The Role of Principalship in the

Management of Teaching and Learning in Swaziland:

Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools in the Hhohho Region

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Abstract

Instructional leadership is a key area of school leadership, which directly speaks to the core purpose of schools, namely, teaching and learning. Educational leadership scholars acknowledge that most research focuses on educational policies: the - what ought -or is required - to be done in schools. Conversely, little is known on how those policies are implemented (Thurlow et al 2003). Thurlow et al's (2003) research exposed the need to investigate the implementation practices and emphasised that research into instructional leadership in Southern Africa was now imperative.

This research therefore explores the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning in two rural secondary schools in the Hhohho region of Swaziland. Furthermore, this research focuses on distributed leadership because this has been recognised as a key facet of instructional leadership. Distributed leadership offers an alternative for running organisations (Spillane 2007). This is done by looking at the extent to which Heads of Departments (HoDs) are empowered, supported and involved in the improvement of learner academic achievement. Research from other countries, England in particular, has shown that where 'middle managers' (HoDs) were directly involved in activities directed at enhancing learner performance, there were remarkable results (Busher and Harris 1999). The research also draws on the large body of international literature in the leadership field.

The research is a qualitative study which uses two small scale case studies of secondary schools in the rural Hhohho region of Swaziland. The secondary schools

are purposefully sampled because they are in rural settings and have records of producing comparatively good learner academic results on standardised external examination at O' level. Participants of the study in each school are the principal, deputy principal, four heads of departments and four teachers. Questionnaires and follow-up probing interviews are used to elicit data from the participants.

In addressing the research question, evidence from the research findings show that the two secondary schools studied mainly focus on producing good academic results as measured by the external examination set by the Examination Council of Swaziland. Principals of both schools do this by ensuring that resources, both human and physical are targeted towards these. They do not concentrate on the wider aspects of teaching and learning; teachers are encouraged only to be external examination oriented in their teaching. My belief supported by international literature; is that the role of principalship should stretch beyond learner academic performance. This role, of the instructional leader, should encompass the quality of teaching and learning by encouraging teachers to reflect on their classroom practices order to improve these.

Keywords

Declaration

I, Khombisile Dlamini (Student number: 0614828R) Master of Education student at the University of Witwatersrand hereby declare that the following project is my own unaided work. It is in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Education degree. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination of any other University. I have used books, journals and the internet as sources of information that have been carefully referenced through the required referencing conventions.

Signature_____   Date: _____

Khombisile Dlamini

February 2009

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This research report is dedicated to my late father Prince Maquba who passed on in 1989. He valued education and would have been proud of me. May his soul rest in peace!

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Glossary

ACE	Advanced Certificate in Educational leadership
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
DoE	Department of Education
E	Emalangeni: Swazi Currency
GCSE	General Certificate in Secondary Education
HIV	Human Immune Virus
HoD	Head of Department
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
MoE	Ministry of Education
OVC	Orphaned and Vulnerable Children
PEST	Political, Economic, Social and Technological
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPC	Swaziland Primary Certificate
STD	Secondary Teachers' Diploma
TSC	Teaching Service Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This research investigates the role played by school principals in managing teaching and learning in Swaziland. Two rural secondary schools situated in the Hhohho region of Swaziland have been used as case studies. Swaziland, a former British protectorate, initially has an education system modelled along the English system. Over the years changes have been introduced resulting in a shift in educational policy with respect to the management of teaching and learning in Swaziland.

Swaziland, a tiny country landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique, is governed by an absolute monarch. The country's leadership system has also been labelled as being unresponsive to change, especially in times when globally, leadership innovations have been an area of focus, particularly to respond to global changes embodied in political, economic, social and technological (PEST) factors. In terms of the constitution the King is vested with both executive and legislative authority. Traditionally the king should not be challenged. So entrenched is this mind set such that it trickles down to politicians, social institutions as well as organisations including schools. Such a mindset has unwittingly influenced the approach of some school principals in leading and managing schools.

The first formal school in Swaziland was established in 1894; it was for whites only. Although schools for black learners were later introduced a 'whites only', 'blacks only' system was maintained until 1968 when the country gained independence (Matsebula, 1972:199). The first teachers' training college, William Pitcher, was established in 1962 (Booth 2003). Three other teacher training colleges have been established since then. All these colleges offer teacher training programmes up to diploma level. The University of Swaziland also offers teacher training programmes at degree level.

Swaziland has a three tier schooling system- primary, junior secondary and senior secondary. Progression to each level is determined by a learner's performance in standardised external examination. At primary level learners sit for the Swaziland Primary Certificate (S.P.C); at junior secondary level they sit for the Junior Certificate Examination; and at senor secondary level learners sit for the International Certificate of Secondary Education (I.G.C.S.E). The I.G.C.S.E is a new curriculum, introduced in 2006 and replacing what was known as General Certificate in Education (G.C.E) (Ministry of Education, undated).

Since learner progression from one level to another is determined by the performance in the externally standardised examination at the end of each level, those learners who fail the exams often 'slip through the net'. The level structured education system has pressured schools, parents and learners to strive for excellence in external standardised testing. This is because there are limited options available for learners who fail the external examination offered at the end of each phase to continue with their education.

Swaziland's National Policy Statement (1999: section12.1), provides that schools should be examined and inspected by inspectors, who are attached to the Ministry of Education (MoE), as way of ensuring that schools are accountable to the Ministry for what they do.

Economically, Swaziland is facing the challenge of a declining economy. This can be attributed to a number of factors including drought which has been widespread over the past years and has negatively affected production in the agricultural sector. In addition, the downfall of the apartheid regime in the neighbouring South Africa led to the erosion of Swaziland's regional advantage, a predicament which has also contributed to the declining economy (Whiteside at al 2006:32).

The prevalence of the HIV/AIDS pandemic also has negative effects on the economy as well as in the education sector. HIV/AIDS does not only affect the productive labour force; it also drains the economy as a lot of resources are devoted to the treatment of the sick as well as taking care of the increasing orphan and vulnerable children population (Whiteside at al 2006:21). Such a situation also exposes schools and their leaders in challenging circumstances. Swaziland is the worst affected by the pandemic with the highest number of people living with the virus in the world, "the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) counted 80, 000 AIDS orphans in Swazi population of about one million" Hall (2007). The government has a programme designed specifically to enable HIV/AIDS orphaned children access to education called: the Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC) programme.

It is important to look at the current socio-economic state of Swaziland in relation with the rest of the world in the context of globalisation and change. Globalisation has enabled financial and "investment markets to operate internationally, largely as a result of deregulation and improved communications". We now live in a global era; it is ever changing and has become more of a 'knowledge economy', with education playing a fundamental role to a country's economic performance in relation to the global world (Carnoy (2001). This has also demanded innovation in education to accommodate such changes. Given these changes, the role of principalship is becoming more challenging both at global and at country level.

This study therefore investigates the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning in rural Swazi secondary schools. It explores how principals influence teachers to produce outstanding learner academic performance by focusing on the principal as an instructional leader as well as features of distributed leadership in the schools. All these aspects are investigated to understand the role of principalship in managing teaching and learning. The research looks at how the studied school principals manage teaching and learning. This is done in cognisant with the external environment from which the schools operate from.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this research is based on the work of eminent educational leadership scholars, namely Bush (2003), Fullan (1991, 1992, 2000,) Harris (2001) Spillane (2006) and Mullins (2007). Bush (2003), a proponent of instructional leadership, advocates that principals can best manage teaching and learning if they become instructional leaders. Such a leadership approach focuses on

the processes of teaching and learning with the primary goal of enhancing learner achievement. Fullan (1991, 1992 and 2000) looks at school leadership at a broader level. He sees it as a process which entails change; that instructional leaders for instance, would have to be change leaders of they are to be effective, because leading and managing change is part of organisational life. Global changes have been experienced in recent years; these changes have made it necessary for schools to respond in order to be compatible with the bigger external environment from which they operate.

Harris (2001) argues that if learner achievement is the focal point, then each subject department is at a better position to influence what happens in the classroom. The trick lies in training and empowering Heads of Department (HoD) and the principal should take the initiative in creating such an environment. Mullins (2007) on the other hand, an advocate of organisational culture, argues that culture is the engine that drives an organisation. The instructional leadership approach can be used; there can be a distributed leadership practice but their success depends on the nature of the prevailing organisational culture. It is fragile and needs to be understood as it can hamper organisational effectiveness.

The works of the aforementioned scholars have given theoretical basis for this research in that while the main research's focal point is on instructional leadership; the role played by principals in managing teaching and learning can not be fully explored in isolation from other leadership practices.

Bush (2003) argues that principalship plays a significant role in influencing teaching and learning. While that school of thought is widely accepted, little is known on how principals are actually doing this in Southern Africa (Swaziland included). South Africa for instance, has acknowledged the gap and as a consequence, the Department of Education (DoE) has introduced a pilot programme, the Advanced Certificate in Educational leadership (ACE) to fill this gap. Research has shown that principals are not adequately trained to execute their professional duties; they do not have special training on instructional leadership. Research has mostly focused on policies; what principals ought to do as opposed to what they do in practice. As a result "knowledge on how principals manage curriculum is therefore limited" (Hoadley et al. 2007:3). There is knowledge and research deficit on instructional leadership, South Africa's quality of "outputs from the school system" for instance, has been seen to be declining (Christie 2007:27). Having said that, principals have been acknowledged to direct and influence the behaviour of teachers to impact on activities associated with improved learner academic performance. (Bush 2003:15).

The overarching concern for most governments has been on educational management and budgets. Clearly the management of the budget is important. To create a conducive teaching and learning environment requires proper management of funds for the purposes of resources (human and physical) (Christie 2008:24). The problem comes when managing the budget supersedes the need to focus on the processes involved in the creation of good teaching and learning environments. Resources are important but how they are utilised for effective teaching and learning to take place is crucial (Taylor, 2007:536 in Hoadley et al, 2007:3).

In Southern Africa, and South Africa in particular, attention has been on educational outcomes (Christie, 2007:136), which are often linked to budget. This governmental approach, though globally influenced has been criticised for being upside down. "The government has an option to fund schools on the basis of rights instead of what has been officially presented as "available" resources and "rational" accounting techniques" Valley and Spreen (2007:59). They advocate for the need to operate from a premise; for example, identify the conditions needed for the creation of a conducive teaching and learning environment. Such conditions may well consider instructional leadership. Christie (2008:137) concurs: the government has not only linked spending on education to the budget but also on spending patterns of other countries in a similar context.

While this research investigates the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning, Spillane (2006) one of the proponents of distributed leadership encourages us to look at the role of principalship from a broader perspective especially in relation to the management of teaching and learning. "A distributed perspective moves beyond the Superman and Wonder Woman's view of school leadership" (Spillane 2003:3).

1.**3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The principal aim of the research is to determine the applicability and the extent thereof of the theories propounded by the above mentioned theorists. The crux of the research is to examine the leadership practices employed by the principals in the selected secondary schools with two intentions. The first is to establish if their practices either align or depart from the existing literature on the earlier discussed

educational leadership theories namely instructional leadership, distributed leadership, school change and school culture. The second is to investigate the reasons behind any point of departure from this, if revealed through the research. The idea of "instructional leadership" is also a critical area which needed to be explored, especially its practices such as the management of teaching and learning.

1.4 Problem Statement

This research is driven by related literature on excellent schools. Beare et.al (1993) in Preedy (1993:141), proposes for instance, that exceptional leadership is a key component for excellent schools. The research takes into consideration the debate surrounding excellent schools, that whereas examination results are only one of the many determinants of effective schools, principalship is also one of the many resource inputs associated with good schools.

The main focus is on the role principalship plays in managing teaching and learning since a lot of money is increasingly spent on education; yet, little is known about the role of principals in managing teaching and learning-the core business of schools. Schools cannot function efficiently without good leadership on the one hand (Beare et al 1993:142); while on the other hand, parents prefer to enrol their children in schools with a record of producing good academic results, in which case good academic results become a priority compared to other determinants that drive outstanding schools.

The basis of the research is on observations and literature. Most schools in the rural parts of Swaziland do not perform well on external standardised examination when

compared with their urban counterparts. Schools often blame this on a number of socio-economic issues including poverty, HIV and AIDS, learners' socio- economic background as well as the lack of community support, a problem which appears more prevalent in the rural areas. Henneveld and Craig (1996:13) argue that results from school improvement research revealed that "the quality of (in-school)" factors exert greater influence on learners' academic achievements in developing countries like Swaziland.

Kamper (2008) has also conducted a specific research which focused on effective leadership in some South African poverty stricken schools. This research, however though also conducted in rural schools, is in a different context in Swaziland where the challenges schools face might not be identical. In addition, the kind of support schools receive from government is likely to be different because of the two countries' economic muscles. In spite of all the challenges, there are schools who still do exceptionally well in their O' level results in the rural places as is observed by the Examinations Council of Swaziland through standardised academic examination. The assumption is that teaching and learning is effective in such schools.

According to Spillane et al (2004:14) principalship entails "the identification, acquisition, allocation, coordination, and use of the social, material and cultural resources necessary to establish the conditions for the possibility of teaching and learning." This research however, does not look at leadership in a broader sense; it specifically investigates the role of principals in the management of teaching and learning. According to Lekato (1970) in Sandoval-Hernandez (2008:32), schools are not very different from any other organisation; for such reason, they have an influence

on learners' academic performance. Both teachers and learners can positively respond to the demands and expectations of a school organisation.

According to Spillane et al (2004) leadership is a significant variable in any organisation including educational leadership which has been increasingly seen as a critical area of innovation. For any organisation to continue exerting its influence, including schools, they need to respond to the political, economic, social and technological changes. The research probes the role of principalship in managing teaching and learning. Focus is on the principal as an instructional leader because of the belief that if the core business of schools is teaching and learning, then those who lead schools must be involved in leading schools towards achieving its core business.

1.5. Research Questions

The study explores the following key question:

- What is the role of the principal in leading and managing teaching and learning? This question is informed by the following sub questions:
  - What are principals' perceptions on instructional leadership?
  - What are the views and practices of school leaders on distributed leadership?

1.6 Rationale

It is expected that this research will add to the body of knowledge on instructional leadership. The research gives a different perspective on how principals in a different context (Swaziland) manage teaching and learning. Leadership innovations to respond to the ever changing global and local PEST factors have been seen to be crucial for

organisation. Most work on instructional leadership has been done internationally since the beginning of the 21st century (Bush 2007:391) but a little has been done in a Swazi context. Bush (2007) suggests that there has been a consensus that the generative force behind the provision of the best education for learners is effective principalship. This research examines the role played by school principals in managing teaching and learning as well as how that aligns to existing literature and by so doing makes a contribution to the understanding of the critical areas of principalship and the management of teaching and learning.

This research also tries to establish the validity of Hallinger and Kantamara's (2000:190) argument. They raised an interesting perspective on their case study on leadership, conducted in a school in Thailand. They acknowledged that there seems to be a consensus on the development of leadership in order to enhance school effectiveness. However, they argue that developing school leadership has a flaw. "…when [it] is provided; school practitioners in non-Western nations often learn Western frameworks that lack cultural validity." The research will test the validity of Hallinger and Kantamara's (2000) claim by establishing whether principals rely on theory or their instincts in the management of teaching and learning in a Swaziland.

At a time when many policymakers and practitioners agree that the principalship needs fundamental rethinking, distributed and instructional leadership offer a coherent vision of one possible future (Bush 2007). The expectation is that this research will benefit policy makers as well as education practitioners in Swaziland especially to discuss the contributions and benefits of seeing leadership in schools as a distributive concept than as invested in the principals alone. Bush (in press) cited in Bush

(2007:391) noted that "as the global economy gathers pace, more governments are realising that their main assets are their people and that remaining or becoming competitive depends increasingly on the development of a highly skilled workforce." Understanding the role of school principals is therefore a critical area, which needs immediate attention; it is hoped that this research will make a contribution in the field in general as well as in the Southern African context.

1.7 Constraints of the Research

Time has been a major constraint of the research; there was limited time to collect data and this has not enabled a thorough investigation of all the particular issues at hand using other research methods like classroom observations. The fact that this research used case studies is also a constraint mainly because the research finding cannot be said to be a representation of every Swazi secondary school. Case studies have "basically been faulted for [their] lack of representativeness… and [their] lack of rigor in the collection, construction and analysis of the imperial materials that give rise to this study" (Merriam 1998:43).

Another limitation of the research was that it was too person specific; it relied on specific people some of whom could not participate in the follow up probing interviews. For example, there is only one principal in a school and often one deputy principal except for school B where they were three. There is only one head of department per subject, and it was difficult to have interview appointments with all those specific teachers. Also the fact that the research focuses on the Head of Department (HoDs) who head the four core subjects was a limitation. Two of them: one English HoD in school A refused to be interviewed; another maths HoD in school

B was occupied with other issues and never honoured any of the interview appointments. Their participation was important for the study but since the research was person specific, it was difficult to replace those that could not be interviewed.

There also seems to be limited literature on instructional leadership in Southern Africa, let alone in a Swazi school context. This might be because instructional leadership has not been given its due attention over the years. Most research has been on policy: what ought to be done [principle] than what is actually happening [practice] (Hoadly et al 2007:2)

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Hallinger and Heck (1998:157) conducted research, which investigated the relationship between school leadership and learner achievement. They discovered that principals play an indirect, but significant role, in influencing learner achievement through the way they manage teaching and learning. The research highlighted different angles from which principals can exert influence on the school and ultimately on its core business. These approaches are classified as direct, antecedent, mediated, reciprocal and moderated effects (Hallinger and Heck: 160).

The mediated influence according to Hallinger and Heck (1998:163) occur when the principal's actions affects the school's outcomes directly, mediated effects on the other hand are identified when the principals' actions through other variables have an indirect effects on the outcomes. Hallinger and Heck caution that researchers who adopt the 'direct effect model' "have been unable to produce sound or consistent evidence of [principalship] effects on [learner] achievement, [there is no] conclusive results with respect to principal effect" (Hallinger and Heck: 166). This, therefore, suggests that such effects do not give insights into how principals influence learner achievement.

Furthemore, according to Hallinger and Heck (1998:167), the hypothesis behind mediated effects is that "leaders achieve their effects on school outcomes, through

indirect paths." They argue that the role principals play in managing teaching and learning is often "mediated by other people, events and other organisational factors such as teacher commitment, and school instructional practices." But for Leithwood (1994) in Hallinger and Heck (1998:167), it is more about how school leaders influence the behaviour as well as the attitude of their staff.

A research conducted by Kamper (2008:7) revealed that despite difficulties faced by schools in poverty stricken areas, there are some schools that manage to be effective for their context. The conclusion it reached was that the prevailing climate plays a fundamental role in keeping teachers, parents as well as learners motivated towards achieving their goals. Kruger (2003:206) concurs when he affirms that an effective teaching and learning culture plays a vital role in promoting academic success. For him, effective teaching and learning culture goes to the extent of ensuring the existence of a "well developed organisational structure and instructional programme that focuses on all aspects of academic achievement and professional development of [teachers]" (Kruger 2003: 207).

According to Kruger (2003:206) as much as it is extremely difficult to create a culture that would enable effective teaching and learning to take place, the responsibility still without doubt, rests on the shoulders of school principals. They have to be at the forefront and intervene when the need arises. Beare et al (1993:141) substantiate this position when they argue that leadership is a key component for excellent schools; the leaders should have a vision for their schools. What is important, they insist, is that the vision should be shared by teachers as well as the school community and should ultimately inform "the programme for learning and teaching". Stogdill (1950:4) in

Beare et al (1993:142) defines leadership as the technique of managing the actions of an organised group towards the realisation of a pre-set goal , this may include the way principals influence the processes of teaching in a way that would produce better academic results.

For Beare et al (1993:142), the quality of education is driven by outstanding leaders who are continuously developed. Since it has now been established that effective principalship is the foundation for those schools which produce comparatively better academic results, the next crucial step is to establish what constitutes effective principalship. Good principals according Beare et al (1993:142) do not only work towards influencing their teachers for the realisation of their vision but also make them understand the significance of accomplishing the pre-set goals. For principals to effectively influence their teachers to realise the school's vision, there must be the existence of an organisational structure, which according to Fidler (1997:53) every school organisation ought to put into place if they want to achieve their core business-teaching and learning.

There are some challenges attached to working towards the accomplishment of pre-set goals. According to Beare et al (1993:144) research has discovered the importance of the behaviour of leaders; they face the challenge of having to strike a balance between leading the schools towards the accomplishment of consensually pre-set goals while ensuring that the working environment as well as the culture of the school is healthy and conducive. This can be done by employing different leadership styles.

Botha (2004:239) argues that behind good academic results is a professional principal who assumes the position of a leader and a manager. Such a leader ensures that resources, both human and physical are effectively utilised so that the school can produce the "educated learner", which is the school's most important business.

2.1. Principalship on the Management of Teaching and Learning

School principals can effectively manage teaching and learning if they become instructional leaders; which is defined by Leithwood et al (1999:8) in Harris et al (2003:58) as a leadership approach that puts the processes of teaching and learning at the centre with the intention of influencing learner's achievement. According to Hallinger and Heck (1998:176) research has shown that a principal as an instructional leader has indirect effects on learner achievement. They argue that research has discovered that where principals encouraged and supported direct classroom supervision, there was improved outcomes. For them, an inculcation of a collaborative culture which attends to instructional problems, securing resources and "improve in-service and staff development activities" is vital.

Seaton et al (2008:26) also believe in the power of the principal as an instructional leader. Such a principal is for them even more relevant in this era as the demands of the 21st century have learner achievement as a top priority. Principals have the fundamental responsibility of providing a "supportive environment" for their organisational members to work collaboratively for the primary goal: teaching and learning for improved leaner performance. They argue that a supportive environment is one which not only cultivates a collaborative culture but also one which supports learning for professional development of organisational members.

Hopkins (2003) in Harris et al (2003:55) maintains that school leaders have the responsibility of ensuring that the school environment is well managed in order to promote successful learning through 'instructional leadership', which encompasses the learning of teachers as well as their learners. The responsibility of instructional leaders according to Chell (1996) is to co-ordinate, guide and direct the efforts of organisational members for the benefit of the quality of teaching and learning. This leader creates a platform for effective teaching and learning by giving priority to activities which set a foundation for high learner achievement.

Glickman (2002) in Ovando and Ramirez (2007:92) concurs; "instructional leaders are expected to have a comprehensive understanding, knowledge, skills and dispositions associated with teaching and learning." They need to have the ability to identify and understand their teachers' professional needs, strengths and weaknesses so that they can help them sharpen their skills pertaining teaching and learning. A principal may use different approaches depending on the level of their teachers' level of professional muscle. The approaches are "nondirective, collaborative, directive-informational and directive control"— all of which might be relevant and useful for different teachers (Glickman 2002:40) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:92). The trick lies in understanding your teachers as a principal.

Brewer (1993) in Hallinger and Heck (1998:171) argues that principals play a significant role in motivating teachers on "their classroom goal setting". Principals' attitudes towards academic expectations affect learner achievement, such that the higher the expectation the higher the results on learner achievement. Hallinger and

Heck (1998:172) add that establishing a consensually agreed school mission is fundamental; it also forms the basis for nourishing teacher expectations while creating learning opportunities for learners.

According to Hallinger and Heck (1998:174) managing teaching and learning is a process which also requires transformational leadership techniques. Leithwood et al (1993) in Hallinger and Heck (1998:194) argue that one fundamental aspect of transformational leadership which has a positive effect on the management of teaching and learning is its emphasis on the provision of support and encouraging collaboration for individual teachers towards the accomplishment of preset goals.

Millet (1996b:2) in Slee et al (1998:128) argues that in education, the need to raise learners' standards of learning has been a priority. Launder et al (1998) in Slee et al (1998:52) raises a rather interesting argument by suggesting that teachers have more influence on learners' academic outcomes than the school. It can be argued that this is as good as the figurative notion of which comes first, the egg or the chicken. Practically, teachers have a direct influence as they are the ones who deal with learners in the classroom, but they ultimately need the earlier mentioned 'right structure', which supports them on what they do. This, as it has been earlier discussed rests on the shoulders of the principals as they have the responsibility of ensuring the existence of appropriate structures in their schools.

A specific research in England revealed an interesting scenario on the employment of development planning in schools. Development planning was established in England to be used by schools so that they cope with "centrally driven change agenda" and at

the same time improve on learner achievement (Hopkins and MacGilchrist 1998:409).

What is more intriguing is how the theory was implemented differently on the ground

by some schools, which benefited the most from development planning. Learners'

progress as well as achievement improved for those schools. The schools that

benefited the most out of the development planning used an 'inside out' approach;

they put priority on the needs of the learners, such that those needs are the ones which

informed the direction of school management. Their strategy worked better for them

than any other school. It was classroom oriented; everything else had to be shaped in a

way that supported the processes of teaching and learning. The research also deduced

that not every school can take that risk. Low performing schools often need external

assistance; they cannot take the risk of redirecting the implementation of the theory

(Hopkins and MacGilchrist, 1998:410).

2.2 Principalship and Learning Outcomes

Hopkins and MacGilchrist's (1998:412) research established a correlation between

the management of processes of teaching and learning with learners' outcomes. These

include the pedagogy, pacing, as well as having high expectations of learners. They

admit that there is no common recipe for success; that each school is unique and so

should be their strategies for enhancing effectiveness.

According to Hextall and Mahony (1998) in Slee et al (1998:128) school principals

cannot successfully lead and manage teaching and learning without 'effective

teachers', no matter how hard principals try on their own. Principals need to get their

teachers and learners motivated. Everard and Morris (1996:20) define motivation as

"getting the best out of people". It can be argued that if the role of a principal is to

inspire teachers in such a way that they perform to their best of abilities; they need clear performance indicators to inform their direction. Everard and Morris (1996:20) also caution that the needs of individuals who form the bigger organisation should be taken into consideration, together with those of the group forming the organisation as well as those of the 'client'.

According to Harris (2001:482) while school leadership has the ultimate responsibility of ensuring the prevalence of the right culture, they cannot achieve that in isolation with the input of their subordinates. Bell (1997:77) concurs ─ the power of teamwork cannot be overlooked. Teachers are more likely to work effectively if their goals are consensually agreed, if they work as a team, share responsibilities and negotiate as a team. Bell (1997:79) argues that through team work, a group can make progress which no one person can achieve. In addition, Everard and Morris (1996:200 argue that involving organisational members serve as a catalyst towards their motivation. They become eager to achieve their consensually agreed goals.

Ali (1998:25) turns our attention to a different dimension to teacher motivation. He insists that for principals to "take responsibility of ensuring the quality of teaching and learning in their schools, they would have to be entrusted with the authority to make important decisions about the school". This includes the recruitment of teachers, otherwise teachers "would not be motivated to try to meet their [principal's] expectations." With this in mind, one would have to highlight that principals in Swazi schools neither have a 'voice' nor choice when it comes to the recruitment of their teachers. A Teachers' Service Commission (T.S.C), on behalf of the Ministry of Education (MoE) appoints teachers. Could principals under such centralised structures

of teacher recruitment be struggling motivating their teachers as Ali (1998) argues? This is another issue concerning the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning which was explored in order to get a complete picture in the running of schools for their core business; teaching and learning.

2.3 Time Management for Teaching and Learning

Time management is a critical issue in the running of schools. It is important for teachers and principals to use every minute of learning time, because any instructional time lost ultimately has a negative impact on learning outcomes. Allington (2005:17) argues that it is crucial that every minute meant for instructional purposes be used towards instructional activities. For him, the most important thing is to keep learners involved in productive academic activities, the problem he exposes however is that most schools especially in the first hour of school's instructional time ignore what he refers to as the "urgency of instructional time". He argues that most schools often use the first thirty minutes of the day to make announcements, take attendance and get learners settled in their classrooms.

I can relate to Allington's (2005) point on instructional time often wasted during the first hour of schools. In my experience as a teacher in Swaziland, I have noticed loss of instructional time especially in the first early hours of the morning. In all Swazi public schools there is a morning assembly which is allocated 10 minutes by the MoE. During that time learners and teachers gather for a prayer, which often takes more than the allocated 10 minutes. Allington (2005) appears to be against such misuse of time. He argues that research has established such problems in the usage of

instructional time in schools. "To achieve the highest quality educational outcomes requires that we make every moment of the school day count". (Allington 2005:17).

2.4 Impact of School's Socio-economic Environment on Teaching and Learning

The role of principalship in the management of teaching cannot be fully explored in isolation from the wider community in which the school is embedded (Huber 2004:670). The socio-economic context of the wider community, which includes poverty, is an issue whose impact on education cannot be overlooked especially in times when it has been deepened by the prevalence of HIV/AIDS pandemic. Swaziland, as earlier mentioned is worst hit by the pandemic, which has also had an undoubtedly negative underpinning on intensifying poverty and ultimately on schools and teaching and learning. Having highlighted the above, Bennel et al (2003:53) assert that a general assumption that learners who are directly affected by HIV/AIDS struggle to keep up with the demands of school, circumstances often force them to drop out and those who remain at school have deteriorating academic performance in most instances. In Swaziland such learners are commonly referred to as orphaned and vulnerable children (OVC).

According to Bennel at al (2003:59) learners such as OVC are usually burdened with responsibilities of looking after sick family members; they argue that it is difficult to identify learners who take up such activities in their homes yet this has a bearing on their learning at school. They argue that research in Sub-Saharan countries established that "orphans from the poorest socio economic background" encounter challenges at school; poverty has been singled out as the source of a number of problems faced by OVC. Such problems include behavioural problems in class, poor concentration span,

as well as unsupportive home environment, in particular pertaining to homework issues.

A specific research conducted by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005:80) in South African rural schools also exposed some of the socio-economic challenges faced by schools in rural areas; problems which have to taken into cognisant as they have an impact on teaching and learning. Such problems include starved learners starve, high unemployment rate amongst parents and the lack of parental support on their children's learning. Connell (1994:145) in Mintz and Yun (1999) agrees. They see poverty as an "outer world issue" which affects the processes of teaching and learning. "Children from poor families are, generally speaking, the least successful by conventional, measures and the hardest to teach by traditional methods." They argue that such learners pose a challenge to the school, especially because they, by and large, depend on the school for educational resources. They also acknowledge that a majority of such children are in developing countries, which includes Swaziland and most of them are in rural places. It is expected therefore that the targeted schools will have quite a number of such learners because they are in rural places.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005:51) also unveiled some challenges encountered by poor families with regard to schools and uniform which also has an impact on teaching and learning. Most poor parents in rural areas struggle to pay school fees as well as buy school uniform for their children. When such parents fail to pay school fees for their children, they [learners] are often sent home until they settle their depts. This means that such learners miss out on school work, which affects their overall performance.

Schools located in rural communities have also been observed to be at a disadvantage when it comes to teacher recruitment. They face a challenge to attract and keep talented teachers. A majority of teachers prefer to teach in areas where there is a variety of recreational facilities. That being noted, teacher quality as well as the quality of teaching have been acknowledged to play a significant role in either enhancing or hampering learner achievement (Holloway 2002:138).

Following from above, Connell (1994:157) in Mintz, and Yun (1999) contend that teachers play an important role in enhancing teaching and learning, especially for schools in disadvantaged communities, through a number of activities, including "compensatory education." In Swazi schools' context, this is referred to as extra lessons (classes); it entails teaching beyond school stipulated hours: weekends, school holidays, early in the morning before official school hours begin or late in the afternoon after school hours. The important issue to note here is that the Swazi government does not allocate funds for such activities; it is up to the principals' shoulders to keep both teachers and learners motivated towards such activities.

2.5 Distributed Leadership as a Facet of the Role of Principals

Distributed leadership according to Spillane et al (2004:7) is a leadership practice which is concerned with inculcating leadership practices at all levels in an organisation, instead of depending on leadership only from the formal leadership position. They argue that most literature on school leadership from the 20th century has been centred on the formal leadership positions. Researchers have now begun to explore the concept of leadership "as a set of behaviours". This approach to the study

of leadership looks at leadership beyond the formal leadership positions. For Hargreaves and Fink (2006: 95), "it inspires staff members, [learners] and parents to seek, create and exploit leadership opportunities that contribute to deep and bread learning for all [learners]."

Spillane et al (2004:3) argue that principalship has been considered an area which needs innovation. For them, teaching and learning is the fundamental purpose of schools, and its success relies on other key actors other than the principal. The principal however takes a leading role in ensuring that his/her school is conducive for teaching and learning to effectively take place. Wise and Bush (1999:193) concur; responding to the ever changing demands of PEST factors have contributed to making managing schools difficult; they are now much more complex organisations than previously, and can not be managed solely by the principal. Ridden (1992:68) also adds; "the increasing complexity of school management requires knowledge, skills, experience, perception and time-well beyond the capabilities of any one person."

One research in England and Wales' schools revealed an appealing angle demonstrating the important role of distributed leadership in schools, which they argue has not been given adequate attention over the years. This research discovered that principals who practiced shared leadership enhanced the effectiveness of their school. The research shows that indeed learners' achievements are at the heart of effective schools. What was unique was the fact that school departments play a fundamental role in positively influencing the processes of teaching and learning, which ultimately enhance the effectiveness of the school organisation at large, and that it is therefore vital to have them developed (Harris' 2001). Hargreaves and Fink

(2006:99) agree that school effectiveness research established "clear correlation between teacher involvement in school decision making and positive [learner] outcome."

According to Harris (2001:478) a 'top-down' approach has little influence on improving learners' achievement. A more learner oriented approach was found to be more effective and departments were in a better position to tackle the issue of learners' achievement from that angle. Harris' (2001) findings revealed:

> *"...various training programmes [have] assisted departments to develop and improve. In the majority of cases, this has manifested itself in improved performances in GCSE level."* (Harris 2001: 480).

What is important to note here is that this 'bottom- up' approach was productive for schools in England and Wales. The governance system at country level is also decentralised; Swaziland on the other hand, where this research was conducted is governed through a centralised governance system. This research has therefore given insights on which approach works for them considering the history of the country's governance system.

According to Harris (2001:482) while school principals have the ultimate responsibility of ensuring the prevalence of the right culture, they cannot achieve that in isolation with the input of their subordinates. Hopkins (2003) in Harris et al (2003:55) concurs when he suggests that it would be too ambitious to expect principals to do everything all by themselves. They need to work collaboratively with their subordinates to succeed.

The power of team work for Bell (1997:77) cannot be overlooked. Teachers are more likely to work effectively if their goals are consensually agreed, and if they work as a team; share responsibilities and negotiate as a team. Bell (1997:79) mentions that through team work, a group can make progress which no one person can achieve. In addition, Everard and Morris (1996:200) assert that involving organisational members serves as a catalyst towards their motivation. They become eager to achieve their consensually agreed goals.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006:95) highlight an important issue which must be carefully considered before distributed leadership is adopted. They agree on one hand that the burden of principalship is a continuing responsibility which has to maintain momentum, and that it would be difficult for principal to sustain that momentum without the contribution of other organisational members. However, the crucial aspect of it lies in also understanding the negative consequences of distributed leadership if poorly planned. They warn; "distributed leadership may not always be good leadership that advances worthwhile causes… [it] is sometimes bad leadership" (Fink 2006:102). For it to be useful, school organisational members need to be equipped with knowledge and skills that would enable them to meaningfully embrace the power given to them while all benefiting by sharing their knowledge. They also emphasise that the important role of principalship is to set such a foundation first before any attempt to distribute leadership; a dysfunctional school for instance, would require the restoration of order and authority otherwise distributed leadership will not work. Key issues which needs to be considered includes knowing where and when it is the ideal time to distributed leadership.

The merits of distributed leadership should be evaluated in relation to the impact it has on the core business of schools, teaching and learning, as well as its sustainability. Two suggestions seem to be coming out strongly: First, distributed leadership should not be done for the sake of innovations; it must ultimately impact positively on teaching and learning. Secondly, a positive impact on teaching and learning is not good enough if it will be short lived Hargreaves and Fink (2006:98).

2.6 Organisational Culture and Change: its Impact on Teaching and Learning

According to Mullin (2005:909) organisational culture and change are important elements of any organisation; it can hamper the effectiveness of an organisation if not carefully natured. He lists a number of factors which are part of organisational livelihood and have made it impossible for organisations not to change. The factors are all embodied in PEST factors, they include "uncertain economic conditions, globalisation, and fierce world competition; political interests, scarcity of natural resources and rapid development in new technology and the information age." Day et al (2000:9) agrees by proposing that changes brought by PEST factors globally have pressured governments to scrutinise the relevance of education in addressing such demands. They discuss the crucial changes at school level mainly arising from leadership approaches, resource management as well as strategic planning. Such changes are fundamental in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place under favourable conditions while responding to global changes and demands. Other forces for change also include the increased demand for quality education in schools. One may agree by adding that the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning must also be responsive to change.

Mullins (2005:897) highlights that while change has been recognised as an inseparable part of an organisation, recently practitioners have also come to acknowledge that change is no longer about merely changing the organisational structures, it also demands the change of organisational culture. "Although people may not be aware consciously of culture, it still has a pervasive influence over their behaviour and action" (Mullins 2005:891). Varey (undated) in Mullins (2005:891) recommends that culture and communication are also inseparable. He argues that meaningful communication requires organisational members to be at the same wavelength in terms of standards and expectations of the organisation. Culture is the 'engine' of an organisation; when a common ground is reached about the culture, and it is acknowledged by organisational members "cultural values increase the power and authority of management." It also motivates organisational members to accept and adhere to rules of the organisation; it also serves as a catalyst to their achievement of organisational goals. The most critical feature of culture is that it should have an intrinsic ability to adjust to the ever changing global and local circumstances (Mullins 2005:898).

Mullin (2005:909) also indicate that organisational change comes in different forms: it can be initiated, can be spontaneous, can be brought by policies and can be as a result of the earlier mentioned PEST factors. What ever triggers it, it has to respond to the demands of the broader external environment which it is part of. The organisational structures and culture should therefore reflect "the nature of the environment in which it [organisation] is operating."

It is the dominant culture that influences "decision making, design of structure, group behaviour …organisational motivation and job satisfaction and management control" (Mullins 2005:897). In an attempt to enable us to understand culture, Handy (1984), introduced us to different cultures which can all be observed in an organisation and that what is most crucial is for organisational members to identify the culture their organisation is closer to: the club, role, task and person cultures. He associates the club culture to a spider's web, with the spider's centre representing power and influence. The power and influence of organisational members in such a culture depends on how close they are to the centre of the spider's web, the close they are the more power and influence they have on the organisation. The role culture is more hierarchical with formal lines of communication. The task culture puts priority on organisational members' talents and competency especially on problem solving issues for the benefit of the organisation. The person culture, unlike the other cultures "puts the individual talent first and makes the organisation the resource for the individual's talent" (Handy 1984:37).

David Hargreaves (2002:50) applies the different cultures in a school environment and categorises into typologies. There is the formal school culture, welfarist school culture, hothouse and survivalist. The formal culture puts emphasis on learner academic achievement by putting pressure on learners to achieve those goals. Outstanding exam results is one of the key elements advocated in this school culture, "school life is orderly, scheduled, disciplined with a strong work ethic." There is a high academic expectation both teachers and learners are expected to work hard towards improved academic results. Teachers are not socially friendly towards their learners; there is discipline with strong work values.

The welfarist school culture depicts a friendly and relaxed and atmosphere. There is less pressure on academic results, instead attention is channelled to individual learners' development; something which is done in a nurturing environment. The development of learners' life skills takes priority over academic goals. The hothouse school culture is a hectic, both social control and social cohesion are high. "Expectations of work, personal development and team spirit are high" There is high teacher commitment and they also push their learners to be as committed. The survivalist school culture on the other hand is dominated by low social control and social cohesion. Both teachers and learners are not enthusiastic towards teaching and learning, such that learners' academic achievement remains low (Hargreaves 2002:51).

Hallinger and Heck (1998:176) argue that organisational culture needs to be understood not only for the effectiveness of an organisation but also when introducing organisational change. They argue that it ultimately influences how people within the organisation behave. Leithhwood et al (1993) in Hallinger and Heck (2000:177) conceptualised school culture as a common agreement about organisational "norms, beliefs and values" and its best revealed through the actions of its members. According to Mullins (2005:891) the simple definition of culture is "how things are done here, organisational culture reflects the underlying assumptions about the way work is performed; what is acceptable and not acceptable and what behaviours and actions are encouraged and discouraged." Handy (1984:37) argues that organisations often have a mixture of all four cultures with one prevailing over the others and that it is critical to build a culture that would have a positive impact on the performance of a school organisation.

In order for organisational culture to be correctly identified and understood Hargreaves (2002: 48) suggests three cyclical tasks in which culture can be understood. The idea is that if culture is well understood it is when informed decision can be made on to change the culture and if the need demands; changed that would support organisational change. These tasks are "diagnostic, directional and managerial." The diagnostic task for Hargreaves (2002:49) is an exercise of identifying the prevailing culture. He recommends the involvement of all school's stakeholders for an in-depth understanding. He also advises practitioners to invest their time and energies in this exercise so that they can be thorough, and also validate their findings by involving other stakeholders outside the formal school environment like the parents.

It is once the prevailing culture is identified and understood that organisational members can make informed decision on the 'directional task'. If a need for change is seen, the 'ideal' direction also requires members to understand change, and its challenges Fullan (2002:17).The managerial task for Hargreaves (2007) is the most challenging; it entails the management of new cultural direction. In order for it to be successful, the diagnostic task should have been properly done, which is why he urges practitioners to be patient and involve as many people as possible because it is important to get it right otherwise all the other tasks would fail. Fullan and Miles (1992:82) warn that change is a learning process which is often unpredictable. For them organisational members should be empowered, encouraged and supported to experiment. For significant change to be realised organisational members need to be allowed and supported to venture into uncertainties and the world of the unknown.

But, if people are to be blamed, they would shy away from experimenting and an organisation like that does not grow; organisational members grow when they explore, learn, they mature in their skills and profession.

While it is important for the new cultural direction to be consensually agreed, that does not guarantee smooth sailing. Hargreaves (2002:61) cautions that the greatest challenge to a new cultural direction can be the existence of 'resistance groups'; "they are actively subversive of management…such a group saps the morale and commitment of supporters of change, and exasperate the leader(s)". Mullins (2005:913) concurs; change is often characterised by resistance which comes in different forms and informed by a number of issues. In some cases some members may be resistant to change when it is seen to pose threats to their power or their 'territorial rights', and this may include monopoly over the control of resources and information. Fullan (2002: 18) stresses however, that leaders should see resistance as an indication of a need for introspection; it should be seen as sign for a reflection.

2.7 Professional Development as a Tool for Enhancing Teaching and Learning

Professional development is defined by Steyn and van Niekerk (2002:250) as an "on going development programme that focuses on the wide range of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to educate learners more effectively." They suggest that the purpose of teacher professional development is to equip teachers as school organisational members with the knowledge and skills that would enable them to grow and improve their performance in the classroom, for the benefit of the school organisation and ultimately the department of education. They also stress that pre-service teacher training is not sufficient enough to enable them to be adequately

prepared "for a lifetime in an organisation". They need to be developing and refining their skills continuously to match up with the ever changing "political, economic social and technological demands" (PEST) factors Steyn and van Niekerk (2002:250). The overarching role of principalship is to encourage and support professional development activities for their teachers.

Teacher professional development plays a crucial role in enabling teachers to grow in their profession, which also benefits teaching and learning. Such a practice according to Ali (1998:24) can be employed through in-school supervision, often done by the school principals. The outstanding feature of professional development include its concern of the different processes around teaching and learning, where teachers are encouraged to engage in a self- reflective exercise in how they teach and how their learners respond.

The principals should take a leading role by assuming the responsibility in the evaluation of teacher performance. The evaluation exercise should be done in an environment which is not only concerned about the learning of learners but teacher too for an increased performance of both (Ovando and Ramirez Jr. 2007:90). Ali (1998:24) adds, "teachers would be as responsible for teacher learning as much as [learner] learning in their school." The principal takes responsibility in encouraging teachers to help and learn from one another, not only within their school but also form teachers in other schools through workshops and other learning opportunities, principals would also ensure that there is monitoring mechanism in place for their teachers professional development to ensure that they meaningfully utilise any opportunity presented for professional development. For Ali (1998:24), the success

of professional development also relies on the contribution of teachers, who should be proactive in exposing areas to the principal which needs to be developed, who would take charge in taking the ideal measures towards its development.

Steyn and van Niekerk (2002:253) add, "Principals should take the initiative in working together with teachers, parents and learners to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the schools' teaching and learning programmes." Marshal (2005), warns however, that the learning of teachers alone is not good enough. The principal has to be the "chief learner"; s/he should take up the lead in taking opportunities aimed at improving his/her skills through learning. It makes it easy for him/her to also encourage their subordinates to do like wise so that everybody is on board on their journey towards skills improvement for the ultimate benefit of teaching and learning.

2.8 Role of Principalship in Keeping Teachers Motivated

School organisational members' motivation is an integral element for the success of teaching and learning, which principals have to work towards. Teachers' motivation is as important as those of the learners. Steyn (2000) in Steyn and van Niekerk (2002:141) defines motivation as energising people, sustaining and supporting their behaviour, which may be done through the use of incentives. Principals have the power to influence teachers by "offering rewards and establishing goals jointly". They seems to suggest that principals have to keep their teachers motivated, otherwise teaching and learning will be negatively affected. Wedel and Jennings (2006:6) agree; "motivating [learners] begins with a motivated teacher". According to them, research shows that learners were enormously motivated to learn when taught by an enthusiastic teacher. It was established that learners become eager to learn even their

"least favourite subject" if taught by a motivated teacher, and they develop an opposite attitude on their favourite subject if taught by a de-motivated teacher. This highlights the value of motivation when it comes to the core business of schools, teaching and learning, the trick for Wedel and Jennings (2006) lies in discovering how to keep your staff motivated as a principal.

Anderson and Kyprianou (1995:64) in Steyn and van Niekerk (2004:142) give some indication on the qualities that are likely to be exhibited by de-motivated teachers; regular absenteeism, late coming, and lack of interest when it comes to dealing with common problems. It would be useful to look at ways in which principals keep their teachers motivated towards teaching and learning. Steyn and van Niekerk (2004:171), argue for example, that "staff who are appraised for their work develop a sense of pride and tend to share an interest in innovations that may lead to improved performance." Another important issue they note is that of teacher autonomy, they highlight that teachers are often uncomfortable when they are constantly watched on their job; it gives the impression that they are not trusted. But, this does not imply that classroom observation where constructive feedback will be given is discouraged. After all, as professionals who are entrusted with the responsibility of 'shaping the future' of children, they have to be ultimately accountable for what they do.

2.9 Accountability and Teaching and Learning

For O'Day (2004:23), accountability exists in a form of pressure between people; it is an obligation which requires reporting back to somebody about what you do. O'Day highlights that accountability comes in different forms and these are differentiated in terms of how they respond to the fundamental questions: who is accountable, to

whom, over what, how and with what consequences? All schools are required to be accountable for what they do, and Swazi schools are no exception, they are supposed to be accountable to the Swazi Ministry of Education as well as the schools' wider communities. It is important to highlight that accountability at school level is assumed to be contextual; it is up to the school leadership to put into place an accountability mechanism that would be effective for the their context, especially when it comes to improving learners' academic achievements. Fidler (1997:62) advises that bureaucratic structures are good at addressing accountability issues, especially if organisational members are clear about their responsibility through job description.

According to Kerry and Wilding (2004:163), "monitoring of teaching and learning has always been a key feature of effective school management." They argue that lesson observation is one of the fundamental features of monitoring; it is where teachers exhibit their effectiveness.

O'Day (2004:16) stresses that the main purpose of school accountability is to improve learners' performance which is done by improving the running of schools as organisations, and by setting target levels of performance. Both teachers and learners are accountable for what they do in schools. Learners' accountability for O'Day comes in a form of academic results and reports. Teachers on the other hand are increasingly pressured into assisting those learners to produce better results.

Ovando (2001) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:88) pinpoint that there has been some developments in the contemporary education field, which has seen an "increase

in academic standards as well as increasing demands for accountability in today's public schools." (Cardo (1995) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:88). Such demands have seen the need for a teacher's evaluation exercise which ultimately helps in the improvement of teaching and learning. This does not necessarily have to be the principal's sole responsibility. Heads of departments and other teachers may also do the exercise through 'peer coaching'. Such a practice can contribute towards these goals; accountability, professional growth and ultimately the goal of enhancing teaching and learning.

Kerry and Wilding (2004:160) concur that teachers are more often required to account for what they do because of the "power and influence" they have on their learners' future through their jobs. Hence they have a number of stakeholders to 'impress', since they are constantly judging their performance. The judgement may either be through formal or informal majors. Even the way learners behave towards a teacher in a form of "task behaviour" cannot be taken lightly as it might indicate a teacher's level of competence in the classroom. Kerry and Wilding (2004:161) refer to such learner behaviour as an informal accountability.

Kerry and Wilding (2004) also warn however, that teachers as professionals need to be accountable to themselves. This form of accountability encourages teachers to continually evaluate themselves and find ways to improve. The formal accountability usually gets more recognition in school. For Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007: 85), it is an integral element for school organisation and it has the potential to improve the quality of teaching and learning depending on how is done.

Kerry and Wilding (2004:160) also raise another interesting issue when they argue that the overall performance of the schools has an influence on the performance and effectiveness of a teacher in the classroom, poor school performance saps the professional morale and self-esteem of any hard working teacher. This leaves principalship with the responsibility of encouraging teachers to engage in a self-evaluative process for their professional growth and effectiveness in the classroom.

Smith and Ellet (2002) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:87) bring in what they refer to as "leadership density" in school, for them where such an approach to leadership is utilised "teachers' assessment, evaluation and professional systems [are all] designed to improve teaching and learning in schools"(Davis at al 2002:229) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:87). A collaborative culture is inculcated in such a school with the motive of increasing opportunities to improve the learning of learners.

Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:89) advocate for a formative evaluation exercise, primarily because it "leads to actions related to improvements." Summative evaluation on the other hand "leads to actions related to retention, promotion and dismissal." I agree because if teaching and learning is the fundamental goal, it's a goal which requires skills, and skills are not acquired overnight, they mature with time and experience. Formative evaluation can give teachers that platform to perfect their teaching skills. Shinkfield (1994) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:91) concurs; "one of the [principal's] most important responsibilities is the evaluation of teacher performance", which serves to address fundamental issues such as the "improvement of instructional programs, staff performance, as well as learner performance."

The United States (US) department of Education (2004:11) in Ovando and Ramirez Jr. (2007:91) also notes that regular classroom observation has been seen as a positive attribute demonstrated by successful principals. The recipe for success however, is the provision of feedback and support for teachers so that they continuously improve. Middlewood (2001:2) in Middlewood and Cardno (2001:181) substantiate this when he argues that improvement in education depends on more than organisational members' skills and competences; groups of highly skilled teacher for instance, do not guarantee improved learner performance. These features (skills and competence) are important but performance appraisal through classroom observations must be seen as an integral part of a move to improve education. Performance appraisal ensures that skills are relevantly utilised, this enables professional growth as well as skill mastery amongst individuals.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

The research investigated the role of principalship in managing teaching and learning and because of the nature of the research question and the study, a qualitative research methodology was more appropriate. The research questions was concerned with answering the "how' and "who" questions. This kind of questions can be best answered through a qualitative study (Neuman, 1997:20). Investigating the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning required an in depth description of 'how' this management of teaching and learning is done, and 'who' is involved, 'how'. Exploring such questions required qualitative research.

This is because the primary purpose of qualitative research is to have an in-depth understanding of a social practice and this is done by "analysing the many contexts of the participants and by narrating participants' meaning of these situations and events" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2006:315).

Two rural secondary schools have been used as case studies for this research. A case study according to MacMillan and Schumacher (2006:316) is concerned with the selection of case(s) with the purpose of understanding the phenomenon at hand in-depth, "the number of sites or participants" is not an important issue. The criterion for the choice of the two cases was a purposeful sampling because the research targeted

rural schools with good learner academic results as observed by the Examination Council of Swaziland through standardised external examinations, when compared with their counterparts in the rural parts of the Hhohho region in Swaziland. This according to Patton (2002:242) in Macmillan and Schumacher (2006:319) is "selecting information rich cases for study in-depth." The anticipation was that since such schools were in a better position to reveal the role principals play in managing teaching and learning, it was wise to choose such schools with that clear intention in mind.

In both schools, the learner performance indicator was the O' level results for the previous fives years to 2005. The reason for focusing on the past years preceding 2005 was because in 2006, the MoE implemented a new curriculum referred to as the International General Certificate in Education (IGCSE). The introduction of IGCSE marked a change in the educational system. This would have made it difficult to get reliable data, primarily because schools were still in the process of understanding and adapting to the new curriculum.

3.1 Sampling

In each of the two secondary schools, participants included the principal and deputy principal; it was originally intended to involve four heads of departments and four teachers. However in both schools two heads of departments: Siswati HoD in school A and Maths HoDs in school B both declined to participate in the probing follow up interviews: but, they made their contribution in the questionnaires. The reason for the participation of principals was because the study heavily depended on their practices,

especially the role they play in managing and teaching. The exercise of establishing their perceptions about the role they play proved to be useful for the research.

Through the participation of the deputy principals, the research anticipated to establish how they work with their principals, especially on the delegation aspect. The heads of department were those who head the four core subjects: English, Siswati, Maths and Science. This was done partly because time did not permit research to get all heads of department to participate, hence purposeful sampling. It was fundamental for the study to establish the role the HoDs play in the management of teaching and learning as well as how they are supported if they are to execute their duties efficiently. The four teachers were also those who teach the earlier mentioned core subjects. The purpose was to understand the processes involved pertaining to the role school principals play in managing teaching and learning.

3.2 Research Instruments

The research instruments that were used for data collection were questionnaires, probing follow-up interviews as well as 'field observations'. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006:358), field observations are an important element of qualitative research, they also assist in the data presentation. Such field observations include description of the research site, people as well as their actions. The advantages of using questionnaires according to Lo (2004) are that they allow participants to respond to the questions when it is convenient. In addition, they also give them time to carefully think before responding. The probing follow-up interviews became useful in investigating further and eliciting clarity on issues highlighted on the questionnaires. The reasons for the use of probing follow up

interviews are because according to Lo (2004), they allow the interviewer to probe participants' responses almost immediately. The interviewer may clarify questions if and when misunderstood by the participants.

The purpose of the probing follow up interviews was also to enhance reliability ─ to establish consistency of the data. The principals, deputy principals, three heads of departments and four teachers also participated in the interviews. Through the interviews, information was elicited as descriptive analysis was involved. For example, participants were asked to give examples on issues raised in the questionnaires.

The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes; participants were free to use the language they were most comfortable with. All of them preferred Siswati although they would often use it interchangeably with English. The researcher wrote detailed 'field notes' of all the interviews as well as observations of what was happening as data collection exercise was in progress. One of the motives for this was to get as many direct quotes as possible to present as evidence for data presentation and analysis.

3.3 Data Presentation Analysis

"A qualitative researcher analyses data by organising it into categories on the bases of themes, concepts, or similar features"(Neuman, 1997:421). McMillan and Schumacher (2006:367) agree, when analysing data, it is important to organise data because otherwise it would be difficult to analyse it. Categorising the data in themes

is one way of organising it. For this research, themes which were directly linked to the research question and sub questions were used.

Research analysis requires the presenter to make sense of the research findings and reason with the findings and conclusion, based on evidence from the research findings. "[Qualitative] researchers examine patterns of similarities and differences across cases and try to come to terms with their diversity" (Ragin, 1994:107 in Neuman, 1997: 419).

3.4 Validity and Reliability

Reliability "is the extent to which a measurement procedure yields the same answers however and whenever it is carried out, [and validity on the other hand] is the extent to which it gives the correct answers"(Kirk and Miller 1986:19) . Maxwell (1996:279) highlights that validity and reliability are important elements which every researcher should take into consideration; he warns however, that in qualitative research it is difficult to address this subject in its totality. Merriam (1998:205) agrees: "Reliability is problematic in the social sciences because human behaviour is never static." This research for instance tried to narrow the validity and reliability gap by employing 'triangulation': principals, deputy principals, three heads of departments and four teachers will all be interviewed in each school. This is because getting information from different sources will allow the researcher to establish if the results correspond. Triangulation was employed with the view that it does not guarantee validly but offers an alternative to enhance it (Merriam 1998).

The research was cautious of what Maxwell (1996:293) refers to as 'generalisability', which is "the extent to which one can extend the account of a particular situation or

population to other persons, time or settings than those directly studied". For these reasons, it is crucial to highlight in the research that the findings are not applicable to every secondary school in the country.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

McMillan and Schumacher (2006:333) caution that qualitative research is often 'personally intrusive', which is why ethical considerations have to be taken into account by the researcher. They argue for instance: "the setting and participants should not be identifiable in print". Ensuring that qualitative research is conducted in an ethical manner is also meant to enhance validity and reliability (Merriam 1998:198). The research therefore carefully took into account ethical considerations. First, permission to collect data was obtained from the Swazi Ministry of Education in a form of letter. The research proposal also went through the University of the Witwatersrand's Ethics Clearance Committee, which after scrutiny together with the proposed questions was declared to have had taken into account possible ethical considerations.

At the research sites, all participants were informed of the nature and purpose of the study and they were required to sign a consent form. The researcher explained every clause of the consent form. Through the form participants agreed that the data collected during this study could be processed in a computerised system and can be presented in a research report or journal. The participants also acknowledged that their participation in the study was voluntary; they were free to withdraw from participating at any time. All data collected was anonymously recorded and processed, pseudonyms were used in place of the names of the schools and participants. The raw data was also kept confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation Analysis

4.1 School A:

4.1.1 Profile

School A is situated in the Hhohho region of Swaziland, approximately 15km from Pigg's Peak. There are 25 teachers and a total number of 628 learners, 304 boys and 324 girls. The school is situated in a thick forest, although, it is less than a kilometre from the main road, it is not seen easily because of the trees which have engulfed the school. It has running water and electricity and only a few houses for teacher accommodation, such that most teachers live in Mbabane the capital city of Swaziland, which is approximately 45 kilometres from the school.

Learners in the school come from all the parts of the country and because the school does not have boarding facilities learners from further parts of the countries are left with no choice but to find their own accommodation. Often they rent houses where they live without the support of their parents or guardians. Some local residents do offer accommodation to a few learners; they also provide parental support to the learners.

4.1.2 Participants' Profile

Participant	Highest qualification	Years of teaching experience	Years in this school	Years in leadership position
Principal	P.G.C.E	28	8	8
Deputy Principal	P.G.C.E	10	4	2
HoD 1	P.G.C.E	19	4	10
HoD 2 (heads two departments)	P.G.C.E	4	4	4
HoD 3	P.G.C.E	29	12	4
Teacher 1	P.G.C.E	2	2	---
Teacher 2	Diploma	4	4	---
Teacher 3	P.G.C.E	6	6	---
Teacher 4	P.G.C.E	7	7	---

Table 1

4.1.3 Principalship on Managing Teaching and Learning

The principal in this school emphasised that he enjoys working with young people,

such that managing teaching and learning is something that comes naturally. When

the principal was asked what he does in managing teaching and learning, he said:

> *I sell education to the* [learners]*; I chat with them and tell them what education can do for them... I try to motivate them. I usually have a highly motivated O'level group. They want to pass, even the weakest of them wants to pass; they want to go to University. I also believe that they should spend a lot of time with books, nobody wants to fail, and they are motivated. I believe in them spending more time with the books, more time for learning than any other activity, they can do without extra mural activities... Time after the normal school hours with books, sometimes we force them to come after school to be with their books, not with teachers but with books...I believe the reason learners repeat is because they don't have enough time with their books…I go to the extent of planning with them, plan their studies, we budget time together... I monitor them. I encourage them to study in groups as well.*

Two of the teachers said they were happy with the way the principal manages teaching and learning. One teacher said "Our *Principal really loves [learners]; he ensures that all learners have books…When it comes to the learning part he normally monitors the classes to find out if teachers are in class."* Another teacher concurred; she indicated that the principal spends a lot of time with learners.

> *There are times, just before learners sit for their O' level examination when the principal ensures that learners are in school studying up until 6:00p.m. The principal supervises the studying; he does that even on school holidays and weekend, and often with the absence of the teachers.*

Six of the teachers interviewed were indifferent about the principal's leadership approach. One teacher alleged the environment is not empathetic to teachers.

> *… Most of the times* [learners] *are closer to the principal than they are to us teacher; they* [learners*] are listened to more than the teachers in this school…. For instance if a* [learner] *alleges that teacher so and so is not teaching us well…the principal believes that without doing his own investigation.*

Similarly, other teachers also complained about the 'special' attention learners get from the principal. Two teachers argued that one of the reasons the principal spends a lot of time with learners is because they use that platform to gossip about the teachers. They argue that it demoralises their commitment to teaching and learning.

Another teacher lamented;

> *If you are not well treated you just feel, well even if I work hard or not …whether I have done well or not, I am castigated anyway…the most important person here is the* [learner]*, if a* [learner] *goes and to gossip about you to the principal you will be called and you will not be given room to give your side of the story…you will just be verbally attacked.*

One Maths teacher interviewed also displayed some disappointments at the way the principal is managing teaching and learning. As far as she knows the principals goes out of his way to discourage learners from paying attention to Maths.

He keep telling them that Maths is difficult…they [learners] *come with that attitude because they know they have been told it's difficult… and for the past I don't know how many years…no one has managed to get an A in Maths so we will also not get it.* [Learners] *then do not cooperate because they know that they are going to fail after all."* This was also validated by a science teacher who also teaches Maths. She complained; *"Whilst* we *try to motivate* [learners] *others are de-motivating them; they go to class and tell them that they are hopeless and can't make it, and such things….They come and tell them Maths is very difficult and they can never pass it.*

 All teachers interviewed also complained that their classes are overcrowded, something which affects their performance. They never get enough time to mark and return learners' work on time. The big classes range from 50 -59 learners per class. All teachers stressed that the high teacher: learner ratio has been brought to the principal's attention but he never responds.

> *He doesn't consider our suggestions so most of the time during the meetings some of us just keep quiet. I mean why waste time and energy when after all he will not even consider your suggestion.*

It is important to take into consideration the conditions under which teachers work if their classroom performance is expected to improve. Easing teachers' load through reducing the number of learners per class is one of the important issues; it gives "teachers a great hand in controlling their own destinies" (Jacksons 1992 in Hargreaves and Fullan (1992:65)

4.1.4 On Learner Academic Performance

Learner academic performance especially in external standardised examination is most important for the school. The principal admitted to be going out of his way to manipulate the system so that the school get more credit in external examination. He believes that getting more credits for the school is an issue of subject selection.

> *We talk to them* [learners] *and make them all do the 'affordable' subjects. We call them 'soft' subjects so that they have more credit; that is how we beat other schools… We do not allow* [learners] *to do what ever they want, and end up not*

getting credits… In our school it is compulsory for all [learners] *to do History, SiSwati, English and Religious Education… then they top up with their specialities like commercial subjects, science etc. The idea is to enable them to get more credits and qualify to go University… In our school it is not about what* [learners] *like but about what they can do and add more to their credits.*

It is interesting to see the tactics taken by the school in order to be ranked as one of the best performing schools in the country. If one looks at the subject selection, learners are expected to take four compulsory subjects in the school, the MoE also has four core subjects which are compulsory for every secondary school learner and those subjects are Maths, English, Science and Siswati. On top of the MoE four core subjects, learners in this school are compelled by the school to also take up History and Religious Education and this brings a total of six subjects. On the other hand all secondary school learners are expected to take up seven subjects. The school's arrangement of compelling learners to do History and Religious Education leaves learners to have a choice of only one subject to add to the chosen six. The reality is that commerce for instance, blends with accounts and woodwork blends with technical drawing and one can argue that the ['soft subjects arrangement'] puts learners who wish to specialise on subjects at an awkward position.

The above arrangement also gives the impression that parents are voiceless when it comes to their children's education. They do not have an input in their children's subject selection, the school has absolute control; learners are also painted as hopeless individuals who do not have the ability to make informed choices on subject selections. They are deprived of the crucial opportunity of shaping their future career by choosing subjects they like. One could argue that the school should empower learners to make informed choices instead of choosing subjects for them; learners need to be equipped with skills that would enable them be aware of their potentials

and make the right career choices through subject selection. The needs of the learners should be informing their subject selection more than the desire to portray the school as one which produces outstanding learner performance.

The problem in emphasising learners' tests and examination results is that it is often done at the expense of quality learning. Quality learning involves a number of skills which cannot be adequately accomplished by focus on only examination scores. These skills include the incorporation of what is already known, problem solving, critical thinking, as well as "the recognition that learning involves uncertainty and difficulty" Mac Gilchrist and Hopkins (1998:412).

> …teachers and educational administrators work to ensure increases in test scores, however this does not mean that [learners'] learning has improved, because it may be a form of antagonistic acceptance (Singh 1990:45)

Singh (1990) cautions against too much emphasis on improving learner examination scores. It is important for learners to perform well on examination and that is not disputed. The problem comes when exam scores supersedes everything else, even learners' right to choose the subjects they wish to undertake. The Principal also believed that all learners are capable of performing well academically. Teachers need to work extra hard and push learners to perform to their best capabilities.

> Sometimes teachers quarrel with me because even if they bring cases of [learners] I do not entertain because I don't believe that there is a hopeless [learner]. I never say there is a hopeless [learner]; I always believe there is something that can be done. Give them time to read and concentrate, there is room for growth; I want to see them being something.

One HoD agreed:

> we all know that we are supposed to be exam oriented..., like for instance, let's say we are talking about form three which requires composition writing, listening; I tell them [teachers within the department] that we have to impart these skills, skills that will assist them [learners] to during the exam… but as to

whether they do that or not I would be lying if I were to say we follow them [teachers] or go to class with them, no we do not do that."

Another side emerged when three teachers highlighted that the school's academic performance is slowly declining. The principal was also reported to be 'burnt out'. One teacher noted; *"He is relaxed this year…in the previous years there were evening classes and weekends."*

4.1.5 On Accountability

Accountability is an important element of organisational effectiveness. Managing teaching and learning also requires all key actors to be accountable of what they do. An ideal accountability mechanism should be able to link to "teacher morale, teacher efficacy, and teacher credibility and teacher pedagogy". A combination of all these factors is likely to bring a holistic picture as they all affect the processes of teaching learning. Most importantly, teacher accountability should lead to professional development because otherwise it is a waste of time (Eraut 1994:24).

The school uses one variable; learner academic results on standardised external examination to monitor teacher performance. Teachers are held responsible for their learner performance at form three and five and those are the grades which sit for external examination. The principal emphasised:

> *At the end of the year we sit down and analyse the results. We rate them* [teachers]*; there are prices they get in terms of their performance. E100 for 100% credit at senior level, two days to spend a night at a hotel. It's not much but it's recognition.*

This is what the school principal described as accountability and this clearly demonstrates that he is not lucid about accountability. What the school is employing in the name of accountability is an appraisal. This form of an appraisal was supported

by early proponents of contractual accountability, a perspective through which teachers were made accountable to their employer. It advocated for an annual review learner academic performance through which performance indicators and target setting were used. The limitations of such an appraisal system was the principle of having to wait for the end of the year to tackle incompetent teachers, an issue which does not necessarily have to be prolonged (Eraut 1994:36)

In support of the principal's view, one teacher also noted that in the school there is enormous pressure for them to perform well. They [teachers] would also like to see their learners performing well. One Maths teacher does not feel comfortable when the results are analysed. She argued that the learners are influenced against the subject such that when she teaches, they [learners] hardly pay attention. Her major concern is that the 'influence' is never taken into account.

> *If there are failures it would seem as if you are not working hard enough and you are called and questioned about it…there is fear that if you produce bad results it will be as though you are not doing your job you see.*

From the above statement we learn one very important issue; teachers cannot improve learner academic performance without the support of all key actors. They all need to be improved if learner performance is to advance, and learners should be on board, collaborate towards a common goal.

4.1.6 Culture of the School

Handy (1984:32) as earlier discussed, defines organisational culture as the "total of the inherited ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which constitutes the shared bases of social action [and] the total range of ideas and activities of a group of people with

shared traditions which are transmitted and reinforced by members of a group". He argues that that organisational culture contributes to the effectiveness of an organisation and that it is important to create one that would be healthy and enable the organisation to grow. The principal informs new teachers on "how thing are done" in this school. *I tell them [new teachers] that we work hard in this school, which is an environment that may not be conducive for you… stay on one condition, when you are prepared to work, and work very hard.* The principal has also made it a norm to enquire from the learners how teachers execute their duties something which does not go down well with a number of teachers interviewed.

> *Learners report to me when teachers do not come, and even when they come and not teach. It's not easy to teach in this school because learners assess you, they want to learn, you have to win their confidence and they report to the office, and I attend to it immediately. I confront you ,and if I'm satisfied that what the[learners] are saying about you is true, I simply write a letter and send you back to the ministry of education, tell you to tell them find another school for you. I tell them "go and find another school.*

From the above statement one can deduce that in the school the principal appears to be unsympathetic with the teachers. He seems to have given learners the authority to assess their teachers, something which should be done by a professional. I support the idea of learners reporting when a teacher does not show up for classes, but it becomes sensitive when they scrutinise teachers' teaching.

4.1.7 On Communication and Decision Making

According to all the teachers interviewed, communication and their involvement in decision making are not the school's strong points. One teacher for instance, indicated that it even difficult to relate your problems to the principal.

When you have problem at home it's difficult to keep your mind focused on school work but it's scary to ask for permission to attend to your problems… your body can be here and your mind on the other side of town…how are you going to be effective on your teaching?

From the interviews with teachers, it appears the principal is authoritarian and does not involve them in the decision making in running of the school. Sometimes the principal makes the decision with the learners without the knowledge of teachers. One teacher gave an example of an instance when the principal, alone decided to expel learners who had not paid building fund towards the schools' kitchen. Teachers had initially indicated against the expulsion of such learners because they all lose instructional time whenever that happens.

He [principal] *does things on his own; this really affects us a lot. We learn about some of the decision he makes from the [learners] ...Even as to when schools are closing for instance, we just hear the [learners] telling us that the schools are closing on Wednesday and we have not been told. It makes you feel quite useless.*

Communication and the involvement of organisational members in decision making are both important elements of an organisation. Members should feel valued in the organisation, something which depends on the prevailing culture. It is beneficial for all organisational members to work in an environment that encourages and supports democratic participation, communication and trustworthiness. This also contributes to the effectiveness of the organisation, (Sergiovanni, 2000). When organisational members are not encouraged to freely communicate and participate in decision making, it is often followed by loss of respect. Gossip and the undermining other members' opinions dominate and undermine the morale of even the most motivated organisational member.

The deputy principal was modest about their involvement in decision making.

Although not explicit about it, he insinuated that they are not always consulted in

decision making. Yet in defence of his principal, he said:

> *The principal makes decision in emergency cases. When there are cases whereby discussion are made without consulting teachers it's because there is an emergency with no room for consultation, In such cases its either you do this or you don't but if the situation permits discussion amongst teacher, that is done, the principal ensures implementation.*

Another teacher was indifferent about it and she didn't mince words:

> *No, no, no, most of the time we are told, even if the principal comes and tells us that this is what need to be done let's make a decision together he is bluffing, he has already made the decision. He does whatever he wants to do regardless of what has been decided during the meeting…We are not involved, certainly no!.*

Another teacher also indicated that the principal is an emotional person, that there is

no better way of approaching him. He single handedly runs the school and does not

give other teachers room to make their own contributions towards the running of the

school. This one teacher warned:

> *He [principal] is very, very emotional like for instance if you try to make a suggestion, he will tell you you're out of order…he would also tell teachers who brought forward their grievances that the gate is wide open, you can go to another school.*

This was validated by the principal himself, he however indicated to be intolerant of

lazy teacher; *"I simply tell them the gate is wide open, they are free to go to any other*

school."

The participation of all organisational members in decision making other hand has

been acknowledged to be crucial in increasing the effectiveness of an organisation; it

does not only ease the load on the principal but it also helps in "bonding" staff

together (Sergiovanni 1984:13) in Bush (2007:397). Some members may be free to

speak their minds, others may decide to be neutral and go with the decisions of the majority; it all depends on the prevailing culture. It is important for instance, to foster involvement and collaboration amongst organisational members because it is the actions of the members that shape the culture (Handy, 1984:11). It is fundamental for members to feel that their opinions are valued in the organisation so that they do not withdraw their participation in the future. It is assumed that every organisational member contributes to the effectiveness of the organisation by virtue of being a member. The difference is that their contribution might not necessarily be positive especially if they are going to withdraw their involvement in decisions pertaining to the running of the organisation; this of course impacts negatively on the organisation. Indubitably, each member's contributions whether good or bad adds to the improvement of the organisation.

Four of the teachers interviewed were frustrated because they felt they were not adequately involved in the running of the school. One of them said: *"We are here because it is extremely difficult to get a transfer; you cannot just say you want to go tomorrow and then you go"*.

Another teacher lamented:

> *…I just feel the best thing for me is to leave this school… I feel like all these years I have been trying to understand the man and feel I should stop trying. I am trying to find my way out of this school…he can stay behind and do whatever to others.*

Jackson (1992) in Hargreaves and Fullan (1992:63) seems empathise with teachers who work in such conditions. He appears to suggest that teachers' work experience has the potential to either make or break teachers depending on a number of organisational issues. Schools can enable teachers to gain more experience in the

field, perfect their teaching skills, be patient, wiser and more confident. It can also break teachers such that they become lazy and lose the passion for teaching. The latter experience is obviously not admirable and can be avoided. Ultimately principals have the responsibility of devising strategies meant to keep teacher re-energised to prefect their teaching skills for improved teaching and learning.

4.1.8 On Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership is a practice which simply means that leadership is distributed. There is no blue print on how it is done; it is a contextual matter. It is up to each school to devise how they distribute leadership. It can be done by allocating individual teachers responsibilities so that different routines in the schools are executed (Spillane, 2006).

The principal does not believe in distributed leadership, in fact he does not practice that in his school. For him, the best strategy he uses is ensuring that he is in the school most of the time; something he believed is not done by most principals. He said:

> *My day starts and ends at school. I make sure that in the morning when the day starts I'm here; if there is a need for me to go somewhere I go but make sure that I'm back before the end of the school day.*

One of the reasons he gave for such an approach is that when it come to the monitoring of teachers, HoDs are not eager to do that because of the fear of being disliked by their colleagues, for this reason he does the monitoring himself when he finds time.

Obviously, the principal portrays himself as the 'Superman' and everything else revolves around him, which could explain the reason he believes he has to be at the school all the time; otherwise, the school could not effectively function in his absence. Spillane (2006:9) advocates for the employment of a distributed approach to leadership. He argues that it is not a 'blue print' of a perfect leadership, but it certainly "offers a productive way to think about leadership for both diagnostic and design purposes" (Spillane 2006:103).

One HoD does not subscribe to the principal's practices:

> *The problem is that he* [principal] *wants to do everything, he is unable to delegate, he is just unable to do that. Even if he goes for a meeting outside the school, he will rather instruct us not to release the* [learners] *until he returns…he makes sure that he comes back before the school's closing time… He wants to do everything and yet he is unable to do so.*

Another HoD added:

> *He plays every role because he wants to do everything himself in all the departments …even as a HoD you find that there is no significant role you play... Everything that has to be done has to go through him. Okay maybe that's the procedure but he wants to be hands-on, on everything so sometimes the activities are delayed." He is the principal but he is not qualified in all the departments and all subject areas. He has the last word in everything we do.*

The deputy principal concurred (but in a modest way), according to him "*the principal delegates only when it comes to cleaning.*" Another HoD was also subtle about it; she spoke about her principal as if she was referring to principalship in general:

> *Some principals do have dictatorial tendencies such that if someone else initiates something they feel threatened as though that person is after their position you see. That kills the spirit and discourages people form taking initiatives in most cases.*

In fact all HoDs interviewed in the school acknowledged that they were not authorised to play significant roles in ensuring that teachers under their departments are effectively involved in teaching and learning activities. They have never done any classroom observation on their subordinate teachers. One HoD highlighted that the best she does in managing teaching and learning is to ensure that teachers go to class when they are supposed to but as to what happens once teachers are in class she doesn't know. She also encourages teachers to give learners time to visit the library:

I take note of the classes that do not come to the library to find out why. Sometimes I approach the teachers to encourage them to bring their [learners] to the library to read.

The revelation from the all interviews is that distributed leadership is not understood. It seems that none of the participants knows what it entails. They relate to it interchangeably with delegation which is not distributed leadership. Clearly there is frustration in the school — teachers would want to be empowered and be more involved in the running of the school but the principal does not allow them to. He probably does not see distributed leadership as an option because he does not understand it. As Spillane (2006) often emphasised, it is not the absolute solution to effective leadership practices, perhaps first understanding it can give this principal and all staff members an alternative for reflecting and rethinking on their practices.

All HoDs interviewed indicated the desire to be more empowered towards their involvement on teaching and learning. The problem, as they argued, is with the principal. One of them stressed:

The principal interferes a lot such that you find that the duties overlap…you would then be duplicating. If for instance you decide to check the prep books he checks them as well you see, yet these should be checked by me because I know what exactly is supposed to be done.”… He simply looks at the whether the week's schedule has been completed and then endorses his signature and a stamp…yet I am at a better position to do that… I could take a more specialised look as to what is being taught why and how?

Another HoD concurred; she would also like to be given the responsibility of managing teaching and learning in her department. She also believes that she is at a better position to check teachers' daily preparations. She says:

“Every Mondays he [principal] he has the prep books…how he knows…I can just write wrong objectives, you know… I don't think it's working. The HoD knows these things but our principal is the main man. The only thing he doesn't involve himself in is sports; he doesn't want sports in the school you see. He feels as though they are disruptive to the learning activities.”

4.1.9 Job Description

Job description for every worker is a starting point for learning the ethos of an organisation. It is therefore an important element which every organisational member ought to have. It must be clearly written for members to understand and revisit whenever necessary. The idea is that members of the organisation need to be sure of what their responsibilities entail in order to deliver and it helps in informing accountability. It becomes easer to make members accountable when they have a clear job description (Fidler, 1997). The lack of a detailed job description on the other hand, may create ambiguity and inconsistency, teachers may not be sure of their duties, rights, and responsibilities, something which in itself might create stress (Smylie: undated in Huberman and Vandenberghe 1999:62).

According to the principal the school does not have written job description but he sits with the teachers and discusses what is expected from them. *“I sit down and talk with*

them [teachers] before I sign the "resumption of duty form". New teachers get

resumption of duty form from the Ministry of Education (MoE) when they are

appointed to schools. It is the principals' responsibility to sign the forms as an

indication that indeed that teacher has reported to the school for duty. Unless the

forms are signed the MoE cannot process payment for that teacher. Normally

principals do sign the forms without a problem because the centralised system used by

the MoE does not permit school principals to appoint their own teachers. Only the

MoE has the mandate to do that and principals only accept the personel who are

allocated to them.

The principal however acknowledged that he was not adhering to MoE rules. The

rules are that the MoE appoints teachers to school and the responsibly of principals is

to sign a resumption of duty form. When teachers come with the resumption of duty

forms to his school, he talks with them and gives them time to think about whether

they can teach under the schools' environment. He says:

> *I have seen some who come only to find that they can't cope… sometimes*
> *teachers are not competent in their subject areas and I simply tell them that, I*
> *have been through university and I know that some people cheat until they get*
> *their degree, which is why some of them have shallow knowledge, and this is not*
> *their place.*

Clearly, from the above statement one can conclude that the principal is authoritarian

and his leadership approach could have created the tensions and 'burnout' from some

of the teachers interviewed. As earlier indicated in the report, principals are not in a

better position to directly influence learner performance more than the teachers.

Principals can do it through 'mediated effect'; by mobilising teachers to do that

(Hallinger and Heck 1998:175). Dictatorship is not the best option; if it works it can

not be sustainable for long. Research has shown that "principal effect are achieved through fostering group goals, modelling desired behaviour for others, providing intellectual stimulation, and individualised support" (Leithwood: 1994 in Hallinger and Heck 1998:175).

4.1.10 Teacher Monitoring and Classroom Observation

Heck et al. in (Hallinger and Heck 1998:176) discovered that schools whose principals have invested more time on direct classroom supervision produced better learner academic achievement that those who did not. In this school none of the teachers interviewed were observed in classrooms. The HoDs indicated that they do not have the authority to do that. One HoD lamented; *"I just got the name tag of HoD and I don't know why, what is my role? I just feel as though they are using me, after all I'm not even paid for the position."*

According to the principal he is the one who is supposed to do classroom observations and does not have time to do that. He also has his own reservations about enabling HoDs to do classroom observations. He argued *"most of the time it's me because HoD's are not eager to do that, they feel like their subordinates will hate them for that."* The deputy principal agreed that the principal observe teachers especially new ones, he noted however that sometimes there are spot checks which are *"the principals' exclusive rights."*

The principals here offers some understanding which aligns with literature, apparently he cannot do everything by himself. There has been a consensus that schools are becoming more complex to be run by principals alone. If he does not have time to do

classroom observations as he admitted in this case, that could be an indication that he needs to entrust someone else to do it. One may argue that classroom observation is crucial especially because certainly it is where the formal learning required takes place. If teachers are not monitored on what they do in class there is a possibility that they will not improve yet they need to develop and most importantly be responsive to change. They need to be constantly reflecting on their classroom practices, classroom observation and monitoring seems to offer the platform to enable teachers to grow.

4.1.11 Socio-Economic Environment

Teaching and learning takes place within a social context which also has an effect on the quality of teaching and learning possible (Stoll at al. 2003:5). The school' surrounding community is poor as one teacher lamented:

> *People are very poor here, they are very, very poor, but they are keen to have their children educated. Donors assist; the government also tries to assist otherwise they are very poor as is evident in all rural schools.*

4.2 School B

4.2.1School Profile

This school is situated in the Hhohho region of Swaziland, approximately a kilometre from Pigg's Peak. It was established in 1948 as a primary school and was upgraded to a secondary school in 1975. It has a total number of 71 teachers, three of which are deputies. One of them is a deputy professional; another is deputy curriculum and examination and then a deputy administrator. There are 1447 learners in the school, 721 boys and 726 girls. This makes the school one of the biggest in the country in terms of total learner enrolment, which is the reason the Ministry of Education (MoE)

allocated three deputies who all assists in the running of the school. The school also has a boarding facility which accommodates 250 learners (both boys and girls); the boarding facility has also seen the school attracting learners from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. Learners from the SADC countries include those from Botswana, Lesotho, South Africa, Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

The school has electricity and running water. It looked well taken care of, in terms of cleanliness. There was absolutely no litter in the school compound, there was order, during break time learners would be seen chatting and playing with friends and they would not litter. The school yard has lawn and concrete sections, under no circumstances do learner step on the lawn section, which could be the reason it looked amazingly clean and beautiful for a school environment. The order in the school is remarkable. All learners had short hair and they looked neat in their school uniform.

4.2.2 Participant's Profile

Participant	Highest qualification	Years of teaching experience	Years in this school	Years in leadership position
Principal	Masters	24	14	14
Deputy principal	P.G.C.E	20	10	1
HoD 1	P.G.C.E	6	6	2
HoD 2	P.G.C.E	7	6	3
HoD 3	P.G.C.E	17	17	14
HoD 4	P.G.C.E	21	12	12
Teacher 1	Degree	13	13	---
Teacher 2	Diploma	5	3	---
Teacher 3	P.G.C.E	7	7	---
Teacher 4	Diploma	4	4	---

Table 2

4.2.3 Principalship on Managing Teaching and Learning

All teachers interviewed noted that the principal does a number of activities which they consider ensures that teaching and learning takes place in a conducive environment. According to the school principal, managing teaching and learning in a way that enhances academic performance relies on three key actors, the learner, the teacher and the parent (guardian).

> *At our school we believe that every child can do better if that child works hard, and if the teacher works hard as well as the parent…in class we preach only one thing, we say my child work hard it is possible; there is nothing impossible as long as you work hard…We have children in this school, let me make an example of last year alone, there were 17 children in form 1 who came and were enrolled with third class passes, one of those children got a merit in form three and two got first classes, the others got second classes. It is the combined effort of the teacher, the pupil and the parent…. In everything my sister you just have to bring hope. A child believes his/her teacher, let me repeat, a child believes his/her teacher.*

The research established that all teachers who participated believed their principal is

doing a great job in managing teaching and learning; he gives them all the support

they need. One HoD for instance, mentioned that he [the principal] always required

that they bring poorly performing learners to his attention. Once such learners are

brought to his attention he talks to their parents (guardians) so that together they all

help the learners. The principal admitted to be firm on the learners; he also doesn't

want their learning to be disrupted by other activities learners may engage themselves.

He expects learners to be disciplined during and out of school hours. He argued:

> *We believe that a pupil is a pupil 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 12 months a*
> *year as long as they are registered here... We do not expect to hear that a child*
> *from this school was seen in a bar during school holidays, we do not expect that.*
> *S/he would be in serious trouble; s/he would have to fetch their parents so we*
> *could deal with the issue because we believe s/he is a pupil 24 hours a day. I do*
> *not expect a pupil of this school to spend a night at a boyfriend's house; people*
> *who do that are not school children. School children are just school children and*
> *that's it.*

The deputy principal also indicated that the principal manages teaching and learning

by ensuring that the school and individual teachers have resources put into place. This

is done to ensure that the classroom is conducive for the teaching and learning

processes. The deputy also assist the principal in doing so: *"I'm the right hand*

woman, if there is anything like that." She sees teaching and learning as every

organisational member's responsibility and she attributes the success of the school in

terms of learner academic performance to all the teachers.

> *Maybe one should start by saying we have a special brand of teachers who have*
> *an intrinsic motivation. You know, when teachers come to this school the first*
> *thing we do when we welcome them is to make them aware that this is the only*
> *ground they have to use to build their reputations…. This should motivate them in*
> *the sense that they know that they are not going to be teachers forever, they need*
> *to climb the ladder of leadership and there is no other ground they have except*
> *their classrooms.*

4.2.4 Classroom Observation

Classroom observation has gained momentum during the 1980s and 1990s and has been often used for purposes of teacher appraisal and evaluation. This is mainly because it has been recognised that every teacher has the potential to improve. In theory teachers can all improve their classroom practices but this requires change in attitudes and behaviour. This highlights the need for the assessment of what happens in the classroom, an exercise which can be done by teachers themselves or by second person (Wragg et al. 1996:23).

The research discovered that this school does not use classroom observation; all teachers admitted never to have been observed in their classes but for one who said:

> *Our former [principal] came once to observe my lesson; I had just joined the school other than that no one comes. I think they trust us because they can see the results at the end of the day they are good.*

As it were, the school is mostly concerned about the end product: learner academic performance. It appears less important how teachers produce those results. The school could be missing out on an opportunity to improve by not giving teachers complete autonomy and 'privacy' on what they do in their classes. Classroom observation has its weaknesses, it is often criticised as a 'snap shot' of the actual performance of a teacher. Nonetheless, when properly done, it offers opportunities for professional growth as well as personal reflection on classroom practices. The most important thing is for both the observer to understand what they are looking for at that particular moment. The advantages is that is offers feedback which can inform changes, it gives a second opinion, it also nourishes the ground for collaboration, exchange of idea and

the opportunity for the refinement of teaching skills (Wragg et al., 1996:44). Otherwise if classroom observation is never used there is a possibility that teachers will teach the same way for years without being responsive to change which could make the school stagnate.

4.2.5 On Team Work

Team work brings tremendous results; if all members bring their intelligences together they produces results which no one mind can produce and they do that with minimal time consumption (Senge, 1990:36).

All the teachers who participated in the study agreed that team work is encouraged in the school. They acknowledged that this is mostly inculcated at departmental level and filters down to the whole school. One teacher stated:

> *There is a lot of team work in our department, at the moment there is a teacher that is absent but you cannot even tell she is absent because we are teaching her classes…we don't want her [learners] to remain idle.*

The teams especially at departmental level do not only assist one another but they also ensure that there is consistency on the material they teach as well as on testing. They have their own monthly standardised testing. This is underlined in the 'job description' booklet. *Tests should be conducted monthly and marks must be kept in the department.* One HoD elaborated on the testing:

> *There is a teacher responsible for a particular test, for instance if that teacher is responsible for form1 the other teachers would have to assist the responsible teacher in setting the test but the responsible teacher sees to it that the test is submitted to the HoD who also evaluates it on time.*

If there is a problem, the HoD addresses the responsible teacher who then has to go back to his/her colleagues to address the issue at hand. There is also room for teachers to convince their HoD on their testing.

4.2.6 Job Description

According to the principal whenever a new teacher joins the school the teacher is given a 'job description' which all teachers are expected to read and digest. The researcher was also given a copy of the 'job description' booklet. It was very detailed and it explicitly outlined every member's responsibility in the school. Everything that is expected of teachers was there, from dress code, time management and discipline to monthly testing. The principal proudly explained the reason they have the booklet.

> *Listen, you do not start accusing a person without having first showed them the way, show the person the way first and if they depart from it you can then start talking and alerting the person to the fact that he in now departing from the path and that s/he is going to have problems.*

The principal seemed to understand the importance of the 'job description' booklet, an important tool for organisational management. As Fidler (1997:53) notes; job description is an important element of organisational structure and it needs to be written down so besides it forming the basis for appraisal, it also enables individual members to revisit it whenever there is the need.

4.2.7 On Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership perspective is a leadership practice which embraces "the interaction of leaders, followers and their situation…it's not simply roles and positions…it's about interaction" (Spillane 2006:4). The principal remains the central

character this approach however, exposes that "leadership is often a collective rather than individualistic endeavour."

According to the principal and deputy principal, HoDs are the ones who are given the responsibility of ensuring that teachers in their departments are working efficiently. All heads of departments and teachers who participated in this research agreed. The HoDs responsibilities are also well outlined in the 'job-description' booklet each teacher gets when they join the school, as it was emphasised by the principal. Amongst other things the 'job-description' booklet   outlines that HoDs

> *Shall assume responsibility throughout the school for a subject or a group of subjects… To ensure that schemes of work and or preparation books are drawn and followed up by the teachers in the department, copies of the scheme of work to be forwarded to the deputy [principal]*

The extract above, from the 'teacher's manual' of the school clearly demonstrate that HoDs have been officially given the mandate to run their departments. The principal also stressed that they encourage teachers who join the school to collaborate with their HoDs as well as other teachers. He said:

> *If a teacher joins the English department for instance, there is the mother of that department she has to consult with. If the teacher doe not understand something in the subject she can ask the HoD.*

As good as this school practice may seem it still does not imply that participants understand distributed leadership. All the principal does is to ensure that formal subordinate leaders are well recognised and supported to execute their duties; but this does not equate to distributed leadership. Delegation appears to be used in the school, and again it does not mean distributed leadership as Spillane (2006) warns.

4.2. 8 Teacher Motivation

The principal believed that his school has highly motivated teachers who are efficient in their respective duties. He believed that the secret of the school is acknowledging teachers for anything good they do. The school gives awards to teachers who produce the best results on the external standardised examinations. This is done at the annual speech and prize giving day. The school awarded teachers a fully paid holiday to Cape Town. At the time the data was collected, five teachers were on holiday and this was part of their award for producing the best results, either in form three or five ― the classes which sit for standardised external examination. The teachers who received the awards were enjoying their holiday during term time while they were supposed to be in executing their duties on school.

The deputy principal also believed that they as administrators play significant role in keeping teachers motivated. They inculcate a working culture trough their practices: *"We [administrators] don't drag our carcasses around, we don't drag our hooves as we do our jobs; we try and lift up the standard so that the teachers could copy it."* All teachers who participated in the study agreed, one of them noted *"I get a lot of support from the administration and my HoD…also as I teach I know that my administration appreciates what I do."*

4.2.9 On Communication and Decision Making

The principal appeared to believe that communication is important for the smooth running and growth of the school. Everybody should be listened to and constructively criticised without fear, including himself.

I have respect for teachers and I believe they have respect for me too. If I make a mistake I want them to come out and tell me. I dislike the belief that they cannot caution me because I am the principal. There is a teacher who once said in a meeting, Head, why do you let us debate this issue and yet you already know the decision you are going to make? There is nothing I said except I apologised. People need understanding, these are human beings. You also make mistakes, we all make mistakes. That is why I say to the teachers Jesus said he who is without sin should cast the first stone.

I cannot pinpoint anyone who I can say is giving me a Headache, there is no one my sister. I talk to them. When a new joins us in this school, I warn them to avoid gossiping.

4.2.10 On Accountability

All teachers who participated in this research directly account to their HoDs. One teacher stressed; *I account directly to the HoD as the person who asks me about tests, we have monthly tests which are mandatory".* All teachers who participated indicated that common approach to accountability used in the school is monthly testing. The purpose is to ensure that teachers are teaching the relevant content, and to establish if they are progressing uniformly with other teachers. The monthly tests are monitored by the HoDs by ensuring that they are not only marked but marked according to the marking guidelines and returned to learners as soon as possible.

Another approach to accountability used in the school comes in a form of learner achievement on standardised testing', which is form three and form five. Teachers' competence is judged through learner performance. The HoDs are also accountable for the performance of the teachers under their departments. One teacher pointed out:

We do exam analysis; at the end of the year each class is analysed individually as to how many A's were achieved…. If you get 90% passes and everyone else in your department achieves 100% you feel out…. We normally get 100% in our department…the standards are very high.

Evaluating and assessing learner performance have both been seen as an essential "instructional tools for years". It is often referred to as 'performance contracting', a strategy most effective to "assure accountability for results." It serves two purposes: to make learners accountable for their learning as well as to make teachers accountable for their learners' learning (Wagner 1989:120). "…reporting [learner] progress is a form of accountability." However, the fact that some learners perform poorly even when such an approach to accountability is used is an indication that reporting and evaluating learner academic performance is not adequate to guarantee the "same degree of success and achievement in education…hence a more effective form of accountability is required (Wagner 1989:123)."

Another issue for exam analysis emerged given that previously the exam analysis only focused on external standardised testing. All teachers except for one indicted that that all classes are allocated equal hours. The one thing they do to give external classes more time is to come and teach on Saturdays and during school hours. Another side of it emerged however from one HoD, she argued that at times preference is given to form three and five. She made an example that there was a time where there was a shortage of teachers:

> *It was decided that we should leave the other classes and focus on the form threes and fives because it was almost timer for their exams….Teachers left form four and went to the form threes and fives, the form fours were left on their own from time to time."*

It is clear from the research finding that learners who sit for external examination are given priority sometimes at the expense of those learners who sit for internal examinations. The school is exam results oriented.

4.2.11 On Time Management

Time is one of the key but limited resources in education. It needs to be carefully planned for and utilised for required activities. "Time management is simply a way of using time effectively" and it is important to avoid spending time on less important activities as it is a waste of a scarce resource (O'Sullivan et al. 1996:4).

What was observed as the researcher was collecting data in the school was that every organisational member changed classes accurately in line with bell. Whenever the bell rang, teachers and learners would all be seen literally running and changing classes, a practice which appeared remarkable. This is not to imply that teachers are not supposed to be wary of time but it was striking the way it was done in that school. There were a few teachers for instance, the researcher knew but none of them were able to spare a minute of their time, until lunch, and that is when they indicated that learning time is precious in the school, and that every teacher is responsible for ensuring that no learning time is used on other activities other than teaching and learning. This was supported by all the teachers who participated in this research, including the principal who had this to say:

> *It is simple my dear, I will say time is important. They [teachers] know that you can never recover time you have lost. At the end of the day they have to show what they have produced. When the results come out, we analyse them. When that time comes, it is not nice because no one wants to be the one to let the school down. Everyone wants to be seen to be playing their part in the development of the school.*

The deputy principal concurred ― they [administrators] also set examples to their subordinates by ensuring that they come to school on time amongst other things.

> *We don't upset ourselves unnecessarily, we don't come late to school, my principal is usually here before 7:00 a.m., and other administrators are here*

before 7:00 a.m. We know the school starts at 7:30 a.m. and we should be here at least 30 minutes before starting time.

All teachers who participated agreed; this is echoed in the comments of one of the teachers who had this to say:

We [teachers] all know that when the first bell rings we have to rush, in fact there is five minutes between periods, when the second bell rings we are supposed to be standing in front of the class teaching and not still on the way to class, that is something that is strictly unacceptable in this school.

Another HoD said that the deputies also see to it that all teachers go to class on time.

They [deputies] ensure that teachers go to class so when the bell rings, they 'patrol' around the school to see if the teachers are in class, and to establish if teachers are teaching when the second bell rings.

Getting the most out of your time has been recognised as one way of time management; it requires the commitment of individuals to manage themselves by spending their time profitably (O'Sullivan et al. 1996:4). The school seems to have established a culture of spending instructional time on instructional activities, something which is also emphasised in the school's 'job description' booklet. Another HoD added; "*I have a timetable of every teacher in my department to make sure that they do go to classes. In fact, teachers at this school do not cheat. We all want to teach and we all have it in ourselves.*" The issue of time management and punctuality is also well articulated in the school's 'teacher manual':

When periods are due, teachers concerned leave the staff room, when the first bell rings teachers should already be in class and the lesson begins. Teachers are expected to punish [learners] who come to class after the second bell has gone. At the end of the period teachers are expected to release [learners] immediately after the first bell such that they are not late for the next class.

4.2.12 On the Culture of the School

The school has earned a reputation country wide for producing good academic results. One other striking feature of the school is that some of the teachers are former graduates of the school and two of the teachers who participated in the study are former graduates. This maybe seen as a strategy of strengthening the culture of the school, the deputy principal and the other two teachers agreed. The deputy principal admitted:

> *Yes in away it has contributed because the fact that they were here means they know the procedures, so when they come back we don't expect them to pull on the other hand, we also expect them to sing with us from the same song sheet, so it has contributed in a way…It does help to recruit former [learners] because we don't expect them to challenge our authority.*

The fundamental purpose of schools is to achieve their core business — teaching and learning; this also requires the management of harmonious relations amongst organisational members (Hargreaves 2002:50). The school appears to have used the strategy of recruiting its former graduates to forge and strengthen harmonious relations amongst its members.

Two of the former graduates of the school who also participated in the research agreed. One stressed:

> *I think being a former graduate has really assisted me because the way things are done in this school are kind of different, and looking at this school I think it is the best…we always say to ourselves we are unique, we are a super school….*

The other teachers also thought the culture of the school in one that is based on disciple: both teachers and learners are disciplined in the school. Teachers work extra hard mainly because the school, unlike other schools does not discriminate against learners who do not perform well on external standardised testing.

The country does not have clear school admission policy that specifically discourages any form of discrimination in admission. School admission is therefore competitive, learners are often given preference based on their academic performance on standardised testing such that those who are academically weak end up in the 'worst' schools. This school, according to all teachers who participated, does not mind to take 'rejects' from other schools and often those learners end up improving on their academic performance. Another teacher who had just joined the school added:

> *I'm new in this school but what I liked when I came here is discipline…what I can say ma'am is that this school is the best in the whole of Swaziland. In our intake we don't only first classes and merits like other schools, if were doing that no school would match our performance in the country…. This school is very good because there is discipline from the teachers as well as from the principal."… I was shocked when I joined the school to learn that whenever you need teaching material you just ask and get it…*

4.2.13 On Professional Development

Teacher professional development is a necessary tool which enables teachers to gain confidence in teaching while also improving their knowledge and skills in the classroom (Hargreaves and Fullan 1992:2). There is also a correlation between teacher professional development and improved learner academic performance. Improving learner achievement is difficult if not impossible to realise without the improvement of the quality of teaching (Hattie 2002 in Robertson and Murrihy 2003:3).

There was a consensus amongst all teachers who participated in the study that the school has a committee that looks at staff development issue. The principal and deputy principal agreed: "*We bring in people to talk to the teachers. Sometimes we bring teachers who are vey successful to advise them [teachers] on how to get good*

results" These were the words of the principal who also stressed that he also creates time develop himself as well:

> *I do get time to develop myself, I get books and read. I have to be ahead of the people. It's a challenge on my part. If I don't read they [teachers] will bring me down. I have to be to be knowledgeable to have answers when they [teachers] ask questions.*

Another teacher added that every year the school has two staff development activities, one takes place at the beginning of the first term and the other at the beginning of the second term. As teachers they are equipped and assisted on how to be better in their profession. The school often uses 'on sight coaching', where they get teachers who are expects in their subjects area to coach local teachers on how they do it. One teacher made an example that last year in their department a teacher from one school was invited to mentor them on how to produce better results. Ideally:

> Professional development should reflect [learner] and teacher needs, be part of an overall plan for change, involve teachers in planning and developing opportunities, promote collaboration at school level and be evaluated for its impact on teaching practice and [learner] learning (Hawley and Valli 2001 in Choy et al (2006:7).

4.2.14 Socio Economic Environment

> "There is no doubt that family background and home situations make a difference." The support learners get from their home environment, in terms of learning has an impact on their academic achievement. Research has also established that "the closer the parent is to the education of the child, the greater that impact on the child development and educational achievement (Fullan 1991:228).

The school has a total number of 351 Orphaned and Vulnerable children (OVC), whose school fees are paid for by the government. This was seen by the principal as an indication that the community they serve as a school is economically dis-advantaged and also hard hit by the HIV/AID pandemic, which has also seen the

country's economy declining. "The impact of HIV/AIDS is likely to be felt at all levels of the formal education system" (Whiteside et al. 2006:59).

All teachers interviewed acknowledged that the community from which the majority of learners come is poor. Some parents struggle to pay school fees for their children and the school tries to cater for the needs of such learners. Whiteside et al. (2006:61) argue that families directly affected by HIV/AIDS experience financial strain which often exposes children to malnutrition starvation. Malnutrition and starvation can also have a bearing on learners' educational performance (UNICEF, 2004a) in (Whiteside et al. 2006:61).

One teacher indicated that the school engages in fund raising activities to pay for needy learners and avoids expelling them for lack of fees. Another HoD concurred: the level of poverty is affecting the processes of teaching and learning, she lamented:

> *Our children are starved, most are underprivileged; they have problems which affects their performance. Some of our children come to school without having eaten and go the whole day without food. You find some in class crying and when you ask them why they are crying they tell you that they haven't eaten and are hungry. There are a lot of problems, our community is not well off, it is not like in the cities.*

The HoD also indicated that the school has trust funds meant to specifically cater for underprivileged learners. Each learner contributes E1 and teachers contribute E5 each towards to assist the needy learners. Beneficiaries are identified by the class teachers.

Another exposed a promising side from the poor socio-economic environment from which most learners come from, he argued:

You see, the main objective of teaching is not to teach students from good socio-economic backgrounds but we are building a future nation… I try to help those children by volunteering my free time to teaching them.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

The research report tried to understand the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning. The study used a qualitative research methodology through which two case studies were selected. The cases selected were two secondary schools in the rural parts of the Hhohho region and the rational for their selection was based on their good academic results as measured by the standardised external examination set by the Examination Council of Swaziland.

In trying to understand the role of principalship in the management of teaching and learning, the study took into consideration the widely accepted notion that, increasingly schools are regarded as complex organisations and as such cannot be led solely by principals. The study, therefore also explored the idea of distributed leadership in an attempt to investigate the extent to which other organisational members are encouraged to contribute to the functioning of the organisation.

In responding to the main research question, the research established that principals of both schools selected manage teaching and learning by focusing on the availability of resource inputs as well as on producing good results on external standardised examination. The principals of both schools ensure that resource inputs are there: that

is the teachers themselves, learners as well as other educational resources are in place so that teaching and learning takes place.

Evidence from interviews in both schools studied show that the wider aspects of teaching and learning are not seen as equally important. All the principals expect from their teachers is good learner academic performance on standardised external examination. The classroom is a 'private' place for teachers and principals appear not to be concerned about what teachers do to produce those good learner academic results. The problem is that the wider aspects of teaching and learning are equally important and evidence from the study exposes that 'missing link', which is the pedagogical content knowledge. For teaching and learning to take place there has to be inputs; that is the resources human and physical. Then there is the process of teaching and learning itself, to produce an end product of which learner academic achievement is a critical part .The problem is that learner academic performance, no matter how good, it is does not give us a complete picture on the role of principalship in the management of quality teaching and learning.

It also emerged that neither of the principals understand what is meant by distributed leadership. This could be an indication that they are lagging behind in terms of professional development. While it has been recognised that principals should be chief learners to effectively support the professional development of their teachers (Marshal, 2005), there are no nationally designed structures to enable principals to be life long learners. The principals who participated in the study acknowledged to be self-empowering themselves with knowledge; they read books so that they are always ahead of their subordinates. One wonders if what the principals are doing is relevant

and with sufficient directions to enable them to run increasingly complex schools in this era of global change.

The importance of the development of principals has also been acknowledged by the South African Department of Education. As earlier mentioned, responding to the need to improve principals, an Advanced Certificate in Educational leadership (ACE) was instigated to develop current and aspiring principals. The management of teaching and learning is one of the areas studied and is meant to equip current and future principals with the relevant expertise to lead and mange schools for the ultimate benefit of teaching and learning (Shuttleworth Foundation: undated).

5.1 Discussions

Teachers in both schools complained that the number of learners per class is increasing by the years. This could be a manifestation of the country's declining economy. As earlier emphasised, the bigger environment has a bearing on schools such that it becomes important for schools to be strategically responsive to such external demands. Schools' major source of revenue comes from school fees and the stagnant country's economy coupled with high unemployment has made it difficult for parents, especially in the rural parts of the country to pay school fees. All these problems have a bearing on the teaching and learning.

Greater emphasis is on learner academic performance on standardised external examination. The annual 'performance contracting' approach used by both school applies to teachers who teach only the classes who sit for external examination (form three and five). These teachers who teach form three and five are the only ones who

receive sanctions and rewards for learner performance; a practice which seems to be unfair to the excluded teachers and learners. One may argue that such a practice is likely to make teachers invest most of their energies on the classes which sit for external examination than those who write internal examinations.

While one is against the idea of rewarding only teachers who teach classes which write external examination, there is a possibility that the way the country's education system is structured also contributes to the emphasis given to form three and five. The earlier mentioned three tier structure and the fact that learners must pass standardised external examination in order to move from one phase to the other could be pressuring schools to be exam oriented. This could be their way of manipulating the system to avoid failures.

5.2 Recommendations

This study exposed the need for further research on instruction leaders mainly because the area of instructional leadership is multifaceted. There is therefore a need for a research that would be longitudinal with a wider scope. This study was small and because of its sample size generalisations on the finding cannot be made which is why a bigger study that which would permit generalisation may be useful. Such a study may also inform and direct future policies.

Having noted the above, Swazi schools and principals do not have a concrete base from which to work when managing teaching and learning. Currently, the country does not have an educational policy that governs the running of schools, including instructional leadership (there is a policy statement of 1999). As earlier mentioned,

instructional leadership is an area which needs to be explored and further research in the field is needed also to inform future educational policies.

Also a study that would involve the major stakeholders: MoE, teachers, learners and parents might be useful to get a complete picture on how teaching and learning is managed. This research has given us one side of the story; learners and other stakeholder opinions might be useful in future research.

It is also important to note that the MoE implemented a new curriculum, the International General Certificate in Education (IGCSE) in 2006. Another study to specifically examine how schools managed the change while ensuring proper management of current teaching and learning practices would be vital. I feel this is important because the interviews with some of the teachers in school A, for example, discovered that some teachers considered the performance of the school to have dropped since the implementation of the new curriculum.

5.3 Conclusion

The study confirmed my introductory hypothesis that most organisations in Swaziland, including schools are a reflection of the country's leadership structure: very centralised. There is a need to change the mind set of our leaders such that they understand that leadership should not be vested in a single individual. School A is a classic example, the principal wanted to do everything himself and he believed that what he was doing was right. Principals need to 'repent' and understand that instructional leadership is multifaceted and its effectiveness and sustainability can be

compromised by principals who are not willing to try out distributed leadership, delegation and or share leadership. These are not blue prints as earlier emphasised but they can offer solutions to some of the problems of running schools.

Most importantly principals need to understand teaching and learning ― the core business of schools in its complete sense. Evidence from the study exposed that principals, deputy principals and teachers understood teaching and learning as only the teaching of learners and the learning of learners. The learning of teachers and their leaders was not seen as equally important. The need to inculcate the culture of teaching and learning at all levels can be seen to be critical component. As earlier mentioned principals need to be life long learners, so should be their teachers in order to build a solid foundation for the provision of quality teaching and learning, which the core business of schools.

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Appendices

1. Introduction letter to school principals and request for permission to conduct research study *(Appendix One)*

2. Information sheets for the participants *(Appendix Two)*

3. Consent sheets for the participants *(Appendix Three)*

4. Consent letter from the Swazi Ministry of Education *(Appendix Four)*

5. Questionnaires and Probing Follow-up Interview Schedules *(Appendix Five)*

Appendix One

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
WITS SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

<div align="right">

Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies

Wits School of Education

Parktown.

17 September 2008

</div>

The School Principal

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTION LETTER TO SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Ms. Khombisile Dlamini, a Master student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies of the University of the Witwatersrand. I am requesting your permission to collect data in your school on my proposed research. The topic is *"The Role of Principalship in Managing Teaching and Learning in Swaziland: Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools"*

The purpose of the visit is to give out ten questionnaires and conduct ten follow up probing interviews with you, your deputy principal, four teachers who heard the four core subjects as well as four teachers who work under the supervision of the four heads of departments. Each of the follow up interviews will take approximately 20-30 minutes. This research is for the purpose of my Master degree. Data will be reported in an anonymous and confidential manner.

Thank you

Yours faithfully

Ms. Khombisile Dlamini (*Student Number:* 0614828R)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies

Wits School of Education

Parktown.

17 September 2008

PARTICIPANTS INFORMATION LEAFLET AND INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant,

My name is Ms. Khombisile Dlamini, a Master student in the Division of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies of the University of the Witwatersrand. I am requesting your permission to collect data on my proposed research. The topic is *"The Role of Principalship in Managing Teaching and Learning in Swaziland: Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools"*

The research will use questionnaires and conducting follow up probing interviews. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you can decline to participate at any point. Responses could take a maximum of 60 minutes of your time (for completing the questionnaire and participating in the interview).

All information obtained during the course of this study will be kept strictly confidential. Data that may be reported in the research report or any journal, it will not include any information that identifies you as the participant.

Your voluntary participation in this study will be appreciated and the result of the research could be availed for viewing at your request.

Thank you.

Ms. Khombisile Dlamini (*Student Number:* 0614828R)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *"The Role of Principalship in Managing Teaching and Learning in Swaziland: Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools"*

PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT

☐ I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Ms. Khombisile Dlamini about the nature of the study.

☐ I have also received, read and understood the Information and Consent sheets regarding the educational study.

☐ I am aware that all the information I give will be anonymously processed in this study.

☐ In view of the requirements of the research, I agree that the data collected during this study can be processed in a computerised system by the student.

☐ I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation from the study.

☐ I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and (of my own free will) declare myself prepared to participate in the study and voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

…………………   ……………………….   ……………………

Printed Name   Signature   Date and time

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *"The Role of Principalship in Managing Teaching and Learning in Swaziland: Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools"*

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PRINCIPAL, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

School Information

District:………………………………………………..

Type of School ☐ **mixed**   ☐ **girls only** ☐ **boys only**

Total number of learners   ………….. **boys**   ……………**girls**

Total number of teachers …………………

Biographic Information

A. Gender: ☐ **Male**   ☐ **Female**

B.   **Level of Qualifications**

Masters ☐

Honours ☐

First Degree ☐

Teacher Certificate ☐

Other (specify) ---

C. Total number of years spent as a teacher………………….…………..

D. Total Number of years spent as a teacher in this school …………………………

E. Total Number of years in leadership position…………………………………….

Leadership Experience

F. What is your understanding of the role of principalship in schools?

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………**G. What role do you play in school leadership?**

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………

H. What role do you play to ensure that your school achieves its core business?

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………

I. Are you familiar with the notion of instructional leadership?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

J. If your response above is YES, what do you know about instructional leadership?…………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………

K. Are you familiar with the idea of distributed leadership?

☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

L. If yes- explain what you understand this to mean?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
……………………

M. Do you play any role in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place in the school? Give examples for your response.

☐ Yes   ☐ No

…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

FOLLOW UP PROBING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PRINCIPALS, DEPUTY PRINCIPALS AND HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

A. What do you consider to be your outstanding practices in the management of teaching and learning?

B. Give your best example where you managed teaching and learning.

C. How do you keep your subordinates motivated towards ensuring that teaching and learning takes place? Give examples.

D. Who takes the responsibility of making decision concerning the running of the school?

E. What challenges do you encounter in the running of the school and how do you deal with them?

F. How do you ensure that your subordinates do their jobs even when you are not around?

G. What role do you play in ensuring that your subordinates are occupationally satisfied? Give examples of best practices in the school to ensure that.

H. How do you deal with teacher absenteeism? Give examples for your response

I. How do you ensure that learners are not affected by teacher absenteeism?

J. How do you ensure that your subordinates are accountable for teaching and learning? Give examples.

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *"The Role of Principalship in Managing Teaching and Learning in Swaziland: Case Studies of Two Rural Secondary Schools"*

INTERVIEW QUESIONNARES FOR TEACHERS

INSTRUCTION: PLEASE TICK AS APPROPRIATE

School Information

District:……………………………………………………….

Type of School ☐ **mixed**   ☐ **girls only** ☐ **boys only**

Biographic Information

A. Gender: ☐ **Male**   ☐ **Female**

B.   Level of Qualifications
   Masters   ☐
   Honours   ☐
   First Degree   ☐
   Teacher Certificate   ☐

       Other (specify) ---

Teaching Experience

C. Total number of teaching experience……………………….
D. Total number of years as a teacher in this school………………………..
E. Which class(es) do you teach?

☐ **Form 1**   ☐ **Form2**   ☐ **Form3**   ☐ **Form 4**   ☐
Form5

E. Which subject/s do you teach?

☐ Siswati   ☐ English   ☐ Maths   ☐ Science

F. What is your understanding of the role of principalship in schools?

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………

F. I am adequately supported to effectively execute my duties.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly
Disagree

G. I have access to adequate teaching resources.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree   ☐ Neutral   ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly
Disagree

H. I am occupationally satisfied.

☐ Strongly Agree   ☐ Agree ☐ Neutral ☐ Disagree   ☐ Strongly
Disagree

I. Do you feel involved when it comes to decision making?

☐ Always   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Never

J. When you encounter problems related to your job, who do you go to?

☐ Head of Department   ☐ Deputy Head   ☐ Principal   ☐ Other
(specify)

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………………

………
………………

J. Are you familiar with the idea of distributed leadership?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

K. If your response above is YES, what do you think is the role of distributed leadership in schools?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………

J. Do you get any form of professional development for your position?

☐ Yes   ☐ No

………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………

L. Do you subscribe to the idea of team work?

☐ Yes   ☐ NO

……
……
……
……
……………………

FOLLOW UP PROBING INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

A. What role does your principal play in the management of teaching and learning in your school? Give examples.

B. What conditions do you think play an important role in keeping you motivated towards your job?

C How do your leaders support you in your job? Give examples.

D. Would you consider your school a conducive environment for teaching and learning?

E What role do you play in keeping your learners motivated towards teaching and learning?

F. Who are you accountable to? How?

G What are the reporting lines and structures?