AN EXAMINATION OF EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF ONE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL IN SOUTH AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

This research is focused on an examination of executive leadership in education which has emerged in the South African independent schools sector over the past two decades. School leadership is based on the premise that the role of the principal or head of a school is to lead and manage teaching and learning. Executive leadership per se is generally associated with business practice in large, corporate organisations, and the introduction of executive leadership structures in education was therefore seen as a paradigm shift which warranted investigation.

Shortly after the first democratic elections in 1994, the South African Schools Act (SASA) was passed by parliament in 1996. The Act provides amongst other things the right to every person to establish and maintain, at their own expense, an independent educational institution. Since then the number of independent schools in South Africa has increased and some of them have doubled or tripled in size over the years. Independent schools fall into the category of private providers of education and are required to operate within the legal and education policy framework of the Republic of South Africa and to obtain accreditation from Umalusi, which is the Council for Quality Assurance in General and Further Education and Training in South Africa. In addition, and as part of their membership obligations, independent schools that are affiliated to ISASA (Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa) undergo a periodic quality assurance process which is carried out by IQAA (Independent Quality Assurance Agency). Compliance and quality standards are therefore considered as key aspects of leadership and management of an independent school.

This research study is located within qualitative methodology, and grounded theory was used to determine theories to explain executive leadership in the selected case study school. As there were no available previous studies or theories to explain the trend towards executive leadership, grounded theory was considered most appropriate for this study. According to Dimmock and Lam (2012), grounded theory is well suited to research in educational leadership because of 'its ability to offer a theory of explanation of complex interactive situations involving human beings in their natural or organisational settings' (2012: 189).

One case study was selected in the Gauteng Province of South Africa and the experiences of eight participants were investigated. The participants comprised of two executive leaders (these are known as Rectors and are the current Rector of the school and his predecessor), the five designated principals of the schools within a school, and the business manager. The research instruments used included questionnaires and interviews; the questionnaires were structured with the purpose of eliciting as much data from each participant as possible. The interviews were semi-structured with follow up probing questions, designed to enable full and frank engagement by the participants.

The analysis of data revealed that the role of an executive head (or Rector in the example of the selected case school) is strategic, policy-based and relational in nature. The role serves to galvanize a school towards a particular long-term shared vision and helps to focus all role-players on what must be done in the present and immediate future in order to achieve the long-term vision of the school. It was also revealed that the role of the Rector does not extend to matters of teaching and learning, and that these are delegated to the designated principal within a particular school environment.

The research concluded that executive leadership structures can be of great benefit to education. The core business of schools is teaching and learning and therefore the principal's key role should be about instructional leadership. The Rector or executive head on the other hand will be the best placed person in a school to lead and manage strategy, vision and policy compliance.

KEYWORDS

Leadership

Executive leadership

Principalship

Instructional leadership

Distributed leadership

Organisational culture

DECLARATION

I, Dumisani Kunene (Student No. 0710183K), hereby declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in 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: ……

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to my late father, Amos Kunene, who passed away in 2007. May his soul rest in peace. He valued education and I know he would have been very proud of me for this achievement.

I also dedicate this work to principals and other leaders in schools who serve diligently and with selfless dedication.

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GLOSSARY

Leadership: a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes. It involves inspiring and supporting others towards the achievement of a vision for the school which is based on clear personal and professional values (Bush and Glover, 2003, p.10).

Executive leadership: a form of leadership that combines the managerial elements of running an organisation and the charting of its strategic direction (Tropman, 2010, p.47).

Principalship: a position of presiding rank in a school, especially the position of the head or principal.

Instructional leadership: a leadership approach that puts the processes of teaching and learning at the centre with the intention of influencing learner achievement (Leithwood 1999, in Harris et al, 2003, p.58).

Distributed leadership: a leadership practice whereby leadership responsibility is dissociated from formal organisational roles, and the action and influence of people at all levels is recognised as integral to the direction and functioning of the organisation (Bolden, 2007, p.2).

Organisational culture: refers to the shared ideas, beliefs, values and knowledge which characterise the way things are done in a particular organisation (Handy, 1984, p.32).

ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATONS

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
ISASA	Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa
SASA	South African Schools Act
IQAA	Independent Quality Assurance Agency
ELPS	Education Leadership and Policy Studies
CDE	Centre for Development and Enterprise
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
SOWETO	South Western Townships
US	United States
NPQH	National Professional Qualification for Headship
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
SADC	Southern African Development Community
IEB	Independent Examination Board
MBA	Master of Business Administration
BELMAS	British Educational Leadership, Management & Administration Society
EQ	Emotional Quotient
MEC	Member of the Executive Council

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far enough ahead to motivate them."

John Maxwell, Power of Leadership 2001

Introduction

Maxwell's quote is pertinent for this research which is primarily focused on leadership practices and, in particular, their application in education. Maxwell suggests that human connections and motivation are symptomatic of leadership practice. For the purpose of this study, human connectivity is used to describe the nature of our relationships with others. Relationships vary from place to place but are all characterised by things such as empathy, courage, self-worth and compassion. The word motivation is used to describe 'the willingness to exert high levels of effort toward organisational goals, conditioned by this effort's ability to satisfy some individual need' (Johnson, 2005).

According to Bolman and Deal (1991), leaders believe in people and communicate that belief; they are accessible and visible; they support, increase participation, share information, and move decision making down into the organisation. In order to lead effectively, it is therefore important that leaders demonstrate the attributes of both relating to, and motivating, those with whom they work.

This research investigated executive leadership in education. The notion of executive leadership has a business connotation and therefore the use of the term executive head implies a paradigm shift in educational leadership. It gives the impression that the role of a principal has changed to resemble that of an executive of a company.

According to McNamara (2010), the role of the executive or chief executive officer is to carry out the strategic plans and policies as established by the board of directors. He argues that the

chief executive reports directly to the board of directors. The research examined the role of an executive head, and a South African independent school was used as a case study. The term independent school is used to describe schools that are privately owned either by church based congregations or private individuals and companies. A South African independent school was selected as a case study for practical reasons as well as its relevance to the South African context. Whilst the case study produced valuable insights into the applicability of business oriented leadership practices, the findings cannot be applied in every independent school or educational institution as they are not, nor were they meant to be, generalisable.

Background and Context

The South African education system is largely modelled on the Western education systems of Britain and the United States of America. According to Hofmeyr (2000), two types of schools are recognised in South Africa namely public (state) schools and independent (private) schools. These are the only categories under which education provision is conducted in post-apartheid South Africa. In the South African context, the term 'public school' refers to a school that is state owned and controlled (South African Schools Act, 1996). Public schools make up about 95 per cent of the schools in South Africa and the Department of Basic Education is responsible for all state education from grade R (a year before formal schooling) to grade twelve which is referred to as matric.

During apartheid, people of different races and cultures were kept apart by law and this separation extended to other aspects of life including education. Apartheid was a political and social system in South Africa which separated groups of people according to race. Bunting (2006) states that the National Party government created five entities naming them: the Republics of Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda, Ciskei, and the Republic of South Africa. The first four were small sections of land apportioned to black people of South Africa. In terms of the National Party ideology, black people (who represented almost 80% of South Africa's population) were expected to be citizens of one of the 'independent' states which became known as homelands. There were also other republics for the Zulus, the Tsongas, the Pedi speaking people, the Ndebeles, the Swazis, and for the South Sotho speaking people.
The homelands were designed to support the National Party's ideology of separate development. They were characterised by poverty and high unemployment rates. Bunting

(2006) further argues that black people were presumed to be aliens in the Republic of South Africa. This means that black people were considered as foreigners in their own country because most of them were born in the homelands. Each homeland had its own education department which was responsible for education in the areas that formed part of the homeland. The National Party government established the Department of Education and Training, under the 'general affairs' government department, which was responsible for education of blacks in the Republic of South Africa. However, the curriculum that was followed was specific to education of black people in South Africa and this also applied to education in the homelands.

Education reforms during the mid-80s

In 1984, the National Party government revised the constitution of the Republic of South Africa and created three houses of national parliament namely the House of Assembly (for whites), House of Delegates (for Indians), and the House of Representatives (for coloureds). However, the new constitution still made no provision for black people even though they constituted the majority of the country's population. According to Bunting (2006), education was considered to be an 'own affair' under the new constitution for whites, coloureds, and Indians. The four provinces of the Republic of South Africa namely Transvaal, Natal, Cape Province, and the Orange Free State had their own education departments. Schools that belonged to these four departments were meant for whites only and had the best education facilities in the country. They were also well resourced with favourable pupil-teacher ratios. Meanwhile the struggle for liberation and better education continued in the townships and other parts of the country. In the late 1980s, certain constitutional amendments were made by the National Party government and these led to the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990 and the unbanning of the African National Congress and other opposition political parties.

After the release of Nelson Mandela from prison in 1990, South Africa went through many political and social changes. Education transformation was one of the biggest changes to be made but it was also one of the biggest challenges that have continued to confront the South African government. One of the changes during this period was the modification in the admission policy at white schools. The policy allowed for admission of black pupils into white schools. This was a move welcomed by many but had certain implications for schools.

Education reforms during the early 1990s

Soudien (2007), states that the Minister of Education and Culture Administration, P.J. Clase, gave white schools throughout the country three options which they could use to deal with the climate of change. He put three models in place namely models A, B and C. Model A meant that schools could choose to retain their status of being exclusive. Model B meant that schools could choose to open up partially and continue to receive financial support from the state. The third model (model C status) meant that schools could open up completely and continue to receive subsidy for teachers' salaries but take responsibility for other expenses. Soudien (2007) also states that by early 1991 more than 200 English and Afrikaans schools countrywide had elected the model C status and therefore admitted pupils of all races. In order to make this decision, schools needed to obtain the support of between 75 and 80 per cent of their parent body. This change did not however go without any problems. The main problem for most schools was bridging the gap between the different cultures and dealing with political anxiety. Even to this day, the country is still dealing with racial issues and political anxiety is high. Divisions that were created over so many decades will need time and patience from all of us as citizens of our country.

Education in South Africa post 1994

After the first democratic elections in 1994, the country's education was brought under one education department and so began the process of education reform in South Africa. The gap between former model C schools and the former black schools is still huge. According to Modisaotsile (2012), there are many signs that show that there is a crisis in education. Quality and standards are amongst those signs. Another concern regarding the country's education system is that 'only half of the learners who start grade one make it through to grade twelve'. Modisaotsile (2012) also cited leadership as a problem in most of our schools. My next chapters will deal with the issue of leadership in great detail. Modisaotsile (2012) further argues that most schools lack in basic resources and this is affecting the standard of education in South Africa. According to the Bill of Rights (South African Constitution, 1996), everyone has a right to basic education. The state therefore has a duty to 'build enough schools and provide enough teachers for everyone to be able to go to school and obtain a proper education. Modisaotsile

(2012) argues that 'the South African Government fails not only to provide facilities such as libraries and laboratory material, but also crucial learning materials such as textbooks'.

According to Modisaotsile (2012), an educated population remains the fundamental platform for meeting the United Nations' Millennium Developmental Goals which include poverty alleviation. She added that despite the country's increased spending on education, the education system remains largely in a poor state of affairs. Modisaotsile's view about the state of our education is, in part, supported by Bloch (2009) who argues that our education system is not working. According to Bloch (2009), education ought to be opening up opportunities, but in its current state South African education is in fact reproducing inequality. This means that the poor are getting poorer. Bloch (2009) further argues that 'the education system is not producing sufficient skills, particularly in areas such as Maths and Science'.

Many people in South Africa had high expectations after the new government was elected in 1994. Amongst the aspirations was the redress of the inequalities in education. Sadly the public image of state education has suffered greatly over this period. According to Hofmeyr (2000), policy changes that followed the 1994 democratic elections were welcomed but they created uncertainty among education stakeholders. Furthermore, the unintended consequences of all the policy changes were an erosion of confidence in the public school sector. Hofmeyr (2000) further argues that the democratic freedoms and black economic empowerment also resulted in the movement of pupils and teachers between former white schools and former black schools, and between the public and independent sectors.

The rise of the independent schools sector in South Africa

Education provision in South Africa is categorised into state and independent schools. The South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 defines an independent school as a school that is privately owned and is registered in terms of the Act. According to the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA), the South African definition of an independent school is a narrow one when compared with other developing countries.

Hofmeyr and Lee (2002) propose that the South Africa definition of an independent school needs clarification. They prefer the following definition which is used by Kitaev (1999):

> *Private schools are formal schools that are not public and may be founded, owned, managed and financed by actors other than the state, even in cases where the state provides most of the funding and has considerable control over these schools.*

The South Africa definition of an independent school however does not include public schools on private property. So the definition of an independent school remains unclear as most people do not know what it signifies. Hofmeyr and Lee (2002) further argue that potential customers and opponents of private schooling classify well-resourced, former white public schools in suburban areas as private schools.

According to the Independent Schools Association of Southern Africa (ISASA), a new era began to emerge in South Africa after 1994. New and cheaper independent schools opened and most of them in urban areas. ISASA (2001: 1-5) cited two types of demand that led to the growth of independent schooling in South Africa: the excess demand for more schooling which is associated with developing countries and the differentiated demand for different, and perhaps better schooling which is associated with developed countries. According to ISASA (2001), the excess demand for more schooling accounted for most of the growth and largely took the form of low-fee schools serving black middle and lower socio-economic households as a result of the apartheid legacy of poor standards and pass rates in many predominantly black schools. As a result, there was an exodus of pupils from state to independent schools.

Du Toit (2003: 3) states that after 1990, two groups were responsible for heightened differentiated demand in the South African education context. DuToit (2003) argues that the Afrikaner households were concerned that the democratic government would not protect their cultural and religious ethos in respect to schooling. The black households, on the other hand, were those who could afford better quality education as a result of increasing social and economic mobility. This view is supported by a study conducted by Burger et al (2014) at the University of Stellenbosch. They found that ‘there has been a rapid growth in the middle class in the post-apartheid South Africa, and the black share of the middle class has increased dramatically over this period (2014: 2)’.

The formalisation of independent education in South Africa can be traced back to the first half of the 19th century when the first missionaries arrived on the southern tip of our country. Since 1994, there has been a rapid growth in the number of independent schools in South Africa. According to ISASA, there were approximately 550 registered independent schools in the country in 1990. In 2014, the number of registered independent schools stood at 1584. The public view of independent schools in South Africa is widely associated with white, rich and exclusive. In my experience of working with all the Catholic schools in the Gauteng Province of South Africa, I can attest that this perception is not accurate and therefore not a true representation of all independent schools. Some schools in Gauteng charge very low school fees, often below some of the former model C schools. An example of this is the independent schools in Soweto who charge fees that are below R5 000 per annum. These schools are by no means rich nor exclusive. Although they receive some state funding in the form of a subsidy, this often comes in late and doesn't go far enough to help the schools meet their expenses. According to ISASA (2003), more than 53 per cent of its member schools charge fees that are below the high-fee category. This figure is expected to rise as the number of low fee schools increase in this country.

Whilst there is no agreed definition of what constitutes a low-fee independent school, the Centre for Development and Enterprise (CDE) defines a low-fee independent school as any school that charges fees of R12 000 per year. According to CDE (2015), the unmet needs of poor communities have given rise to low-fee independent schools in South Africa. CDE argues that low-fee schools are usually set up and funded by Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), or altruistic teachers who want to give disadvantaged children a better chance in life. A few have begun as outreach programmes of high-fee independent schools, and many are linked to Christian churches or other religions.

Low-fee schools can be found almost anywhere: in a warehouse, in an inner city office block, a house in a township or a suburb near a taxi route, an old bank building, a Putco bus depot, an old farm house, a vacant government building, and in part of a public school (CDE, 2015).

According to Mark Henning, former National Director of the Independent Schools Council now known as ISASA, the founding mission of independent schools in South Africa comprised three pillars: viz; to spread muscular Christianity, to extend the British Empire and to support

growth in the colonies. This view is supported by Visser (2004) who writes as follows in his description of schools in the British colonies of South Africa: the central theme of the British imperialist schools was the expansion of the British Empire and the achievements and benefits of the empire. In an interview with Henning (May 2015), he emphasised the following about the first mission schools in South Africa:

> *The first principals of schools founded for English-speaking communities came mainly from England. They were given a great deal of autonomy to run their schools with minimum interference and the schools were organised around a sense of community. It is interesting to note that autonomy and a sense community still remain at the core of independent schooling today.*

Today, there are different categories of independent schools. The first category is made up of religious schools. Whilst most of the faith schools in South Africa remain Christian, some of which are fundamentalist, there has been a considerable growth in the number of Muslim and Jewish schools. According to the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) cited in Hofmeyr and Lee (2002), faith schools made up 46 per cent of independent schools in South Africa.

Independent chain schools

In recent years, the South African landscape of independent schools has changed since the introduction of chain schools which are for profit. According to CDE (2015), chain schools can be grouped into three main categories namely the publicly listed companies on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, the for-profit chains of independent schools and the not-for-profit chains of independent schools. The players in the first category are the AdvTech and Curro schools. AdvTech schools tend to cater for the high-fee market and an example is the Crawford schools. Curro schools however cater for a combination of low and medium to high fees and have expanded rapidly over a short period of time, often to the detriment of other well-established independent and public schools. For example, Curro Nelspruit caused a migration of pupils and staff mainly from two independent schools in the area. At the time, I was principal of one the schools that were affected. This impact was also felt by public schools in the area as one school in particular lost over a hundred pupils in one year.

The for-profit schools include Reddam and SPARK schools. Reddam schools first opened in 2000 and in 2015, the chain has six schools in specific centres around the country. SPARK

schools are ‘the new kids on the block’ currently with four schools, and with plans to open additional schools in 2016. Unlike Reddam, the fees of SPARK schools are just above what CDE regards as low-fee independent schools. The third category of chain of independent schools is the not-for-profit independent schools. According to CDE (2015), low-fee school chains include Vuleka, the Get Ahead Project, BASA Educational Institute Trust and LEAP Science and Maths Schools, The 2 Oceans Education Foundation, the Love Trust and the African School of Excellence. CDE (2015) argues that all the new players and the expansion of chains have had a considerable impact on the growth of the independent schools sector in South Africa. For example in 2013 and 2014 Gauteng, the Western Cape and the Free State together received a total of 307 applications for registration from new independent schools (CDE, 2015: 18).

Different but not-for profit independent schools

Another category of schools in South Africa is made up of secular and non-profit independent schools. According to Hofmeyr and Lee (2002), this group of schools arose largely as a result of differentiated demand in white communities. This category also include alternative schools such as the Montessori and Waldorf schools. Montessori and Waldorf schools model their practices on the educational philosophy of their founders namely Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner. According to Sliwka (2007), Montessori schools are characterised by multi-aged classrooms which are perceived to enhance flexibility in learning and eliminate competition. Waldorf schools on the other hand emphasise the seven year developmental stages of the learner with a greater focus on the learner’s emotional life artistic expression.

Stakeholder expectations in the independent schools sector

Most independent schools are mission-driven organisations designed to apply a specific philosophy. Instead of “shareholders”, independent schools have “stakeholders” who are made up of pupils, parents, and alumni who hold the schools accountable. The schools are governed strictly by boards of governors who are often selected from the parent body. Parents have greater influence over many areas of the school including mission and vision and the

sustainability of the school. They also, through their role on the board of governors, play an active role in the recruitment of principals.

The role of the principal is to lead and manage teaching and learning. However, principals work extremely hard to balance this responsibility with a barrage of other expectations from their stakeholders. These expectations range from good sports results to business decisions such as creating extra revenue to build a new and bigger school hall. The principal is expected to be all things to all people. A principal may be a very good instructional leader but not necessarily be good at developing a long-term strategic vision for the school. In business, the strategic vision of a company is the work of a chief executive officer. Whilst business and education are not the same and should not be treated as if they are similar, this implies that schools need to reconsider the role of the principal. Executive leadership structures can be of great benefit to schools in managing high expectations.

Problem Statement

This research is driven by the trend towards executive leadership which has developed within the independent schools sector in South Africa. The use of the label executive head to describe someone who is occupying the position of a principal indicates a point of departure from the traditional notion of principalship.

The notion of principal as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) has been in use in the United States of America (USA) for over two decades and central to this notion is the role played by the principal in the achievement of mission and vision of the school. Hollar (2004) writes of principals:

> *They may never grace the pages of The Wall Street Journal or Fortune magazine, but they are the most important CEOs in our country. In terms of business practice, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is responsible for leading the development and execution of the Company's long term strategy with a view to creating shareholder value (2004: 43).*

Hollar (2004) presents a view that principals are CEOs which means this implies a business approach to education. CEOs are ultimately responsible for all day-to-day management decisions and for implementing the Company's long and short term plans. The CEO acts as a

direct liaison between the Board and management of the Company and communicates to the Board on behalf of management. The CEO also communicates on behalf of the Company to shareholders, employees, Government authorities, other stakeholders and the public. When applied to education, this role however can mean different things to different people. The role of the principal is to lead and manage teaching and learning. Principals are expected to attract and retain talented staff, build morale among their teachers and pupils, manage large budgets, improve productivity, encourage excellence and create a vision and strategic plan for their schools. Hollar's view suggests a paradigm shift from the traditional notion of principalship which is based on the premise that the role of the principal is to lead and manage teaching and learning, the core business of a school.

Aims and Objectives

The primary aim of the research was to examine executive leadership in education. The research examined the role of an executive head and a South African independent school was used as a case study. The term executive head is relatively new in the South African context and the applicability thereof of business principles to education was of great interest to me. The first objective was to establish whether the practices of a school executive head either align or depart from existing literature on business and education. The second was to investigate the reasons behind any point of departure from the literature, as revealed through the research. The notion of instructional leadership was also a critical area which needed to be explored, especially its practices as relating to management of teaching and learning (Bush, 2003).

Research Questions

The research explored the following key question:

- ***What is the role of an executive head/Rector in leading and managing a school?***

  This question is informed by the following sub-questions:

  - Why are some independent schools moving towards executive leadership?
  - How does the role of the executive head of a school differ from that of a designated principal(s) and/or business manager within this executive model?

- How does an executive head perceive his/her role within the overall leadership of the school?
- What are the perceptions of people working in executive leadership structures?

Rationale

It is expected that this research will contribute to the literature of educational leadership and management, specifically, the applicability of business principles in leading and managing independent schools. The research examined the role of an executive head in an independent school and the extent to which the role of an executive head enables the designated principals of the five schools within a school to focus on the core business of a school, which is teaching and learning. In the case school, the term that is used for the executive head is Rector and so these two terms have been used interchangeably in this research report.

Conceptual Framework

This research is based on conceptual framework that the principal is the CEO of a school (Krajewski, 2008). The issue of school leadership has become one of the most important topics in the education debate in the twenty first century. According to Arne Duncan, US Secretary of Education, stated in his inaugural speech that 'principals must be treated as CEOs, and must be trained as such' (Business Week, March 2009). His speech sparked the much-needed debate about what the role of principals should be in twenty first century schooling.

A study conducted in England in 2000 compared 200 highly effective principals, with 200 senior business executives (Fullan, 2002: 2). It found that both groups were equally impressive and that 'the role of head teacher is stretching, in comparison, to business.' The study identified five leadership domains that were similar between the two groups: teamwork and developing others, drive and confidence, vision and accountability, influencing tactics and politics, and thinking styles (both on the conceptual and analytical level). According to Fullan (2002), the principal of the future has to be more attuned to the big picture, and much more sophisticated at conceptual thinking, and transforming the organisation through people and teams. He argues

that ‘if the goal is sustainable change in the knowledge in society, then business and education leaders have increasingly more in common’.

Recent literature on leadership, change and ‘best management practice’ emphasises shared and transformational leadership, recognition and respect for cultural diversity, teacher collegiality and professionalism, valuing democratic relationships in situations and creating caring environments. Bennis and Nanus (1995) define the transformative leader as a person who can shape and elevate the motives and goals of followers. ‘Transformative leaders achieve significant change that reflects the community of interests of both leaders and followers; indeed it frees up and pools the collective energies in pursuit of a common goal’. The transformative leadership image is closely associated with the self-managing school, where the school is responsible for initiation of change, not just the implementation of changes conceived by others. The independent schools with their established Boards typically are responsible for their own management and their own future. Teachers are viewed as important sources of expertise, rather than as the targets of others’ efforts to improving schooling.

Caldwell and Spinks (1992) argue that there are six fundamentals of leadership in a self-managing school: the capacity to work with others to develop vision; a personal ‘educational platform’ that can be communicated to other members of the school community; a vision which is communicated in a way that develops commitment from school community members; the technical, human, educational, symbolic, and cultural facets of the leadership role; the ability to keep abreast of trends and issues, threats and opportunities in the school community and in society at large, nationally and internationally; the ability to discern the ‘megatrends’ and anticipate their impact on education and the school, and the ability to empower others, especially in respect to decision-making.

The conceptual framework which informs this study has also been described by Josephson (2014) who claims that the principalship is the most difficult CEO job in today’s world. He argues that principals must find ways to teach 21st century workplace skills, enhance students’ social and emotional development, and build their character so they become responsible and productive citizens. Josephson argues further that principals have the responsibility of any other CEO including hiring, supervision, budgeting, and facilities management.

Limitations of the Study

Time was the biggest constraint during my study. I conducted this research whilst holding a full time position as a teacher. I found it difficult to strike the balance between my work and studies. During a school term, there were always deadlines that needed to be met in regard to assessments and other tasks such as preparing for lessons, marking and doing extramural activities.

Distance and travel were also a limitation during the study. Although the participants were located in the same city, it was often difficult to meet with them at the times when they were available because of my full time teaching commitments. The nature of the responsibilities of the participants was such that they themselves were very busy people and so this made finding time to probe their responses very difficult.

The focus of this research was executive leadership in education, an area which has not yet been sufficiently researched and so finding relevant literature was also a challenge.

As a result of time and travel constraints, the scale of my data collection was therefore limited. It would have been very beneficial to revisit each participant more than once to probe further and elicit clarity on some of the data that had been provided. The lack of relevant literature in this field also had a negative impact on the findings. Availability of relevant literature would have enabled me to compare my findings to previous research and this was not possible.

Structure of the Report

The subsequent chapters of this research report are as follows:

Chapter Two: Literature review

This chapter reviews relevant literature in the fields of organisational theory and leadership in general. To contextualise the issues, school culture is analysed and the role of leadership in shaping the culture of a school is also examined. The core business of schools is teaching and learning, therefore the notion of instructional leadership also forms a focal point of this chapter.

The chapter also examines the concept of distributed leadership. The roles and responsibilities of CEOs in general also form part of the discussion and the extent to which business principles are applied in education will also be examined, with a particular focus on the notion of principal as a CEO. In conclusion, the literature is summarised and propositions are identified.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

The chapter describes the methodology that was used in the research. The chapter then continues with an explanation of the techniques used in the research and the overall outline of the methodology is presented. The outline includes a breakdown of the statements in the questionnaire, an explanation of how these will be tested, a description of the population for the study, a description of the size of the sample and how the sample was selected, the instruments and methods used for data collection, and methods in which data is analysed and presented.

Chapter Four: Presentation and analysis of data

This chapter begins by giving a detailed profile of the school, describing its location and size. It also describes the school in terms of its socio-economic status. The chapter describes the organisational structure of the school and provides the profile of the participants. The second part of the chapter is focused on data presentation and analysis. The analysis included three main parts namely; the role of the Rector, the role of the designated principals and the role of the business manager. The chapter concludes with identification of the main findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusion, reflection and recommendations

Chapter five discusses the relevance of the findings and draws conclusions on the role of the executive head in the sampled case study. The chapter refers back to questions raised about executive leadership in education, and in particular, the role of an executive head and the applicability business principles in leading and managing an independent school. The study concludes by providing answers to the research questions and makes suggestions in terms of areas that require further investigation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter reviews relevant literature in the fields of organisational theory and leadership in general. To contextualise the issues, school culture is analysed and the role of leadership in shaping the culture of a school is also examined. The core business of schools is teaching and learning, therefore the notion of instructional leadership also forms a focal point of this chapter. The chapter also examines the concept of distributed leadership. The roles and responsibilities of CEOs in general also form part of the discussion and the extent to which business principles are applied in education will also be examined, with a particular focus on the notion of principal as a CEO.

According to the South African Standard for Principalship (gazetted in March 2015), eight interdependent areas constitute the role of the principal in any South African school. These areas include amongst other things; leading teaching and learning, shaping the direction and development of the school, and managing quality and securing accountability. It is interesting to note that leadership of teaching and learning is regarded as one of the core responsibilities of a South African principal. Similarly in the United Kingdom, the National Professional Qualification for Headship (NPQH) which is a baseline qualification for individuals aspiring to become head teachers, also regards the leadership of learning and teaching as a key area of the role and responsibilities of head teachers (National College for Teaching and Leadership, 2014).

Organisational theory

According to Barnard (1948), an organisation is a system of consciously co-ordinated activities or efforts of two or more persons. Barnard's definition implies formal planning, division of labour and leadership. Organisations can also be thought as 'social entities that are goal directed, deliberately structured activity systems with a permeable boundary' (Bedeian and Zanmuto, 1991). From this definition, we can deduce that if two people get together and decide to start a little playschool, they actually are forming an organisation. Van der Westhuizen et al (1996) define an organisation as 'a formal structure in which people stand in a certain relation to one another and their actions are directed at achieving certain common objectives (1996: 37)'.

Fidler (1997) argues that all organisations have basic structures within which they operate. He maintains that the main aim of any organisational structure is to allocate people and resources to the tasks which have to be performed. McLagan and Nel (2006) state that structure creates the framework for values and relationships. Central to the structure of an organisation is the job description of each employee. The job description enables people in an organisation to know their tasks and the tasks of others with whom they work. Embedded in the job description is accountability of the individuals or employees in the organisation. Fidler (1997) maintains that if every employee knows his/her tasks, the goals and mission of the organisation are more likely to be realised. Organisational structures are therefore designed with the intention to bring about unity of vision and to promote effectiveness. It is important to note, as Fidler (1997) points out that organisational structures are built on compromise and require co-ordination and control.

Greenfield (1979), cited in van der Westhuizen et al (1996: 3), argues that human action and intention are the foundation for the functioning of an organisation. Therefore this view leads us to believe that in fact people make up an organisation. In addition, this view also means that we should not conceive an organisation to be an object. It is also important to consider the aspect of human relations whenever we talk about organisations. According to van der Westhuizen et al (1996), Greenfield is critical of the perception that organisations are places to which people take certain values and beliefs. He argues that when those individuals leave the organisation, the basic structure of the organisation remains the same. Whilst I agree with this

view, I also believe that individuals can have a huge influence over organisations, especially if they are in a position of authority and sometimes that influence can remain with the organisation long after the individual has left. Greenfield further claims that in order to understand an organisation, it is also important to understand how each person in the organisation converts his own intentions into a programme of action (van Westhuizen, 1996: 5). The authors argue that this assertion points us to the fact that organisations are in fact an expression of will, intention and a certain value system. The theory of Greenfield is viewed by van der Westhuizen and his colleagues as epistemological in nature. They argue that he places too much emphasis on the individual and makes the organisation an abstract of humanity.

Contrary to Greenfield's view of organisations, Griffiths regarded administration as the base of an organisation. Griffiths argued that all administrative tasks take place within the context of an organisation and therefore administration controls and directs everything that occurs within an organisation (van der Westhuizen, 1996: 8). His view brings me to another point which requires further debate. If administration 'controls and directs' the activities of an organisation, then people must be at the centre of an organisation. Tasks alone do not amount to administration unless there are people designated to perform the tasks. This view suggests that people 'control and direct' activities of other people.

Organisational structures

Fidler (1997) states that there are two approaches to organisational structures. Some organisations follow bureaucratic hierarchical structures which are characterised by clear authority based on position with formal rules of operation. According to Salacuse (2006), the word authority can be defined as 'the right by virtue of one's position to direct the activities of other persons – in short, to tell them what to do'. Fidler (1997) maintains that organisations that have bureaucratic structures in place tend to have very clear lines of accountability where each office bearer is accountable to a superior.

McLagan and Nel (1995) argue that bureaucratic or authoritarian structures entrench superior-subordinate relationships among people. They state that in a bureaucratic system, employees are not responsible for co-ordinating their work with others at their level as this is their boss's job and to do so would be presumptuous. The job of thinking about the big picture and how

things fit together is the responsibility of management and not the employees. Therefore cross-functional or horizontal communication with one's peers is frowned upon as either a waste of time or usurpation of the boss's authority. Organisations that are modelled on bureaucratic hierarchical structures operate using some or all of the following structural levels:

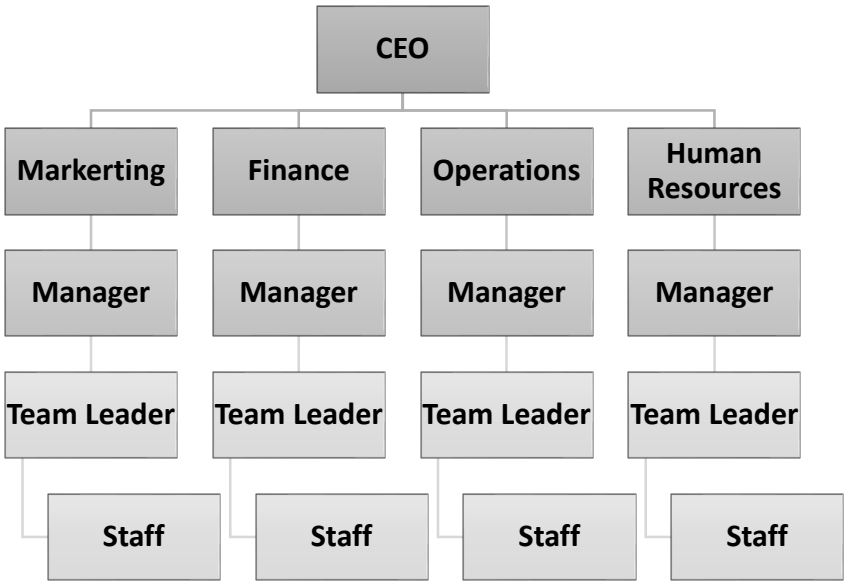

Figure 1: Example of an organisation with a bureaucratic hierarchical structure

The chart indicates the different hierarchical levels within the organisation and it also indicates the direction of command which begins at the top (from the leader) and continues downwards (to the subordinates) where the task has to be performed and this is done in silos. In this type of structure, the direction of accountability goes upwards from the subordinates who are responsible for the organisation's performance. According to Bush (2003), leaders of such organisations are often responsible to external agencies for the performance of subordinates and the activities of the organisation.

Fidler (1997) states that other organisations follow a collegial structure. According to Bush (2003), collegial structures emphasise that power and decision-making should be shared among some or all members of the organisation. In organisations with collegial structures in place, for example, policy and decision-making occur through a process of discussion leading to consensus. Collegial structures are characterised by power sharing practices that include some or all members of an organisation who are thought to have a shared understanding of the organisation's aims and objectives. Bush (2003) states that collegial structures work on the assumption that some or all employees have an equal right to determine policy and influence

decisions in the organisation. Therefore an organisation that represents a collegial structure as described by Bush (2003) will look similar to the following illustration:

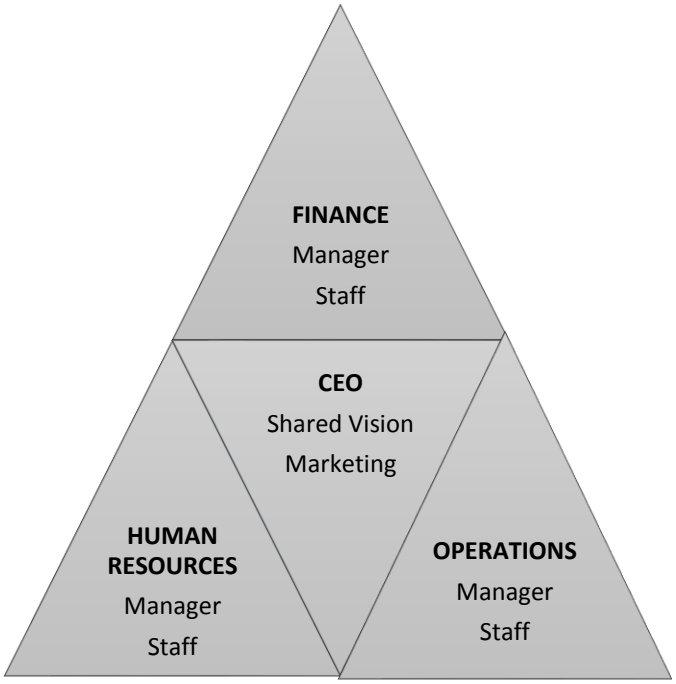

Figure 2: Example of an organisation with a collegial structure

The triangle is used specifically to show a sense of connectedness that exists in a collegially structured organisation. The organisation's CEO guides all the employees towards a shared vision and ensures that all activities of the various departments (managers and staff) remain focused on the aims and objectives of the organisation. Marketing may have a dedicated person who works closely with the CEO and all employees but overall it is the responsibility of all employees to market the organisation and communicate its vision to clients. In this type of organisation interactions between people are very important and that usually happens within and across departments.

McLagan and Nel (1995) argue that structure creates the framework for values and relationships and also creates the pathways for the formal flow of information and guides people's assumptions about the actions that the institution considers legitimate. However, they also emphasise that participation must become a way of life for organisations. They argue that hierarchical organisational structures were valuable in the past as they "boosted productivity, helped to raise the standard of living for the middle class and create massive wealth for stockholders".

According to McLagan and Nel (1995), steep pyramidal structures create major problems for today's organisations. They argue that information moves too slowly and customers are far removed from those who serve them. They also maintain that in hierarchical organisations, people are too busy taking care of their bosses instead of caring for the customers. In order to "compete in a rapidly changing global market, we need flexibility" (1995: 21). McLagan and Nel further argue that there is a need for flatter and flexible structures. "New pictures that show the desirable interplay among people will help to break the stranglehold of the mindsets" (1995: 22). They also emphasise that the new organisational vision must reflect the configuration of work most effective in promoting productivity and quality.

Schools as organisations are also expected to reflect this new global trend of organisational structures. Informal structures are helpful in improving the flow of information within a school. Instead of staff having to wait for the 'big boss' to tell them what to do at a staff meeting or by way of a circular, important information can be relayed quickly either via a text messaging system or by way of email. Whilst this is informal (and perhaps impersonal), it assists the school to function more effectively. In this way, the communication gap is reduced and people may feel empowered and trusted that they will do the right thing.

Glatter (2015) argues that "schools are frequently referred to as organisations but they are also often regarded as institutions" (2015: 100). He cites Scott's (1989) research as a basis for his argument. Scott's idea of educational institutions suggests that schools lead a double life in that they are both "administrative and serve as moral entities" (Glatter, 2015: 100). Scott further argues that "education is about more than what happens in the classroom or lecture theatre" (Glatter, 2015). Scott's view suggests that schools serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, schools have a responsibility of ensuring that academic results are of a high standard, but "moral, social and cultural issues also lie at the heart of education" (Glatter, 2015: 100). He develops his argument by bringing in Painter's work. Painter argues that "institutions are bodies that mediate between public and private interest and so have a multiple purpose whereas organisations have single purposes" (2014: 41). Painter further argues that an institution must balance public and private values, yet still act with a purpose, and must see itself not as separate from those it serves but as a space where different interests can interact and create new collective value. According to Glatter (2015), this requires a "culture of openness, transparency, accountability and inclusiveness" (2015:100).

Organisational culture and its impact on school leadership

Ogbonna (1993: 42), argues that the term 'organisational culture' refers to the values, norms, beliefs and customs that an individual holds in common with members of the social unit or group. The group or social unit referred to in Ogbonna's definition may be an organisation such as a school or a company such as Price-Waterhouse-Coopers. Handy (1984) states that, 'in organisations there are deep-set beliefs about the way work should be organised, the way authority should be exercised, people rewarded, people controlled'. He argues that every organisation is different but there are truths and theories that apply to all organisations. He states that 'in some organisations, and some schools, everything is very tight, tidy and precise'.

Handy's argument is still valid even today. For example, in certain organisations such as South African Airways, the South African Navy, and most banks, employees are expected to conform to strict uniform regulations. Even some of schools still apply strict rules in the way teachers are expected to dress. Some schools expect male teachers to wear a collar and tie and pupils to wear blazers throughout the year. There are also companies and schools where titles are very important and those occupying the position of principal are addressed as "Mr White' or 'Mrs Khumalo' by all staff. According to Handy (1984), in such organisations 'there are rules and procedures for everything and things are expected to go by the book'. Others however operate differently and are characterised by a sense of flexibility between bosses and their subordinates. In such schools, teachers can call the principal either 'Helen' or 'John' and there will be no issues.

Handy (1984) introduced us to four different types of cultures which can be observed in an organisation. The focus of this research was not so much a description of the different cultures but the extent to which individuals can recognise and identify with the culture of their own organisation. He described the four cultures as the club, the role, the task, and the person. His description of the club culture resembled a spider's web, with the spider's centre representing power and influence. Handy (1984) further argues that the closer the members are to the spider's centre, the more power and influence they will have in an organisation. He describes the role culture as being more hierarchical with clear and formal lines of communication from the person at the top to the subordinates. Handy also describes the task culture in an organisation as a way of utilising members' talents and competencies to address problems

which may require specific skills from an individual. He argues that unlike the first three cultures, the person culture 'puts the individual first and makes the organisation the resource for the individual's talents' (Handy, 1984: 37).

Organisational cultures can be strong or weak, collaborative or individualistic, trusting or suspicious (Hargreaves, 1994). A key task of leadership is to create strong and positive cultures that motivate and mobilise people to achieve the organisation's purpose. In an attempt to help us understand culture, Hargreaves (2002: 50) applied Handy's research to a school environment and categorised it into four typologies of school cultures namely *formal*, *welfaris*t, *hothouse*, and *survivalist*. He argues that the *formal* school culture is concerned with the academic achievement of pupils and puts pressure on them to achieve goals. For example, the emphasis put on pupils by high schools to achieve a 100 percent pass rate at matric level is a key element of formal school culture. In this type of school culture, there is always pressure and 'school life is orderly, scheduled, and disciplined with a strong work ethic'. Because of this focus on achieving the best results, the organisational structure of the school tends to be bureaucratic and task-oriented.

The *welfarist* school culture depicts a cosy, caring and relaxed atmosphere. Schools that have this type of culture tend to put less pressure on academic results and focus more on the wellbeing of individual pupils and their development within the school.

The *hothouse* school culture is characterised by both high social control and high social cohesion. According to Hargreaves (2002:51), expectations of work, personal development and team spirits are high. High expectations are placed on teachers and teachers in turn push their pupils to also perform. This type of culture can be observed largely in the more affluent communities where often the expectation is associated with the amount of money spent on education. Leaders of *hothouse* schools tend act in accordance with the pressures that are placed on them and their staff.

The *survivalist* school culture is characterised by low social control and low social cohesion. Both pupils and teachers lack motivation and therefore the culture of teaching and learning is also low. As a result pupils' academic achievements are affected negatively and these schools

are often classified as dysfunctional. Leaders in the *survivalist* school culture tend to ignore their own shortcomings and point at other role-players such as the Department of Education.

The principal as an instructional leader

Proponents of school improvement argue that the role of the principal is key in ensuring that there is effective teaching and learning in a school. The use of terms such as 'instructional leadership' and 'distributed leadership' have characterised the debate about education reform. Leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning (Leithwood et al, 2010: 9).

It is therefore no surprise that the notion of principal as an instructional leader has gained momentum in recent years. As a starting point for my discussion of the role of the principal as an instructional leader, I begin by examining the concept of instructional leadership. Later I examine the concept of distributed leadership as a facet of principalship.

Leithwood et al (1999) cited in Harris et al (2003: 58) define instructional leadership as an approach that puts the processes of teaching and learning at the centre with the intention of influencing student achievement. Once again, it is important to point out that schools are organisations which I discussed earlier in this chapter. In an organisation, someone has to be accountable for either the success or failure to achieve what the organisation is set out to do. In a school setting, the principal has the overall responsibility and is accountable for the students' achievements.

There are many models that have been presented by researchers in the field of instructional leadership. All of the research models specify particular leadership practices and provide evidence of the impact of these practices on both organisations and students. However, one model has stood out and received attention of many researchers in recent years. It is a model that is put forward by Hallinger (2005). His model consists of three sets of leadership dimensions namely defining the *school's mission*, *managing the instructional programme* and *promoting a positive learning climate.* Within each of the dimensions, Hallinger (2005) suggests ten specific leadership practices. His view of school leadership is endorsed by the

National College for School Leadership (2006) who argue that building compelling visions of the organisation's future is a fundamental task of school leaders. Murphy (1999) cited in the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) proposes that the profession should adopt school improvement as its centre of gravity. This approach suggests that school leaders need to have sufficient knowledge of the "learning process and of the conditions under which students learn in the school setting…it emphasises the role of the head as a knowledge manager with respect to the core business of the school, namely teaching and learning" (NCSL, 2002).

According to Hallinger and Heck (1998), the principal's role is to inculcate a strong culture of collaboration which attends to instructional problems, maximises resources and ensures that there are continuous staff development activities, which are for the primary goal of teaching and learning with the aim of improving student performance. Hallinger (2005), maintains that the school principal has always been expected to perform a variety of roles. Some of the identifiable and fundamental roles of the principalship are political, managerial, and instructional roles. Hallinger (2005) argues that the principal effectiveness is attained by finding the correct balance among these roles for a given school context.

In relation to *defining the school's mission*, 'framing the school's goals and communicating the school's goals' is an important dimension of the principal's role. According to Hallinger (2005), this dimension concerns the principal's role in determining the central purposes of the school. The dimension also focuses on the principal's role in working with staff to ensure that the school has clear, measurable, time-based goals focused on the academic progress of students. He argues further that 'it is also the principal's responsibility to communicate these goals so they are widely known and supported throughout the school community'.

Managing the instructional programme of the school is considered as one of the important if not the most important functions of the principal. Hallinger (2005) argues that managing the instructional programme involves focussing on the co-ordination and control of instruction and curriculum. He maintains that this dimension incorporates three leadership (or what might be termed management) functions namely "supervising and evaluating instruction, co-ordinating the curriculum, and monitoring student progress". This dimension requires the principal to be deeply engaged in stimulating, supervising, and monitoring teaching and learning in the school. Obviously, these functions demand that the principal has expertise in teaching and learning, as

well as a commitment to the school's improvement. It is this dimension that requires the principal to become "hip-deep" in the school's instructional programme (Marshall, 1996).

Regarding the third and final dimension: *promoting a positive learning climate*, Hallinger (2005) argues that promoting a positive school climate includes several functions namely to protect instructional time, promote professional development, maintain high visibility (which is commonly as management by walking around), provide incentives for teachers, developing high expectations and standards, and provide incentives for learning. According to Hallinger (2005), this dimension is broader in scope and purpose than the other two. It conforms to the notion that effective schools create an "academic press" through the development of high standards and expectations for students and teachers. Instructionally effective schools develop a culture of continuous improvement in which rewards are aligned with purposes and practices (Hallinger & Murphy, 1986). This view is supported by Mortimore (1993) who argues that the principal must model values and practices that create a climate and support the continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Distributed leadership as a facet of the principalship

The nature of school leadership has changed dramatically in recent years to include a number of responsibilities which were previously not part of the head's role. According to a study conducted by the then named National College for School Leadership (NCSL, 2005), the school leaders' responsibilities have increased tremendously to include:

> *"instructional leadership for narrowing the achievement gaps between demographic groups, human resources leadership for teachers and staff; community leadership for developing and sustaining a collective vision for the school and maintaining a positive organisational culture and climate; resource leadership for strategic management and leveraging of fiscal, physical, technological, and community resources, including the use of data to guide decision making; governance, administration, and policy leadership for working with governing boards; navigating local and state politics; understanding, applying, and shaping policy; and change leadership for identifying gaps between current and desired outcomes, analysing underlying problems and challenges, navigating and balancing competing interests, strategizing, and ultimately implementing appropriate changes." (NCSL, 2005: 1 and 2).*

The NCSL (2005) further argues that the context of school leadership has changed. Norton (2005) cited in the NCSL, argues that in the information age, school systems have grown complex, unpredictable, unstable, and uncertain. All these changes add to the complexity of the principalship. According to Bolden (2007), the concept of distributed leadership has been seen as an alternative where the "influence of people at all levels is recognised as integral to the overall direction and functioning of the organisation" (2007: 2).

According to Bennett et al (2003: 3) cited in Bolden (2007: 252), distributed leadership is not something done by an individual to others, or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organisation. Distributed leadership is a group activity that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action.

Spillane argues that distributed leadership "puts leadership practice centre stage" (2006: 25). He states that there is a shift in focus from the traits and characteristics of leaders to the shared activities and functions of leadership. His view is supported by the NCSL (2005) which argues that leadership occurs through many individuals across the organisation. It further states that distributed leadership acknowledges the complexity of the organisation; the diversity, maturity, and interdependence of the participants within it; and the deep cultural values of democratic governance.

Bennett et al (2003) cited in Bolden (2007) suggest that distributed leadership is based on three main premises: leadership is an emergent property of a group or network of interacting individuals; there is openness to the boundaries of leadership and that varieties of expertise are distributed across the many, not the few. Taking this view and applying it to education, one might consider the "role played by teachers, pupils, and the role of parents, governors and the local community in school leadership" (Bolden, 2007: 4). Therefore the principal is not the only leader in the school. Whilst he/she has to co-ordinate the roles played by the different stakeholders, the leadership of the school does not lie solely with him/her. The idea of leadership that is vested in one person alone is therefore not associated with the practice of distributed leadership. MacBeath (2005) argues however that distributed leadership is premised on trust, which implies a mutual acceptance of one another's leadership potential. Bolden asserts that distributed leadership "requires formal leaders to let go some of their control and authority, and favours consultation and consensus over command and control" (2007: 6).

According to Harris (2001: 482), whilst school principals have the ultimate responsibility of ensuring the prevalence of the right culture, they cannot achieve that in isolation and without the input of their subordinates. This view concurs with Hopkins' view (2003) in Harris et al (2003: 55) where he argues that it will be too ambitious to expect the principal to do everything all by himself. Mbokazi (2013) argues that the role of the principal in a school is to set the climate and ensure that there is a shared vision among all members of the school community.

In an organisation where the locus of leadership is devolved and dispersed throughout a structure of shared decision-making, Leithwood and Jantzi (2000) suggest that relationships take on a greater importance than roles. Gronn (2002) concurs with this view and states that "interpersonal synergies are critical in developing mutual understandings and strong group norms, where participants intentionally share, overlap, or blur their roles; and engage in spontaneous collaborations". According to Bolden, the challenge is whether or not organisations and the holders of power are flexible enough to enable distributed leadership to become practice in their organisations (2007: 7).

The notion of the principal as Chief Executive Officer

In order to discuss the notion of the principal as a Chief Executive Officer (CEO), I begin with a definition of the term "chief executive officer" and then proceed with an examination of the role and responsibilities of chief executive officers. Finally, I conclude with an exploration of the leadership paradigm shift i.e. why business principles are being applied to education.

> *"The Chief Executive Officer is the highest ranking executive in a company whose main responsibilities include developing and implementing high-level strategies, making major corporate decisions, managing the overall operations and resources of a company, and acting as the main point of communication between the board of directors and the corporate operations. The CEO will often have a position on the board, and in some cases is even the chair"* (http://investopedia.com/terms/c/ceo.asp).

Another online source (2010) had the following information regarding the CEO:

> *"A CEO does only three things. 1. Sets the overall vision and strategy of the company and communicates it to stakeholders. 2. Recruits, hires, and retains the very best talent for the company. 3. Makes sure there is always enough cash in the bank. And delegates everything"* (http://b3global.com/beta14/category/small-business/page/209).

These definitions are both relevant for the discussion on the notion of principal as CEO. The first definition suggests that the CEO does not manage every aspect of the company and therefore delegating certain responsibilities to other members within the company is seen as an essential practice of a CEO. Therefore, this speaks directly to the practice of distributed leadership which I discussed earlier in this chapter. According to Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998), the CEO's job is like no other in the organisation, as they are "ultimately responsible for every decision and action of every member of the company, including those decisions and actions of which they are not aware". (1998: 117).

The second definition focuses on three specific areas of the CEO's responsibilities. Setting the overall vision and strategy is an important task of the CEO's job description. However, the CEO alone does not own the vision. It may belong to him/ her initially but through his/her leadership, others in the company can be made to believe that they also own the vision. Kouzes and Posner (2008) refer to this as the ability "to enlist others in a common vision" (2008: 2). This view is supported by earlier studies such as that of Bennis and Nanus (1995) who argue that there is a need for the CEO's visionary process to include all stakeholders within the organisation. They also argue that "to truly inspire and motivate excellence and achievement in organisations, leaders must find the right vision" (Bennis and Nanus, 1992).

According to Kouzes and Posner (2008), people will follow the leader willingly if he/she is "honest, forward-looking, inspiring and competent" (2008: 3). They argue that a leader cannot "model the way without being honest nor can he/she inspire a shared vision without being forward-looking" (2008: 3). They emphasise competence because they believe it "allows the leader to challenge the process and enable others to act" (2008: 3).

Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998) argue that CEOs do not simply adopt the leadership approach that suits their personalities but instead adopt the approach that will best meet the needs of the organisation and the business situation at hand" (Harvard Business Review on Leadership, 1998: 118). They recommend five leadership approaches for all CEOs. The first approach is the *strategy approach*. They argue that CEOs who this particular approach believe that their most important job is to create, test, and design the implementation of long-term strategy extending in some cases into the distant future. Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998) maintain that CEOs who adopt a strategy approach tend to "devote approximately 80 per cent of their time

to matters that are external to the organisation's operations e.g. customers, competitors, technological advances, and market trends" (1998: 118). Farkas and Wetlaufer argue such CEOs value employees to whom they can delegate the day-to-day operation of their organisations and those who possess finely tuned analytical and planning skills.

The second approach is the *human-assets approach*. According to Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998), human-assets CEOs believe strongly that strategy formulation belongs closely to the markets, in the business units. These CEOs consider their primary role in the organisation to be that of imparting certain values, behaviours, and attitudes by closely managing the growth and development of individuals. They spend a great deal of time on personnel related activities such as recruiting, performance reviews, and career mapping. Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998) argue that these CEOs main focus is to "create a universe of satellite CEOs – people at every level of the organisation who can act and make decisions as the CEO would" (1998: 119).

The third CEO approach is what Farkas and Wetlaufer (1998) call *'the expertise approach'*. They argue that these CEOs see their role as mostly "selecting and disseminating within an organisation an area of expertise that will be a source of competitive advantage" (1998: 119). The authors argue that such CEOs spend a considerable amount of time studying new technological research, analysing competitors' products, meeting with engineers and consumers. These CEOs also tend to recruit people who have relevant expertise, but they also look for people who are flexible, less bias and demonstrate the willingness to be immersed in the expertise.

Another approach that some CEOs tend to use is the *'box approach'*. The authors maintain that CEOs of the box approach believe they can "add the most value in their organisations by creating, communicating, and monitoring an explicit set of controls e.g. financial, cultural, or both – that ensure uniform, predictable behaviours and experiences for customers and employees" (1998: 120). The final approach that some CEOs prefer to adopt is the *change approach*. These CEOs, the authors maintain, see themselves as the change agents and they focus "not on the specific point of arrival for their organisation but on the process of getting there" (1998: 121). These CEOs are less concerned about systems and procedures and spend 75 per cent of their time on communication in an attempt to motivate members of their organisation to embrace the gestalt of change. The authors further argue that these CEOs are

less worried seniority or chain of command. Instead they embrace on passion, energy and an openness to new ideas that can take their organisation to the next level.

Dubin (1991), states that the concept of the principal as a CEO was borne out of education reform in the United States. The chief aim of this paradigm shift was to bring about effectiveness in an education system where change was constant and schools were faced with the challenge of improving and advancing a multicultural and ethnically diverse society. As a major part of the reform agenda, strong recommendations were made to give greater responsibility and accountability to school principals and teachers instead of relying on State regulation. According to Dubin (1991), the role of the principal expanded to include plans on implementation intervention programme and monitoring student improvement, building public confidence in the school, and ensuring accountability. It was precisely this change in the principalship that gave rise to the notion of principal as CEO. The principal was no longer just the instructional leader of the school but became "a professional manager for the nation's school leaders" (1991: 38). It is important to note that these reform efforts did not include independent schools.

Dubin (1991) interviewed four CEOs from different companies to ascertain their perception of the role of the principal. He argues that the feedback was interesting and useful as it gives a direct bearing on the role of the principal. One of CEOs interviewed gave this response to Dr Dubin, "I see the principal as a catalyst for change." (1991: 71). Change happens at different levels of the organisation and it requires facilitation, but most important it calls for leadership at every turn. According to Dubin (1991), another CEO regards the principal as a creator of the vision, which must be articulated down into the organisation. The CEO is "primarily responsible for looking at where the organisation wants to be in the future, articulating that vision, getting everybody to agree, and helping the organisation create that vision" (1991: 101). The CEO also suggested that it is important for a principal to have had classroom experience.

In a survey conducted by the Department of Education in the United States, some principals welcomed the changes, but others felt the CEO model is not applicable to school principals because CEO's have much more control. "If principals are to be held accountable, then they must also be given full authority" Tschumy (2005: 2). The principal is expected to "have a strategic/fiscal skill set that is similar to the CEO of a small multimillion dollar corporation,

the pedagogical appreciation of a principal, the community building abilities of a superintendent, and the fundraising and board savviness of a successful executive director of a non-profit" (Phillip Peck, Head of School: Holderness School in Plymouth, NH).

Conclusion of the Literature Review

This chapter has described a number of areas that underpin principalship as revealed by the literature review. The complexities that are associated with the role of the principal have also been examined. The chapter began by exploring theories associated with organisations and particular focus was given to how organisations are structured and this was supported with relevant illustrations. The culture of organisations and the extent to which it can influence organisations was discussed in detail. In addition, the notion of the principal as an instructional leader in a school was examined. To successfully lead the school, it was suggested that the principal needs to distribute leadership as he/she cannot do the task of leading the school alone.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology that was used in examining executive leadership in education. A qualitative research methodology was considered the most appropriate for the focus of the study and utilised grounded theory approach. According to Dimmock and Lam (2012), grounded theory is well suited to research in educational leadership because of 'its ability to offer a theory of explanation of complex interactive situations involving human beings in their natural or organisational settings (2012: 189)'. A case study was selected in the Gauteng Province of South Africa and the experiences of eight participants were investigated. The participants comprised two Rectors (the current Rector of the school and his predecessor), five designated principals of schools within a school and a business manager. The research instruments that were used included questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were structured with the purpose of eliciting as much data from each participant as possible. The interviews were however semi-structured with probing questions. This done to make the participants to feel comfortable which in turn would encourage them to engage positively in the discussion.

The research questions were concerned with answering the "what" and "how" questions. According to Neuman (1997), such questions can be best answered through a qualitative study. The research topic, *an examination of executive leadership in education: a case study one independent school in South Africa*, required the participants to describe 'what' their roles are and 'how' these differ. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that the main purpose of qualitative research is to have 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" (2006: 315).

MacMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that a case study is concerned with the "selection of case(s) with the purpose of understanding the phenomenon at hand, the number of sites or participants is not an important issue" (2006: 316). This view is supported by Merriam (2001) who argues that "a qualitative case study is an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social event" (2001: 27). The criterion used for the choice of the case study was purposeful sampling because the executive leadership structure in the school is well established and has been applied since 1998. The rationale therefore was that the case school will reveal better the 'what' and 'how' of the study.

Sampling

The sample was taken from one case school and the participants included two Rectors (previous and current Rector), five designated principals of 'separate' schools within a school and the business manager. The Rector is the title used for the executive head in the selected school and he was chosen because the study depended heavily on his practices, especially the role that he plays within the overall leadership structure of the organisation. His perceptions of his role were useful and revealed the 'what' and 'how' of the study. The 'what' of the study was concerned with the role that the Rector plays in leading and managing the school and the 'how' was focused on the differences between the role of the Rector and the roles of the designated principals of the five 'separate' schools within this one school. The reason for having both the present and former Rectors participate in the study was not planned but happened as a result of the change which took place during the study. The previous Rector moved on and the new Rector took over and so both participated. Their perceptions about the role they play proved to be invaluable in addressing the research questions.

The participation of the five designated principals was also useful since the research intended to establish 'what' role they play in the leadership of the organisation and 'how' their role differed from that of the Rector. The main focus was given to the role they play in the leadership and management of teaching and learning – the core business of schools. The probing questions during the follow up interviews included the aspects of instructional and distributed leadership. Equally important was their perception of the role of the Rector within the overall executive leadership structure of the school.

The decision to include the business manager in the research was an important one. The business manager is an accountant and, through his participation, the research anticipated to establish 'what' role he plays within the overall executive leadership structure and 'how' his role differs from that of the rector.

Research Instruments

The research instruments that were used for data collection were questionnaires and interviews. The nature of the questionnaires was such that all the questions had been carefully structured for to ensure that the participants had specific to respond to in the questionnaires. According to Lo (2004), questionnaires allow participants to respond to the questions when it is convenient and they also give the participants reasonable time to think carefully before responding. All the questionnaires were prepared beforehand and delivered to the participants. The questionnaires asked for certain biographical data which included qualifications, years of work and leadership experience, job title and years of service at the school. The questionnaires were open-ended, allowing the participants to respond without restricting themselves to either 'yes' or 'no' answers.

The probing, follow up interviews were crucial in investigating further and seeking clarity on issues that were highlighted in the questionnaires. According to Schmidtt et al (1991), interviews are conversations with a purpose. They are used to gain insights regarding how individuals attend to, perceive, and deal with phenomenon of interest. Schmidtt et al (1991) further argue that "interviews are dynamic" (1991: 139). I conducted several interviews with the all the participants and these were done in a non-threatening manner and lasted between one hour and two hours. Responses were captured using a note taking technique. The purpose of the probing, follow up interviews was also to enhance reliability i.e. to establish consistency of the data (Bush, 2012).

Data Presentation and Analysis

Data analysis requires the conversion of raw data into classified or coded answers for the purposes of rational analysis. MacMillan and Schumacher (2006) argue that "when analysing data, it is important to organise data because it would otherwise be difficult to analyse it" (2006: 367). Neuman (1997) concurs with this view and asserts that "a qualitative researcher analyses data by organising it into categories on the basis of themes, concepts, or similar features" (1997: 421).

The raw data obtained from the questionnaires were of a qualitative nature and needed to be examined through the lens of grounded theory. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), "grounded theory has been widely adopted in many fields of social research including education" (2005: 140). Schwandt (2001) argues that this grounded, posteriori inductive, context-sensitive scheme consists of the following:

> *"a systematic set of procedures that emphasise the generation of theory from data; a process that develops theory from the conceptualisation of data, rather than the actual data. Unlike descriptive research, Grounded theory highlights the generating of concepts that are abstract of context. It sees the researcher engaging with the authentic responses and resulting textual treasures of research participants. Following a pattern of analysis they work with the data in ways that generate codes, concepts, categories and theories; comparing, contrasting, aggregating, ordering, establishing links and relationships, and lastly speculating on tentative explanations" (2001: 26).*

When the questionnaires were received, they were screened for completeness. All the biographical information had been recorded and questions had been answered sufficiently and in detail. On the basis of this, I was able to use the questionnaires in the data presentation and analysis. I used themes that were directly linked to the research question and sub-questions to analyse the data. The analysis of data required me to make sense of the written responses and reason with the findings based on the evidence in the questionnaires and notes taken during the follow up interviews.

Validity and Reliability

According to Eisner (1991), a good qualitative study can help us "understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing" (1991: 58). Patton (2001) concurs with this view and states that validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analysing results and judging the quality of the study. The concept of validity is described by a wide range of terms in qualitative studies. This concept is not a single, fixed or universal concept, but "rather a contingent construct, inescapably grounded in the processes and intentions of particular research methodologies and projects" (Winter, 2000: 1).

Kirk and Miller (1986) define reliability as "the extent to which a measured procedure yields the same answers however and whenever it is carried out" (1986: 19). However, the concept of reliability is regarded by some researchers as superfluous. They argue that the term in fact belongs in quantitative research. For example, Kleven (1995), claims that reliability has only relevance in qualitative studies because "it is a necessary precondition for attaining validity" (1995: 13). Bush (2012), argues that reliability in survey research requires standard instruments such as questionnaires and structured interviews, and meticulous instrument design (2012: 77)'. He maintains that 'structured interviews and questionnaires provide potential for reliability in case study research (2012: 78)'.

Maxwell (1992) argues that validity and reliability are important elements which every researcher should take into consideration. He warns however that in qualitative studies, it is difficult to address this subject in its totality. Patton (2001) suggests generalisability as one of the criteria for quality case studies depending on the case selected and studied. He argues that triangulation methods are used in qualitative research. According to Bush, in Briggs et al (2012), triangulation means 'comparing many sources of evidence in order to determine the accuracy of information or phenomena (2012: 84)'. Triangulation is typically a strategy (test) for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. Patton (2001) concurs with this view and states that the use of triangulation "strengthens a study by combining several kinds of methods" (2001: 247).

In this research, triangulation was used in that the Rector, the five designated principals of 'separate' schools within one school and the business manager were all interviewed. According to Merriam (1998) triangulation does not guarantee validity but only offers an alternative to enhance it.

Ethical Considerations

According to McMillan & Schumacher (2006), qualitative research is often "personally intrusive and the researcher has to take into account the necessary ethical considerations" (2006: 333). The authors maintain that "the setting and participants should not be identifiable in print". Merriam (1998: 198) argues that if qualitative research is conducted in an ethical manner, validity and reliability are also enhanced. This research took into account all ethical considerations, however, the case school is a unique example in this country and may therefore be easily identifiable.

Permission to collect data was sought and granted, in the form of an email, from the selected school. The permission was accompanied by the school's policy on educational surveys and research giving clarity and guidelines to the researcher. In addition, I submitted the research proposal to the Ethics Committee of the University of the Witwatersrand and an 'Ethics Clearance' letter was issued to me, thereby granting permission for the research to be conducted.

At the research sites, I informed all the participants of the nature and purpose of the study and the participants signed consent. I explained every clause of the consent form and participants agreed to participate in the study. Data was collected and I took the necessary steps to minimise identification of the case study school as well as the anonymity of the participants. I also ensured that confidentiality in regard to raw data was adhered to during and after the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

This chapter presents the research data and further provides analysis of the findings. Data analysis was done using grounded theory. According to Dimmock and Lam (2012), grounded theory is well suited to research in educational leadership because of 'its ability to offer a theory of explanation of complex interactive situations involving human beings in their natural or organisational settings (2012: 189)'. The research instruments included questionnaires and interviews. The nature of the questionnaires was carefully structured to ensure that the participants had specific questions to respond to during the study. The chapter begins with a presentation of the school profile, organisational structure of the school and profile of the participants. The next part of the chapter deals with the culture of the school which is examined using Handy's research (1984) on organisational culture as described by Hargreaves (2002).

The research questions were concerned with answering the "what" and the "how" questions. Data was analysed with special focus on the following: the role of the Rector, role of the designated principals and the role of the business manager. It is also in this chapter that the notion of the principal as an instructional leader is examined. The chapter also presents the application of the concept of distributed leadership as observed in the case study school. The chapter concludes with an examination of two main themes that emerged during the study namely relationships and synergy.

Presentation of Data

School profile

The school is situated in the Gauteng Province of South Africa and it employs 410 permanent staff, comprising 300 teachers and 110 non-teaching personnel. The school has an overall enrolment of 2 595 pupils spread across five schools on a subdivided 105 hectare campus. There are 1 390 boys and 1205 girls learning alongside each other with some of the facilities shared between the five schools.

The school is situated in an affluent suburban area and is easily accessible with four entrances which are staffed by security guards. The infrastructure of the school is excellent with all main services. There is also housing facilities on campus for senior members of staff including the Rector, and the heads and deputy heads of the schools. The term 'head' is commonly used in the South African context to refer to a principal of an independent school. However, for the purposes of this research, the term 'principal' was used instead.

Pupils in the school are drawn mainly from surrounding areas of the city, but there is a very small percentage who come from other parts of South Africa and from the SADC countries of Botswana, Swaziland and Zambia. SADC is the acronym for Southern African Development Community, a regional group of African countries with a common goal of strengthening economic development and co-operation between member states.

The school has boarding facilities which currently accommodate about 80 boys, both from areas around the city and those who come from far from the school. Community outreach is a strong feature in the school's education philosophy. The key element of the outreach programme is to improve the standard of education in disadvantaged schools. Teachers and pupils from the disadvantaged communities are given access to better facilities for teaching and learning with the focus being the development of Mathematics and Science skills in these poorer communities. The school has also recently started a 'bush school' in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Limpopo Province is one of the major locations of South Africa's biodiversity. The 'bush school' serves as a residential outdoor education facility for the school. The main purpose of the 'bush school' is to provide pupils with practical experience and a

deeper understanding of the seven Rs of outdoor education as laid down by the school. The seven Rs include: rite of passage, relationships, reach, rootedness, risk, responsibility and reflection. Embedded in the school's education philosophy is the belief that every child has unique characteristics, interests, abilities and learning needs and therefore the school makes efforts to diversify its educational programme to suit the individual needs of its pupils.

The school's profile reflects a large entity of schools bound by the stated common purpose of educating happy and fulfilled individuals who value the spirit of *ubuntu*. *Ubuntu* is about human behaviours and one's contribution to one's community. It originates in the Nguni African languages and culture. During the presidency of Nelson Mandela (1994 to 1999), *ubuntu* became a widely used term in South African society because the country was 'rebuilding' itself after the ills of apartheid. Ubuntu is the essence of our constitutional values. Today the term *ubuntu* is used by many world leaders, non-governmental organisations and ordinary people to promote the values of humanity across the globe.

Organisational structure of the school

In terms of its governance, leadership and management systems and processes, as an independent school it applies a combination of bureaucratic, hierarchical and collegial structures. The following illustration is a visual image of the organisational structure of the school.

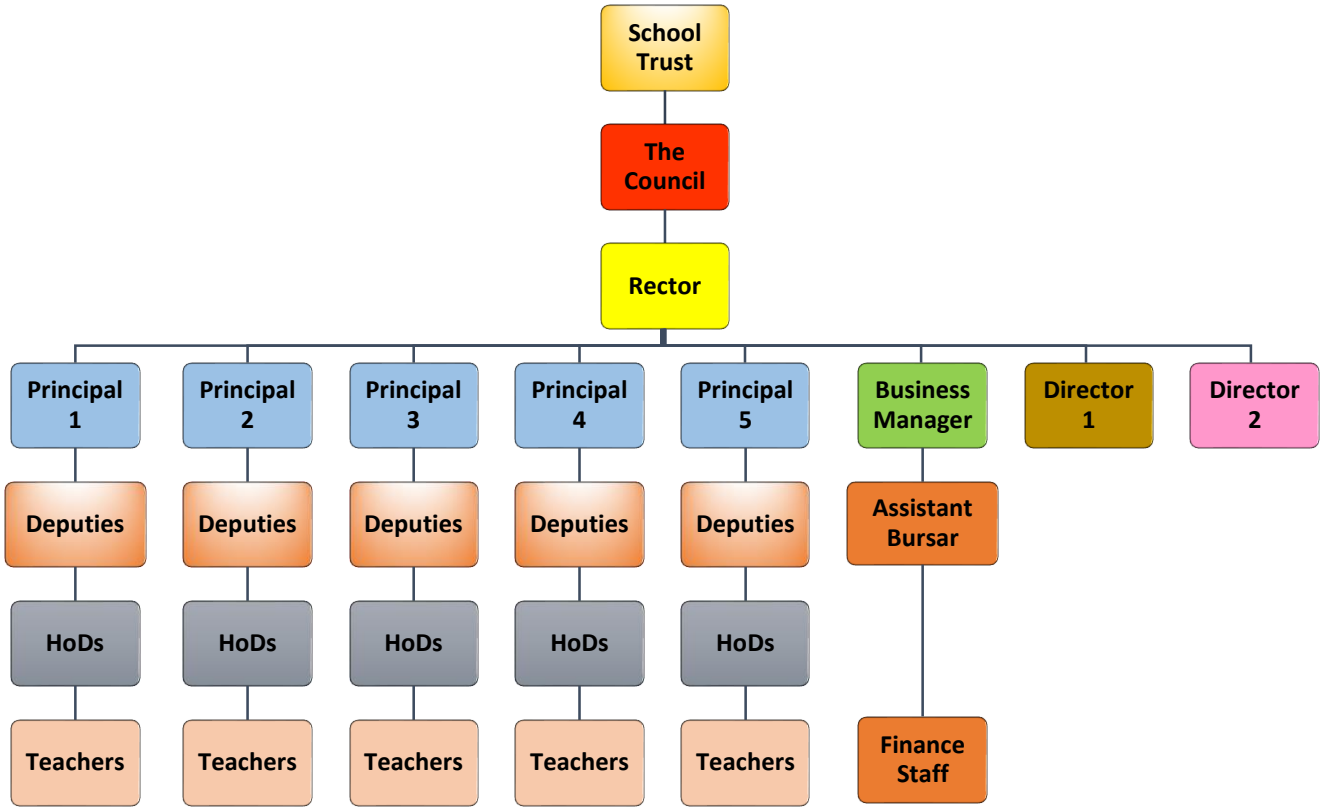

Figure 3: Organogram showing the organisational structure of the school

The school is governed by a Council whose members are not employees of the school. Members of the Council are drawn from various sections of society such as business, law, human resources, and other important bodies including the church to which the school is affiliated. The Rector and the five principals serve as ex-officio members of the Council. Until recently, the school followed a co-ordinate model whereby boys and girls were educated on the same campus in four single sex schools and one co-educational school for young children attending grades 0 to 2. The school has since eliminated the word 'co-ordinate' from its vocabulary and replaced it with the term 'synergy' which is discussed in detail later on in this chapter.

The Rector and his campus executive team, as reflected in the illustration above, are responsible for implementing the strategic vision and managing the day-to-day business of the school. Each of the five schools has its own executive comprising the designated principal, his/her deputies and heads of department. The designated principals and business manager report to the Rector who serves as the executive leader in the school. The Council appoints the Rector and the Rector reports to the Council. The Rector in consultation with the Council appoints the designated principals of the five schools.

Participants' profiles

The participants in the research involved members of the school's executive team which consists of the Rector, five principals of the five schools, and the business manager. The previous Rector of the school also participated in the initial data collection and has therefore been included as a participant in the research. The biographical information of the participants is presented in the table below.

Participant	Highest Qualification	No. of years in education	No. of years as a teacher	No. of years in the current school	No. of years in the current position	No. of years in a leadership position
Rector 1	MA.Ed	22	8	8	8	14
Rector 2	PhD	26	6	2	2	13
Principal 1	BA (Hons)	30	12	15	9	25
Principal 2	BA (Hons)	35	20	19	15	19
Principal 3	BA (Hons)	27	12	15	15	25
Principal 4	M.Ed	25	10	15	15	19
Principal 5	B.Ed (Hons)	38	4	16	15	30
Business Manager	CA (SA)	15	0	15	15	18

Table 1: Showing biographic information of the participants

Culture of the school

The school has an established reputation with a long history of success in education. Many of its former pupils are recognised entrepreneurs or experts in different professions in and outside of South Africa. In the history of its existence, which by comparison with other established schools is still relatively young, the school has 'produced' approximately fifty-four principals. This achievement reflects positively on the school's commitment to the idea of growing people. During a follow up interview, Principal 1 remarked:

At conferences, we used to gather all the Heads (those from our schools and the ones who came through our schools) for a photo. Eventually the numbers got too large that we don't do it any longer.

According to Hargreaves (2002), the fundamental purpose of a school is to achieve its core business namely teaching and learning. This requires teamwork, co-ordination and the management of harmonious relations amongst members of the organisation.

The school's admission policy promotes inclusivity at all levels and I did not observe any form of discrimination other than the legitimate forms of discrimination such the girls' schools admit girls only and the boys' schools admit boys only. The junior prep (grades 0 to 3) is a co-educational entity whilst the other four entities are single sex schools on one campus. It also became clear that the school works very hard to enable pupils to reach where they need to be by the time they leave at the end of their schooling career. There is clear commitment by the school to foster a strong culture of community coupled with a sense of belonging. The three main categories that are used to allocate points during admission are siblings, alumni and transformation.

I observed that the school exemplified two typologies of school cultures namely *formal* and *welfarist* cultures. These typologies of school culture are described in detail in chapter two of this research. Academic success is a major component of the school's culture because matric results and other assessments throughout the school are reviewed to determine the level of success and also for intervention purposes. For example, in the 2014 academic year, the school obtained 228 Bachelor degree passes, out of 237 candidates, with a total of 513 subject distinctions. All of the candidates passed, with only nine obtaining Diploma passes. A Diploma pass means that a candidate obtained a pass but this does not qualify him/her for entry into university. Matric results are an important tool to measure academic success in many schools in South Africa. Matric, also known as grade twelve, is the final year in the South African schooling system. In South Africa, there are two types of examinations at matric level. One is set and administered by the Department of Basic Education and the other by the Independent Examination Board which is commonly known as the IEB. Most independent schools including the case study school write the IEB assessments. These assessments enjoy popularity among independent schools because they are perceived to be of a higher standard in that they use rigorous methods to test subject content and are mostly skills driven.

According to Hargreaves (2002), a *welfarist* school culture depicts a cosy, caring and relaxed atmosphere. Schools that have this type of culture tend to put less pressure on academic results and focus more on the wellbeing of individual pupils and their development within the school. This form of school culture was illustrated, at first, in the school's statement of purpose, with the words 'happy fulfilment' inscribed on the school's foundation stone. The activities and interactions between people indicated that these values are lived and they form part of the school's culture. Principals of the five schools gave interesting anecdotes of how life is centred not only on academic success but also on the wellbeing of individual pupils. For example, during a follow up interviews, Principal 1 said:

We believe that each boy deserves a second chance. If a boy tests positive for performance enhancing drugs, we do not expel him. Instead, we give him an opportunity to undergo rehabilitation in the school in the hope that he will learn from his mistakes. This of course doesn't mean that the boy's actions do not get punished. He is not allowed to participate in sport whilst in rehabilitation. There are schools that simply expel boys for this type of conduct.

From this comment, we can see that part of the school's culture is to develop the whole person. Allowing pupils to make mistakes is an important paradigm of holistic education. We live in a world that is not perfect and for pupils to be educated in an environment that demonstrates such understanding and tolerance can be seen as a positive development on the part of the school.

Analysis of Data

The analysis of data was organised according to specific themes which formed the basis of the research. These themes included the role of the Rector, the role of the designated principals and the role of the business manager. It was important to analyse data using these themes because the focus of the research was to establish the role of an executive head in leading and managing a school. This role had to be examined in relation to the other role namely, the role of the designated principals and the role of the business manager. Consequently other themes emerged during the research and these have been analysed under section 4.4 of this chapter.

On the question of the role of the Rector

The participants were asked for their understanding of the role of the Rector; both in the questionnaires and during the follow up interviews. The responses yielded three important strands of understanding of the role of the Rector which I have extrapolated below.

The Rector as a leader of strategy and vision

Principal 5 said:

The Rector is the custodian of the school. He represents the school's Exco on the Council and has fiduciary responsibility. He implements the strategy and vision and upholds the academic standards and values of the school and liaises with all five principals and ensures that all function and act within the parameters of the school's strategic intent.

This statement indicates that the Rector's key role is strategic and visionary. This view is supported by local and international research which shows that vision is an important component of leadership. In his research of successful South African township schools, Mbokazi (2015) states that strategy is an important dimension of successful school leadership. Harman, cited in Sutcliffe (2013: 9), supports this view and argues that in order to succeed, school leaders must have a clear vision of where they want to take their organisation. He maintains that 'developing a vision and being able to articulate it is crucial because everyone involved in the school – pupils, staff and parents – need to know where they are going' (Sutcliffe 2013: 9-10). This statement speaks directly to the notion of a shared vision. Sutcliffe (2013) argues that having conviction and being able to articulate the vision are simply not enough. He maintains that sharing the vision creates better conditions of turning the vision into reality.

Principal 5 also said that the Rector's role includes upholding the academic standards and values of the school. In practice however this responsibility was delegated to the designated principals. The ability to delegate responsibility is seen as important aspect of executive leadership. According to Smith, cited in Sutcliffe (2013), it is important for a school leader 'to create conditions in which others can take the day-to-day control of teaching and learning' (2013: 54). This statement implies that a leader needs to demonstrate trust in others and a belief that they will carry out the responsibility in the best way possible. Principal 5 stated further

that the Rector does not try to interfere with the work of the designated principals and his should be seen as a strength which indicates a positive leadership style by the Rector.

Still on the question of the role of the Rector, similarly the business manager said:

The Rector is the facilitator between all role-players/stakeholders. He is the public face of the institution, a leader and a visionary for the school. He ensures optimum performance from the executive team in order to achieve strategy. He sets strategy for the school with Council and the executive team.

The business manager's statement was an important finding for the research. Whilst supporting the views and perceptions of the other participants, it offered a different voice to the research. It was this different voice that brought unity and clarity to the understanding of the role of the Rector. It was also important for the study to capture the Rector's own perception of his role.

During an interview with him, the Rector said:

I look at the school from a different perspective. I am like a giraffe overlooking the savannah. The savannah is the school. I have to constantly think about and ask myself what kind of future we want for our current children's children.

If one takes literally the image of the giraffe given in the statement above, one can't help but think of the agility of the giraffe's neck. The giraffe is able to turn its head in all directions and see all there is to see in the savannah, and most of the time it is also able to see where other creatures are not able to see. Its vision is enhanced and this is an apt image for someone whose role is strategic leadership in a school.

Principal 3 said:

The Rector is officially the CEO of the School.

This was the first time in the research that the Rector had been referred to as a CEO. During the follow up interview, this statement was probed further to elicit what the principal meant. The response given was very detailed and included an explanation of the history behind the creation of the position of the Rector.

Principal 3 said:

The Council [which is the governing body of the school] had built three new schools on the same campus over a period of five years. Two of the new schools were for girls only and the other was a co-educational junior primary school. They [the Council] realised that the complexity of the school needed a Rector. The Rector's role is to ensure that the school is portrayed as one entity but with many parts which are bound together by one vision and one strategy.

According to Sutcliffe (2013), principals of schools are CEO because most of what they job has to do with finance, buildings, grounds, contractors and contracts. He argues that the position of a CEO is almost political. The role involves 'making people comfortable and happy and convincing them that this is the right thing to do' (2013: 54).

Although Principal 3 had referred to the Rector as CEO, he also clarified his position by saying: *I don't believe a bank would employ a headmaster as CEO either.*

The Rector as a leader in policy-making and compliance

Another strand of understanding that emerged from the research, both from the responses in the questionnaires and via notes taken during the follow up interviews, was the perception that the Rector is central to policy decisions in the school. The next set of data analysis examines this perception in detail and seeks to provide further clarity on the role of the Rector.

Principal 4 said:

The Rector oversees equality between schools and is central to policy-making in the school.

In the follow up interview, this statement was probed to elicit further details from the Principal 4. In response, the Principal indicated that it is important that all five schools apply the same policies simply because they are one entity. She emphasised the importance of having one person who can co-ordinate and ensure equality amongst the five schools. The fact that the designated principals represent five 'separate' schools within a school means that the executive of the school is made up of five different interest groups. According to Dawson (1996), the term interest group is used to 'describe a collection of people who believe they share common objectives and viewpoints in work-related matters' (1996: 29). Dawson argues however that not all their work-related objectives and viewpoints will be identical. In the example of the case

study school, the interest groups are varied in that there are those represent the interests of their monastic schools and there are also those who represent the interests of co-education. The interests groups can also be viewed in terms of primary versus high school.

All the participants agreed that the Rector plays an important role in policy-making in the school. The size and complexity of the five schools was emphasised by all the participants.

Principal 4 said:

Schools over the past years have had to deal with new legislation and new HR requirements hence it is crucial that we have the Rector to deal effectively with all the demands.

Once again, the perception that the Rector's role is to serve as a key policy-maker in the school was checked against the job description which amongst other duties that the Rector is responsible for 'establishing and maintaining policies that are appropriate for the effective operation of the school'.

The Rector as the public face of the school

Principal 2 said:

The Rector is the face of the school to the wider community.

The statement was probed further during the follow up interviews and the principal was able to supports this comment with examples. The principal explained that in her role, she interfaces with the parents in her school and not the public. The Rector, on the other hand, serves as the spokesperson for the whole school. He represents the school's brand in the community. Her view was supported by Sutcliffe (2013) who argues that 'successful school leaders are comfortable at dealing with the media and adept at using it to their advantage – they are always willing and eager to communicate and engage with the outside world' (2013: 115). Being the face of the school means that the Rector represents the organisation as a whole. He is the one person who can issue press statements and answer questions from the media regarding matters that relate to any of the five schools. From the point of view of the designated principals, this is a 'nice to have' bearing in mind that dealing with the media is not an easy task.

Principal 5 said:

He is an eloquent speaker and I feel confident that he can represent our school brand well.

This statement resonates with Sutcliffe's viewpoint on being an effective communicator. He argues that very successful school leaders 'are able to create a narrative for their schools and carry people along with them, sometimes through sheer force of personality and frequently they are seen as charismatic or inspirational leaders' (2013: 118).

It was important to check whether there was any mismatch in the understanding of the role of the Rector as described by the designated principals and the business manager when compared the Rector's perception of his role. The previous Rector's responses to both the questionnaire and follow up interview were studied.

In response to the question about his role, Rector 1 said:

I lead the school to achieve its goal of preparing the future citizens/leaders of the country. I am the final point of accountability for what happens at the school.

Rector 1 gave an illustration of the leadership structure of the school, showing where he as the Rector/person accountable overall fits in. He perceived his role as being more strategic, but he also indicated that he was accountable for the academic standards in the whole school. Rector 2 did not participate in the questionnaire and so most of his understanding of his own role was captured in an interview with him in June 2015. He used the word 'synergy' several times during the interview saw synergy and strategy as components of his role. He also emphasised that accountability is a big part of his role. He has a strong academic background which he uses to his advantage to reflect and create new ideas.

On the question of whether the Rector should be an educationalist or not

In the questionnaire, the question was posed about whether it is necessary for the Rector to be an educationalist. The participants could respond with either 'yes' or 'no' answers followed by a brief explanation of their choice. Only one of the participants said 'no' to the question. All the others said 'yes'. The participants were able to qualify their answers.

Principal 5 said:

No. It depends on the needs of the school and the role of the Rector. He does however need to have a sound knowledge of education, but should have an MBA or other experience in running a business model such as ours.

This principal explained that in view of the legislative changes that have taken place over the years, it is necessary for the school to have someone who has a sound knowledge of business and law. The principal emphasised however that the Rector should have a deep passion for education and be willing to learn.

Principal 2 said:

Yes. The environment needs to be understood from both the learning and teaching perspectives. Education principles must guide the business principles and not the other way round.

The principal concurred with the view that the core business of schools is teaching and learning. She drew on 'the lessons' she had learnt during her visit to Finland in 2015.

Principal 2 said:

Finnish education is rated the best in the world and teaching is a sought-after profession with many young high school graduates aspiring to become teachers.

She had Sahlberg's book on her desk entitled, *Finnish Lessons: What Can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?* The used the book as a source of inspiration for herself and her teachers. No doubt it also played a part in strengthening her conviction about the Rector being an educationalist. The other principals and the business manager concurred with Principal 2's viewpoint.

Principal 4 said:

Yes. In order to make effective decisions, the Rector needs to understand the business of teaching and learning. Otherwise, decisions can be made which could save the school money but in actual fact hinder the learning process.

The business manager said:

Yes. The incumbent needs to have a deep understanding of the fabric of education.

The research revealed that the majority of the executive leadership team of the school would prefer the Rector to be an educationalist. The previous Rector, who took part in the study, also offered his views on this question.

Rector 1 said:

The business of schools is teaching and learning. In delivering this service to the 'customers', the CEO needs to know the 'product' which is education.

These perceptions make for an interesting debate on the transferability of business skills into education. They indicate that there is a need for schools to apply business principles, but that education and business cannot be treated in the same way. In general, education principles are driven by long term goals and this can at times take years before the intended outcomes are realised. In the short term, it might make business sense to cut funding for an education improvement project that will take years to yield expected results in a school. However, the same decision might have an adverse impact on pupil achievement in a long term and this will impact education in the particular school. Therefore, the view expressed by Principal 2 that 'education must drive business decisions in a school' is a case in point and must guide business practices in schools.

On the question of the role of the designated principals

The core business of schools is teaching and learning. In an organisation with a complex structure such as in the example of the case school (as illustrated figure 1 above), it is important to examine the role of the designated principals and the extent to which their role differs from that of the Rector.

When the question was asked about the role of the designated principals in the questionnaire, the following answers were received.

Principal 5 said:

I am the custodian of my school, particularly with regards to the academics and professional development of my staff. I report to the Rector and not to the Council.

The response given by this principal indicates that there is a clear distinction between the role of the Rector and the role of the designated principals. It can be elicited from this response that the role of the designated principal is specific to one school within a community of schools. The role involves leadership and management matters that relate to that school. In explaining what she meant being the custodian of her school, Principal 5 emphasised that she is responsible solely for the effective functioning of the junior prep school.

The clarity of roles and reporting lines were an important observation in the structure. Unlike in most independent schools where the principal usually reports directly to the board of governors or board of directors, the designated principals in the case school report to the Rector and not to the Council. This type of reporting lines indicated a point departure from traditional practices of school leadership and management in South Africa and other countries. It also raised a question about the level of autonomy that a principal working in a structure such as this one might actually have. The principals however felt that they were given enough autonomy to run their schools without interference from the Rector. They viewed the Rector as the overall leader of the school and the 'go to' person in times of need.

Principal 2 said:

My role is much more hands on and pertains specifically to the operational matters of my school and its direction within the bigger picture of the organisation as a whole. I am the custodian of the school's values and its strategy.

Her statement was supported by Principal 4 who said:

I am solely responsible for the Girls' Prep whereas the Rector is responsible for the whole School. It is about accountability issues.

Principal 3 concurred with the other principals and said:

I have the fiduciary responsibility for education and the safety of the pupils in my own school. I paint a picture of a compelling vision and have conversations with those who need to help in achieving that vision.

The responses of the principals showed a clear understanding of their role within the organisation. This clearly supports the necessity for detailed and transparent job descriptions to underpin organisational effectiveness as posited by Fidler (1997). It was apparent that the designated principals understood that their work is part of a broader educational vision of the whole school. Their perceptions and understandings were checked against the available job description which revealed no overlaps or clashes with the role of the Rector. There were, however, synergies in terms of being the custodian for the school's values, culture, vision and strategy.

On the question of leadership and management of teaching and learning

Leadership and management of teaching and learning are key aspects of principalship. The principals in the case school were asked to explain the role they play in ensuring that the school achieves its core business.

Principal 1 said:

My responsibility is to ensure that our core business (teaching) is delivered at a good standard, through review and reflection, and to ensure best practice.

When this answer was probed further during the follow up interview, Principal 1 indicated that reviews are an important step in ensuring that the school delivers a good education. Staff reviews are done annually and they involved a number of people including the deputy heads (academic and pastoral), subject heads and colleagues. The principal meets with deputies and heads of subjects to discuss all matters pertaining to academics and pastoral care. The principal also explained that he reads every child's report and makes a comment on each; in this way he felt that he was aware of progress or lack of it in the case of each pupil in the school. One of the pillars of the school's educational philosophy is outdoor education and the principal plays an active role by preparing and presenting aspects of the history curriculum during what the school calls 'bush education'.

Principal 4 said:

I have an excellent understanding of curriculum and the needs of girls and so I ensure that our policies and procedures support this.

It was interesting to note that this principal holds a Master's degree in curriculum design and development and that she had played a key role in curriculum development as a deputy principal at her school prior to her appointment to the current position. She spoke insightfully about curriculum interventions and her belief that each child is unique and teachers need to take this into account when designing lessons for their classes.

Principal 2 said:

I encourage staff development to keep the school at a cutting edge of holistic education. I see myself as a compass, helping staff to know where they are going.

The principal's interface with pupils is minimal but she has a dedicated management team who keep her informed on all issues pertaining to pupils' wellbeing and their education. She also maintains visibility in the school and said that it is during these walkabouts that she is able to pick up on subtle but important issues that require action.

Principal 3 said:

I ensure that all spheres of school life namely the academics, sport, service and leadership are working coherently and in support of the values of the school. My role is to ensure that the right climate exists in the Boys' Prep. I am assisted by the Boys' Prep executive team and they play a very important role in ensuring that our core business is achieved in all of these areas.

The principals have different styles of leadership but all ensure that the core business of their schools is achieved. More importantly, they appeared unified in their vision for the school and this was reflected in the responses that they provided in the questionnaire and during the follow up interviews. Leadership and management of teaching and learning did not appear to be the responsibility of the principals alone. This practice concurs with Woods & Gronn (2009), who argue that 'distributed leadership is a more accurate way of representing patterns of leadership in organisations' (2009: 440).

On the question of instructional leadership

According to Leithwood et al (1999) cited in Harris et al (2003: 58), instructional leadership puts the processes of teaching and learning at the centre of the organisation with the intention of influencing student achievement. This view is supported by Bush and Glover (cited in

Mbokazi, 2015) who suggest that 'a principal focused strongly on managing teaching and learning would undertake activities such as ensuring availability of appropriate teaching and learning support materials; ensuring that lessons take place; monitoring the work of heads of departments; and arranging a programme of class visits followed by feedback to teachers'.

The principals of the five schools all showed that they understand their role as instructional leaders.

Principal 4 animatedly said:

I'm deeply passionate about what happens in the school. I lead by example, not only in matters relating to teaching in the classroom, but also being active and present in all aspects of school life. I am a role model.

Principal 5 said:

I have to ensure that I walk the talk. I can't expect my staff to do what I myself do not do. Mentorship is also a big part of my work and I grow people to become leaders. It takes time and energy to do this but I love it.

Principal 4 further emphasised her role as an instructional leader of her school. She said:

As an instructional leader, I have to question the status quo and stretch the thinking in the school. I have to speak confidently about all educational matters – some at a deeper level than others.

It can be deduced from the statements above that Principal 4 has a clear understanding of her role as an instructional leader. She explained the extent of her role as going well beyond the classroom. She was confident to discuss matters of teaching and learning and had interesting anecdotes of support her beliefs.

All the principals also showed an understanding that their role as instructional leaders goes beyond matters of teaching and learning. It includes creating space and motivating staff to deliver the best and bring out the best in pupils and their colleagues. According to Moloi (2010), leadership plays an important role in building a learning organisation. She argues that principals who are 'participative and visionary leaders can help turn a school into learning organisation' (2010: 630). Schools are considered learning communities and the role of the principal includes amongst many tasks inculcating learning habits that go beyond the confines of the classroom. These are critical aspects of school leadership which contribute a great deal

to achieving the core business of schools. The principals displayed courage and a strong sense of responsibility.

On the question of distributed leadership as a facet of principalship

The structure of the organisation is such that each of the five schools has its own management team. The principals spoke of the importance of having their own management teams viz. to spread the workload and promote leadership at different levels of the organisation. The management teams are made up of various role-players which include deputy principals and directors/heads of department. The principals agreed with the notion that they are 'not the only leader in the school'. They also emphasised that it is important for the principal to know what is happening in every area of the school and one can do this by gathering important information.

Principal 4 stated:

It is always important to ask the right questions and be a step ahead.

The principals co-ordinate the roles of different stakeholders and ensure that the core business of the school is achieved. They set the tone for this to happen effectively and monitor the activities of the school through the people and with the people. According to MacBeath (2005), distributed leadership is premised on trust which implies a mutual acceptance of one another's leadership potential.

Principal 2 said:

I trust my staff to do what is expected of them and my role is to nurture, guide and provide a conducive environment for each to excel in what they do and become leaders. We (management and staff) review what we do and try to improve; always with the children's best interest at heart.

This statement is supported by Spillane (2006) who argues that the focus of distributed leadership is 'a web of school leaders, followers, and aspects of their situation' (2006: 3).

On the question of the role of the business manager

The aim of the research was to examine the trend towards executive leadership that has emerged in the independent schools sector in South Africa. In the case study school, the business manager formed part of the executive team and therefore his participation was deemed necessary and relevant. It was important to establish what role he plays in helping the school to achieve its core business which is teaching and learning.

The school is a large entity whose income is the fees. By the nature of its fees, the school does not receive a state subsidy. It operates as a non-profit organisation, with a large budget that needs to be carefully managed. During a follow up interview with the business manager, it became clear that the school applies strict business principles in the management of its financial assets. To do this, the school employs a qualified chartered accountant (in the capacity of a business manager) to lead and manage the organisation's financial resources. In addition, several personnel with specific financial skills assist the business manager in ensuring that the books are kept up to date and that the fees are collected.

When asked about his role, the business manager said:

I have to ensure that the school is financially sound so that we can work on new initiatives, explore strategy that will benefit the school in the long term. I give advice on policies, strategic issues, anticipate and solve problems that might arise, allocate resources and ensure that policies are adhered to.

It was clear from the interview that the role of the business manager does not conflict with any other roles within the school's executive leadership structure. Instead, the role of the business manager was deemed to be supportive and beneficial for the organisation as a whole. In particular, it is seen as giving the principals the opportunity to focus mainly on the business of teaching and learning. It also enables the Rector to focus on strategy, vision, and policy compliance. In the British context, as reflected in two schools that were visited in 2010, the business manager plays a similar role. At one school in particular, there was a building project which was in progress at the time and it was the business manager who handled all of the contractual issues with the contracting company. The principals on the other hand were focused on the day-to-day leadership and management of their schools.

The business manager in the case school was asked to explain how his role differed from that of the Rector. The business manager stated the two role are not the same but complement each other.

The business manager said:

I need to enable the strategy and vision of the school by securing and allocating resources. Together with the Rector, I need to make things happen and am accountable for all financial matters.

When the business manager was asked to explain what he meant by financial accountability, he reiterated that he is personally liable for the school's financial stability. In order to ensure that his personal liability does not get put at risk, he manages the school budget strictly, ensuring that the school will be sustainable for the immediate and distant future.

On the question of the school's decision to have an executive leadership structure

The participants were asked the question of why the school decided to have an executive leadership structure and the responses yielded the following.

Principal 1 said:

There are five schools on our campus and the role of the Rector developed out of the building of the girls' schools in the late 1990s.

The other principals concurred with this statement.

Principal 3 said:

With five schools on the campus, it makes sense to have an overall leader. We discussed a flatter structure at length but our stakeholders preferred the idea of an overall leader.

Principal 4 said:

The structure is complex and therefore it was necessary for the Council to appoint a Rector in order to ensure that our synergistic model ran as smoothly as possible and was as effective and efficient as it could be. Schools over the past years have also had to deal with new legislation and new HR requirements hence it was crucial that the Rector had the time to deal effectively with all the demands. This has benefited our schools.

It was clear that the decision to have the executive leadership structure was thought through carefully by the school council. The Rector's position was created with the intention that it will benefit the school in terms of its strategy, vision and values. The participants regard the executive leadership structure as the only way forward for the school. They felt that the Rector provides direction and cohesion which would otherwise be difficult to achieve if the school had a flatter structure.

On the question of generic application of executive leadership structures

Executive leadership structures can be of great benefit if they are applied carefully and with the best intentions. Any decision to adopt an executive leadership should be informed by the needs of the school. This point was emphasised by the participants in the case school.

Principal 2 said:

It is important to question the needs and the size of the school. This will inform the role of the Rector in each environment.

Principal 4 said:

It would depend on the structure and size of the school. It would also depend on what the school would require the Rector to do that would be different from the head. It is imperative that there are clear guidelines with regard to these two portfolios. An effective Rector can add great value to an organisation and can be an enormous support for a head.

From the statements of the two principals above, it can be deduced that adopting executive leadership structures need careful consideration. Two considerations that have emerged from the statements above are the size of the school and the clarity of roles. According to Fidler (1997), a job description is important in any organisational structure. It enables the organisation to function effectively.

On the question of generic application of executive leadership structures, the business manager said:

I would advise schools to tread lightly before they go that route. It is a very costly model and could reinforce a silo mentality with principals or Rector at the helm of a silo.

The business manager's view was shared, in part, by Principal 1 who said:

I think this question requires discussion and debate, not a quick answer. When schools want to embark on a model such as this, they need to be careful. They need to build all the schools at the same time. Otherwise it impacts on the more established school in terms of funding and resource allocation.

Principal 3 said:

It works but it is complex. Schools work without a Rector or CEO as well. But this model enables heads at our school to focus more on the core business which is teaching and learning. So it encourages and promotes instructional leadership.

It was important to note that the views of the participants all contained some caution on the generic application of the executive leadership structure. This implies that executive leadership structures need careful consideration and any decision to apply them must be informed by such factors as the size of the school, the needs of the school, clarity of roles as well as consideration of the cost implications.

Emergent themes

Earlier in this chapter, I mentioned that other themes emerged during this study and they are discussed in detail under the subheadings, relationships and synergy. These two themes were deemed important because of their relevance to, and impact on, the study.

Relationships

The word 'relationships' was mentioned several times by the participants during the follow up interviews and in the questionnaires. So I decided to include the theme of relationships as a separate section in this chapter. According to Pope (cited in Sutcliffe, 2013: 65), relationships matter more than anything else when it comes to establishing a happy and successful school. He argues that "if you want to get the best out of your staff you have to build good, trusting relationships".

The participants viewed the relationship between the Rector and his executive team as an important ingredient for success. They also alluded to the importance of healthy relationships amongst the principals themselves and the business manager.

Principal 4 said:

We are effectively one school and so we have to be able to work together to make this model work. That includes teachers and our admin staff. The Rector is a good support to the Heads and he brings different parties together for the common good.

Principal 5 said:

The Rector is central to building a cohesive community. His relationship with the people can either make or break the institution. He has to be a conversationalist and must display courage and a high level of energy. He needs to be inspirational and have the ability to bridge the gap between all stakeholders including the Church. He must be considerate and committed to the values of the organisation in good and in bad times. We are fortunate that our current Rector is all of these things and it makes it easier for us as Heads.

It was important to note that Principal 5 regarded human connections as an important component of the Rector's role. According to Paine (cited in Sutcliffe 2013: 14) a successful school leader needs to be able 'to win over hearts and minds' of people. It is about ensuring that everybody you work and come into contact with as a leader has signed up to the vision you have for the school. Paine (2013) argued that it is important to develop a vision that can win the hearts and minds and be used as a sustainable programme of action for the school.

Principal 2 said:

The Rector is a good listener. He goes away from meetings and reflects on the important points/concerns raised at our meetings. It is a hard job trying to keep everyone happy but he has a good EQ and this makes a big difference.

The view of Principal 2 is supported by Goleman (1995), cited in Sutcliffe 2013, who proposes that there are five components that are critical for leadership; namely 'self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills' (2013: 62). Goleman (1995) argues that these are more important than traditional leadership traits such as general intelligence, toughness, determination and vision. He maintains that 'a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive and analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas but still not be a great leader'.

The business manager said:

We are lucky that we have the Rector who knows what each of us are good at and gives us the space to do it. He is ultimately 'in control of the ship' but does not interfere. He is a very good listener and I like his style of leadership.

According to Frederick (2013), cited in Sutcliffe 2013, although school leaders are responsible for major-decision making and provide strategic direction for their institutions, they should not pretend to be the fonts of all knowledge and wisdom. She argues that good leaders 'bring people in and find out what their expertise is and thank them for it and recognise them publicly and not pretend it's all their own work' (2013:60).

Principal 1 said:

We are fortunate that the Rector understands the differences within our synergistic model. We are the oldest school within this model and sometimes it's difficult when you're the eldest child because you have to give up certain things for your siblings and my staff sometimes feel that way. But the Rector is always there for us all and has the whole school's best interest at heart. After all, we are one brand and so we have to make compromises to make this model work.

It was clear from the interviews and responses that the participants valued the current Rector's ability to build and maintain healthy relationships with people. This is perceived by the participants to be the unifying factor for the organisation as a whole.

Synergy

Synergy was another theme that emerged during this research. In previous years, the school followed a co-ordinate model where, with the exception of the Junior Prep, boys and girls where educated in four single sex schools built on one campus. Initially when I heard the term 'synergy', I thought it was just a matter of semantics but it meant a lot more for people in the organisation.

In an interview with him in June 2015, Rector 2 said:

We recognise that our prospects for synergy are unique amongst schools in South Africa. The institutional character of our school is such that it creates opportunities for synergy. Combining the parts of our school will create a whole which is bigger than the sum of its parts. The core objective of our synergistic model is to adopt a common purpose where staff, students and other stakeholders work strategically and synergistically towards developing a common holistic approach to the experience that our students get at all our schools.

The Rector's response was interesting and revealing in terms of what is new and also what lies ahead. The Rector also spoke about the importance of leadership in a culture of change. He stressed that synergy means that the school needs to change the way it sees itself as an educational institution. He spoke about the drive to get the school community to think in pictures when talking about how and what the school might look like in the future.

The Rector's view was supported by other participants.

Principal 1 said:

There are many benefits to having our five schools on one campus and our strategy for the future is to 'exploit' the great opportunities. The synergistic model is beneficial for both genders.

It was also interesting to discover that the notion of synergy was included in the primary roles and responsibilities of both the Rector and the Head. Part of the Rector's role is "to extract synergies from the group of schools" and the Head's role is "to leverage synergies from or with other schools".

Conclusion

This chapter began by giving a detailed profile of the school. It described the school's location, the number of pupils, staff as well as the size of the campus grounds. It also described the school in terms of its socio-economic status. The chapter then described the organisational structure of the school as shown in the organogram on page 42. The profile of the participants was the next focus of this chapter and it is illustrated in table 1. The first part of the chapter concluded with a description of the culture of the school.

The second part of the chapter focused on data presentation and analysis which included three main parts namely; the role of the Rector, the role of the designated principals and the role of the business manager. The role of the Rector was analysed using certain criteria that had been identified based on the responses which had been provided in the questionnaires. These criteria included strategy and vision, policy-making, communication. The question of whether the Rector of a school should be an educationalist or not was also given attention.

The roles of the designated principals were analysed on the basis of the following key areas of school leadership; leadership and management of teaching and learning, instructional leadership and distributed leadership. The role of the business manager was analysed in terms of how it differs from that of the Rector and also in relation to how the position enables the principals to focus on the core business of schools. The question of why the Council decided to have an executive leadership structure was also examined. This section of the chapter concluded with an examination of the generic application of an executive leadership structure to education.

The final part of the chapter focused on two selected themes, namely relationships and synergy, which emerged from the questionnaires and follow up meetings with the participants. These themes were examined in terms of their importance and relevance to the role of the Rector in the selected case study school.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION, REFLECTION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This research examined the role of an executive head in a school and the applicability of business principles in education. The study used qualitative research methodology and grounded theory. Dimmock and Lam (2012) argue that grounded theory is well suited to educational leadership research because of 'its ability to offer a theory of explanation of complex interactive situations involving human beings in their natural or organisational settings (2012: 189)'. The selected case study was a suburban independent school in the Gauteng Province of South Africa and the rationale for its selection was twofold: the school is easily accessible and the executive leadership structure is well established when compared with other schools in South Africa. The term used for an executive head in the selected case study was that of a Rector and so this term was used during the data analysis in chapter four as well in this final chapter.

In attempting to understand the role of the Rector, the study took into consideration the widely accepted notion of principalship which argues that the role of a principal is to lead and manage the core business of schools, namely teaching and learning.

Discussions

The research was underpinned by the following key question:

What is the role of an executive head/Rector in leading and managing a school in leading and managing a school?

The study found that the Rector's primary role is to *develop and lead a strategic vision* that will ensure the school's ability to provide education into the future, for the generations to come. It became clear during the data collection process that the school has invested sufficient

resources (both financial and human) to enable this vision to be achieved. The fact that the school council has retained the position of the Rector for nearly two decades (whilst others have experimented with executive leadership structures temporarily) indicates strongly that it is a valued role within the school. It is considered important because the school's direction as an entity relies heavily on the role of the Rector. The designated principals lead their schools very effectively but they represent different constituencies and the Rector is regarded as a symbol of unity. He represents a single institution with many parts bound together by a common purpose.

Many schools, in the independent sector in particular in South Africa and in other parts of the world, have tried executive leadership structures for a variety of reasons. Some of the reasons that were identified in the available research literature include issues of staff retention, people's skills set and expansion. Schools that have experimented with executive leadership structures have tended to use a variety of terms to refer to the same thing. In South Africa, for example, the term executive head is generally used to refer to the overall principal of a school. In the United Kingdom, however, the executive head is often referred to as the principal whilst the term 'head teacher' is used for the designated principals. Often schools that have executive leadership structures have a pre-primary, primary and high school all on one campus.

The term executive head implies a business approach to education and therefore this aspect was also explored during the research. It was revealed that the executive head (the Rector in terms of the selected case study) performed a kind of role that does not quite resemble the role of an executive or CEO of a company. According to Glatter (2015) schools find themselves caught up in identity crisis. They are 'frequently referred to as organisations but they are also often regarded as institutions' (2015: 100). He makes a strong argument that schools serve a dual purpose. On the one hand, schools are responsible for ensuring that academic results are of a high standard, but "moral, social and cultural issues also lie at the heart of education" (Glatter, 2015: 100).

The research found that the Rector performed a specific role within the context of the school. All schools need to plan and 'know' how they will continue to provide teaching and learning for future generations. This is a task that requires considerable foresight and dedication. For various reasons, principals are not always able or equipped to do this kind of thinking and

planning activity. One of the main challenges is that principals have to juggle many responsibilities on a day-to-day basis and these often take priority over the long-term vision. In the case study school however the Rector's role enables the school to craft a vision that will "ensure the school's ability to provide education to current children's children". Therefore this means that the vision must go far beyond the usual five year strategic plan which often characterises planning in schools and other organisations.

The research also found that the Rector plays an important role in *building and sustaining a positive school climate*. The fact that there are five schools on one campus means that the role of the Rector is quite complex in the case study school. The Rector has to be all things to all people and at the same time bring different stakeholders (who don't always hold the same views about things) to a common purpose. This is a task that requires courage, emotional intelligence, resilience and the ability to connect with people. Based on the views of all the participants, the research revealed that the current Rector embodied these important skills and qualities.

The study found that the Rector is not involved in the leadership and management of teaching and learning. This responsibility is delegated to the designated principals who also serve as custodians of the overall vision of the school. In theory, this means that the Rector enables the designated principals to focus more on the core business of their schools which is teaching and learning. However, the research found that the designated principals in the selected case study delegate a great deal of this responsibility to members of their executive teams, namely deputy principals and heads of department. The principals ensure that their schools work effectively towards achieving the overall vision of the school. The fact that the designated principals delegated a large portion of their responsibility in the leadership and management of teaching and learning to their management teams demonstrated their commitment to the notion and practice of distributed leadership. It also emerged that all the designated principals were familiar with the concept of instructional leadership. The research also revealed that there are various platforms and ways in which the principal of a school can exercise instructional leadership. During the follow up interviews, for example, Principal 4 indicated that her role goes well beyond matters of teaching and learning. She viewed herself as a facilitator of meaningful discussions regarding matters of best practice in the school. She also indicated that,

as an instructional leader, she has to be active and present in all aspects of school life and serve as a role model in her school.

On the question of the applicability of business principles to education, the research revealed that schools are in a catch twenty-two situation. On the one hand schools apply business principles because of the legal framework in which they operate, but on the other hand schools adopt business principles as part of sustainability measures. However, the study revealed that teaching and learning are central to the school's strategic planning and vision. Principal 2 in the case study school reiterated this point and said that schools should always put education first by ensuring that education decisions drive business decisions and not the other way round. This is key for the research because as educators we are conscious of the fact that education results are not immediate and therefore cannot be quantified in terms of profit and loss. However, this principle does not hold the same value in the for-profit independent schools. In this category of schools, where there are shareholders, business is the driver of education provision.

The research found that sustainability is an important aspect of school leadership. In the case study school, this responsibility was delegated to the business manager but the designated principals were also expected to play their part in ensuring that their schools provide quality education which in turn will help enhance the brand in the community.

On the question of why the school council decided to have an executive leadership structure, the research found that the creation of the Rector's position served a two-fold purpose: strategic vision and the advancement of values of the school. The position was created in response to the needs of the school which had been expanded. The size and complexity of the organisation meant that the school needed to have someone who would co-ordinate the five schools. The research also revealed that clarity of roles is very important and this speaks directly to the notion of a job description. The role of the Rector can be intertwined easily with that of the principal, hence the need to define it clearly if a school decides to adopt an executive leadership structure. Any overlaps can lead to confusion and frustration in the organisation.

Reflection

I started this research in 2010, a year of excitement in South Africa's history as we hosted the first African Soccer World Cup. Hosting the Soccer World Cup signalled progress and put South Africa firmly on the world stage. In that same year, I was appointed to my first headship in Nelspruit in the province of Mpumalanga. This was exciting but it also meant that I would have to complete my research across some 360km from the University. When I commenced my duties as principal, it became clear that my studies would need to give way to my then new set of responsibilities. So, I decided to put my research on hold and focus my energies on running the school. This break was hugely beneficial for the research as I gained better understanding of schools as organisations and also began to realise the value of the study. Fortunately for me, when I resumed my research in 2015, the University was able to source and assign the same supervisor that I had started with in 2010.

The follow up interviews with the participants were particularly enlightening and fascinating. The participants provided vivid anecdotes which were very useful in the analysis. The biggest challenge however was finding a suitable time to meet with the participants. Due to the nature of their roles within the school, they were not always available to meet with me although they were helpful when I finally managed to meet with each of them. I also had my own challenges with time because I am in full time employment. Rector 2 did not contribute via the questionnaire and his written responses may have added more depth and richness to my data. I had made provisions for him to respond electronically but this effort was unsuccessful, and so I had to base most of my analysis on his verbal anecdotes instead. The process and the questions used for data collection were effective, and proved fit for purpose; as such I would not change them at all. I would, however, endeavour to find more time to probe deeper, to elicit further information from their conversations and anecdotes given during the interviews.

I studied a number of very useful pieces of literature in the field of educational leadership since this is the area in which my study is located. Sutcliffe (2013) provided insightful descriptions and anecdotes of successful school leadership. The research question was: *what is the role of an executive head/Rector in leading and managing a school?* This question could be best

answered through using education leadership literature. The role of an executive head still remains elusive and blurry as it does not fit the definition of a CEO as provided by the relevant literature.

Recommendations for future research

This research revealed that there is a need for further studies on the applicability of business principles in education and leadership of independent schools in general, given their growth and status in South Africa. The main question of the research should focus attention on whether skills obtained purely in the business field can be transferred to education and the implications of this for schools. This would require an in-depth longitudinal study of for-profit chain schools such as the AdvTech group or Curro schools.

This research was very small and was based on a unique case study and because of its sample size the findings are not generalisable, nor were they intended to be. The study tried to answer a very important question about leadership and management that prevails in the independent schools sector. The research question was: *What is the role of an executive head in leading and managing a school?* This question and many other questions that pertain to independent schools need further investigation. This concurs with what Harvey (2015) calls 'the elephant is still in the room' (2015: 2). Harvey argues that there is so much that is said about independent schools but questions about 'style and quality of provision remain unanswered' (2015: 2).

In the South African context, executive leadership structures are currently found only in the independent schools sector. The size of a school seems to be one of the factors that contribute towards schools adopting executive leadership structures. If these structures were to be found beneficial, the idea of executive leadership could be applied in the state sector where some very large schools are run by a single principal. This, in part, has already been suggested by the MEC for Education in Gauteng. During his speech in August 2014, the MEC delivered his proposed twinning programme for schools in the province. Amongst his proposals is that twinned schools may have one school governing body and one or more principals.

Conclusion

The research confirmed my hypothesis that executive leadership structures are of great benefit to organisations such as schools. The study also revealed that when organisations adopt executive leadership structures, certain important considerations need to be made and these include clarifying the reasons for adopting the structure. The rationale for adopting executive leadership structures should always be determined by the needs of the school and whether this will maximise education achievement and create better opportunities for growth. Once the reasons for adopting the structure are clear, then the next important step should attempt to clarify the *'what'* and the *'how'* questions. The *'what'* refers to the roles which will need to be fulfilled and the *'how'* refers to the extent to which the roles will differ from each other.

The study also confirmed that leadership is not vested in the position of one person. In the case study school, the Rector's role was clearly defined and the roles of the designated principals were also clear. This was important for the organisation as it provided an enabling environment for leadership to flourish. Relationships were also identified as an important facet of leadership. The relationship between the Rector and the principals is as important as the relationship between the Rector and the school council. Without sound relationships between these role-players, the executive leadership structure itself could run the risk of failing.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: **Letter to the Chairman of the Board of Governors**

Appendix Two: **Letter to Participants (CEO/Rector, Heads/Principals & Business Manager)**

Appendix Three: **Participants' Informed Consent**

Appendix Four: **Questionnaire for the Executive Head/Rector**

Appendix Five: **Questionnaire for the Heads/Principals**

Appendix Six: **Questionnaire for the Business Manager**

Appendix Seven: **Follow Up Interview (CEO/Rector)**

Appendix Eight: **Follow Up Interview (Heads/Principals)**

Appendix Nine: **Follow Up Interview (Business Manager)**

Appendix One: Letter to the Chairman of the Board of Governors

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Educational Leadership and Policy Division

July 2010

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AT YOUR SCHOOL

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Dumisani Kunene, a Masters student with the University of the Witwatersrand, Johanneburg. As part of my degree requirements, I have to undertake a small scale research in the area of my specialisation, namely educational leadership. In this connection, I seek your permission to conduct educational research at your school and this will include collecting data on my proposed research during the academic year of 2010. I have chosen to investigate a specific leadership model which is clearly evident in your school and my topic is *"An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa"*.

Your permission will allow me to visit the persons concerned i.e. the CEO/Rector, principals of the respective sections of the school and the business manager. The purpose of the visit is to give out a questionnaire and conduct follow-up probing interviews with each of the persons concerned. Each of the follow-up interviews will take approximately 1 hour and data will be reported in an anonymous and confidential manner.

Participation in the study will be voluntary, and your school is free to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. The research will be for the purpose of the degree only and all information collected during this period will be kept strictly confidential. The study may be of direct benefit to your school, and the results of the research will be made available for viewing at your request.

Should your school be willing to participate in the study, I would require your written consent.

Thank you in anticipation of your consideration.

Yours sincerely

Dumisani Kunene
Student No. 0710183K

Appendix Two: Letter to Participants (CEO/Rector, Heads/Principals & Business Manager)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Educational Leadership and Policy Division

July 2010

PARTICIPANTS' INFORMATION LETTER AND INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Participant

My name is Dumisani Kunene. I am a Masters student with the University of the Witwatersrand, Johanneburg and, as part of my degree requirements; I have to undertake a small scale research in the area of my specialisation, namely educational leadership. To this effect, I seek your permission to collect data on my proposed research area. The topic of my research is *"An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa".*

The research will use questionnaires and conducting of follow-up probing interviews. Your participation in the study is voluntary and you can decline to participate at any point without prejudice. Responses could take up to an hour (60 minutes) of your time i.e. completing the questionnaire and participating in the interview. All information obtained during the course of this study will be kept strictly confidential and the reporting of the data in the research report will not identify you as a participant.

Your voluntary participation in this study will be highly appreciated and the results of the research will be made available for viewing at your request.

Thank you in anticipation of your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Dumisani Kunene
Student No. 0710183K

Appendix Three: Participants' Informed Consent

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

PARTICIPANTS' INFORMED CONSENT

Please tick (√) each box below.

☐ I hereby confirm that I have been informed by the researcher, Dumisani Kunene, about the nature of the study.

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

☐ I am aware that all information that I provide will be anonymously processed in the research report.

☐ In light of the requirements of the study, I agree that the data collected during the study can be processed in a computerised system by the researcher.

☐ I may at any stage, without any 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 agree to participate in the study.

Name of participant in print: ……

Signature of participant: ……...

Date: ……..

Time: …….

Appendix Four: Questionnaire for the CEO/Rector

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CEO/ RECTOR

Please tick (√) whichever is appropriate.

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1. School Information

Type of School: ☐ **Co-educational** ☐ **Girls Only** ☐ **Boys Only** ☐ **Co-ordinate Model**

Total number of pupils: ……**Boys** ……**Girls**

Total number of staff (excluding you): ……

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2. Biographic Information

2.1 Gender: ☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

2.2 Job Title: ☐ **Executive Head/CEO** ☐ **Rector**

2.3 I am responsible for: ☐ **Whole School**

☐ **Other (specify)** ……

2.4 Levels of Qualification: ☐ **Masters** ☐ **Honours** ☐ **Initial Degree** ☐ **Teaching Diploma** ☐ **Other (specify)** ……..

2.5 Total number of years in education: ……..

2.6 Total number of years spent as a teacher: …….

2.7 Total number of years spent at this school: ……

2.8 Total number of years in your current position: ……

2.9 Total number of years in a leadership position: ……

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3. Questions for the Participant

3.1 What is your understanding of the role of a CEO or Rector of a school?

3.2 What is your understanding of why the Board/Council decided to have an executive leadership structure for the organisation?

3.3 What is your understanding of how the role of an executive leader differs from that of the designated principal?

3.4 How do you ensure that your organisation achieves its core business?

3.5 In your opinion, is it necessary for the CEO or Rector of a school to be an educationalist?

3.6 If other schools (including state schools) came to you for advice regarding the executive leadership structure, what would your advice be and why?

3.7 What is your understanding of the state of education in South Africa and how do you think a leadership structure such as the one followed by your organisation can benefit the broader spectrum of education?

Appendix Five: Questionnaire for the Heads/Principals

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa.*

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE HEADS (PRINCIPALS)

Please tick (√) whichever is appropriate.

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1. School Information

Type of School: ☐ **Co-educational** ☐ **Girls Only** ☐ **Boys Only**

Total number of pupils: …….**Boys** …….**Girls**

Total number of teachers (excluding you): …….

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2. Biographic Information

2.1 Gender: ☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

2.2 Job Title: ☐ **Headmaster** ☐ **Headmistress**

2.3 I am responsible for: ☐ **Prep School Only** ☐ **Senior School Only**

2.4 Level of Qualifications: ☐ **Masters** ☐ **Honours** ☐ **Initial Degree** ☐ **Teaching**

Diploma ☐ **Other (specify)** ……..

2.5 Total number of years in education: ……..

2.6 Total number of years spent as a teacher: …….

2.7 Total number of years spent at this school: ……

2.8 Total number of years in your current position: ……

2.9 Total number of years in a leadership position: ……

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3. <u>Leadership Experience</u>

3.1 What is your understanding of the role of a CEO or Rector in a school?

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3.2 Why did the Board decide to have an executive model of leadership for the School?

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

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3.4 Are you familiar with the notion of instructional leadership? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

If your answer is YES, what do you know about instructional leadership?

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3.5 How does your role, as the designated Head, differ from that of the CEO or Rector of the School?

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3.6 Is it necessary for an CEO or Rector of a school to be an educationalist? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Give reasons to support your answer.

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3.7 If other schools came to you with a view to finding out about this executive model of leadership, what would your advice be and why?

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Appendix Six: Questionnaire for the Business Manager

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE BUSINESS MANAGER

Please tick (√) whichever is appropriate.

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1. School Information

Type of School: ☐ **Co-educational** ☐ **Girls Only** ☐ **Boys Only** ☐ **Co-ordinate Model**

Total number of pupils: …….**Boys** …….**Girls**

Total number of staff (excluding you): …….

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2. Biographic Information

2.1 Gender: ☐ **Male** ☐ **Female**

2.2 Job Title: ☐ **Business Manager**

2.3 I am responsible for: ☐ **Whole School** ☐ **Other (specify)** ……

2.4 Levels of Qualification: ☐ **Masters** ☐ **Honours** ☐ **Initial Degree** ☐ **Other (specify)**

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2.5 Total number of years in education: ……..

2.6 Total number of years spent at this school: ……

2.7 Total number of years in your current position: ……

2.8 Total number of years in a leadership position: ……

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3. Leadership Experience

3.1 What is your understanding of the role of a CEO or Rector in a school?

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3.2 Why did the Board decide to have an executive model of leadership for the School?

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

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3.4 How does your role, as the Business Manager, differ from that of the CEO or Rector of the School?

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3.5 Is it necessary for an CEO or Rector of a school to be an educationalist? ☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**

Give reasons to support your answer.

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3.6 If other schools came to you with a view to finding out about this executive model of leadership, what would your advice be and why?

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Appendix Seven: Follow Up Interview (CEO/RECTOR)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

QUESTIONS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP PROBING INTERVIEW WITH THE CEO/RECTOR

1. **Describe the organisational structure of your School.**
2. **What is at the heart of your organisation?**
3. **What do you consider to be your most outstanding leadership practice, to date, as the executive leader of the School?**
4. **Who takes the responsibility of making decisions concerning the daily operation of the School?**
5. **How do you keep your executive team motivated and make sure that they, in turn, motivate the staff who work with them to achieve the organisational goals of the School?**
6. **What challenges do you encounter in your position as the "overall" leader in the School and how do you deal with these?**
7. **Who do you turn to for advice and why?**
8. **What role do you play in ensuring that your staff are pastorally supported and occupationally satisfied? Give examples.**
9. **In a big organisation such as yours, how do you ensure that accountability is maintained at every level and that the School's mission is carried out effectively by all?**
10. **How do you deal with ineffectiveness, where possible, within your organisation?**

Appendix Eight: Follow Up Interview (Heads/Principals)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

PROBING QUESTIONS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP INTERVIEW WITH THE HEADS/PRINCIPALS

1. **Describe the organisational structure of your School.**
2. **What is at the heart of your organisation?**
3. **As head of the School, what role do you play in the management of teaching and learning?**
4. **What do you consider to be your most outstanding leadership practice to date?**
5. **Who takes the responsibility of making decisions concerning the daily operation of the School?**
6. **What do you think play an important role in keeping you motivated towards your job?**
7. **What role do you play in keeping your staff and pupils motivated towards teaching and learning?**
8. **What challenges do you encounter in your position as the designated leader of your school and how do you deal with these?**
9. **Who are you accountable to and how?**
10. **What are your reporting lines and structures?**

Appendix Nine: Follow Up Interview (Business Manager)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Topic: *An examination of executive leadership in education: A case study of one independent school in South Africa*

QUESTIONS FOR THE FOLLOW-UP PROBING INTERVIEW WITH THE BUSINESS MANAGER

1. **Describe the organisational structure of your School.**
2. **What is at the heart of your organisation?**
3. **As the School's Business Manager, what role do you play in the management of finance to ensure that the school is on a sound financial footing year after year?**
4. **What do you consider to be your most outstanding leadership practice to date?**
5. **Who takes the responsibility of making decisions concerning the daily financial operation of the School?**
6. **What conditions do you think play an important role in keeping you motivated towards your job?**
7. **What role do you play in keeping your staff motivated towards their job?**
8. **What challenges do you encounter in your position as the designated leader within the School and how do you deal with these?**
9. **Who are you accountable to and how?**
10. **What are your reporting lines and structures?**

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