed to failure in many schools. He assumes that the implementation of OBE was driven by political motives rather than educational motives and maybe this was the reason for excluding principals from the initial process.

OBE exists at Primary School 8 from Grade R to Grade 7. This school is a feeder school to High School 7 and the two schools established a team together during their internal OBE workshops. Mr H is a member of High School 7 SGB which is responsible for facilitating OBE workshops in the two schools.

Living in South Africa and in Limpopo Province in particular, one cannot avoid being confronted with **racial problems**. All people created by God are special people despite their racial, cultural and linguistic differences. Human diversity is a special gift which should be celebrated. According to Mr H the biggest sinners regarding race are adults – parents and teachers. The philosophy of many adults concerning racism is based on a false premise. For example, when Black and White children are fighting in the playground, which is something that is normal, parents are quick to find this as a racial issue. These children do everything together, they are taught together, play together, learn together without problems. In 2000 the head girl was a coloured girl while the head-boy was a Northern Sotho speaking boy from Seshego. As the principal, Mr H enjoys it when a child from an under privileged race group achieves because they were marginalised for many years. It is indicative of the kind of education that the school is offering that all children can learn and achieve despite racial differences.

It is a trend also that when children become older they seem to mix more often with children of their own culture. Then adults are often quick to say it is racism. But experience teaches that it is easier to socialise well with people of one's own culture, with the same language, than with people speaking different

languages. **Racism** causes stress at a school like Primary School 8 where seventy five percent of the children are Blacks and it is ostensibly manned by a White staff. There are more Black parents than White and there are what the Afrikaner calls "botsing" (clashes), which are not necessary. Among all racial groups there is evidence of a lack of empathy, tolerance, understanding and there is much ignorance of what helps people integrate. Mr H has not found racism to be a problem himself. He likes to differentiate between people according to their languages – Northern Sotho speaking, Afrikaans speaking, rather than black and white. Identifying people by colour is heavy and laden with negative connotations. When there is something noteworthy done by a different racial group there is praise and celebration for the achievement, not for the racial difference. Mr H emphatically said:

**I don't care about race. You live a normal life without worrying about race.**

The school has a tuck shop and there is often **crime** or burglary. **Crime** is part of the baggage of people who live in South Africa, where crime seems to be given little attention. The consequences of crime are related to resources. The senior police officer told Mr H that they are provided with only two vehicles to monitor a wide area. In most cases Mr H takes things into his own hands, sacrifices and guards the school all by himself to discourage criminal offences.

**Discipline** is a very broad aspect of life. Mr H often encourages the school children to live a disciplined life. He points out that:

**The sportsman who wins the Olympic Games must be a disciplined person. The winner of the Comrade Marathon must be a disciplined person who trains, trains, ...**

At school a major question should be: what should we as children do to be disciplined people? **Discipline** also rests on the role that parents play in raising their children. In most cases Mr H found that children who are disruptive are those whose family situations are wanting. Parents keep themselves busy by searching for material things (cars, money), forgetting the children along the way. As parents we didn't teach our children respect, love, honesty, humility and all those values of living an orderly life. When these children meet teachers and other children at school they cannot respect them. This is the root of undisciplined life.

To assist parents with ways of **effective parenting**, Mr H invited the Grade R parents to watch a video about good parenting. Guidelines were given as to how parents should teach their children human values. The school sent a weekly newsletter to the parents and most of the contents of the newsletter have to do with effective parenting. Mr H also belongs to the Association of Parents which has Professor Eleanor Lemmer of Unisa as adviser. Prof Lemmer was invited to give the parents a lecture about effective parenthood or the role of successful parenting in schools. She also sent the school a newsletter once a quarter. The education of parents in relation to the disciplinary process regarding children is a continuous thing. One of the principal's duties is to discuss disciplinary problems with parents from an academic as well as social point of view.

It is unfortunate that because of the South African political history there is a form of generalisation and absolutisation, particularly with regard to **corporal punishment**. It is understood that in many schools, in the past, corporal punishment was used to assault students. That is the reason that it is found unconstitutional to inflict corporal punishment today. In Mr H's opinion, however, corporal punishment is not as evil as it has been made out to be. With proper guidelines, corporal punishment may be inflicted, by the principal

or the Head of Department for a particular stipulated course. The offence and the kind of hiding should be recorded. The problem is that many principals and teachers will have difficulties because they have never followed correct procedures.

There are other creative forms of punishment, which should be included in the punishment of children at school. For example, more creative ways of punishing are a verbal warning, a written warning, interviews with parents and tribunal meetings. After having meetings with some parents Mr H realised that the support given to the child was not continuing and the home was not conducive to a disciplined lifestyle.

To employ effective **communication** Mr H used staff meetings, consultations and empathy. When reprimanding teachers Mr H believes in the adage "**reprimand in private and praise in public**". Reprimanding should guard against breaking the morale of the teacher. The principal tries to point out those things that the person did well – that is, praise. If a verbal warning is repeated it should change to a written warning.

Many factors contribute to the **low morale** of teachers. In this regard Mr H mentioned the actions of the Department of Education, for example during the process of R and R, the introduction of OBE, the media emphasising the poor matric results and the ineffective principals, the attitude of the legislation and of the teachers' unions, emphasising human rights more than responsibilities, and the obligations that teachers have. Mr H believes that the teachers' actions have a very strong influence on the culture of teaching and learning.

The influence of the principal is very important at a school even if its resources are scarce. As a society in transition, Mr H challenges the school principals to accept the allegedly **inconsistent directives** from the district office or the

department. One of the permanent things in life is that there will always be changes and as leaders principals should be ready to accept and adapt to any change. According to Mr H there will always be inconsistencies in a transition, but these are acceptable as long as the focus of all concerned remains the learning of children. The attitude of the departmental authorities is also very important. These higher officials are partners working with principals, not above them.

Regarding **delegation of tasks** by the department, yes, tasks are intelligible; but for principals where there are no adequate buildings things may be different. There is a problem for a head master in a rural school where there is no tap to switch on running water. How is OBE introduced in a school where there is no water, because OBE is life and life without water is impossible? These are some of the obstacles that render principals ineffective.

Mr H is able to employ the principles of educational management like **planning, organizing, controlling and leading**. He has been exposed to the technical aspects of the job by studying further as to how he can manage a school. He has explored how to conduct interviews, staff development, budget planning, communication and many other managerial activities. He is, however, not a master of everything. He is a PhD student at the University of the Free State. Mr H suggested that principals can share knowledge with those colleagues who did not get the opportunity to have such insight. There is a wealth of knowledge among principals themselves. Such principals may assist to encourage those who feel inadequate. This can save a lot of money for the education department. Principals will also listen to colleagues more easily than to higher authorities.

The **biggest goal** that Mr H set for the school is to be a world-class school. This implies that it should be recognised locally and internationally as one of



the effective schools, not the best school, because the school is not competing with any other school. He went to New Zealand and Australia at his own expense to observe and learn from schools in these countries. Mr H motivates teachers by indicating when they have done well. To be praised and be told that you did something good is more satisfying than money.

**Staff development** is done because the only people who have stopped learning are those who are in the grave. At Primary School 8 teachers are developed in many creative ways. Sometimes the staff goes on educational tours to a conference elsewhere, for example to be taught more about OBE assessment. Staff development is the formal growth of teachers, which is a motivation strategy. The department may use schools such as Primary School 8 to be centres of excellence. These centres team up with a group of rural under resourced schools to assist such schools with staff development strategies and materials development.

Principals have a large role to play in **developing the curriculum**. But curriculum development by principals will only be possible if principals remain students. How many principals are still learning to try and adapt to the changing school situation? It is impossible for principals to encourage teachers and learners to learn while they themselves have stopped learning. Actually principals should be called "head-learners". There is a need for principals' learning centre where principals can learn, and share ideas, as to how to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in this country. There are curricular planners in the university and in the government but the implementation of a curriculum depends heavily on the expertise of the principal. It is therefore very important for the Education Department to take development of school principals seriously, otherwise the transformation of schools which is currently underway may never be fully realised.

#### 4.4.9 Ideogram I

##### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mr I

Name of school: High School 9

Number of learners: 555

Number of teachers: 27

Date of interview: 02-11-2001

##### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

The introduction of **Outcomes Based Education** has been a serious problem. Even at the time of the interview Mr I could not assure the researcher that teachers were teaching according to acceptable OBE procedures. The biggest problem encountered in this district, according to Mr I, was lack of knowledge on the part of OBE facilitators. These lecturers were not fully trained in order to lead teachers. On the other hand Mr I found time management to be a big problem. Teachers and principals were not given enough time to master OBE concepts fully. In Mr I's view teachers and principals should have a year of OBE training before they can start with the implementation of this new approach. Nevertheless High School 9 has started with the implementation of OBE, despite the little knowledge they have. Teachers are exposed to various situations where OBE is implemented to develop their skills. When he visited Gauteng Province earlier that year (2001), Mr I met teachers who were knowledgeable and practical about the whole question of OBE.

There is a great difference between OBE and the old, traditional approach. The teacher in an OBE classroom is very practical, with little talking. There is the idea of helping children to discover things on their own. OBE will work faster with those children whose parents are inquisitive and who respond

positively to education needs and who keep abreast of the developments of the modern world. The only problem is that there is a lack of material. For example, as a rural school there are no newspapers; and children are not exposed to television and computers. There is a dearth as far as dissemination of information is concerned.

There is also still a problem with teachers who refuse to record their preparations for their lessons. Thorough preparation of lessons is, according to Mr I, a prerequisite of an authentic OBE lesson. Many teachers believe preparation of lessons is a waste of time.

**Redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers affected schools extremely adversely, in the sense that it remained controversial. Whenever the principals introduced something they were not sure as to whether the departmental officials would come and say "so and so must go". Teachers themselves did not understand the dictates of Resolution Number Six. Teachers who were declared in excess were highly demoralized, to the extent that they became disruptive elements in the school. They lost concentration altogether and some of the teachers even redeployed themselves. It came to a point where teachers became impatient. Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers was not well handled by the department. In Mr I's opinion teachers were so demoralised that some of the teachers, despite their experiential knowledge, would need in-service education.

Concerning **discipline**, Mr I pointed out that:

**It is my humble belief and conviction that an undisciplined mind will never learn.**

But at High School 9 Mr I tried his level best to instill discipline as a priority in the minds of the parent component of the School Governing Body (SGB). Indeed there is an emphasis on disciplined life at this school. Mr I indicated that he always urged teachers to lead an exemplary life in order to instill discipline in the children.

Mr I added that:

**We are no longer using a sjambok but whenever we scold children, we make sure that we take their parents on board the parents should talk the same language as we do.**

Mr I understood the reason why **the education legislators** in South Africa abolished corporal punishment. It is because of the political and historical background, where many teachers abused corporal punishment. However, according to Mr I, the legislators did not complete their homework. The legislators need to come to the communities with very clear guidelines as to how children should be punished. In Mr I's thinking, the legislators should go back to the drawing board to assist communities with better ways of punishing children.

There is an indication that the question of **discipline** is even more complicated when political ideologies enter the education situation. To make things worse, these ideologies are even carried by teachers. So schools as learning institutions are highly politicised. There is a need for the authorities to come with a programme of depoliticising education and schools in particular. Educationally speaking, teachers are not disciplined. Present day teachers have trained during an era of violence. In their training there was never a means of disciplining people. The biggest problem is that most of these

teachers do not read. They do not acquaint themselves with recent legislation like the South African Schools' Act (SASA), labour laws and ethics. In education, if one wants to gain power it is by reading widely and by living an exemplary, normative disciplined life. The South African Council of Educators (SACE) is also very dormant. For example, in cases where teachers misbehave to the extent of raping children, SACE should come out very strongly to take disciplinary action. It is a pity that SACE is still in a cocoon. Teachers need to feel its existence by seeing it enforcing proper disciplinary measures on teachers. It is insufficient only to see posters speaking on behalf of SACE.

About the question of **crime**, Mr I pointed out that there should be programmes to educate community members about seeing a learning institution as their own. As the principal, Mr I is trying to educate the School Governing Body that they should also educate all the parents about ownership of the school. To realize this, there are three occasions celebrated at High School 9. At the first ceremony the community at large is invited and the main topic is about ownership of the school. The second occasion is a celebration of its cultural heritage. The third ceremony is a farewell to those children who will be leaving the school. There is security at this school so there is no crime. The neighbouring hospital is also very helpful. The hospital security guards and the welfare committees visit the school regularly to guide children on personal matters such as the awareness of HIV/AIDS.

Concerning **inconsistent directives** from the district office, Mr I was very sympathetic with the district authorities. According to him, the inconsistent messages come from head office and the district authorities do not have an option; they have to end up passing them to schools. But local principals try to have regular meetings to help each other to clear up some of the controversies. The district is fortunate now because of the contribution made by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) under the guidance of the Quality

Learning Project (QLP), which is financed by the Joint Education Trust (JET). QLP has made principals in this district strong, reflective managers.

Conflict at school may lead to **principals being killed**. A principal at Mr I's neighbouring school was killed five years ago. The reason for the killing emanated from the question of politicising education, where teachers see themselves as members of a particular union rather than as educators. That is why in its training QLP emphasizes unity and professionalism. The idea of being united would create dividends for the learners. Mr I was optimistic as he had discovered a mutual understanding between major teachers' organisations such as Professional Educators Union (PEU) and South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). There is a less discriminatory attitude about victimising principals on the part of SADTU members.

Mr I found the **district officials very helpful** during difficult times at school. The district manager, Mr M.J. Kganakga, goes to the extent of coming to school to speak to learners and assist in solving problems. However, there is still much to be done to train the parent component of the School Governing Body (SGB) in school management. The school, under the training and guidance of QLP, had courses on finances, as well as management and administration. The parents of High School 9 are improving day by day. QLP started educating teachers, principals, and SGBs of selected schools late in 2000. The main purpose of QLP is to enhance the culture of teaching and learning, and hence the quality of learning in schools in South Africa generally and in Limpopo Province in particular.

With the assistance of QLP Mr I, the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB), together with the teachers, are planning for 2002. QLP has helped the school to draw up a realistic vision and mission statement shared by all the school participants. As a result the school has a

clear direction at the moment. They are preparing a budget, and allocating duties to different teachers for 2002. This implies that by the sixteenth of January 2002 teachers will definitely be starting with their lessons. Mr I praised the input that has been given by the Quality Learning Project, saying:

**QLP made me a proud reflective manager. But the only problem that we have is to take everybody on board – the SGB, teachers and parents.**

In **decision-making** Mr I revealed that they still have to assist one another to make the *right decisions*. There is a need for an expert to assist school participants on teamwork and in decision-making. Mr I also indicated that he lacked knowledge of curriculum development. He therefore saw a need to do research on the historical background of the particular community in which High School 9 is situated, in order to influence decisions in curriculum development. Regarding the aspect of curriculum development, most of the staff members are still lagging behind.

In the education department there is a lack of planning and coordination of activities. This was evident when **staff appraisal** was introduced at the same time as R and R of teachers. Mr I's view is that staff appraisal was not possible because the timing with which it was introduced was conflicting with R and R and the whole scenario changed to a cloudy situation where teachers could not be appraised.

In 2001 it was not possible for Mr I to employ **staff development and staff motivation** programmes. The reason given was that there was a lot of tension at this school, so much so that the climate was not conducive to those programmes being realised. There was a power struggle according to Mr I, and people dented their image by telling lies to the community about financial

instability and corruption at school. Later it was evident that the chairperson of the school governing body was implicated in the matter and he was taken to court. Controversial issues such as this need to be attended to with the understanding and concentration they deserve, otherwise they may become the breeding place for conflict between staff, SGB, learners, parents and the principal.

#### 4.4.10 Ideogram J

#### IDENTIFICATION PARTICULARS

Name of principal: Mr J

Name of school: High School 10

Number of learners: 1045

Number of teachers: 31

Date of interview: 05-11-2001

#### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

The question of **Outcomes Based Education (OBE)** is a problem for the district, especially when it comes to the question of training educators. In Mr J's view the department has already made a very big mistake by implementing OBE before they can train teachers. At the moment there is implementation and training at the same time. Another major problem is that of implementing a project before you train a manager of that project. Principals find it very difficult, as managers in control of schools, to control and even manage OBE. It was just imposed on them. In the district it was only after principals raised the concern that they needed training, that principals were given a one-day lecture. OBE in itself needs a lot of training for one to be able to be acquainted with its terminology. The best thing, according to Mr J, was to introduce OBE



in the form of pilot schools. This implies training a few principals, who in turn will extend the training to all principals in the district.

OBE seems to be a good approach, but the way it has been introduced to schools really leaves much to be desired. Mr J indicated that when coming to the actual teaching, using the OBE approach in a high school, it is just a mess. A high school is regarded as the senior phase as well as Further Education and Training (FET). In a high school, therefore, there are two systems in one. The primary schools also cater for a junior phase, an intermediate phase and part of the senior phase (Grade 7). This division and overlapping of phases in one school creates a problem during the introduction of Outcomes Based Education. There is a problem with making a proper OBE timetable, which differs radically from the old traditional time table. It is a problem with regard to staff because the same teachers who teach in Grade 12, within a system of thirty-five minute periods, have to jump to a Grade 8 or OBE class to offer a one and half hour long OBE lesson. There is therefore great confusion in schools. There is also a radical change in approach, in that in OBE a learning class is not necessarily a quiet class. There is still a lot to do in order to introduce the OBE approach to schools.

**Planning of lessons** is very difficult to enforce. Teachers tell the principal that they are busy with Continuous Assessment and therefore cannot find time to write out their lesson plans. According to Mr J, since 1990 when planning of lessons was classified by teachers as one of the apartheid related activities to oppress them, it has been difficult to convince them to plan lessons again.

OBE tests are good because they ensure that learners attend school regularly. Parents are also encouraged to monitor their children's progress by checking whether learners write tests. The standard of questions set in OBE tests seems to be high, above the academic standards of learners. Most learners

cannot construct a sentence in English so it is difficult for learners to express themselves in OBE tests.

With regard to **redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers Mr J contended that:

**I am still struggling with problems brought about by redeployment and rationalisation of teachers. This thing is a process. Yes, we like to bring equity ... But equity should be done as soon as possible.**

In Mr J's opinion it was a mistake for the Education Department to create equity that would stretch for more than four years, creating loop-holes during the process. At High School 10 three teachers were responsible for commercial subjects and two of them were declared in excess. After these two teachers left the school, the remaining commercial teacher applied for a higher post and was appointed as a principal at another school. Thus the school was left without a commercial teacher.

Another teacher at this school received an approval letter in June 1999 to be redeployed to Bochum district. In August 2001 another approval letter came to the same teacher redeploying him to Region 1. The department's administrative procedure is too long. In the lengthy redeployment and rationalisation process the department even "forgets" some of the decisions it made. The department decided to charge the teacher with misconduct as if he had refused to be redeployed to Region 1. That is how redeployment and rationalisation of teachers left much confusion in principals and teachers alike.

There are many **disciplinary problems** at this school because it is a semi-urban school. However, Mr J orientates new teachers and parents that

because of the type of learners, one needs to be exemplary and careful in decision-making. There is full cooperation on the part of parents and the SGB. The school achieves awards in activities such as drum majorettes and aerobics.

The period of transition with its over emphasis on human rights and the right to strike on the part of teachers brought many problems to schools and principals in particular. Many high school principals are very lenient and meek. They are afraid to tell teachers the truth. Mr J pointed out that:

**... otherwise you will be in trouble. You will see yourself going out of the school yard forever.**

Most teachers who are at high schools are more political than educational. They have the right to react to what you say. They will say "there is no corporal punishment; what do you expect us to do?" If the principal is pressing them to do the work they in turn press the learners and this will be by means of corporal punishment. The learners also know about their rights and the abolition of corporal punishment. So, the question of discipline is difficult and complex. The department should come straight to teachers if they want discipline to be back in schools and want to de-politicise schools.

The problem of **discipline** is related to conflict between principals and teachers, which may lead to the principal being killed. The principal is a prominent figure in the school as well as in the community in general. The relationship between the department and the principal is also a contributing factor. Principals are not protected; instead they are used by the Education Department to provoke teachers. The position of the principal, the way he/ she is sent to supervise the work of teachers, creates hostility. Tension is created by the department when they send the principal to pass a message to teachers:

a message which should not be questioned. The money that is handled at school also puts the principal's position in jeopardy. Many criminals may think the principal has money and decide to attack him/her. The implications of legislation during strike action single the principal out. Before going on strike, the principal must complete a form forty eight hours prior to the strike. But teachers are allowed to go on strike at any time without any obstacle. These issues create a rift between principals and teachers and may lead to the deaths of many principals. The department should revise their relationship with principals as well as teachers. They should also provide schools with trained security guards.

There is a tendency in the Education Department to issue a directive today and tomorrow to cancel it. For example, in this district, the procedure of short-listing for interviews in the filling of deputy principals' posts had to be done again. At some schools in the same district the procedure is going to be repeated for the third time. Interviewing candidates for the second time does not give the same results. Even if candidates are the same, marks will not be the same because interviews are a highly subjective method of evaluation. Mr J said:

**I realised that the department should come to its senses and please give us one direction ... and it ends there. Maybe they must get an adviser because, legally, the whole problem of repeating the selection process has got legal implications.**

There were always **contradictory directives** during the introduction of OBE, and in the process of redeployment and rationalisation of teachers. Contradictions and lack of consistency create much conflict between teachers and principals.

Managing such a big school without **planning and delegation** of duties is impossible. For example, as the principal, Mr J is only able to manage and control the external examination (Grade 12) while the Heads of Department (HODs) are in charge of internal examinations (Grade 8, 9, 10 and 11). Concerning delegation Mr J feels very strongly. There are, however, doubts as to whether HOD's feel confident in their duties because they do not have enough power to convince teachers to do the work as expected.

**Staff development, staff appraisal**, as well as **classroom observation** are not done whole-heartedly. It would be difficult for principals to employ staff appraisal because:

**... some of our teachers ... they don't see themselves as under developed. They see themselves as developed and complete. As long as they come to school and go away.**

According to Mr J it would be better for the department to review **staff appraisal** and relate it to **staff motivation** incentives. As far as class-visits and classroom observations are concerned, they are very difficult to implement because of the negative attitudes on the part of teachers. At High School 10 there are more than seventy learners in a classroom. Sometimes the principal visits a teacher with the aim of assisting the teacher in such a crowded classroom. As the principal, he tries to give the teacher advice and tips as to how to control the students and how to handle the subject matter. Mr J said:

**I have a problem of teacher's attitudes denying me to just visit his/her classroom. Well we don't know because we are of the old school of thought.**

**School goals are formulated** and targets for the examination results are clearly displayed but these goals are never fully achieved because of the problems mentioned thus far. The question of abolishing corporal punishment left a vacuum to be filled in the schooling system. Employing effective discipline – who is going to discipline children and how is it going to be done? Theory is very different from practice. This was evident when Mr J called a parent of a child who hit his classmate with a brick the other day. After a discussion with the parent the principal offered the child a spade and told him to clean up the school-yard. The student simply said:

**I am not going to do that ... do you understand me?**

The student easily defied the punishment in front of the teacher, the parent and the principal. The parent wanted to hit the child but Mr J showed him the implications of the law. The child has "rights". So what! That is why Mr J said, there is a gap between what is stated in the law and the actual practice, which is more complicated than a mere written document.

As in other schools, there is **crime** at High School 10. There was a burglary at this school in May, 2001. Three computers and the Hi-fi set were stolen. The matter was reported to the police. Knowing very well that the police would never do a thing, teachers took it upon their shoulders to investigate the matter. They were aware that criminal elements were present among their own school children and therefore it was very easy to trace the cases. These computers were found and are used by the school again.

#### **4.5 SUMMARISED EVALUATIONS AND COMMENTS**

In the previous section the researcher presented the views of school principals in Limpopo Province concerning the ways in which they experience their role

as educational managers and instructional leaders. That which has been presented is mainly the principals' own words summarised and sometimes rephrased. In order to capture the immediacy of the interviews, the grammatical rules regarding reported speech have sometimes been disregarded.

In the following section the researcher wishes to make summarised evaluations of the content of the ideograms, guided by the nature and the demands of the research.

□ **PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS, LEADING TO THE ABSENCE OF A CULTURE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

Principals were concerned about difficult working conditions experienced in the management of schools as a barrier to enhancing a culture of teaching and learning (cf. 1.1.3.1; Ideograms B, C, D, F, I and J). For example, in small schools there is an inadequate staff which cannot meet the requirements of implementing Outcomes Based Education, with its diverse number of learning areas (cf. Ideogram B). There are schools without enough accommodation and teachers who are responsible for large classes, ranging from fifty to eighty learners (cf. Ideograms D, F and J). There is a lack of facilities such as electricity, technological equipment (computers and photocopying machines, fax machine and telephone). Water is also a problem. Outcomes Based Education is teaching about life as it is lived. It is therefore very difficult for teachers to introduce children to life without water (cf. Ideogram H). Principals feel that in general there has not been much change in education since the inception of the new government (cf. Ideogram B).

Almost all the respondents agree that the Outcomes Based Education approach has not been grasped by teachers and principals (cf. 1.1.3.6;

Ideograms A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I and J). It was not appropriate for the department to exclude or marginalize principals in the initial stages of introducing OBE to Grade one teachers in 1998 (cf. Ideograms H and J). School principals found it incomprehensible for the Department of Education to exclude them when the whole system of teaching and learning was changed. Respondents discovered that the curriculum advisers who taught teachers about OBE courses also lacked expertise in the methodology (cf. Ideograms A, F, H and I). It was also unacceptable, in the principals' view, to expect teachers to change the teaching skills that they had learned and practised for many years, in two or three days (cf. Ideograms A, I and J). Grade one teachers were ordered by the Education Department to change timetables and textbooks without the knowledge of the principals as school managers.

It is evident, therefore, that there is little chance for the new Outcomes Based Education approach to succeed because of lack of expertise on the part of curriculum advisers, teachers and particularly principals, who have never had a formal course on Outcomes Based Education.

Because of difficult working conditions such as shortage of staff, large classes and lack of technological equipment OBE is still a theory rather than practice (cf. Ideograms B, D, F, H and I). This implies that it is difficult to implement OBE because it is believed that OBE requires a minimum of eight teachers for the eight learning areas at a school (Ideogram B). Another revelation is the problem of resistance by teachers to planning their daily lessons, particularly at high schools (cf. Ideograms A C, I and J). Teachers find it a waste of time to record what they are supposed to teach.

All the respondents unanimously agree that the basic requirement of enhancing a culture of teaching and learning is the restoration of discipline in both children and teachers (cf. 1.1.3.4; Ideograms A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I and J). It has also been revealed that the calibre of teachers, the way teachers exemplify



their responsibility and commitment to hard work, determines to a large extent the maintenance of discipline at school (cf. Ideograms A, D, E, H and J). There is also a close relationship between the attainment of self-discipline and hard work by both parents and teachers. Most learners who are unruly lack effective guidance from parents (Ideograms F and H). Teachers' absenteeism, tardiness and sometimes drunkenness are also the root of disciplinary problems. There is also evidence of fewer disciplinary problems in a school where the parents and community are respectful, well behaved and well mannered (cf. Ideogram B). It is important for teachers to adhere to their timetables in the classrooms (cf. Ideogram C) and live according to norms of propriety inside and outside the school (cf. Ideograms E and I).

Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers has been a mystery to both principals and teachers alike (cf. 1.1.3.7; Ideograms A, B, C, D, F, G, H, I and J). Although the idea of equity among teachers at different schools was acceptable (cf. Ideograms B, C and J) principals were worried about the manner in which rationalisation and redeployment of teachers was implemented. Excess teachers were highly demotivated because of a feeling of insecurity in the profession, hence their lack of enthusiasm in their new stations (cf. Ideograms D and H). Some of the excess teachers were not sure as to whether they would find work elsewhere or not. According to the present researcher the low morale and conflict created by redeployment and rationalisation of teachers will not be cured overnight. There is still a stigma attached to principals who declared certain teachers to be in excess because of personal attitudes. There are teachers who may be charged with misconduct because of a delay in administration during rationalization and redeployment of teachers (cf. Ideogram J). There is no longer a mutually trusting relationship between teachers and the principal. A mutual respect between the principal and teachers, which is a prerequisite for a sound culture of teaching and learning in schools, has gone, and probably gone for ever.

Respondents expressed concern at the escalating crime rate in South Africa generally, and particularly in schools (cf. 1.1.3.8). Enhancing a culture of teaching and learning is difficult in schools if such a culture does not exist in the community (cf. 1.1.1). This has been true for some of the principals (cf. Ideogram B), who found a close relationship between the absence of crime and vandalism at school and good behaviour and adherence to values of society in the community.

Respondents are worried about the implications of education legislation in their daily education management practice (cf.1.1.3.5; Ideograms A, C, D, F, H, I and J). According to these principals it was incorrect for the Constitution of South Africa and the South African Schools Act to abolish corporal punishment (cf. Ideograms A, C, D, F, H, I and J). Parents have not taught their children to accept norms of good behaviour (cf. Ideograms F and H). Teachers have also not been taught as to how to apply a substitute for corporal punishment. Principals also found that in South Africa the implications of beating have been exaggerated to the extent that it is called corporal punishment. In the researcher's view, corporal punishment is a harsh term with several negative connotations. In its modest sense, beating children is normal and if it is done in a very responsible way as a correctional measure (cf. Ideograms A, C, D and H) it can yield good results. The South African education legislation with its emphasis on human rights and the rights of learners and teachers, disregarding their responsibilities and obligations, leads to a disruptive culture in schools (Ideogram A, C, D, F, H, I and J). There are, however, principals who supported the abolishment of corporal punishment (cf. Ideograms E and G).

In general the education authorities, principals, teachers, parents and learners do not share the same understanding of the manner in which discipline should be maintained at schools. This differing understanding of democracy and human rights in the long run makes it difficult for the school participants,

particularly principals, teachers and learners to relate well. It is, however, on the basis of the ability of these different groups of people to relate well that the meaningful discipline which is a prerequisite for a sound culture of teaching and learning can be established (Ngoepe, 1997:36).

Respondents made it clear that it is unthinkable to root out racism in such a short space of time in South Africa generally, and in Limpopo Province in particular (cf. 1.1.3.9; Ideograms C, D, E, G and H). Principals who are confronted with managing a multicultural population at schools concurred that the problems with race emanate mostly from parents and teachers, i.e. from adults. In South Africa, transformation of society should include a change of attitude and beliefs on the part of the school participants. Adults should exemplify an acceptance of a multicultural setting as a way of life for the children (cf. Ideograms E, G and H). There would be no racial tensions if parents and teachers' teachings were based on unity, celebration of cultural difference, and learning different cultural ways of living with pride. According to the respondents (cf. Ideogram E) adults in a country such as South Africa should make the children aware that life is about every one's culture. No culture is more important than the other. The idea of seeing one culture as superior to another is unacceptable for educational reasons. At home and at school, children should be exposed to the values of tolerance, respect, sharing, which are in essence the basis of combating racism. Therefore, the problem of racism, according to the respondents, cannot be confined to school principals alone. Racism is the problem of the whole community and of society in general.

#### □ **EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**

Although there is a difference in approach there is a clear indication that the respondents adhered to the principles of educational management such as planning, organising, controlling, delegation and decision-making (cf. 2.3.2 –

3.8; Ideograms A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I and J). However the plans were not followed to the letter because of unavoidable interruptions, for example: teachers' lack of enthusiasm, parents' visits and district official meetings and administrative needs (cf. Ideograms A, C, F and J).

Most principals have formulated clear school goals and objectives (cf. 2.3.2). It has, however, been difficult for some of the schools to work according to their vision and mission since principals are so busy that they forget to remind the school participants about those goals (Ideogram F). Respondents equated high academic standards with a high Grade Twelve or matric pass rate (cf. Ideograms A, C, G). There are, however, principals who have a broader view of school achievement, as something more than matric students passing the examinations (cf. Ideogram E): those who rate school success in terms of students attaining success in tertiary institutions and in life.

Although the respondents agreed that school goals and objectives are formulated, they seem to be related to a large extent to a high academic standard, which is associated with one hundred percent of the matric students passing (cf. Ideogram A, C, E and G). There is a problem, according to the researcher, if the high education standard implies only a high examination pass rate (Ideogram E). Excellence in education should involve a high standard of normative living at tertiary institutions and later in life. It seems that in most schools teachers succeed in giving students ample information to pass the examination, but one wonders as to whether these students are indeed educated. Sometimes the goals, vision and mission are drawn up and put on paper but are later forgotten (Ideogram F). The reason given is that principals are often kept so busy with daily routine administrative duties that it becomes difficult to remind teachers and learners about the school goals.

In the principals' view there is poor communication between schools and the Department of Education through the district authorities. Principals are worried

about the speed with which the district officials need information from schools (cf. Ideograms A, B, C, D, F, G, and H). Information received late, after the submission date has expired, is a stressor to the principals and teachers. There are also inconsistencies regarding the guidelines given to principals on most pertinent issues, such as the termination of the services of temporary teachers and the filling of deputy principals' posts (cf. 1.1.3.2; Ideograms G and J). The administrative demands from the department through the district authorities are in most cases disrupting the culture of teaching and learning (Ideogram F). According to many respondents most of the education authorities do not have proper managerial skills and hence the duplication of vague, inconsistent information through circulars (Ideogram A, D, C F, G and J). There is poor filing or saving and retrieving of information, which is the reason why the same statistical information may be needed more than once (Ideogram A).

#### □ **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP**

The respondents indicated that instructional supervision – staff development, staff motivation – is directly or indirectly employed at most schools (cf. 3.4.4 - 3.4.5; Ideograms B, D, E, F and H). Principals sometimes develop teachers in formal staff meetings and in the form of report-backs from courses or seminars when they discuss pertinent issues like Outcomes Based Education Assessment Strategies (cf. Ideograms C, D, E, F, G, H). In well-resourced schools, principals arrange educational tours with staff, or invite an expert to enlighten or address teachers on a particular issue (cf. Ideograms G and H).

There is evidence, however, that at other schools conflict and tension between school participants made the performance of instructional leadership tasks very difficult (Ideograms I and J). For example, respondents had difficulties in implementing staff appraisal (cf. 3.4.6). Principals criticised the Education Department in Limpopo Province for not having clarity on how appraisal should

be implemented in schools (cf. Ideograms A, D and F). Most principals rejected not only the timing (cf. Ideograms D and I) of introducing teacher appraisal simultaneously with redeployment and rationalisation of teachers, but also the procedure which had to be followed when teachers were supposed to be appraised (cf. Ideogram F). The existing appraisal document requires that the appraisee choose a friend or peer to be included in the appraisal panel. This is unacceptable because appraisal, according to some principals, is a form of supervision that needs to measure the teachers' performance regardless (cf. 3.4.1.1 and Ideogram F). It is also a waste of time, according to respondents, to appraise teachers who are reluctant to prepare their daily lessons in the first place (cf. Ideograms A, C, I and J). According to principals some young teachers also do not feel they need development. They see themselves as educated, complete and self-sufficient and developmental appraisal would be a waste of time for such teachers (cf. Ideogram J). At some schools appraisal had been haphazardly done to please the education authorities (cf. Ideograms A and B).

Staff motivation is also done at some schools while others do staff motivation on a very limited scale. Principals indicated honestly that most of the intervention they do at school is related to management of conflict, which results in forgetting to see the "good" in teachers (cf. Ideograms D and I). The highest and most important intrinsic motivation, according to some of the respondents, is the success that teachers achieve (cf. Ideogram G).

Educationally speaking, most of the schools do not have functional, effective School Governing Bodies (SGBs) (cf. Ideograms A, C, D and F), possibly because of the illiteracy of most of the parents. It is important for all the school participants to have a focus on the whole school. The school participants, the principal, teachers, parents, students and the SGB all work together to achieve the same goal, which is educative teaching (cf. Ideogram C and E). There is evidence of the SGB members fighting for power or being reluctant to

cooperate with the principals and thus dragging the school in several directions, leading to a demise of the culture of teaching and learning. There are indications at urban schools, however, that (cf. Ideograms E, G and H) parents and the SGB are very supportive.

Respondents do not see their role as being curriculum development. It is an omission on the part of the department to sideline principals in curriculum planning, because principals are the main people who know the demands of the community and what should be taught to the youth (cf. Ideogram A). Anything that is introduced at an institution which excludes the views of the expert who gives direction and tone to the institution is likely to be flawed (cf. Ideogram H). The curriculum planners at universities and the politicians who are responsible for curriculum development will succeed only if principals as head-learners are involved. This changes the role of principals and teachers from that of a mere civil servant to that of intellectual (Ideogram H). Intellectuals are critical and are able to question why they teach what they teach. It has been revealed that the introduction of Outcomes Based Education empowers principals, as well as teachers, to develop the curriculum (cf. Ideogram D). It is a pity that most principals and teachers may lack expertise, because curriculum development is a highly specialised field of study (cf. Ideograms D and I).

Respondents said that they lived an exemplary life, exemplifying norms of professionalism to teachers and children (cf. 3.7.5 and Ideograms A, B, E, H and I). The principals observed that when there is a contradiction between what the teacher or principal is saying and what he/she is actually doing, learners tend to believe in actions rather than words. Professionalism, according to the researcher, includes actual classroom teaching by principals (cf. Ideogram A, B, C, and E), formal dress, punctuality, sharing ideas and imparting instructional leadership skills to teachers.

In the section that follows, specific evaluations of the ideographic information are made.

#### **4.6 A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS EDUCATIONAL MANAGER AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER**

Reflecting on the respondents' views in the ideograms concerning the principals' roles as educational managers and instructional leaders, the specific evaluations can now be made. The researcher realises that without this critical evaluation this research, through its analysis, findings, and conclusion will remain at the theoretical level (Ngoepe, 1997:68). It may run the risk of losing sight of the practical reality and implications of the main issues that have already been revealed in the previous chapters, such as the problems experienced by school principals in reaction to what is actually going on in schools.

The researcher attempts to evaluate whether there are indeed problems and, if so, to establish how principals deal with these problems. The researcher also wants to determine the enactment of the role of the school principal, by evaluating the existing educational management and instructional leadership practices using the criteria that have been formulated in the previous chapters. An evaluation is made of how the principals react to the problems revealed in the literature study in an attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning. The criteria which were formulated in chapter two (cf. 2.4.1 – 2.4.7) and in chapter three (cf. 3.7.1 - 3.7.6) will be applied as questions, to determine the authenticity of the role of the school principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in practice.



## □ REACTION TO PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY PRINCIPALS

Almost all the principals interviewed agreed that the introduction of **Outcomes Based Education** was not well carried out (cf. 1.1.3.6; Ideograms A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I and J). The principals, as well as teachers, are not clear about the new approach. Most schools have not changed very much, if at all. Teachers' approaches to teaching remain unchanged. The curriculum advisers who introduced OBE to teachers lacked answers to some of the important questions. The **difficult working conditions** such as insufficient staff, lack of classroom accommodation and lack of technological equipment also make the implementation of OBE very difficult, if not impossible (cf. Ideograms B, D, H and I). The researcher is, however, optimistic that Outcomes Based Education has a chance to succeed in well-resourced schools (cf. Ideograms G and H).

The tension that has been created by **redeployment and rationalisation** of teachers has far reaching implications for a sound culture of teaching and learning in schools. Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers is the reason for an unacceptable staffing procedure at many new schools (cf. 1.1.3.7 and Ideogram D). Redeployment and rationalisation is also responsible for the low morale of many teachers and principals, as well as, for the conflict that prevails at many schools (cf. Ideograms C, F, G, I and J).

It has been revealed **that racial (cf.1.1.3.9) and disciplinary problems** (cf. 1.1.3.4) at school are caused by lack of insight on the part of adults. There is lack of proper knowledge of an acceptable intervention on the part of parents and teachers with regard to racism. By being indolent in their duties, teachers are to a large extent responsible for disciplinary problems experienced at most schools (cf. Ideograms A, C, D, E and I). It is assumed that teachers who prepare their lesson thoroughly, who know their subject matter before going to class, report no disciplinary problems (Ideogram E, and Ngoepe, 1997:78).

The implications of **education legislation** in terms of corporal punishment and its emphasis on the freedoms and rights of teachers and learners are unacceptable to principals. There are no proper punishment strategies ready for principals and teachers to use (cf. ideograms C, D, F, H, I and J). Lack of parental involvement and a disregard of human values have added more disciplinary problems (cf. Ideograms D, E, F and H).

The problems of **crime and vandalism** (cf. 1.1.3.8) at schools are related to the kind of society there is in South Africa (cf. Ideograms C, H, I and J). It is difficult to have an organized, stable school within a community that is immoral and full of criminal incidents. To eradicate crime will not be the role of the school principals only. It is the responsibility of parents to teach their children human values and good morals. It is, on the other hand, the responsibility of the government, through the services of the police, to join hands with the community so as to enforce the law in order to root out crime. From the researcher's experience there is a difference between school participants and the police in perception of crime. According to the police, it is a waste of time to search for the stolen solar panels, stoves and sewing machines reported by schools (cf. Ideogram C) because those goods are often stolen. There is therefore a lack of support, or proper police service, in most of the community schools (cf. Ideograms C and J).

Principals **lack proper educative support and guidance from the district authorities** (cf. 1.1.3.2; Ideograms A, B, C, D, F and G). **The inconsistent directives** given by the education authorities make the principals' decision-making very difficult (cf. Ideogram J). **Administrative incompetence** on the part of the district authorities, in asking for the same information more than once, is unacceptable to principals. Requesting a submission of information at the last moment causes the district authorities to be time wasters. In most instances principals are unable to give accurate information because of the

speed at which it is needed. It is worth mentioning, though, that some principals were optimistic about their relationship with the district authorities (Ideograms E, H and I). In a transition, according to these principals, inconsistencies are inevitable. It was also pointed out that the education district offices were understaffed, which may be the reason for the slow machinery of administration and for their not visiting schools (cf. Ideograms E and I).

- **EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT**
- **Is attention given to a wide range of planning strategies, short term, medium and long term planning (cf. 2.3.2)?**

Most principals do plan in advance (cf. Ideograms A, C, E, F, G and H) and revise the plans according to circumstances. It has, however, been revealed that almost every day managerial practices do not work out according to the plan, because the school management is not immune to many interruptions.

- **Are the school participants clear about the goals of education in general and of their school in particular (cf. 2.4.2)?**

At some schools clear educational goals are formulated and adhered to (Ideograms A, C, E, G and I), while at other schools the goals are forgotten, and because of the reluctance of teachers to work very hard it is impossible to reach the outcomes of the envisaged goals (Ideograms F and J). In the researcher's opinion school goals are related to achievement in tests and examinations (cf. Ideograms A, C, E and G). The principals' conceptions of high standards are still trapped in the vocabulary of schooling for entry into the labour market and the improvement of economic power (Smyth, 1987:13). Missing, in such goals, is the focus on creating democratic public cultures, seeking ways of addressing homelessness, HIV/AIDS, starvation and racism

which are rampant in South Africa generally and in Limpopo Province in particular. In the present discourse about transformation of schooling, educational management and instructional leadership includes principals being engaged in a paradigm shift by viewing schools as part of the broader society. In such a shift of thinking, school goals will not only emphasise economic power but they will, broadly speaking, also address problems of life as experienced by school children.

- **Do the persons involved in decision-making have competence and skills in the areas in which decisions have to be made (cf. 2.4.3)?**

There is evidence that most members of the parent community and the School Governing Body lack knowledge in the areas where decisions have had to be made. There are also teachers who lack knowledge of educational management but who are members of the School Governing Body. Lack of knowledge in decision-making leads to a destruction of the creative thinking emanating from some principals' initiative (cf. Ideograms A, D and F). Many of the SGB members, both teachers and parents, lack decision making skills and their ignorance is retarding the progress of the schools (Ideograms C, F and I).

- **Are tasks clear to the people who should execute them (cf. 2.4.4)?**

If the SGB and most principals are not clear about how to manage and lead schools, it is impossible for them to execute the management task properly (cf. Ideograms A, B and I). From the researcher's experience and observations most principals, particularly those who find it difficult to upgrade themselves in the field of educational management, cannot cope with the present day school situation (cf. Ideograms A, B, H and I). The manner in which the Department of Education transforms the schools system in itself induces some principals and teachers to feel left behind. Consequently, some principals and teachers

become critical, sceptical, and in some instances even hopeless about their tasks, which are aimed at transforming schools (Ngoepe, 1997:83). Furthermore, most of the SGB members, parents and teachers do not understand their roles. This is a source of conflict in many schools, which leads to the absence of a culture of teaching and learning (cf. Ideograms A, C, D, F and I). Some of the SGB members regard it as their duty to police the principal (cf. Ideogram A), while others perceive their roles as being the “boss” of the principal (cf. Ideograms C, E and F). The Learner Representative Council (LRC) is not conversant with its managerial role within school management (cf. Ideograms C and I). According to the researcher, these trivial, minute things are the main source of the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. Educationally speaking, in most cases tasks are not clear to the people who should execute them. It is important in the researcher’s opinion, and according to Smyth (1987: 13), that every school participant:

**... knows about his /her own field, has a wide breadth of knowledge ... develops theory and questions theory on the basis of further experience.**

- **Is delegation used effectively to form a means of developing staff (cf. 2.4.5)?**

Principals delegated tasks to the teachers and SGB where possible. Respondents indicated that tasks were delegated and teachers executed them successfully, as expected. For example, initial planning of lessons by teachers is controlled by the deputy principals and relevant Heads of Departments (cf. Ideograms B, C, D, E, F, G, H). Senior teachers who are acting as Heads of Departments are also delegated tasks such as admission of learners and compiling statistical information (cf. Ideogram A). The final responsibility for the successful completion of the tasks lies with the principal, who in turn has to

control the work. However there are teachers who resist performing the tasks delegated by the principal, who would regard implementing delegated tasks as oppression (cf. Ideogram F and J). The research revealed that most of the education tasks delegated by the district office to principals are in many instances regarded as automatic: there seems to be no alternative but to comply (Greene in Smyth, 1987:13). It is therefore not a question of tasks being clear, relevant and understandable. It is a question of principals being public servants or carriers of departmental messages, whether palatable or not (cf. Ideogram J). In a democracy there is a need for principals and teachers to be intellectuals rather than mere civil or public servants (cf. Ideograms D and H). Intellectuals are people who question why, what and how they perform tasks, people who join the struggle to have a form of control over some of the educational tasks they perform.

- **Are there sufficient mechanisms to exercise control before, during and after completion of work (cf. 2.4.6)?**

Principals controlled the work of the teachers either once a month or once a quarter. Principals still control or observe teachers' lessons, to see whether what is recorded as preparation of work is indeed put into practice (cf. Ideograms C, D, G and H). However, there is evidence that effective control is not possible at some of the schools (cf. Ideograms A, C, F, I and J) because teachers are reluctant to keep proper administrative records such as their preparation of lessons. The research revealed that the question of supervision is still a debatable issue between principals as supervisors and teachers in schools, and it could be the reason why teachers in secondary schools are reluctant to plan their lessons (Ideogram I).

- **Do the tasks delegated to principals suit their competency and skills (2.4.7)?**

It was revealed that not all the tasks delegated to principals by the departmental authorities are intelligible and clear (cf. Ideograms A, B, D, F, G, H and J). Most principals did not understand the formula calculated to reveal excess teachers at schools (cf. Ideograms A, B, C, F, G, H and I.) The task of teacher appraisal was also not intelligible to principals, hence their reluctance to do it. The initial implementation of a new approach to teaching in the form of Outcomes Based Education, without prior knowledge on the part of principals, was also incomprehensible (cf. Ideograms H and J). From the present researcher's experience it is doubtful as to whether OBE is perceived and implemented as a changed approach to teaching and learning in schools. Educationally speaking, little structural change has occurred in the actual classroom teaching. The majority of time is still spent on teachers lecturing, and learners listening or reading textbooks. Teachers are still talking to learners while learners are sitting and daydreaming (Glickman, 1991:5). The task of differentiating between the old, traditional approach to teaching and the new OBE approach did not suit the competency and skills of both principals and teachers. As Common (in: Smyth, 1987:5) aptly maintains: "**The power to change teaching does not lie in the hands of education reformers ...**" but in the hands of principals (cf. Ideograms H and J) as educational managers and instructional leaders, and of teachers as facilitators.

- **INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION**
- **Is the principal building the school culture (cf. 3.7.2)?**

Although principals did not indicate that they build the school culture, as a concept found in the literature, there is evidence that at some schools

principals organize culture days to celebrate and revive their different culture activities (cf. Ideograms E and I). In the researcher's opinion most of the management and instructional activities mentioned by the principals are geared towards enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

□ **Do principals demonstrate professional responsibility (3.7.3)?**

In the light of what the respondents stated, principals do demonstrate professional responsibility (cf. Ideograms A, B, C, E, G, H and I). It was possible for these leaders to indicate their ability to direct staff by being punctual, neat, responsible and working very hard (cf. Ideograms A, B, C, E, G, H and I). However, within the postmodern concept of leadership, the research revealed that professionalism includes more than being neat and punctual. Professionalism implies a will to challenge the *status quo*. As leaders of the new South Africa, according to Giroux (1992:15), principals' professionalism includes remaining head learners (cf. Ideograms H and I) and being in the forefront of this country's struggle to find an acceptable definition of democracy. It is in the school that democracy should find its proper expression.

□ **Are principals knowledgeable (3.7.5)?**

In the researcher's opinion the principals interviewed do have knowledge of pedagogy and of educational management. Authors of education literature such as Cawood and Gibbon (1985:2), however, believe that a competent teacher is a growing teacher (cf. 3.6). People are never completely educated. It is for this reason that in a post apartheid era, a major challenge to principals is, according to the researcher, to remain students and adhere to the principles of life-long learning. No principal can urge children and staff, parents and the SGB, to learn while he/ she is not learning himself or herself (Ideogram H and I). The changing nature of education and of the school system in particular



requires principals to keep abreast with developments and to be able to lead all the school participants with confidence.

□ **Are principals involved in curriculum development (cf. 3.4.3)?**

Initially, principals did not have a role to play in curriculum development (cf. Ideograms A, G and H). The principals found it strange to be left out when the new curriculum was developed because they are the main people who monitor the implementation of the learning content. It is also incomprehensible because principals are people who know the needs of the community they serve and will possibly know what the youth should be taught (cf. Ideograms A and H).

It is worth noting that, with the advent of OBE, some principals found themselves being responsible for development of the curriculum. In their curriculum development principals should focus on current problems faced by all communities, such as health care, teenage pregnancy, drugs, violence, crime and racial discrimination (cf. Ideograms D and E). Principals should also be aware that as well as addressing how these issues impact on schools and undermine the culture of teaching and learning, Outcomes Based Education focuses on Continuous Assessment (CASS), Continuous Assessment Tasks (CAT) and External Assessment Tasks (EAT) (Giroux, 1992: 6). The researcher concurs with those principals who thought that curriculum development would not be an easy task for many teachers and principals (cf. Ideograms D and I). Many teachers and principals are familiar with prescriptive syllabi and will find it very difficult to formulate learning content suitable for their specific learners.

□ **Are principals motivating staff (cf. 3.7.4)?**

Principals motivate staff by means of praise and incentives when they have done something impressive (Ideograms F, G and H). There are, however,

indications from the principals' point of view that much of the time principals see themselves mainly as solving conflict and this causes them to forget to appreciate teachers' achievements (Ideogram D).

Developmental appraisal should also be linked with staff motivation. This implies that the appraised teachers should be given incentives by the department (Ideogram J)

□ **Are principals engaged in staff development (cf. 3.7.4)?**

There were mixed findings about principals' experiences concerning staff development. Although there are no formal staff development programmes, it is evident that principals engage in staff development in various ways (cf. Ideograms D, E, F, G and H). Most principals extended OBE courses at school level. Staff development was also done by means of teachers from different schools clustering to assist each other with the OBE approach. Some principals organised educational tours, with the aim of developing staff on certain pertinent issues such as OBE assessment strategies (cf. Ideograms G and H). To develop staff, principals invited experts in specific fields to educate staff about – for example – effective parental involvement (cf. Ideograms H and I). There is, however, evidence that some of the principals were totally unable to implement staff development because of a culture that was not conducive to such programmes (cf. Ideograms I and J) at schools.

□ **Do principals demonstrate positive human relations (cf. 3.7.3)?**

There are positive human relations between principals, parents, staff, education authorities and learners, but the impression should not be created that schools are peaceful and orderly institutions. On the contrary, there is resistance by some teachers with regard to planning of lessons, being

punctual, chatting during working hours, which often makes the relationship between the principal and teachers unsound (cf. Ideograms A, C, D, F, G, I and J). The inconsistent directives from the department during redeployment and rationalisation of teachers, and also during the introduction of OBE, created hostility between principals and teachers. A tendency of the education department, particularly in Limpopo Province, to repeat procedures relating to filling of promotion posts – short-listing and interviewing potential candidates – provokes conflict between teachers and principals (Ideogram J).

There are sometimes tensions between the School Governing Body (SGB) and the principals, where there is a conflict over power (cf. Ideograms C, F and I). This implies that the school participants should be taught that their roles at school are not contradictory (cf. Ideogram E). According to Tanner and Tanner (1978:63) the school is an organic, as opposed to a mechanistic, form of organisation. In an organic organisation such as a school the members are viewed as working for a common goal (cf. Ideogram H) and their work is continually redefined through interaction with one another. In the words of Gersten (in: Tanner and Tanner, 1987:63):

**On the whole, it makes more sense to consider a team approach in which critical support functions are carried out by those most able to perform – not only by the principal.**

Education relationships are often adversely affected by the tendency to misinterpret human rights as meaning that teachers and learners are equals. In the teaching-learning situation this idea is echoed by Morrow (in: Ngoepe, 1997:36) who maintained that educative relationships cannot be relationships between equals. Morrow further averred that it was misleading to suggest that learners can manage their own education. Education relationships cannot be

relationships among equals because teachers are more experienced in life and more knowledgeable than learners.

- **Are principals employing effective communication (cf. 3.3.2 and 3.7.1)?**

From the information acquired in the interviews the assumption can be made that principals are effective communicators. They are communicating most of the information about the objectives, vision and mission of the school to the teachers, learners and parents alike. It was, however, also evident that at some schools the education standard of many parents and SGB members is lower than the required standard. It is therefore doubtful as to whether what is communicated by principals is really understood and put in practice.

- **Are principals change agents (cf. 3.3.3 and 3.7.4)?**

Principals are seen as change agents, although they were left out when the whole system of education was supposed to change (Ideograms A, H and J). It was also evident that generally, many principals were unable to adapt to the changes brought about by the new political dispensation in South Africa (cf. Ideograms A and B). It was difficult for those principals to phase out the school hierarchical structure and introduce democratic principles of negotiations and collaborative decision-making. These principals had such stressful situations that some of them decided to leave the profession (Ideograms A and B).

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter the researcher has evaluated the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province. A qualitative approach in the form of ideograms has been employed. The

ideograms that have been gleaned from interviews with a sample of principals in Limpopo Province have been included in this chapter. In the last section of the chapter summarised evaluations and comments were given. The criteria which were determined from the literature study (chapter two and chapter three) have been applied to determine whether the enactment of the role of school principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in Limpopo Province was authentic or not.

The findings from interviews with principals revealed that the role of principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in Limpopo Province was not authentically enacted. The ideographic information and literature study in chapter two and chapter three revealed that the role of the principal in Limpopo Province did not meet most of the essentials characterising authentic educational management and instructional leadership. The research findings indicated that although school goals are formulated, principals indicated that in most cases these goals are not fully achieved because of teachers' reluctance to plan their lessons and teach effectively. There is lack of control of the teachers' work by principals because teachers' rights are protected by their respective teachers' unions. Principals were unable to guide and supervise teachers in performing instructional tasks because principals were not well trained in Outcomes Based Education.

In chapter five the researcher will summarise the findings that emanated from both the relevant literature as well as the ideographic research, in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations concerning the authentic enactment of the role of principals as educational managers and instructional leaders in Limpopo Province.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARISED FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In essence this research has focused generally on the authentic enactment of the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader in promoting a culture of teaching and learning in schools. More specifically, however, the research has also been directed at evaluating to what extent school principals in Limpopo Province have been able to authentically enact their roles as educational managers and instructional leaders. In this concluding chapter an overview of the research undertaken, summarised research findings, recommendations and concluding remarks are presented.

#### **5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH**

This study was divided into five chapters which dealt with the following issues:

Chapter one was an introductory chapter aimed at acquainting the reader with the scope of the research to be undertaken. Besides the explication of the key concepts appearing in the title, the problems experienced by school principals, resulting in the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools, were discussed. The main purpose of the chapter was to define and state the problem that had excited the researcher's interest and thereafter to explain the methods to be employed in carrying out the research. In the methodological exposition, an attempt was made to identify the theoretical framework that was to contextualise the research, namely a phenomenological approach, as well

as the research methods to be employed, namely a literature review, observation and qualitative interviews.

In chapter two the focus was to reflect phenomenologically on the role of the principal as educational manager. The chapter included a discussion of management theories, which assisted the researcher to reveal what is regarded as authentic in terms of the enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager. At the end of the chapter the revealed essential characteristics of educational management were verbalised and formulated as criteria. These criteria were used as standards or norms to evaluate in the fourth chapter how the principal as educational manager operates in education practice.

Chapter three examined the role of the principal as instructional leader and how principals may attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning in schools. A discussion of the concept of culture and of how instructional supervision may be realised in schools followed. The essential characteristics of instructional leadership were revealed. These essentials were used as criteria in chapter four to evaluate and determine how the enactment of the role of the principal as instructional leader is realised in education practice.

In chapter four the ideographic method was employed to analyse critically the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader in Limpopo Province. To acquaint the reader with the method to be used (cf. 1.5.3) a brief overview of the qualitative approach, in the form of an ideographic method, was given. Advantages and disadvantages of interviewing as a research method were exposed. Taped, unstructured interviews that were flexible and dynamic enough to accommodate different respondents, were used as a method of obtaining data from principals in Limpopo Province. These were followed by summarised evaluations of the proffered interviews.

In conclusion, the role of the school principal was evaluated critically in order to establish whether it met the criteria for an authentic educational manager and instructional leader.

In chapter five, summarised findings and conclusions are drawn up and recommendations made regarding how the role of the principal in Limpopo Province, as educational manager and instructional leader, may be enhanced, in promoting a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

### **5.3 SUMMARISED FINDINGS**

Findings derived from both the literature study and the responses obtained by means of the ideographic method employed in examining the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader, are outlined in this section. The significant themes that were discussed and others that have emerged during qualitative interviews are synthesized here and integrated with prior research, as indicated in the previous chapters. The key elements of the themes and subsequent recommendations are presented below:

□ **Difficult working conditions (cf. 1.1.3.1)**

A major revelation in the interviews was that principals, in fact, were unhappy about many issues in their role as educational managers and instructional leaders. Most of the interviews discussed a major barrier in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning as stemming from problems of conditions in schools such as:

- **over crowded classrooms;**
- **lack of accommodation;**
- **lack of equipment and textbooks; and**
- **shortage of staff.**



This implied that principals see the poor conditions under which they work as a very important factor hindering their attempt to enhance a culture of teaching and learning. Principals believed that they were automatically blamed for academic results of schools, regardless of these conditions over which they do not have control (cf. 4.4.1 and Mda, 1989:31).

□ **Defiance of education legislation (cf. 1.1.3.5 and 3.6.8.2)**

The principals welcomed the establishment of the new legislation; however, they were concerned about the abolition of corporal punishment and lack of proper strategies to substitute for corporal punishment (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.10). There is an embarrassment on the part of teachers, principals and parents when children misbehave (cf. 4.4.6 and 4.4.10) and even resist being punished in any other way. There is a clear indication that misinterpretation of democracy and an absolutisation of human rights on the part of teachers and learners have led to a laissez-faire policy reigning at many schools. Principals believed that the issue of beating children in schools was exaggerated, which led to abolition of corporal punishment because of the recent South African political history. There was abuse, beating children, by some of the teachers and principals. But to many principals and teachers, if implemented in a very responsible way beating of children is an effective punishment for reducing children's misbehaviour. Principals and teachers sometimes defy the education legislation. Due to the lack of effective punishment strategies, principals and teachers indirectly and directly inflict corporal punishment in schools (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, 4.4.9 and 4.4.10).

□ **Discipline (cf. 1.1.3.4 and 3.5.2.1)**

Almost all principals have disciplinary problems at their schools. In the entire study students' discipline has been related to the undisciplined behaviour of

teachers, teachers' and learners' absenteeism, lack of commitment, lack of morals and lack of effective discipline at home (cf. 4.4.2, 4.4.6. and 4.4.9). The principals observed that children who misbehave and display unacceptable behaviour lack parental care. With the entry of women into the labour market, most children live alone as their parents have gone to work. Furthermore, parental intervention is minimal because of the prevailing emphasis on children's rights and lack of strategies for effective parenting. Discipline is also to a large extent determined by teachers' absenteeism and other misbehaviour outside the school (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.4.8 and 4.4.9).

□ **Outcomes Based Education (cf. 1.1.3.6)**

Outcomes Based Education is still a mystery to most principals and teachers (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.4.6, 4.4.9, 4.4.10). Generally speaking, the principals interviewed agree that OBE is an acceptable approach although they admit that they do not have in-depth knowledge of it. Principals believe the following factors will work against the successful implementation of OBE:

- **Principals and teachers and departmental officials are not well trained in Outcomes Based Education.**
- **A lack of a culture of teaching and learning, especially in poorly resourced schools.**
- **Problems of time-tables (cf. 4.4.2, 4.4.9 and 4.4.10).**
- **Poor communication between schools and the department of education.**
- **Crime that prevails at many schools (cf. 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.8 and 4.4.10).**

□ **Rationalisation and redeployment of teachers (cf. 1.1.3 7)**

Redeployment and rationalisation of teachers has impacted negatively on the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader. The principals interviewed believed that redeployment and rationalisation of teachers led to:

- **Increased conflict between principals and teachers. Low morale and lack of motivation in both principals and excess teachers (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.2, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.4.6, 4.4.7, 4.4.8, 4.4.9). Lack of enthusiasm and hard work by teachers at their new stations (cf. 4.4.4 and 4.4.8). Problems of inadequate staffing (cf. 4.4.10) where teachers have been erroneously redeployed.**

□ **Racial problems (cf. 1.1.3.9)**

In multicultural schools racial conflicts are disturbing to principals. Such conflicts are evident in the playground and in the sports grounds. Generally, principals indicated that it is impossible to root out racial problems in such a short space of time in South Africa, and in Limpopo Province in particular (cf. 4.4.5, 4.4.7 and 4.4.8). Principals argued that the people who trigger racial tensions at multicultural schools are adults, i.e. teachers and parents. It is wrong, according to the principals interviewed, for parents and teachers to view a certain culture as superior to other cultures and in turn impart this wrong philosophy to their children (cf. 4.4.5 and 4.4.8 and Marivate, 1996:9). Many Whites believe that they are of a superior human species to Blacks. The tragedy is that most Blacks have unconsciously come to believe this lie. In their efforts to cure the society's racial ills Blacks and Whites see racial conflicts even where they don't exist. Most teachers and parents promote discrimination, although overtly they may deny it. The bottom line is that many schools are not preparing their pupils to live intelligently and freely in the new South Africa (cf. 4.4.4 and 4.4.8 and Marivate, 1996:10).

□ **Principals an endangered species (cf. 1.1.3.10)**

Inconsistent directives concerning controversial issues, and conflicting, unquestioned directives emanating from the Education Department caused conflict between principals and teachers. Examples were cited of a directive to repeat the interviews and short-listing in the process of filling the deputy principals' posts in a certain district in Limpopo Province. Potential candidates who were called to the interviews for the first time may cause disputes with previous candidates and these may lead to hostility between the principal, as the educational manager in control of the process, and the applicants for the deputy principals' posts. There were contradictory directives during the termination of temporary teachers' contracts, leading to conflict between temporary teachers and principals. Many teachers disputed principals' decisions during redeployment and rationalisation of teachers (cf. 4.4.1). In such instances the position of the principal becomes more vulnerable and his/her life may be in danger (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.9 and 4.4.10).

□ **Instructional supervision tasks (cf. 3.3.3.4 and 3.3.3.5)**

Staff development and staff motivation has been implemented at resourced schools. These principals were able to invite an expert to educate teachers about the correct implementation of Outcomes Based Education (cf. 4.4.7 and 4.4.8). As far as teacher motivation is concerned some schools introduced formal teachers' incentives, awarded to deserving teachers at the end of the year (cf. 4.4.6). Announcement about achievement of success and praise were also used at some of the schools. At most schools however, staff development and staff motivation were done to a lesser extent (cf. 4.4.4), or were totally non-existent (cf. 4.4.9). An analysis of the principals' responses revealed that hardly any supervision or appraisal takes place at schools. Teachers, especially in disadvantaged schools, have resisted any attempt by the principal to conduct

supervision (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.6, 4.4.9 and 4.4.10). However, in the research literature (cf. 3.3.3.6) and in the interviews it is believed that a system of teacher appraisal is very necessary as a form of teacher development strategy or teacher motivation.

□ **Educational management principles (cf. 2.3)**

Planning, organisation, delegating are applied at most schools. There are, however, problems with forms of control such as classroom observation of lessons (cf. 2.3.4.1 and 4.4.10). There are negative attitudes among some teachers, who deny principals an opportunity to assist them with regard to classroom activities (cf. 3.3.3). It was therefore difficult for some principals to implement staff development, staff motivation and staff appraisal. Principals delegate duties to the Heads of Departments, but principals as well as Heads of Departments cannot control the work fully because of the negative attitudes among teachers towards supervision. Principals are lenient and powerless with regard to control and supervision of teachers' work (cf. 4.4.10), because since 1990 the teachers feel it is oppressive to have to prepare and record what has to be taught. Teachers' rights are protected by their unions (cf. 4.4.3), a fact which weakens principals' authority – and hence their reluctance to effectively control the teachers' work (cf. 1.1.3.10, 4.4.9 and 4.4.10).

□ **Culture of teaching and learning (cf. 1.1 and 1.1.3)**

Throughout the study it has been indicated that the culture of teaching and learning in schools has suffered (cf. 1.1). Both teacher and learner absenteeism are rife, a fact which has further led to disciplinary problems and the demise of a teaching and learning culture. According to Marivate (1996:10), principals and teachers should know that the culture of teaching and learning is not a commodity, which the department of education can supply, like

stationery and computers (cf. 4.4.7). No amount of money can buy this culture. Such a culture of teaching and learning has to be generated from within principals, teachers and learners through adhering to effective disciplinary procedures.

□ **Knowledge (cf. 3.6.5)**

There is a concern raised by principals with regard to lack of support and effectiveness on the part of the School Governing Body (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, 4.4.9). Many parent communities from which the School Governing Body members are drawn, are poor, unemployed and have inadequate education, or no basic education background (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3, 4.4.4, 4.4.6, and 4.4.9). On the other hand teachers and other stakeholders (nurses, policemen, university lecturers, shopkeepers) who may be part of the SGB have seldom had an opportunity to serve on any committee or be involved in any managerial activity. This implies that the parent and teacher component in the SGB lack knowledge in management and leadership skills, hence their ineffectiveness. The teacher component in the SGB also lacks knowledge of their role and finds additional or extra work oppressive and prescriptive (cf. 4.4.6). In the opinion of the researcher there is also a lack of managerial skills on the part of principals and education authorities. Many principals lack authority and skills in decision-making. Post modern teachers, particularly in secondary schools, are more political in their approach (cf. 4.4.9 and 4.4.10) to teaching, and a principal's position of power will be weakened by ignorance and lack of expertise as to how to deal with such teachers.

□ **Positive human relations (cf. 3.5.3)**

Teachers are political in their approach to teaching and their trade union activities have weakened their relationship with principals (cf. 4.4.9 and

4.4.10). Consequently the research revealed that principals do not have authority and power to tell teachers what to do or to plan their lessons, because of the protection that teachers receive from their teachers' unions (cf. 4.4.10). One of the research findings is that teachers found planning of work to be clerical in nature and therefore a waste of time to them (cf. Mda, 1989). In a school the principal interacts with the SGB, parents and teachers, who belong to and are registered as members of employee organisations and unions. This poses problems for the principals when decisions have to be taken affecting teachers, since the interests of these teachers or employees as expressed by their respective organisations have to be considered. Principals find themselves operating in between two strong forces, namely the Education Department as their employer and the teachers' union. This has weakened the decision-making strength of many principals, especially if they and the School Governing Body are not confident and lack sufficient knowledge and information (cf. 4.4.9 and 4.4.10) about the education legislation (Labour Relations Act and South African Schools' Act). In most cases, therefore, the principal's supervisory status has created a negative relationship between principals and teachers, which has caused the culture of teaching and learning to suffer.

□ **Curriculum development (cf. 3.3.3.3)**

Initially principals and teachers were told what to teach by the education department through the curriculum (cf. 4.4.1 and 4.4.7). With the advent of Outcomes Based Education there is a change from this top down approach to curriculum development, towards a collaborative engagement (cf. 4.4.4 and Marishane, 1999:160). A democratic approach to the curriculum implies that all stake holders, including parents who were previously excluded, should be consulted, because **"they may know what is good for their children"** (Marishane, 1999: 160).

The above findings of the entire research project are now followed by the researcher's recommendations.

## 5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher would like to propose that in terms of the research findings, attention be directed at the following in order to enhance the role of principals in Limpopo Province as educational managers and instructional leaders in the promotion of a culture of teaching and learning in schools.

### 5.4.1 The need for improvement of conditions of service

It is the duty of the Department of Education in Limpopo Province to provide adequate school buildings and grounds. Grey (2000:3) has cited an independent education analyst, Tleane, who argued that unless there are adequate resources and equipment in schools, and unless the current trend of framing education policy according to market dictates is stopped; unless teachers are well motivated and well remunerated; and unless the physical conditions of many schools are improved, the vision of enhancing the culture of teaching and learning in South African schools in the 21st century will remain a pipe dream. Schools that are dilapidated contribute to a poor learning environment (Govender, 1997:179). Attractive school buildings and grounds, in contrast, are inviting to people and because of this create a pleasant culture of teaching and learning in schools. According to Kelly and Warner (in: Marishane, 1999:100) **“educational property which is well designed for its purpose, well maintained, and pleasant to be in will be a considerable asset in recruiting staff and students”**. Teachers also like to work in an inviting environment (cf. 4.4.3). Dilapidated buildings, lack of a fence, broken windows, and so on, lead to low morale in staff and pupils alike. Generally speaking, principals are not against either large or small schools but they are in



favour of the provision of a management and staff that has been calculated and determined correctly, giving room for the needs of streams or faculties offered at a particular school (cf. 4.4.2, 4.4.3 and Masnyi and Bessarab, 1992:6).

It is therefore the responsibility of the department to improve the teachers' conditions of service, by building enough classroom accommodation, providing adequate staff, clean water, electricity, and text books in time (cf. 4.4.3, 4.4.6 and 4.4.8). Improving conditions of service includes guiding and directing principals effectively in their decision-making processes (cf. 2.3.2.1). Improving conditions of service includes effective administration and communication between district offices and schools. If the Education Department is serious about improving the performance of principals in schools, particularly in rural areas, it needs to commit itself to making more resources available to disadvantaged schools.

#### 5.4.2 The need for reflection on redeployment and rationalisation of teachers

The Department of Education should rethink its policy on redeployment and rationalisation of teachers, reflecting on what has been done, taking stock of unresolved problems and offering possible solutions. The Department of Education should also analyse a particular directive before it may be issued to principals. Canceling directives that have already been implemented causes conflict between teachers and principals – conflict that leads to the demise of a culture of teaching and learning in schools (cf. 4.4.10).

#### 5.4.3 The need for security guards at schools

Common sense tells one that a culture where learners and staff are safe and secure is a culture that is conducive to teaching and learning (cf. 1.1.3.8). It is believed that such a culture fosters high achievement in learners' activities (Shortt and Thayer, 2000: 10).

There is a high crime rate in South African society in general and in Limpopo Province in particular, including schools, which creates a culture of insecurity and fear (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3 and 4.4.4). There is a clear indication that much of the equipment that has been bought through financial sacrifice is vulnerable to theft and this leaves principals in a dilemma (cf. 4.4.3 and 4.4.10). A significant finding was that there was less or no crime at schools that had properly trained security guards (cf. 4.4.5, 4.4.6, 4.4.7).

It is therefore recommended that the Department of Education in Limpopo Province see to it that the provision of service for security guards in schools be placed on their priority list.

#### 5.4.4 The need for intensive Outcomes Based Education training

Throughout the research a major revelation was that principals, teachers and their trainers do not have a thorough grasp of Outcomes Based Education (cf. 1.1.3.6; 4.4.1; 4.4.2; 4.4.4; 4.4.5; 4.4.6; 4.4.7; 4.4.8; 4.4.9 and 4.4.10). There is no indication that principals and teachers do not want to implement OBE. After all, retention of their jobs as teachers depends to a large extent on its implementation (Vakalisa, 2000:25).

The most frequently cited obstacles are those about the inadequacy of orientation courses, lack of material and difficulty in understanding the new concepts. There is a need for intensive training for principals as heads of schools, teachers and curriculum advisers alike. Faculties of education at universities should be requested to assist teachers on an ongoing basis through formal in-service courses. It is also suggested that the ministry of education should not only involve the expertise in the faculties of education at universities but also that found in the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (cf. 4.4.9 and Vakalisa, 2000:25) as well as that of principals

themselves (cf. 4.4.8). Principals should also be taught how to assist teachers, how to control the work of teachers in OBE.

#### 5.4.5 The need for management training for the School Governing Body

Generally speaking, the establishment of a school governing body has been welcomed by principals. However, there seem to be more specific areas of concern which affect the management of schools. There is apathy from parents about educational management and school wide issues. There is often no quorum at the election of parents' committees, resulting in delays or in the election of parents who are not best suited to such tasks. There is an absence of meaningful parent and teacher participation in the School Governing Body (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3 and 4.4.6.). Ignorance concerning the SGB's role and duties, its being easily misled and manipulated by teachers, and conflicts over power are also a major problem frustrating some of the principals (cf. 4.4.3 and 4.4.6). Generally, it seems that power relations in the management of the school have left some principals confused as they are facing new, conflicting pressures and can no longer rely on a position of power.

The lack of answerability and performance in most South African schools could be resolved quickly if government put the system back into the hands of parents by means of training them (*Christian Democrat, 2000:15*). This seems to be a contentious issue presently, because the legislation has given more powers to School Governing Bodies, who mostly consist of parents. According to the principals interviewed (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.3 and 4.4.8) the lack of proper guidance in education management renders the parents ineffective. Parents do not know how they should assist the school and teachers, particularly the principal, do not know how to involve parents in school management.

There are handouts and material about school management provided by the Department of Education as a guide to the SGB. Becoming knowledgeable in

the managerial activities of the school needs one who was once involved in managing the school in practice. This implies that a mere reading of the literature may not equip the parents with enough skills to be effective school managers. In the research it was found that the SGB could easily be misled, not understanding their role, and could merely clash over power (cf. 4.4.3 and 4.4.5). Sergiovanni (1994:iv) advised that the school should become a community in which emphasis is no longer on "power over" (cf. 4.4.5) others but on "power to accomplish" shared visions and goals. In a school as a community, the obligations to lead are shared by everyone. The school becomes a community of leaders.

In terms of the above proposition, there is a need therefore for intensive School Governing Body training with regard to the role of parents in school governance (cf. 4.4.9 and Govender, 1997:279). Training should be carried out in the exercise of their powers, the conduct of meetings, the control of school budgets, fundraising strategies, the conduct of interviews for appointment of educators to the school and conflict resolution.

#### 5.4.6 The need for instructional supervision

The principals' task is to reduce teacher isolation while determining how best to influence the decision-making of teachers, particularly in their instructional activities. The researcher has observed that although supervision and evaluation are essential, they are not the only means, and in fact, may not even be the primary means, of principals exercising influence over instructional decisions. Many principals have had little formal training or experience in working with constructive supervision programmes. Effective supervision should be done more frequently than is usually the case, to familiarise both teachers and learners with collaborative, partnership, or team teaching. Supervision must be followed up with additional assistance to be effective, and

convenient resources for improvement must be made available to teachers (Huddle, 1984:65).

It is the responsibility of the Department of Education in Limpopo Province to introduce management courses for principals with a focus on instructional supervision. The responsibility for supervision, according to Sergiovanni and Starrat (1993:xix), has widened to include not only principals as supervisors but teachers and the whole school community as well. Teachers and principals should be convinced to accept the Chinese-Taoist philosophy, a philosophy that regards the supervisor/teacher relationship as a ying-yang balance (cf. 3.3.3 and Glanz, 1997:199). For, example staff development programmes which outline clear sequential steps in improving instructional activities should be introduced in schools.

#### 5.4.7 A need for staff development programmes in schools (cf. 3.3.3.5)

Instruction is a complex and artistic endeavour: principals who are effective instructional leaders work to create a non-threatening partnership with teachers that encourages openness, creates a willingness to experiment and provides a freedom to make and admit mistakes in the interest of improvement (Blasé and Blasé, 1999:18). Such an attitude to instructional activities will only be possible if the Education Department and the principal make attempts to promote the personal growth of teachers in the form of staff development programmes (cf. 3.3.3.5).

To improve the low morale of teachers, a major challenge to principals is to provide a continuous systematic staff development programme to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of teachers within schools (Lipham and Hoe, 1974:248). Staff development may be done in the form of a weekend course or workshop, participating in study projects, visits to other schools, attendance at

symposia and courses presented at training institutions, and participation in study groups (cf. 4.4.8 and Theron and Bothma, 1990:127).

#### 5.4.8 The need for motivation of teachers (cf. 3.3.3.4)

Rewarding teachers does not necessarily imply giving them the salaries they would like to earn. There are, according to Vakalisa (2000:24), other forms of reward that keep people content in their jobs. The most significant of these, it is believed, is the acknowledgement of their professional expertise in what they are qualified to do and giving them space, improving conditions of service, giving them material to demonstrate their expertise. In the present research it has been found that teachers from "well-off" communities are motivated and hard working while teachers in needy and poor communities are indolent in their duties (cf. 4.4.4, 4.4.7 and 4.4.8). In a dilapidated school, teachers do not feel they do something worth while – as long as they merely come and go, this is sufficient (cf. 4.4.10). The improvement of conditions of service, and the provision of the required learning material, comprise the first motivation strategy needed by most teachers.

Another revelation was that an effective principal as educational manager and instructional leader motivates the teaching and non-teaching staff, learners, parents and entire school community in general. A sound culture of teaching and learning in a school depends to a large extent on the skill and capabilities of the principal (cf. 4.4.7 and 4.4.8). Successful principals know that change requires adjustment, but that the primary goal is equity and excellence in education (cf. Fafard, Harris and Sullivan, 1987:44).

This implies that the task of appointing principals in schools should not be done in a listless and haphazard manner. There is a need, therefore, for the Department of Education in Limpopo Province to be meticulous in dealing with filling of promotion posts because it is unthinkable to find an effective school

with an ineffective principal. The "principal teacher" is a major source of motivation for staff and the entire school community. There is a further need for the department of education to continually support principals with role clarification.

Data from this research suggests that classroom changes rarely become permanent routine if teachers do not receive incentives (Corbett, 1982:190). Staff motivation is not the responsibility of the principal alone. There is a need, therefore, for the department of education to support principals in their instructional leadership roles by implementing staff motivation strategies (cf. 3.3.3.4) such as:

- Improvement of conditions of work, such as salary increments;
- Motivation incentives in the form of prize giving, certificates, and praise (cf. 4.4.6, 4.4.7 and 4.4.8); and
- Provision of a safe environment (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.8, 4.4.9, 4.4.10 and Professional Educators' Union, 2000:4-5).

In general, staff motivation embraces a need for the department of education to improve the conditions of service prevailing at many schools.

#### 5.4.9 The need to enhance a culture of teaching and learning

The first and most important prerequisite in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning is the maintenance of firm discipline and authority. Principals and teachers should direct their energies towards instilling discipline first in themselves (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.4, and 4.4.5) and only then in the learners. Thinking only in terms of salaries is inferior thinking and cannot contribute to enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in schools (cf. 4.4.7). There must be discipline in teachers to honour their teaching time, and to teach (cf. 4.4.3 and

4.4.5) and inspire their pupils to learn. There must be discipline in learners to listen to the authoritative voice of teachers and learn. Teachers cannot sit in the staff room and chat while learners walk around the streets in uniform during school hours, and still hope to enhance a culture of teaching and learning (Marivate, 1996:10).

The department should empower principals as well as SGBs with effective ways to instill discipline in schools. Without discipline, most of the educational, managerial and leadership tasks discussed in this research may not be realised.

Apart from discipline an important finding concerning the enhancing of a culture of teaching and learning was that schools should celebrate heroes and heroines in the form of rituals and ceremonies (cf. 3.3.2.4, 4.4.5 and 4.4.9). In such celebrations, the shared values and beliefs that bind the school community together should be emphasised. A school should have a distinctive culture that makes it different from other schools – its own norms, values, ways of behaving that characterise the manner in which staff and learners get things done.

#### 5.4.10 The need to communicate a common school vision

Principals must have a clear vision of the goals and outcomes their staffs, learners, parents are expected to achieve (cf. 4.4.6 and 4.4.9). This is not to say that the principal is required to invent the vision and goals alone. The establishment of a school vision should be the result of consultation with staff, parents, students, and other professional leaders (Streshly, 1997:57). Principals should constantly model and teach those goals and outcomes (cf. 4.4.7).



It is therefore recommended that all major stake-holders play a role in the restoration of a culture of teaching and learning, by focusing on this vision, especially in the former disadvantaged schools.

#### 5.4.11 The need to support for the principal's role clarification

One of the issues that must be addressed when attempting to reduce the frustration related to the principals' role as educational managers and instructional leaders is to try and clarify their changing role. In this regard the Department of Education and universities and colleges have a critical role to play related to the training of school principals.

In the present research (literature and ideographic information) it was revealed that patterns of school practice are actually characterised by a great deal of uncertainty, instability, complexity and variety (Sergiovanni, 1987:ix). Sergiovanni cited Schon (1983), who maintained that though one may be comfortable in viewing the principalship as a logical process of problem-solving or as the application of standards and techniques to predictable problems, a more accurate view may be to view the principalship as managing messes (cf. 2.2.2.6, 2.2.4 and Owens and Shakeshaft, 1992:16). Since situations of teaching practice are characterised by many different events, uniform answers to problems are not likely to be helpful. Since teachers, principals as supervisors, and students bring to the classroom beliefs, assumptions, values, opinions, preferences and predispositions, objective and value-free administrative strategies are not likely to address issues of importance. Since uncertainty and complexity are normal aspects in the process of schooling, informed intuition becomes necessary, to fill in the gaps of what can be specified as known and what cannot (Sergiovanni, 1987:235).

It is evident that in the restructuring of schools, principals as school leaders need a great tolerance for ambiguity and inconsistencies (cf. 4.4.5, 4.4.8 and

4.4.9). While under some conditions ambiguity may contribute to creativity, it is also imperative that there should be ways in which principals seek to reduce ambiguity and tackle uncertainty. In other words, principals should be supported in their role, to continue to respond vigorously to changing normative expectations, while at the same time limiting the erosion of traditional notions of schooling leadership (Hallinger, 1992:4).

In restructured schools the principal not only assists staff in reaching their conceptions of the problems facing schools but also helps to generate and develop potentially unique solutions to these problems. In effective schools teachers' discussions have emphasised the importance of collegiality, experimentation, teacher reflection and school based staff development (cf. 4.4.6, 4.4.7 and 4.4.8). The implication is that collective problem solving and capacity building implies a different role for the principal. But principals need to realise that if teachers are going to be empowered to collaborate on school wide tasks, they need to be heard and make a difference on substantial issues. Inevitably, then, some things will be decided in ways that differ from the principal's preference. The key is to think ahead of time about which issues are appropriate for collegial decisions and which issues should be resolved by the principal alone (Hoerr, 1996:380).

There is therefore a need for the Department of Education to continually support principals with a proper clarification of their changing role: a role that moves with the times.

#### 5.4.12 The need for ongoing management courses for principals, teachers and education authorities

South Africa is performing poorly in matric examination results, particularly in Limpopo Province, and is battling to put the culture of teaching and learning in place. According to the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU's)

provincial secretary in Limpopo Province, Thamaga (2000:4), the main problem is that the school, district and circuit officials are still inherited from the old-style Bantu administration, who lack the capacity to deliver. Educational management, in Thamaga's opinion, continues to be distinguished by unprofessionalism and ignorance.

There is a need, therefore, for principals, teachers and education authorities to remain students, particularly in philosophy of education and education management (cf. 4.4.2, 4.4.8 and 4.4.9). As agents of change principals should be prepared to continue their education by acquiring the vital leadership skills they need through professional development programmes (Bragg, 2000:75). The role of teachers and principals as change agents is made imperative by two contrasting forces, namely the necessity for technologically relevant knowledge and for teaching about tolerance (Mathibe, 1998:122). As a result the present generation of teachers, principals and education authorities will have to be trained in the requirements of a non-racial democratic South Africa, since it is assumed that the untransformed cannot bring about transformation (Mncwabe, in: Mathibe 1998:122). Teachers should be empowered to facilitate adaptation into a multicultural democratic society. The inculcation of values such as cooperation, unity and tolerance correlates with the teaching of the relevant knowledge to be undertaken by teachers. This requires that principals, teachers and education authorities be trained to carry out their professional, academic and occupational responsibilities.

As the leader of a school the principal is a very important figure in the community (cf. 4.4.10). The principal has to meet almost superhuman demands, set an impeccable example and display the tact of a diplomat in his or her dealings with learners, staff, parents and all the stake holders. Faced with such a daunting task, there will be times when every principal feels the need for assistance and advice. Remaining a student will help greatly to supply the guidance the principal needs. Studying widely, keeping abreast with

latest developments in the field of education, particularly in educational management, will help principals to approach their career with confidence and make renewal and adaptation easier (Theron and Bothma, 1990:outer cover).

In order to eliminate the incompetence of school and district staff there is a need for the department of education to design continuing education management courses that will benefit principals, teachers and education authorities in Limpopo Province.

#### 5.4.13 The need for curriculum courses for principals and teachers

Principals need to know not only what their roles are as principal-teachers, but also their status as individuals with respect to the focus of the curriculum (Short, 1994:503, cf. 4.4.1 and 4.4.4). Teachers must also be involved meaningfully in the reform agenda and initial stages of curriculum change. This should give them a sense of ownership towards the curriculum.

Ndawi and Peresun (in Vakalisa, 2000:25) averred that a curriculum blueprint may prescribe a high standard of education, but whether it will be achieved depends on such fundamental factors as the availability of human resources, adequate material and financial resources. One lesson to be learned by the education authorities is that it makes no difference how good a curriculum is if teachers will not use it. For a curriculum to be implemented by teachers and principals they have to be involved in choosing, adapting and developing it (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.8 and Glickman, 1998:384). To this extent the Department of Education must make huge resources available for the purpose of training and retraining, bringing teachers on board in curriculum development (Govender, 1997:147 and 4.4.9). Outcomes Based Education involves principals and teachers, in a vague way in designing their own curriculum. This is incomprehensible and a great effort for principals and teachers who were never introduced to an initial course in curriculum development. A formally articulated

curriculum in document form is necessary as a guide to facilitate the work of principals and teachers, not as a blueprint to be followed unquestioningly (Vakalisa, 2000:25).

#### 5.4.14 The need for peace education in the curriculum

In the design of the new curriculum politicians, principals, teachers and curriculum experts at universities should realise that the learning areas (subjects) must reflect the conditions of the catchment area as well as of the global environment. Smith (1987:311) pointed out that in the twenty first century the task is to refurbish all subjects taught so that they accurately reflect the real local circumstances (cf. 4.4.4) and global environment in which people live. The recent terrorist tragedy which took place in the United States of America on the 11th of September 2001, and the problems of crime and vandalism experienced at most schools in South Africa generally, and in Limpopo Province in particular, necessitate a need for peace education in the school curriculum.

Those who occupy the position of school leadership should help to build the school culture in such a way as to promote linkages to other systems nationally and internationally (cf. 4.4.8). The education policies, vision and mission of the school will be irrelevant and one-sided if they only aim at high examination standards in terms of matric examinations. School principals as leaders cannot ignore processes that encourage and build a peaceful ethos. Meaningful contacts of learners and staff with those of other cultures can help to convey knowledge of cultures of the different people with whom we collectively share the planet earth (cf. 4.4.5 and 4.4.8).

#### 5.4.15 The need for professionalism in principalship

The principal's new role in a country such as South Africa generally, and in Limpopo Province in particular, should include a new approach to professionalism, which will embrace that of an organisational leader, developing consensus, facilitating collaborative problem-solving, and managing collective action (Limahieu, Roy and Foss, 1997:583). This rethinking of professionalism towards teachers is more than exemplifying an acceptable mode of dress and being punctual (cf. 4.4.1 and 4.4.2).

The role of the principal in prompting a clear educational and instructional leadership vision and challenging quality in that vision is very important in the twenty first century. There must be an emphasis on the ethos of professionalism (cf. 3.7.3) that runs through current efforts of enhancing the culture of teaching and learning. This ethos should seek to promote the professional empowerment of all who work at a school. This implies that the principal's role must be to challenge quality in practice. Prescriptive devices and supervision and the checklist mentality are not consonant with this perspective. A useful tool for examining teaching and learning must raise questions that inspire practice, without resorting to checklists that seek to script it. A successful principal is not only an instructional leader but also a leader of teachers as instructional leaders themselves (Glickman, 1991:7).

There is a need to challenge principals as instructional leaders about the complex nature of viewing teaching and learning. Principals should be able to guide teachers to make a shift from pedagogical approaches that are based in transfer technologies (lecture, drill, worksheets) to approaches that are more constructivist in approach (hands-on approaches, problem-based learning, and inquiry approaches). This view of teaching and learning needs to permeate instructional practices and learning events as well as newly developing forms of assessment.

Professionalism includes a challenge to the status quo, having a voice in education. As professionals, principals should be able to tell the education authorities the "truth" that there is a vast difference between the reality of the school and the way the department prescribes schools to be. As a result, principals of high achieving schools do not comply slavishly with the departmental prescriptions. Professional principals should be intellectuals, engaging in a process of reflecting, questioning why principals do things the way they do.

#### 5.4.16 The need for discipline in schools

It is unrealistic to believe that the principal can eliminate disciplinary problems. This is not to deny that many disciplinary problems may be prevented (cf. 3.5.2, 4.4.5 and 4.4.6). Braaten (1987:47) advised that prevention of discipline problems should start with a declaration of assumptions about the reasons why the problems exist. Much conflict between the youth and adults arises from the negative beliefs attributed by each group to the other. Prevention of disciplinary problems begins with the belief that the children's thoughts, desires, needs, and most of all their personal selves, are not valued by adults. The primary purpose for intervention lies with adults. It is not a matter of taming the beast in children (cf. 4.4.7, 4.4.8 and Braaten, 1987:47). Rather, it is a complex process orchestrated by caring adults to foster children's emotional and social growth, based upon sensitivity to their common and individual needs.

As educational managers and instructional leaders principals should realise that *all children need comfort, security, respect and achievement*. On a daily basis principals are involved in the task of making hundreds of decisions, but in the words of Jones and Jones (in: Braaten, 1987:47), are not faced with the prospect of merely reacting to students' behaviour over which they have no control. On the contrary, by creating a culture that responds positively to students' needs, principals can ensure that the behaviour of the vast majority of

their students will be positive and goal directed. Teachers' sense of effectiveness and the nature of the education culture created by principals determine students' behaviour (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.5, 4.4.8 and 4.4.9).

The department of education should develop new policies, new legislation and new structures to address issues of insubordination, misconduct, students' and parents' violations of policies that threaten the culture of teaching and learning. It is the responsibility of the department of education to find ways of supporting the advantaged schools to assist the so-called disadvantaged schools (cf. 4.4.8). The Department of Education in Limpopo Province should introduce regular updates to publicise the schools that are following "best" practice models in performance, through the radio, television, and newspapers (cf. 4.4.8 and Govender, 1997:287).

With regard to the discipline of teachers, the research revealed that the South African Council of Educators is silent and dormant (cf. 3.6.7 and 4.4.9). There is a need for the Department of Education in Limpopo Province, in collaboration with SACE, to restore credibility to the teaching profession by implementing its principles in terms of teachers' misconduct. The department should ensure that all teachers are made aware of the implications of the SACE code of conduct for teachers in case of misconduct.

#### 5.4.17 The need to review the education legislation

The outlawing of corporal punishment by the education legislation (SASA and the Constitution of South Africa) has had a negative impact on school management (cf. 4.4.1, 4.4.4, 4.4.6 and 4.4.9). Principals have had to develop alternative strategies, which are not always successful (cf. 4.4.10). There is therefore a need to review the existing education legislation with regard to corporal punishment. The education legislators should complete their homework, and come back to the drawing board to review the education



legislation (cf. 4.4.9 and 4.4.10). It is of no use to have comprehensive well-designed education legislation on paper, which does not serve its purpose in educational practice.

It is also recommended that principals and teachers be trained in making use of alternative strategies (cf. 4.4.7 and 4.4.9), such as the establishment of a code of conduct which is accepted by parents, learners, teachers and all stakeholders. A code of conduct has firstly to be designed by all stake holders (cf. 4.4.7) and must spell out clearly, in unambiguous language, the repercussions for defaulters when rules are broken. The code should, however, not violate any constitutional principles (see Govender, 1997:281). The code should also be accepted in the school community, that is by parents, teachers, other staff and learners. The code should be periodically reviewed in the light of new and changing circumstances. It is very important that the code be enforced equitably on all people – any favouratism would render the whole activity useless.

#### 5.4.18 The need for parent involvement programmes

Schools must become families where parents feel wanted and are recognised for their strength and potential (cf. 3.5.1 and Lemmer, 2000:68). Frequently, as already indicated, parents do not feel welcome in school, particularly parents from low income families. Principals should try to close the traditional gap existing between parents and schools which made parents unwelcome strangers, by creating positive relations between teachers and parents and encouraging direct parent involvement in their children's learning process (Marishane, 1999:97). In a sound partnership, this can be overcome by creating more family-like schools (Epstein as cited by Lemmer, 2000:68). A parent or family-like school, as Epstein stressed, recognises each child's individuality and makes each child feel special (cf. 4.4.5 and 4.4.8). Moreover

such a school strives to reach and welcome all families, not only those who are easy to reach.

It has been revealed that schools seldom offer staff any formal training in collaboration with parents or in understanding the varieties of modern family life (Lemmer, 2000:74; cf. 4.4.8). Clearly, qualitative investigations such as the present study cannot be generalised but they do suggest the usefulness of providing training for both principals and teachers, particularly in a comprehensive model of parent involvement. The present findings suggest that parent involvement is a cost effective and feasible way to enhance the culture of teaching and learning so needed in South Africa, and in Limpopo Province in particular (Lemmer, 2000:74).

In the light of the above proposition it is recommended that schools introduce planned parent involvement programmes to teach parents how to assist learners with their school work and how to participate meaningfully in various school activities (cf. 4.4.9 and 4.4.8).

To involve parents in school reform there is a need to establish effective communication channels between the school and its parents.

#### 5.4.19 The need to develop communication channels with parents

Principals of effective schools indicated that a successful strategy to involve parents in the school is by developing effective communication channels (cf. 3.5.1). Principals and teachers should understand what parent involvement entails, and how and why parents should be involved in school. It is the obligation of the principal to see to it that parent programmes are established. The establishment of parent involvement programmes is not a task that can be done in a haphazard way. It needs thorough planning, insight, commitment on the part of the principal and teachers (cf. 4.4.8 and 4.4.9).

Inclusion of the following communication channels in a parent involvement programme is recommended:

- **Weekly or monthly newsletter**
- **Holding annual cultural days**
- **Involving parents in volunteer school activities**
- **Frequent parent meetings.**

Principals should involve learners in communicating the school events to their parents.

To enhance a culture of teaching and learning, particularly with regard to changing values in the society, there is a need to include moral education in the curriculum.

#### 5.4.20 The need for moral education

In the research the problems of racism in school have been shown to lead to frustration in principals. It was pointed out that the new South Africa, with its diverse cultural heritage, needs teachers and parents with a wholesome set of values (cf. 4.4.4, 4.4.5 and 4.4.8). These are responsible adults with a clear vision of the new South Africa – a South Africa where each South African irrespective of race, colour or creed will feel safe, secure, loved, appreciated and equal in human dignity (cf. 4.4.5 and 4.4.8 and Marivate, 1996: 10). A difficult step in South African education, therefore, is to eradicate wrong attitudes which have been allowed to build up over the years – the notion that White and Black are like east and west and the two shall never meet. South Africa needs adults, both teachers and parents, who will give the youth a wholesome education because:

**... being educated requires ... more than a superficial knowledge of the arts and sciences. ... (it) means preparation for world citizenship; in short, for survival (Braude in Marivate, 1996:10).**

It is therefore recommended that teachers and parents need to acquire a specific set of values like tolerance, respect for human dignity ("botho"), which address the problems of racism in schools. This is only possible if moral education is included in the curriculum, because it is only in the classroom situation that negative attitudes towards other racial groups may be eradicated.

## **5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

During the course of this study it became evident that further research is needed in the sphere of the role of the school principal and it is recommended that the following research projects be undertaken.

- Instructional supervision in the form of appraisal, staff motivation and staff development can be effective if principals and teachers are knowledgeable and clear about the programmes to be followed in their implementation. The possibility of developing an accountable instructional supervision model needs to be explored and researched.
- One of the findings of the present study was the need for intensive School Governing Body training. Thorough research needs to be conducted urgently in this area.
- There is evidence that the trade unions, such as NAPTOSA, SADTU and COSAS, absolutise their interests at the expense of the children's educational needs. The role that these unions and organisations play in schools, particularly in education management, should be researched.

- There is a need to research the role of parental involvement and its effect on discipline and authority in schools.

## **5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

As a research project based on a qualitative methodology, a phenomenological reflection on the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader with particular emphasis on Limpopo Province demonstrated both its strength and limitations intrinsic to such an investigation. The small sample size, typical of the qualitative tradition is the most obvious limitation (cf. 4.2.2); however the research was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature (cf. 4.2) and the analysis of data provided a rich source of information. The unstructured interviews presented in the form of ideograms (cf. 4.4) were used to elicit data from principals as additional information to strengthen the validity of the literature findings. The primary goal of the research was to understand the perception of the principals about the enactment of their role as educational managers and instructional leaders and no attempt was made to generalize the findings. In the literature review and the ideographic information no hypothesis were formed and no attempt was made to prove or disprove theory. Data was formulated according to certain themes which emerged from literature review and interviews.

Respondents were not selected by a random sampling technique rather purposeful sampling was used (cf. 4.3). Purposeful sampling, as indicated earlier (cf. 4.2.2) requires that respondents information are chosen deliberately by virtue of their status. This means the particular principals were chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader. Although the respondents provided rich information to the study, the exclusion of principals from learners of disabled schools and principals from independent or private

schools, narrows the study a little. As indicated the sample is rather small and does not cover all principals in Limpopo Province. Although the problems confronting principals in South Africa were indicated in the first chapter (cf. 1.1.3) the study was basically limited to Limpopo Province.

## **5.7 CONCLUSION**

The purpose of the present study was to determine the authentic enactment of the school principal's role as educational manager and instructional leader in the promotion of a culture of teaching and learning in schools. From research findings it is evident that principals in Limpopo Province are generally not satisfied with the enactment of their role as educational managers and instructional leaders and that this can be attributed to their working conditions, inconsistent directives from the Education Department, the introduction of Outcomes Based Education, the implications of the redeployment and rationalisation of teachers, and the lack of safety and security in schools. It is imperative that Limpopo Province Department of Education pay attention to these factors as well as to the subsequent recommendations made in by this study, in order to address the many problems confronting school principals in the authentic enactment of their roles as educational managers and instructional leaders.

Finally, the researcher would like to conclude by proposing that the enhancing of a culture of teaching and learning in schools in Limpopo Province by means of the authentic enactment of the role of the principal as educational manager and instructional leader is dependent upon equipping principals, teachers, the School Governing Body and parents with knowledge and skills relevant to the managing and teaching function expected of them. Ultimately, the significance of this research will not depend on the number of recommendations made, but on whether policy makers regard the research findings and recommendations as useful, and on how they incorporate them in their policy-making process.

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MAP OF LIMPOPO PROVINCE



# LIMPOPO



# NPiii

NORTHERN PROVINCE  
INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

APPROVAL LETTER FROM EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**NORTHERN PROVINCE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CENTRAL REGION  
MANKWENG DISTRICT OFFICE**



REF NO : 1257376  
ENQ : MOTHIBA  
TEL: (015) 267 5641

Mankweng District Office  
P/Bag x1108  
SOVENGA

11 December 2000

The Regional Director  
Central Region  
CHUENESPOORT  
0745

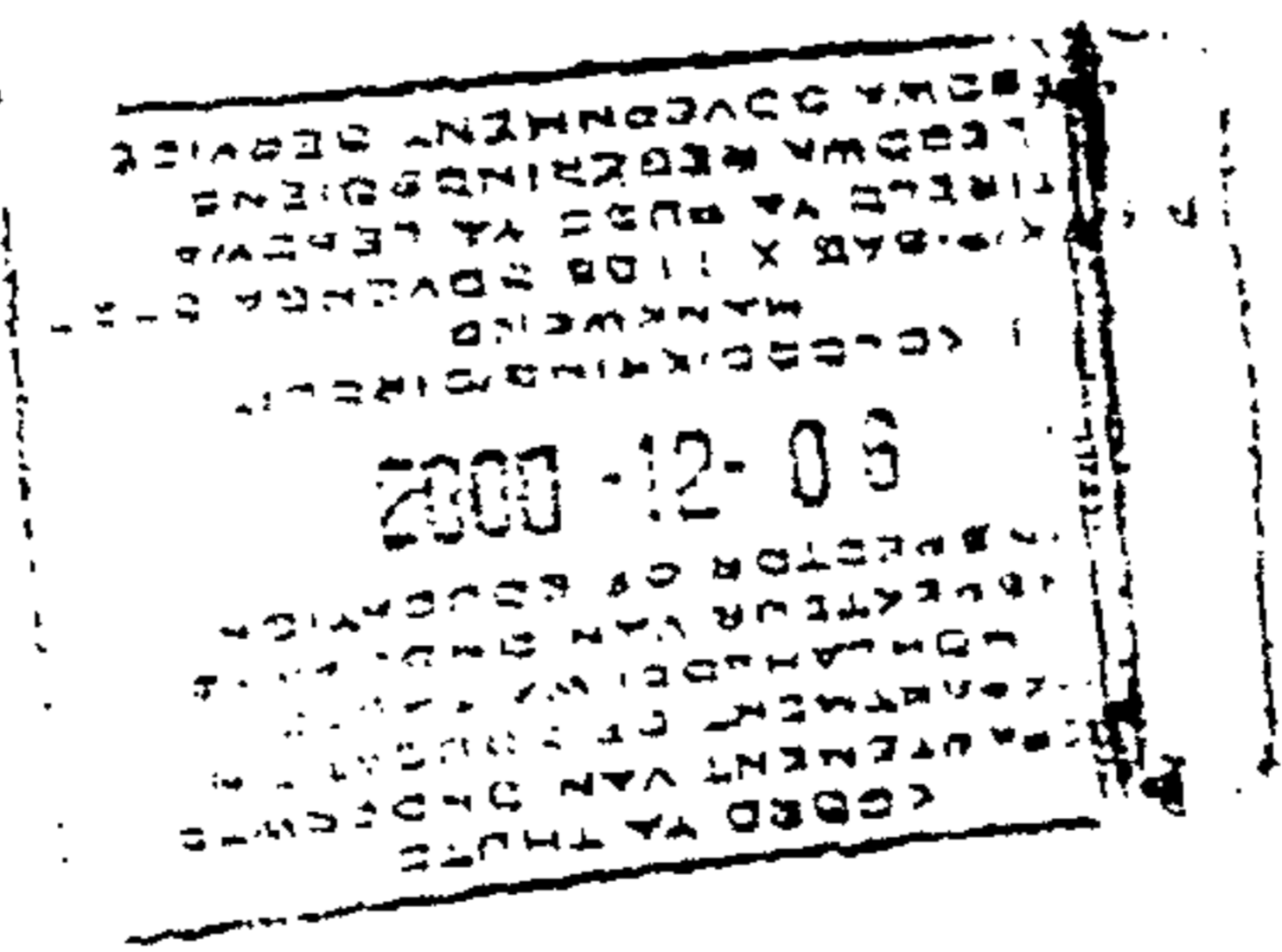
**APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH : MAMABOLO C.S.**

Here with attach please find a submission letter dated 11/05/00 from our office and a copy of the application from the applicant.

This office has no objection with the research kick starting. We therefore strongly recommend.

Your urgent attention shall be highly esteemed as the matter is long pending.

  
DISTRICT MANAGER







# Northern Province

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CENTRAL REGION

Private Bag X03

CHUENESPOORT

0745

Tel.: 015 633 7130

Fax.: 015 633 6177

*Handwritten signature: J. R. ...*

REF: 9/2/1/5

ENO: K.T. MARISHANE

TEL. (015) 633 7153

12/12/2000

The Superintendent General  
Department of Education  
Private Bag X 9489  
PIETERSBURG  
0700

**APPLICATION FOR DOING RESEARCH IN REGION TWO: DED STUDIES -  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

1. The above matter refers.
2. Attached hereto find copies of letters from the applicant Mrs. C.S. Mamabolo (application) and District Office (recommendation) for your consideration and subsequent approval or disapproval.
3. Like the District Office the Regional Office has no objection in the applicant doing research in our Region.
4. The matter need urgent attention

Thanking you

*Handwritten signature: J. M. ...*  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

*Handwritten signature: J. M. ...*

## INTERVIEW GUIDE

THESIS: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL AS EDUCATIONAL MANAGER AND INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

For the purpose of the present research, the role of the school principal as educational manager and instructional leader constitutes the following:

- **Problems that are confronting principals as educational managers and instructional leaders**
  1. How are you involved in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning in the midst of problems such as:
    - introduction of Outcomes Based Education;
    - difficult working conditions;
    - rationalisation and redeployment of teachers;
    - administrative incompetence;
    - defiance of education legislation;
    - dealing with racial problems;
    - lack of discipline;
    - crime and vandalism;
    - inconsistent directives;
    - principals – endangered species.
  2. How can the principal, teachers, pupils or students, parents and the Department of Education assist in solving the problems referred to previously?

3. How do the staff, SGB, inspectors of schools, directors and the highest authorities assist you in enhancing a culture of teaching and learning?
4. Management is often described in terms of planning, organising, leading and controlling. Please describe how each of these activities are realised in your principalship (e.g. long term planning, short term planning).
5. Do the people in decision making (you, HODs, school inspectors, etc.) have competence and skills in the areas in which decisions have to be made?
6. Are the tasks delegated to you (or to the people who should execute them) clear?
7. How do you ensure that there is effective control of staff and learners' activities?
8. Do you ever formally set goals for your school? If yes, which technique do you employ to set goals and to communicate them to your staff?
9. Do you have a specific vision and mission statement for the school? How is this manifested in educational practice?
10. How do you see yourself as effective communicator?
11. What role do you play in curriculum development?
12. What role do you as an educational manager and leader play in the formulation of education legislation?
13. What impact does the new education legislation have on your role as the educational manager and instructional leader? e.g. the implications of the South African Constitution, the SASA and the LRA on education practice, particularly on your role as principal.
14. How do you employ instructional supervision by means of conducting:

- **staff development programmes for teachers;**
  - **motivating staff;**
  - **appraising staff or evaluating teachers.**
15. What are, according to you, key features or characteristics of effective principalship?
16. Can you describe any particular challenge thus far in your position?