

An exploration of leadership practices: A case study in a public high school in Nigeria

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my sponsor organisation

Ford Foundation International (USA)

and

Pathfinder International Abuja Nigeria

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All glory and adoration for the successful completion of this academic program belong to God Almighty.

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Declaration

I, the undersigned, John Oluwole Adediji, hereby declare that this study is my own work and that it has not been submitted for a degree or examination at any University and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been acknowledged by complete references.

ACRONYMS USED

BM	Briefing meeting
SM	Staff meeting
P	Principal
VP	Vice-principal
HOD	Head of department
T	Teacher
SMT	School Management Team
MoE	Ministry of Education
NPE	National Policy on Education
NDP	National Development Plan
Q	Questionnaire
SRI	Stimulated recall interview
O	Observation
Do	document
NCSL	National College for School Leadership

ICT Information and communication technology

ABSTRACT

The management of Nigeria high schools are noted for administrative practices in the management of their schools; hence the term administration is commonly used in their daily operations. This fact on ‘administration’ was emphasised by the Nigerian government in the National Policy on Education (Nigeria, 1981, p. 21). Therefore as a researcher from Nigeria, my rationale for embarking on this research study was to find out to what extent a public high school in Nigeria was still operating in a hierarchical, individualistic, authoritarian style of leadership or whether it has started embracing contemporary approaches such as distributed leadership. The main goal of this study was to explore leadership practices in the case study school with the main focus on how different people relate to each other in the various leadership practices of the school, such as staff and briefing meetings of the school. In addition, my research questions aimed at exploring the respondents’ perceptions of leadership and factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership in the school.

The study is located within the interpretive paradigm. As a researcher in a wheelchair studying in South Africa I needed to find alternative ways of accessing the research site and gathering data. I was able to use electronic communication for the collection of my data. I used four different tools of data collection methods namely document analysis, observation, questionnaire and stimulated recall interviews.

Findings from the study indicated that there was limited evidence of contemporary leadership approaches in the case study school. The school was still operating traditional leadership, while school activities were dominated by a hierarchical chain of command. What emerged from the leadership practices of the school could be termed authorised distributed leadership which was under the command of the school principal. Data also indicated that there were some forms of restricted teacher leadership in the management and administration of the school. In addition, findings revealed that the case study school was very good at the management and administrative functions. The school was very effective and efficient in the controlling and management of both human and material resources.

Lastly, findings from the case study school indicated some enabling factors to the distribution of leadership in the case study school which include a culture of respect and cordial relations among the SMT and the teachers, Prominent among constraining factors to the distribution of

leadership in the case study school were: cultural orientation of the people where the case school was located, exclusionary religious practices by the principal of the school and the inhibiting role played by the Ministry of Education. Finally, based on these findings, recommendations were made both for practice and for future research.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	Error! Bookmark not defined.
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 INTRODUCTION	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3.1 Leadership practices from a distributed perspective.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES (GOAL) AND QUESTIONS.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.6 METHODOLOGY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.7 LAYOUT OF THE DISSERTATION.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
CHAPTER TWO	8
LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1 INTRODUCTION	8
2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	9
2.2.1 Defining leadership, management and administration.....	9
2.2.2 The relationship between leadership and management	12
2.3 TRADITIONAL THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP	13
2.3.1 What is traditional leadership?.....	13
2.3.2 Problems of traditional theories of leadership	15
2.4 CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF LEADERSHIP	16
2.4.1 Distributed leadership – a preferred alternative.....	18
2.4.2 Defining the concept – distributed leadership	18

2.4.3 Potential values of distributed leadership for our schools	19
2.4.4 Leadership practices – from a distributed perspective.....	20
2.4.5 Defining leadership practice from a distributed perspective	22
2.4.6 How interactions take place	23
2.4.7 Relevance of leadership practice from a distributed perspective.....	24
2.5 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP – A CRITIQUE	27
2.6 CONCLUSION.....	30
CHAPTER THREE	31
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	31
3.1 INTRODUCTION	31
3.2 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS	31
3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM	32
3.4 METHODOLOGY: A CASE STUDY APPROACH.....	33
3.4.1 Defining a case study	34
3.4.2 Features of case study	35
3.4.3 Weaknesses of case study	36
3.4.4 The case site	37
3.4.5 Access issues.....	39
3.4.6 Participants for the study	39
3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS	40
3.5.1 Document Analysis.....	41
3.5.2 Observation	41
3.5.3 Questionnaires.....	42
3.5.4 Semi-structured interviews	43
3.6 DATA ANALYSIS.....	44
3.7 VALIDITY	44
3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES	45

3.9 CONCLUSION.....	45
CHAPTER FOUR.....	46
PRESENTATION OF DATA	46
4.1 INTRODUCTION	46
4.2 STAFF AND BRIEFING MEETINGS: A FORMAL PROCESS	47
4.2.1 Agenda for the meeting.....	47
4.2.2 Attendance and seating arrangement at meetings	48
4.2.3 The principal as the permanent chairperson of staff and briefing meetings	50
4.2.4 The meeting secretary	50
4.2.5 The opening speeches	51
4.2.6 Reading and adoption of minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting.....	52
4.2.7 Main business of the meeting	52
4.3 BEYOND MEETINGS: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES IN THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL	53
4.3.1 Academic records, human and material resources.....	53
4.3.2 Punctuality/lateness and discipline	54
4.4 A CULTURE OF CORDIAL AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONS.....	55
4.4.1 Cordial relations.....	55
4.4.2. Respectful relations.....	56
4.5 DECISION-MAKING: A CONSULTATIVE PROCESS?.....	57
4.5.1 Varying degrees of decision-making	57
4.5.2 Staff involvement in decision-making	58
4.5.3 Parental involvement in decision-making.....	59
4.6 LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL	60
4.6.1 Perceptions of leadership	61
4.6.2 The dominant practice: leadership within a hierarchical chain of command	62
4.6.3 Teacher management in the case study school	Error! Bookmark not defined.

4.6.3.1 Delegation of authority.....	63
4.6.3.2 Heads of various committees	63
4.6.3.3 A motivational culture for teachers.....	64
4.6.3.4 The centrality of goals and objectives of the school	64
4.6.4 Influence of the Ministry of Education on the case study school	65
4.7 CONCLUDING COMMENTS	66
CHAPTER FIVE	67
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	67
5.1 INTRODUCTION	67
5.2 Answering the research questions.....	67
5.2.1 Leadership practices evident in the case study school: Management rather than leadership?	67
5.2.2 Respondents' perceptions of leadership.....	73
5.2.3 Factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership.....	75
5.2.3.1 Culture of mutual and friendly relations	75
5.2.3.2 Award for the best teacher.....	75
5.2.3.3 Cultural orientation of the people	76
5.2.3.4 Exclusionary religious practices	77
5.2.3.5 Staff members as barriers.....	77
5.2.3.6 State Ministry of Education as a barrier	78
5.3 CONCLUDING COMMENTS	78
CHAPTER SIX.....	79
CONCLUSION.....	79
6.1 INTRODUCTION	79
6.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY	79
6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE.....	80
6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH.....	82
6.5 POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE STUDY	82
6.6 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.

6.7 CHALLENGES TO MY STUDY	Error! Bookmark not defined.
6.8 CONCLUDING COMMENTS	83
REFERENCES	85
APPENDIX 1.....	90
APPENDIX 2.....	91
APPENDIX 3.....	97
APPENDIX 4.....	99
APPENDIX 5.....	100
APPENDIX 6.....	103

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The main goal of my study was to explore the leadership practices in one public high school in Nigeria, from a distributed leadership lens. Leadership as positional has been well researched internationally, but not the practices. This is the gap in the literature that my research study sought to address especially in Nigeria where the term leadership is not in general use. In Nigeria principals are not commonly referred to as ‘educational managers or leaders’ but the as ‘educational or school administrators’. The term ‘administration’ is the term used in the Nigeria Educational Policy context. Through a study of the practices and organisation members’ perceptions of leadership I was able to see how leadership happened in staff and briefing meetings in the school situations and how different people related to each other in these situations. In particular, I was able to explore the level of interaction between the leaders and followers in the staff and briefing meeting situations of the school.

I start with the main focus of this chapter which is the background and context of the study. This is followed by a rationale for the study including my personal motivation and a brief overview of the literature in which the study was located as well as the methodology adopted for the study. Finally the chapter concludes with an outline of the organisation of the thesis.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In Nigeria, education is a government venture that has witnessed a progressive evolution of government’s complete and dynamic intervention and active participation in the provision of quality Education to its citizens. The Federal government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument par excellence for effecting national development. The five main national objectives of Nigeria, as stated in the second National Development Plan (NDP) and endorsed as the necessary foundation for the Nigeria National Policy on Education (NPE), are the building of: a free and democratic society; a just and egalitarian society; a united, strong

and self-reliant nation; a great and dynamic economy; and a land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens (Nigeria, 1981, p. 7).

At secondary school level, which is the focus of my research study, the Nigeria NPE stipulates that the

Government of Nigeria will work towards improving the quality of secondary Education by giving support to measures that will ensure **effective Administration**. These will include the selection of persons of the right calibre for principalship of the school, the mounting **of** induction courses for newly appointed Principals, and prompt disciplinary steps to deal with principals who misuse their powers or prove inefficient (1981, p. 21).

The above statement suggests that the Nigerian government aims to ensure **effective Administration** for secondary Education, which is an indication that “if the national objectives of the country are to be attained, school leaders have very important roles to play in the Administration/Leadership of their schools” (Ogunsaju, 1983, p. 41). Furthermore, it can be seen in the Nigeria NPE that the terminology adopted is ‘**administration**’ as opposed to leadership or management. In addition, the document places emphasis on the principal as the main role player in this administrative process. This reflects an understanding of leadership as positional.

Therefore, it is in the context of this **effective Administration**, emphasised by the Federal government of Nigeria, that my research study focuses. My research study explored if there was any form of distribution of leadership in a school in Nigeria despite the emphasis in policy on the role of the principal in leadership.

The Ministry of Education in Oyo state of Nigeria is one of the state Ministries charged with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of educational institutions, including supervision/inspection of secondary schools in the state. The Ministry of Education is directly under the leadership, management, administration and control of the Honourable Commissioner of Education appointed by the Executive Governor of the state. In support of this claim, the Nigeria National Policy on Education (Nigeria, pp. 44 & 45) explains that “the co-ordination, planning, financing, and direction of the total educational effort within the state is placed in the hands of the state Ministry of Education”. Reference to the Ministry of Education was relevant to this study because the case study school was directly under the control and administration of the state Ministry of Education. In the next section of this

chapter, I discuss the rationale for the study as well as my personal reasons for embarking on this research study.

1.3 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

It is evident from past research that leadership in education in developing countries, specifically African countries (including Nigeria), tends towards the authoritarian (Harber & Davies, 1997, in Coleman, 2003, p. 155). Harber and Davies further argue that “classroom teaching (in African countries) tends to be authoritarian in style and since principals are recruited from the ranks of classroom teacher without further training, they are likely to maintain the same style”. Therefore, as a researcher from Nigeria, it was my interest to find out whether or not a public High school in Nigeria was still operating in a hierarchical, individualistic, authoritarian style of leadership or whether it has started embracing more contemporary approaches, such as distributed leadership which include the leadership of the SMT and teachers alike.

1.3.1 Personal reasons for the study

In addition, apart from the fact that the thesis constitutes an important requirement for the attainment of a master’s degree in any higher institution, I had my personal reasons for embarking on this study. As a proprietor or owner of a private school in Nigeria, embarking on this type of research study will go a long way to enhancing my professional knowledge in the field of leadership and management. It will further influence my orientation towards the professional handling of a school as a person in the position of leadership. Finally, engaging in this type of research study will broaden my horizon to embark on other, similar research projects in the future. I work closely with principals and other leaders in the school and developing a better understanding of leadership, and of how leadership is perceived, will obviously help me to understand issues and solve problems. It worths mentioning that, although I am a proprietor of a private school, I was not involved in the particular school where this study was based.

In the next section of this chapter, I present an overview of literature on leadership, management, and administration because of their importance to this study.

1.4 OVERVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

According to Coleman (2005, p. 6), “the three concepts of leadership, management and administration overlap, but as we shall see, their usage varies at different times, in different countries and in different professional cultures”. In Nigeria, as in the USA, the term ‘administration’ is more popular than leadership and management. In most of the courses offered in Nigerian Universities, one finds courses in ‘Educational Management and Administration’ and not ‘Educational Leadership and Management’, as in countries like England and South Africa. Also, in Nigeria, principals are commonly addressed as school administrators. For the purpose of this research study and a better understanding of the three concepts, I think it is appropriate to look at their various definitions.

The word leadership is a complex and ambiguous word. In fact there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership. Take for example Bass (1990, in Spillane, 2006, p. 10) who argues that “leadership has been seen as an act of behaviour, a form of persuasion, and a power relation”. Bass further states that leadership also occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. In my view, leadership can be defined as a process whereby a leader sets a new direction, vision or influences a group of individuals towards the achievement of an organizational goals and objectives, i.e. leadership is about change.

According to Cuban (1988, in Bush, 2003, p. 8), management is “maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change”. Thus management is about the maintenance of systems and processes in an organisation such as a school.

For the purposes of this study, administration is defined as “a concept that relates to tasks which were routine” (Coleman, 2005, p. 6). Such tasks include fixing of dates for the meetings, writing and sending of notice of meetings, writing of agenda for the meetings, minutes taking, and collating and typing of minutes of the meetings.

Distinguishing these three concepts was very important in my study as they offered me the conceptual tools to understand what was going on in the leadership practices of the case study

school. This is because, for any significant achievement to take place in our educational institutions, our school leaders and our researchers should be ready to shift their attention from leadership, understood in terms of the person in the top management position in the school (i.e. the principal) to leadership practices from a distributed perspective, which is my next point of discussion.

1.4.1 Leadership practices from a distributed perspective

According to Henning (2004, p.25) “a theoretical framework is like the lenses through which you view the world”. The main theoretical framework underpinning my research was that of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership moves away from traditional notions of leadership which tend to emphasise authority and control. It is primarily concerned with “mobilizing leadership at all levels in the organization not just relying on leadership from the top, it is about engaging the many rather than the few in leadership activity within the school and actively distributing leadership practice” (Harris, 2005, p. 1). In this case it was this understanding of distributed leadership that guided my study and provided the theoretical background for me to make sense of, describe and explain the practices of leadership in the case study school. Distributed leadership can therefore be used as an “analytical frame for understanding leadership practice” (Harris and Spillane, 2008, p. 32, cited in Harris, 2005).

1.5 RESEARCH GOAL AND QUESTIONS

The main goal of this study was to explore leadership practices in the case study school – to see how different people relate to each other in the various leadership practices of the school, such as staff and briefing meetings.

To realise the above goal, I endeavoured to answer the following questions:

- What leadership practices are evident in staff meetings and brief meetings in the case study school?
- What are the respondents’ perceptions of leadership in the case study school?
- What are the factors enabling or constraining distributed leadership in the case study school?

1.6 METHODOLOGY

This research study is located within the interpretive paradigm. According to Maree (2007, p. 60), “the ultimate aim of interpretive research is to offer a perspective of a situation and analyse the situation under study to provide insight into the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation or phenomena they enter”. Therefore, my intention was to explore the leadership practices in the case study school, to study the joint interactions of the leaders and the followers during staff and briefing meetings and to explore respondents’ perceptions of leadership.

The approach adopted in this study was a qualitative case study. This was suitable for my study as its focus was to explore the leadership practices at play in real-life situations, chiefly staff meetings and briefing meetings in the case study school and how the leaders and followers interacted with each other during these particular situations.

The research site was a public high school in Ibadan Oyo state, Nigeria. My primary participants for the study included the entire population of the school management team i.e. the principal, the vice-principal (academics) and heads of departments. I also drew on the entire teaching staff to provide breadth of information on my topic.

As a disabled researcher in a wheelchair, going back to my country Nigeria for data collection was out of the question. Therefore my plan was to gather my data through studying video footage of meetings. I use internet Skype which I tested and found suitable for my interviews with participants. It was also useful for discussions on important documents collected, and sending as well as receiving relevant information on gathering of questionnaires from my participants. I used four different tools of data collection to obtain information for my study namely: Document analysis, observation, a questionnaire and stimulated recall interviews. These are discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

1.7 LAYOUT OF THE THESIS

This dissertation is presented in the following manner: Chapter one introduces the study and presents the background and context of the study. Chapter two outlines the literature review on leadership, management and administration; traditional theories of leadership; distributed leadership and leadership practices. In Chapter Three, I discuss the methods and methodology used in the research, as well as ethical issues and the limitations of the study. The findings of my research are discussed in Chapter Four, Chapter Five presents the discussion of the findings and Chapter Six concludes the thesis and makes recommendations. In the next chapter, I review the relevant literature to the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In our educational institutions today, the importance and relevance of effective leadership to the achievement of their primary goal which is effective teaching and learning cannot be over emphasised. Effective leadership therefore is a powerful force for change. Harris (2008, p. 9) argues that “while the education challenges are considerable and the route to reform is complex, the potential of leadership to influence pupil and school performance remains unequivocal. It has been consistently argued that quality of headship matters in determining the motivation of teachers and the quality of teaching which takes place in the classroom” Furthermore, for our schools of learning to make any appreciable achievement or development, the research focus must shift from leaders to leadership practice which is a joint interaction of the leaders, the followers and the situation. Therefore, for any remarkable achievement to take place in our educational institutions, our leaders must be ready to develop a broad-based leadership capable of leading to effective teaching and learning in our educational institutions. According to Harris (2008, p. 1) “in today’s climate of rapid change and increasingly high expectations, effective leadership is needed more than ever. But the question is what type of leadership? It is clear that change on such a massive scale will demand new leadership practices” (Harris, 2008, p. 1). In his own contribution, Spillane (2006, p. 87) argues that “we need a new way of thinking about leadership. The distributed perspective offers one. It offers a way of approaching the very practical problems of school leadership. However, it provides a way of thinking systematically about the practice of leadership”. thus the focus on leadership for my study as opposed to administration which is the standard concept in Nigeria.

In this chapter, I review the relevant literature on leadership and particularly distributed leadership, the focus area of my study. I begin the chapter by defining the concept of leadership together with its two other overlapping concepts, management and administration, and also discussing their differences and similarities. These three concepts of leadership,

management and administration are important to my study. Leadership is important because it is the focus of my study, but because management processes are complementary to leadership processes, they must be included in the discussion. Administration is important because it is a term used in Nigerian educational policy context and I want to understand its relationship to leadership. In addition, the understanding of the differences between these three concepts will afford the educational institution employees to know when and how to apply each set of characteristics for given processes.

Other areas of concentration of this literature review include: looking at the traditional leadership both as a background to leadership styles and its weaknesses that gave rise to the emergence of the contemporary theories of leadership especially distributed leadership. I also review distributed leadership which is the main theoretical framework underpinning my research study – its potential values to our educational institutions, leadership practices, and finally the chapter concludes with criticism of distributed leadership by some authors and researchers, which I termed ‘Distributed leadership- A critique.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

2.2.1 Defining leadership, management and administration

The three concepts of leadership, management and administration are said to overlap, are contested and interchangeably used in our day-to-day business operations. According to Coleman (2005, p. 6) “the three concepts of leadership, management and administration overlap, as we shall see, their usage varies at different times, in different countries and in different professional cultures”. She further states that in the UK at the present time, ‘leadership’ tends to be seen as the most important of these concepts, while in North America, the term ‘administration’ relates to the most prestigious level and may even be synonymous with ‘leadership’. ‘Educational administration’ in the USA therefore means more or less the same as ‘educational leadership’ in the UK. In Nigeria, like in the USA, the term ‘administration’ is more popular than leadership and management. In most of the courses offered in Nigeria Universities, one finds courses in ‘Educational Management and Administration’ and not ‘Educational Leadership and Management’, as in countries like

England and South Africa. Also, in Nigeria, principals are commonly addressed as school administrators.

The word leadership has been described as a complex, evolving, and ambiguous, emerging and contested phenomenon. Coleman (2003, p. 155) “the concept of leadership is complex and evolving”. Also, Harris (2008, p. 9) “leadership is currently in vogue”. The definition given to leadership depends mostly on the perspectives and the background of the definer. In fact, there is no agreed definition of the concept of leadership. Yukl (2002, pp. 4-5) argues that “the definition of leadership is arbitrary and very subjective. Some definitions are more useful than the others, but there is no ‘correct’ definition”. For the purpose of this research study and a better understanding of the three concepts, I think it is appropriate to look at their various definitions.

2.2.1.1 Leadership

According to Cuban (1988, in Bush, 2003), “leadership refers to people who bend the motivations and actions of others to achieving certain goals: it implies taking initiatives and risks”. Bush (2003, p.5) argues that “a central element in many definitions of leadership is that there is a process of influence”. However, some definitions of leadership focus on the need for leadership to be grounded in firm personal and professional values. Wasserberg (2000, in Bush, 2003, p. 5) claims that “the primary role of any leader (is) the unification of people around key values”. In their own contribution, Greenfield and Ribbins (1993, cited in Bush, 2003) add that leadership begins with the ‘character’ of leaders, expressed in terms of personal values, self-awareness and emotional and moral capacity. Coleman (2003, p. 156) also argues that “leadership tends to be equated with vision and values”. In his own contribution, Clarke (2007, p. 2) argues that “Leadership is about getting things to change”. He further states that there are four key strategies leaders use as they seek to produce future focused change which include vision, strategy, aligning people, motivating and inspiring. Gardner (2000, in Fullan, 2000, p. 3) also argues that “leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual (or leadership team) induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers”. Lastly, Naidu, Joubert, Mestry & Ngeobo (2008, p. 6) state that “leadership in an educational context comprises the ability to understand emerging trends in education and to guide a school through various challenges by achieving a vision based on shared values.” In fact, there is no agreed definition to the word leadership. From my own view, leadership can be defined as a process

whereby a leader sets a new direction, vision or influences a group of individuals towards the achievement of an organizational goals and objectives.

2.2.1.2 Management

The word management has been defined by various authors and educators according to their experiences or researching findings. Cuban (1988, in Bush, 2003, p. 8) argues that managing is “maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements. While managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change”. Also, the South Africa draft policy framework (South Africa, 1996, p. 3) states that management is “the capability and capacity to plan, operationalize and monitor management structures to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of the school through the day-to-day administration and system processes which underpin leadership and school improvement”. Clarke (2007, p. 3) argues that “management is about getting systems to operate effectively”. He further states that there are four key strategies managers use to ensure operational effectiveness; they are planning and budgeting, organising and staffing, controlling and problem solving and predictability and order”. In his own definition, Glatter (1979, p. 16) argues that “management is the ‘internal operations’ of an institution. This means that management involves dealing with systems, structures and the culture of a school for effective and smooth day-to-day operations” .From the above definitions, it is apparent that management has got to do with day-to-day operations or functions of an organization towards the achievement of such organizational goals or objectives. Such functions include, planning, organizing, directing, selecting, coordinating and budgeting.

2.2.1.3 Administration

The term Administration can be defined as the process or activity of running an organisation. Brooksbank (1980, p. 36) argues that “planning is the fundamental activity of educational administration in all its various aspects and at all levels of operation”. Such tasks include all the administrative routine activities in a formal meeting such as fixing of dates for the meetings, writing of agenda for the meetings, minutes taking, and collating and typing of minutes of the meetings and distribution of the agenda for the meetings. Next, I discuss the relationship between leadership and management.

2.2.2 The relationship between leadership and management

The fact that leadership and management are two notions that are often used interchangeably indicate that care must be taken in distinguishing between the two concepts. Coleman (2003, p. 7) argues in support of this claim that “despite the different interpretations that can be put on them, the words leadership and management are often used interchangeably in everyday speech, particularly in the UK. The blurring together of these two concepts is not entirely surprising as in practice, it is often the same people who are both leading and managing”. In their own contribution, Bolman and Deal (1997, in Bush, 2003, p. 9) state that “leadership and managing are distinct, but both are important, organisations which are over managed but under led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. Poorly managed organisations with strong charismatic leaders may soar temporarily only to crash shortly thereafter, the challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides”. Clarke (2007, p. 1) also argues that “strong leadership and good management are both essential for the success of a school, and a good principal is skilled at both. They also understand that circumstances determine whether a given situation requires more leadership and better management”. Also Gardner (2000, in Fullan, 2000) argues that “every time I encounter utterly first-class managers, they turn out to have quite a lot of the leader in them”. He further said that even the most visionary leader is faced on occasion with decisions that every manager faces. Naidu et al (2008, p. 6) state that “school leadership and management must be seen as two sides of the same coin as skills in both are essential to the effective functioning of schools”.

In contrast, some people hold different opinions when it comes to the relationship between leadership and management. Schon (1984, in Coleman, 2003, p. 156) argues that leadership and management are not synonymous, one can be a leader without being a manager and conversely, one can manage without leading. In his own contribution, Kotterman (2006, p. 13) argues that “whereas leaders are seen as charismatic and often are admired and held in high esteem, managers frequently are thought of as the organization’s taskmasters with a whip in one hand and bullhorn for screaming out orders in the other hand”. Also Clarke (2007, p. 1) argues that “leaders look outward and to the future. To them success is derived from future focused change. Managers look inward and to the present. To them success is derived from improved systems of control, predictability and order”. He further states that leadership is about direction and purpose while management is about efficiency and

effectiveness. Finally, Bush (2003, p. 8) argues that “leadership and management need to be given equal prominence if schools and colleges are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives”.

2.3 TRADITIONAL THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP

2.3.1 What is traditional leadership?

In this section, I look at the traditional theories of leadership, such as the Great man theory of leadership, trait theory of leadership, and situational theories of leadership. I discuss these concepts of leadership because of their importance to this research study which focuses on leadership practices and since traditional theories of leadership serve as background and foundation for leadership research in the nineteenth century. Also, for some of the school staff members who might display traditional forms of leadership in their staff meetings, these concepts will be of use for them as well, therefore, they must be included in my discussion of leadership practices.

The concept of leadership has been well and extensively researched. Day et al (2000, in Coleman, 2005, p. 8) refer to as the ‘swamp of literature on leadership’. Coleman (2005, p. 7) argues that “there is an enormous amount of material written about leadership in general and leadership in education in particular”. Historically, significant research into leadership started after the Second World War and traditional theories of leadership especially ‘Great man and trait’ theories of leadership became popular during the 19th century (Clarke, 2007, p. 13). However, due to their lapses or shortcomings, they became out dated as a result of the emergence of some other leadership theories that share leadership responsibilities among multiple leaders and followers. This is in contrast to the traditional theory of leadership that reposes its confidence and leadership responsibilities in a single authoritarian person.

2.3.1.1 Great man theory

One of the early leadership theories is the Great man theory. According to Clarke (2007, p. 13) “based on research into the qualities (behaviours and character traits) of historical leaders, particularly military and political leaders, there was a belief that leaders were born not made but that those who aspired to positions of leadership needed to emulate the personality traits, behaviour and values of the heroes of history” . The earliest researchers on leadership

theories attributed leadership to the qualities of the individual, hence they came up with the idea that leaders are being born and not made. The question I would then ask is, if this were the case, what would the significance of the leadership trainings provided by our various institutions where people were being trained as leaders and they have been practising successfully the skills and training acquire. Coleman (2005, p. 9) argues that “the most basic illustration of this is the ‘great man’ theory. The implication is that leaders are not made but born. This could be rather a depressing thought as it implies a sort of predestination and that there could be no such thing as effective leadership training”. The term Great man was used because, at the time, leadership was thought of primarily as a male quality, especially in terms of military leadership.

2.3.1.2 Trait theory

This is another similar theory of leadership to the Great man’s theory of leadership propounded by the earliest researchers in their attempt to investigate leadership. Earliest leadership researchers tend to identify traits that effective leaders possessed by examining leaders who had achieved a level of greatness. Prominent among such qualities included: visionary, inspirational, courageous, loyal, steadfast and stoical (Clarke, 2007, p. 13). Wynn (2012) argues that these preliminary attempts to identify traits of leaders focused on well-known historical figures who were men, which is why this theory is often called the ‘great man’s’ approach.

Fundamental to this theory of leadership was the idea that some people are born with traits that make them natural leaders. According to Clarke (2007, p. 13), “there was a belief that leaders were born not made but that those of who aspired to positions of leadership needed to emulate the personality traits behaviours and values of the heroes of history”.

2.3.1.3 Situational theories

These are another set of leadership theories by the earliest researchers. Situational theories relate the leader to the situation in which they find themselves. Their thinking was that leaders were made by their situations. Clarke (2007, p. 15) argues that “situational leadership looks to define leadership characteristics by the extent to which there is a match between the needs of the situation and the knowledge and skills of the leader”. In addition, Coleman (2005, p. 10) states that “these theories allow for the fact that the leader does not operate in isolation, but will be affected by his/her circumstances. Churchill is often identified as a

‘great man’ but he was much more successful as a leader in war than in peace”. All these theories of leadership propounded by the earliest researchers on leadership were not without their shortcomings and problems associated with them that made them unsuitable for leading an organisation today. These problems will be my next point of discussion.

2.3.2 Problems of traditional theories of leadership

What was fashionable yesterday, is out dated today, hence, as the worldview changed from ancient to modern, also the way researchers viewed leadership changed. Knowledge about leadership theories needed to be observed and studied to give better understanding. In a nut shell, traditional theories of leadership were critically criticised and rejected based on some inadequacies.

According to Coleman (2005, p. 9,) “it has proved impossible to empirically identify a particular set of traits that are clearly present in a range of leaders and transferable across cultures and both the great man and trait theories are not considered adequate for the identification of leadership qualities and skills”. In her own criticism of these traditional theories of leadership, Wynn (2012) identified two shortcomings that made the Great man and trait theories of leadership unsuitable for today’s leadership: that they lacked consensus on the definite traits that set great leaders apart from each other; and also that trait theory overlooked the importance of situations and the relationship to leadership. Wynn further argues that the only point on which earliest theorists agreed was that great leaders were special; they had qualities that were born within them.

In his own criticism of the situational leadership approach, Clarke (2007, p. 14) states that “the obvious shortcoming of this model is that it suggests that different situations require different leaders and that an individual who is a suitable leader in one situation would not necessarily suit another different situation”. He further contends that leaders, however, need to, and do cope, with a range of differing situations. Any valid model of leadership needs to accommodate this reality. Simkins (2005, p. 12,) in his own criticism of the traditional theories of leadership, differentiates between the traditional views and emerging views of leadership, these include: while the traditional views hold the belief that leadership resides in individual, the emerging views believe that it is a property of social system; to the traditional views, leadership is hierarchically based and linked to office, but in the emerging views, leadership can occur anywhere; to the traditional view, leadership occurs when leaders

do things to followers, in the emerging views of leadership, leadership is a complex process of mutual influence; also, traditional views believe that leadership is different from and more important than management, while to the emerging views, the leadership/management distinction is unhelpful and lastly, traditional views hold the belief that leaders are different, while emerging views believe that anyone can be a leader. Spillane (2006, p. 4) also criticised heroics type of leadership and argues that “the heroics of leadership is problematic for four reasons: first, heroic epics typically equate school leadership with school principals and their valiant actions; secondly, most accounts of school leadership pay scant attention to the practice of leadership; third, concentration on individual actions fails to capture the significance of interactions and, fourth, in the heroic leadership tradition, leadership is defined chiefly in terms of its outcome. This is problematic because leadership can occur without evidence of its outcome”.

In my own view, the traditional approach of the earliest researcher on leadership was quite in order, believing that Rome was not built a day, it was a gradual process. These theories of leadership termed traditional serve as background, as a basis or foundation for the emergence of the contemporary leadership theories. However, they are not without their lapses, the focus of their leadership qualities on inherent characteristics, gender and physical disabilities made them unacceptable or unsuitable for today’s leadership operations. Both gender and physical disability need not be a barrier to leadership. Also, we have situations whereby some people possess those traits but who were not leaders as at that period. All these serve as challenges to the traditional theories of leadership.

Finally, I agree with Clarke (2007, p. 15) who argues that “the new model of leadership has grown out of necessity as a result of the rapidly changing environment in which organizations must operate”. My next discussion is in line with this assertion, which is about the changing landscape of leadership.

2.4 CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF LEADERSHIP

Evidence from research studies and various literature reviews have indicated that the failure of top-down, hierarchical, traditional leadership to meet the needs and aspirations of today’s leadership operations in our educational institutions has paved way to the emergence of contemporary theories of leadership. According to Hartley (2007, p. 206), “there appear to be two explanations of the emergence of distributed leadership: first, the failure of the

‘charismatic hero’ associated with transformational leadership; and second, the greater complexity of the tasks which now beset school leaders”. Also, Camburn et al (2003, cited in Timperly, 2007) argue that “a more achievable and sustainable conceptualization of leadership has been coming increasingly to the fore to replace the model of a single ‘heroic’ leader standing atop a hierarchy, bending the school community to his/her purposes”. They further explain that this alternative involves thinking of leadership in terms of activities and interactions that are distributed across multiple people and situations.

Apart from the failure of traditional forms of leadership to meet up with the expectations of today’s requirements for educational leadership, there are other reasons that brought the emergence of contemporary leadership as a replacement, especially distributed leadership or shared leadership as a replacement to heroic type of leadership. According to Copland (2003, in Timperley 2007, p. 395)

Hopes that the answer to the problem of transforming schools lie with the strong leader with exceptional vision and action have been dashed for a number of reasons. Such leaders do not come ready made in sufficient numbers to meet the demands involved in being a leader in today’s world.

Timperley (2007) in her own contribution states that the number of administrative tasks a principal undertakes typically leaves insufficient hours in the day to complete the necessary heroic activities and to cope with these more mundane responsibilities and most problematic is that, when the heroic leader moves on, progress often comes to a standstill and previous practices re-emerge, thereby bringing the school back to its original position of heroic leadership. Senge (1990, p. 834), argues that “a new conceptualization of leadership is needed to break the cycle – where leadership is seen as ‘the collective capacity to do useful things’ and where leadership responsibility is widely shared beyond the head or principal”. This viewpoint, according to Harris (2008, p. 23) “is premised on the central idea that that contemporary organizations require collaboration and team work on a scale not required before. This ‘new leadership’ is about deep involvement in leadership practice and collective capacity building”.

However, indications from contemporary research studies on leadership have revealed that distributed leadership is now the most fashionable and favoured of all the theories of leadership in operation, therefore I would like to discuss distributed leadership as a preferred alternative leadership to all other types of leadership of the moment.

2.4.1 Distributed leadership – a preferred alternative.

Literature reviewed on distributed leadership from various scholars and authors has indicated that distributed leadership is the preferred theory of the moment. Prominent among these scholars include Harris (2008) and Spillane (2006), all of which are evidence of the continuing influence of distributed leadership. Woods and Gronn (2009, pp. 430-431) argue that “in this context, distributed leadership has emerged as the preferred candidate of a growing number of scholars”.

In support of the fact that distributed leadership is the leadership whose time has come and the fact that literature on it is so diverse and global, Hartley (2007, p. 202) argues that “distributed leadership has currency; its time has come; it is the ‘new kid on the block’ (Gronn, 2000, p. 1), ‘in vogue’ (Harris, 2004, p. 13). The National College for School Leadership (NCSL) in England now has its own dedicated distributed leadership website (NCSL, 2006). In USA, there is a similar trend, for example, there is Spillane’s five year distributed leadership study project at North western University”. Hargreaves and Fink (2006, in Harris, 2008, p. 30) argue that “in a complex fast paced world, leadership cannot rest on the shoulders of the few”. It is their further contention that sustainable leadership has to be distributed leadership, which firmly centred on learning.

2.4.2 Defining the concept – distributed leadership

In this section of my literature review, it is not my intention to trace the history of the emergence of ideas relating to distributed leadership but rather, my discussion here is to explore various definitions of distributed leadership and its contributions or impact in our educational institutions and on members of our educational institutions as well.

Despite the widespread interest in the idea of distributed leadership, there have been competing and sometimes conflicting interpretations of the term. The definitions and understandings of distributed leadership extend from the normative to the theoretical and by implication; the literature supporting the concept of distributed leadership is diverse and broad based (Bennet et al, 2003, in Harris, 2008, p. 33).

In the light of this and for the purpose of this study, I look at some of the various definitions of distributed leadership. According to Gronn (2000, p. 324), “distributed leadership theory advocates that schools ‘decentre’ the leader. In this sense leadership is more appropriately understood as ‘fluid and emergent’, rather than a fixed phenomenon”. Coleman (2002, cited in Gronn 2000) argues that distributed leadership “reflects the new view that every person in

one way or another can demonstrate leadership”. She further states that this does not mean that everyone is a leader or should be but it opens up the possibility for a more democratic and collective form of leadership. Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p. 95) argue that “sustainable leadership is leadership that spreads, that is distributed and shared”. Gronn (2000, p. 331) views distributed leadership as more of a collective phenomenon where “leadership is present in the flow of activities in which a set of organization members find themselves enmeshed”. Spillane, Halverson & Diamond (2004) refer to this distribution as being ‘stretched over’ people in different roles. According to Copland (2003, in Harris, 2008, p. 28) broad-based, deep, distributed leadership in schools is viewed as:

a set of functions or qualities shared across a much broader segment of the school community that encompasses teachers and other professionals and community members both internal and external to the school. Such an approach imposes the need for school communities to create and sustain broadly distributed leadership, systems, processes and capacities.

Looking at the different definitions given by various authors, it can be concluded that one point on which different authors appear to agree is that distributed leadership is not the same as dividing leadership responsibilities among the organizational members. According to Timperley (2007, p. 396),

distributed leadership is not the same as dividing task responsibilities among individuals who perform defined and separate organizational roles, but rather it comprises dynamic interactions between multiple leaders and followers. Task responsibilities are distributed across traditionally defined organizational roles”.

2.4.3 Potential value of distributed leadership for our schools

Distributed leadership, for its popularity, and as the prevalent leadership model of our time must have got some potential values towards the development and growth of our schools which I would like to explore in this section. According to Harris (2008, p. 28), “it suggests that distributed leadership, as an idea, is powerful for two reasons: first, it has the potential to free schools from the current rigidity and flexibility of existing leadership structures and secondly, it has the potential to connect the practice of leadership more closely to teaching and learning”. She further argues that a major study of effective leadership in England concluded that “well executed distributed leadership is a key feature of effective models of leadership” (DfES, 2007, cited in Harris, 2008).

From the literature, there seem to be some support for the idea that distributed leadership has the potential to secure organizational change. Leithwood et al (2007, cited in Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2009) argue that “there is increasing evidence to suggest that certain patterns of configurations of distributed leadership offer greater potential for organizational change and development”. Also “a distributed leadership makes it possible for the work of leadership to be manageable” (Spillane, 2006, p. 88). According to Woods and Gronn (2009, p. 442) “distributed leadership affords a membership the potential for access to decision-making agenda framing, information input and argumentative deliberation”. They further argue that a value of distributed leadership conceptually is that in its radical form it raises fundamental issues to do with how we understand the relationship between individual and community. Timperley (2007, p. 396) in her own contribution argues that distributed leadership is particularly important in relation to the instructional aspects of leadership. “It is the development of instructional leadership, rather than other organizational functions that has been shown to have the greatest leverage in effecting programmatic changes and instructional improvement”. In addition, Leithwood, Day, Sammons, Harris & Hopkins (2006, p. 12) argue “...relevant here is the fifth ‘strong claim’, ‘school leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed”. Hargreaves and Fink (2006, p. 95) also argue that “sustainable and distributed leadership inspires staff members, students, and parents to seek, create and exploit leadership opportunities that contribute to deep and broad learning for students”.

2.4.4 Leadership practices – from a distributed perspective

From the literature, it is evident that complex organisations like schools, where complex and numerous leadership responsibilities take place, can only achieve a meaningful development when those leadership responsibilities are distributed. There is too much involved in leading a school and this is beyond the ability of a single individual leader like a school principal. Spillane (2006, p. 87) argues that

thinking about leadership from a distributed perspective is essential. Individuals who single-handedly try to lead complex organizations like schools set themselves up for failure. Getting beyond the heroic plot is imperative. A distributed perspective makes it possible for the work of leadership to be manageable.

In this section, my intention is to discuss leadership practices within a school organization from a distributed perspective. Some of the areas that I would like to discuss include: what leadership practice from a distributed perspective means; I also wish to discuss the three

essential elements of leadership practice and how leadership practice can contribute to the growth and development of an organisation like a school. Also, in this section, I draw mostly from the five years research work of Spillane on leadership practice for my discussion. The reason is because his work serves as a useful framework for my research study. Spillane (2006, p. 10) argues that

a distributed perspective on leadership is best thought of as a framework for thinking about and analysing leadership. It's a tool for helping us think about leadership in new and unfamiliar ways. It can be used as a frame to help researchers decide what to look at when they investigate leadership.

Another reason why I draw on the research work of Spillane (2006) on leadership practice from a distributed perspective is that there is scanty literature on it. Heck and Hallinger (1999) argue that in-depth analysis of leadership practice is rare but essential if we are to make progress in understanding school leadership. They further state that most work that addresses leadership practice tends to equate it with the acts or actions of leaders. Frameworks for studying leadership practice are scarce. Spillane (2006, p. 57) in his own contribution, argues that "regrettably, the empirical knowledge base on the practice aspect of distributed leadership is thin. Few have investigated how leadership takes shape in the interactions among leaders, followers, and their situations; most of the work in this area has been done by me and by Gronn and his colleagues". Evidence from literature on leadership has shown that apart from Spillane et al, Gronn and Harris, other authors, and particularly in the context of Nigeria, have not actually emerged to carry out research work on leadership practice or distributed leadership in practice. In support of this claim, Hopkins and Jacksons (2002, in Harris 2004, p.13) argue that "accounts of distributed leadership in practice are not readily available and 'operational images' of distributed leadership are not forthcoming". However, there is an indication that some efforts in this field are on-going. Take for example, in 1999 the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT) commissioned research to identify and examine successful leadership practice in schools (Day et al, 2000, in Harris, 2004, p. 16) and also in 2001, the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) funded research that explored successful leadership in schools facing challenging circumstances (Harris and Chapman, 2002). All these show that we have on-going research efforts on leadership practice in addition to the scant research currently available on it now.

2.4.5 Defining leadership practice from a distributed perspective

According to Spillane (2006, p. 3), “a distributed perspective is first and foremost about leadership practice. This practice is framed in a very particular way, as a product of the joint interaction of the school leaders, followers, and aspects of their situation such as tools and routines”. He further argues that this distributed view of leadership shifts focus from school principals and other formal and informal leaders to the web of leaders, followers, and their situations that gives form to leadership. Looking at it from another angle, Spillane and Diamond (2004, p. 10) argue that “leadership activity is constituted – defined or constructed – in the interaction of leaders, followers, and their situation in the execution of particular leadership tasks”. According to Harris and Lambert (2003), “leadership practice from a distributed perspective implies broad-based involvement in the practice of leadership i.e. involving teachers, other professionals, students, parents and the wider community in decision making”.

In leadership practice from a distributed perspective, three elements are important. They are: leaders, followers, and their situations. These three elements can be represented by a diagram.

LEADERSHIP PRACTICE

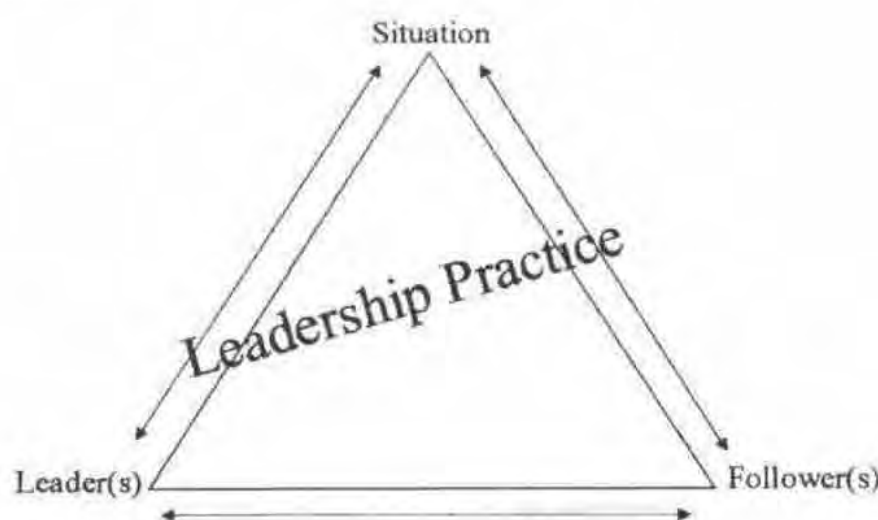


Figure 1. Constituting elements of leadership practice.

(From Spillane and Diamond, 2004, p. 11)

Spillane (2006) further contends that this leadership activity is stretched over individuals who have responsibility for leadership routines; these three elements in interaction mutually

constitute leadership practice. The triangle above represents leadership practices, with each of these angles representing one of the three essential elements such as the leaders, followers and the situation.

2.4.6 How interactions take place

Here, I try to consider how leadership practices are stretched over leaders and then the other two essential elements such as the followers and the situation. Spillane (2006, p. 15) argues that “the critical issue, then is not whether leadership is distributed but how leadership is distributed. In this way, a distributed perspective presses us to investigate how leadership practice is stretched over two or more leaders and to examine how followers and the situation mutually constitute this practice”. Analytically, and for better understanding of how interactions take shape, it might be useful to look separately at how leadership practice takes shape with each of these three essential elements of leadership practice such as leaders, followers and their situation.

2.4.6.1 Leaders and leadership practice

Within a school setting, the interactions under this heading take place between multiple leaders of the school. Such leaders may include the principal, vice-principal or deputy-principal, the HODs, the teacher leaders, the students, parents and community leaders. Therefore, understanding interactions that take place among them when they are jointly executing a certain routine or task is very important. Spillane (2006, p. 19) argues that “in a distributed leadership perspective, leadership practice is stretched over multiple leaders”. He further states that many of the leadership activities are co-enacted. Both their design or initiation and their execution over time depend on the practices of two or more leaders. According to literature, leadership practice among multiple leaders can take shape or enacted when a leader plus other leaders within the school setting working together to solve a particular set of pedagogical problems (Harris, 2008). Take for example, Spillane (2006, p. 17) argues that “at Ellis school on Chicago’s West side, the principal and assistant principal both monitor and evaluate classroom teaching, a core leadership function in their efforts to improve instruction”. He further states that, in some circumstances, the leaders’ role may defer while in another situation leaders roles may overlap. It all depends on the type of leadership task that is available for execution.

2.4.6.2 Followers and leadership practice

Spillane (2006) is careful to explain how he uses the term ‘followers’. He uses the term merely “to distinguish those in leader roles from others involved in a leadership routine. Leaders not only influence followers but are also influenced by them”. This aspect is equally important in leadership practices. Take for example, the classroom teachers, the head of departments, the school guidance-counsellor and others may find themselves in the follower role. It all depends on the type of leadership activities that comes up for execution. In support of this claim, Spillane (2006, p. 17) argues that “a distributed perspective on leadership not only acknowledges the centrality of followers to leadership but also casts followers in a new light, as an essential element that mutually constitutes leadership practice”. In this situation the interaction between the leaders and followers is a reciprocal gesture.

2.4.6.3 Situation and leadership practice

This aspect of situation is as important as the first two components that I have discussed, i.e. the leaders and the followers in leadership practices. Interactions take form not only among leaders and followers but with the situation as well which include routines and tools. According to Spillane (2006) “routine involve everything from getting to work in the morning to teaching a reading lesson. Routines involve two or more actors in a repetitive, recognizable pattern of interdependent actions” (2003, in Spillane, 2006 p. 18). Routines may engage multiple parties, such as from a classroom teacher to HOD to the school principal. Routines are said to be part and parcel of school life. Tools on the other hand, are defined as “externalized representations of ideas that are used by people in their practice (Wertsch, 1998, in Spillane, 2006, p. 18). According to Spillane (2006) tools include student assessment data, observation protocols for evaluating teachers, lesson plans and student academic work. He further argues that “these tools mediate how people practice, shaping interactions among leaders and followers in particular way”. In short, the role tools play in the performance of routine is essential to the interactions that take place among leaders and among leaders and followers. Finally on situation, Spillane (2006) argues that from a distributed perspective, tools and routines are an integral element that constitutes leadership practice.

2.4.7 Relevance of leadership practice from a distributed perspective

Thinking about leadership practices from a distributed perspective is very essential to the growth and development of the school as well as the development of the leadership of the school. According to Spillane (2006, p. 101),

Viewing leadership from a distributed perspective means that education policy makers must acknowledge that the work of leading schools involve more than the leadership of the school principal. Other leaders are critical, whether they are formally designated leaders such as assistant principals or teachers who take leadership responsibilities.

In stressing the importance of leadership practice, he further states that if you take a distributed perspective, the practice of leadership has to be the central concern. Leadership roles, functions, and structures are important. But leadership practice is paramount. It is the Holy Grail. Further on the relevance of leadership practice from a distributed perspective, Harris (2008, p. 13) argues that “distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise whenever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role”. In addition, Little (1990, in Harris, 2008, p. 13) argues that “evidence suggests that where teachers share good practice and learn together the possibility of securing better quality teaching increased”. According to Sackney (2000, in Harris, 2004, p. 13) “a variety of studies have also found clear evidence of the positive effect of distributed leadership on teachers’ self-efficacy and levels of morale”. In a summary form, the following are essential contributions of leadership practices from a distributed perspective towards the growth and development of a school.

- Leadership practices in a particular school is where the rubber meets the road for distributed leadership, Distributed leadership can be a diagnostic tool for reflecting on leadership practice. It can also be a design tool for thinking about the improvement of leadership practice.
- A distributed perspective provides leaders and those who work with them a set of analytical tools to support their reflection on leadership practice.
- A distributed perspective on leadership puts leadership practice centre stage rather than the chief executive or the principal; it allows for others – for instance, administrators or teachers – as key players in leadership practice either by design or by default.
- Leadership practice from a distributed perspective is most likely to contribute to school improvement and to build internal capacity for development.

Finally, despite the popularity of distributed leadership as the leadership of currency, however, it is not without its criticism. It is on this criticism of distributed leadership that my next discussion will be based. The next section aims to explore various criticism and confusion surrounding this concept – distributed leadership.

2.5 CHACTERISATIONS OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

Distributed leadership is characterised into three major categories by Gunter (2005, p. 51). These include authorised, dispersed and democratic distributed leadership. For the purpose of this study, I would like to look at their definitions briefly.

2.5.1 Authorised distributed leadership

According to Gunter (2005), authorised distributed leadership is “where work is distributed from the headteacher to others”. He further said that this type of distributed leadership is usually accepted because it is regarded as legitimate through the complex operation of hierarchy. It is a form of delegation from the leader to the led. It is also the empowerment of the led to work in particular ways.

2.5.2 Dispersed distributed leadership

In his definition of dispersed distributed leadership, Gunter (2005) argues that it is “where much of the work goes on in organisations without the formal working of a hierarchy”. In this situation much of what goes on in organisation cannot be directly attributed to the impact of leaders (Jermier and Kerr, 1997, cited in Gunter, 2005, p. 54). This type of distribution of leadership could also be termed ‘parallel leadership’, where others in addition to the headteacher lead (Crowther, 2002, cited in Gunter, 2005). In dispersed distributed leadership, while formal structures exist with role incumbents and job descriptions, the realities of practice means that people may work together in ways that work best and so “there is a difference between the paper-based organisational chart and what actually happens” (Gunter, 2005, p. 54).

In his own contribution, Wood, 2004, cited in Gunter, 2005) argues that “although leadership may be distributed, it does not necessarily imply an absence of hierarchy”, and so we need to be mindful that the debate about distribution is around where the interface is between control and autonomy.

2.5.3 Democratic distributed leadership

In his definition of democratic distribution leadership, Wood (2004, cited in Gunter, 2005) differentiates between ‘democratic leadership’ and ‘distributed leadership’, when he argues that “democratic leadership is distinct from distributed leadership in a number of ways”. For example, while both enable analytical description it is democratic leadership that has more normative potential. Also, while both are emergent and reveal dispersal of influence it is democratic leadership that acknowledges formal leaders as well as leadership.

2.6 DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP – A CRITIQUE

Distributed leadership is not without its criticism. Harris (2008, p. 31) argues that “before getting too carried away, we need to put distributed leadership under some scrutiny. The leadership field is very fond of new theories or labels for leadership, often produced without any recourse to empirical evidence”. Also, in his own contribution, Levin (2006, in Harris, 2008, p. 32) argues that “it is imperative that any consideration of distributed leadership or any other new model of leadership must be put to the theoretical and empirical test. We cannot simply accept that it is a good thing”. In fact, I quite agree with what Levin (2006, in Harris, 2008) said. There is a need for an intensive research works on distributed leadership, so that there can be empirical evidences of its suitability before it is given general acceptability. In addition, Gunter and Ribbins (2003, p. 132) in their own contribution, note:

While distributed leadership tends to be seen as normatively a good thing, it has also been contested ...most notably because of the complexities of who does the distribution and who is in receipt of distribution.

Furthermore, notwithstanding the emergence of distributed leadership as a genre within the field of educational management and leadership, some people believed that it has little or no impact on the learning of the school students. According to Hartley (2007, p. 202), “distributed leadership admits some confusion: its conceptual elasticity is considerable. And this very lack of conceptual clarity does not allow for a clear operationalization of the concept in empirical research”. He further states that although distributed leadership is very popular, there is no evidence of its particular achievement linked to the school management. Also the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) has this to say “but we are aware that, while there is a strong belief in the idea, (distributed leadership), there is not a great deal of evidence about how it works in practice”. In a similar way, Levacic (2005, cited in Hartley, 2007) argues that “attempts to show a direct causal relationship between leaders’

behaviour (be it distributed or otherwise) and pupils' achievement have yielded little that is definitive".

In addition, the comparison of distributed leadership with some other leadership concepts and its usage is creating a sort of confusion. Harris (2008, p. 37) argues that "this accumulation of allied concepts means that distributed leadership is often used in a shorthand way to describe any form of devolved, shared or dispersed leadership practice in schools. It is this catch-all use of the term that has resulted in both its misuse and its abuse". This argument is supported by Spillane (2006, p. 102) when he argues that "it would be unfortunate in that distributed leadership as a perspective on leadership practice would end up being everything and nothing at the same time". He further states that a related problem is that in associating a distributed perspective on leadership with democratic and collaborative leadership, commentators frequently juxtapose it against more hierarchical and top-down approaches to leadership. Despite all these criticisms, I still see the value of this theory of distributed leadership and therefore elected to use it in my study.

Harris (2008, p. 39) in her own criticism of distributed leadership, mentioned three barriers to distributed leadership that may make distributed leadership in schools difficult to achieve. These three barriers include: Distance, Culture, and Structure.

Distance – Within the school organization, the problem of distance can make it more difficult for teams to meet and problem solve. She further states that the physical space and distance can be a barrier to distributing leadership as the geographic separation makes it more difficult for teachers to connect. The solution she proffered is possibly ICT based solutions to break the barrier of distance and to seek alternative forms of communication.

Culture – Distributing leadership, Harris (2008) said, means a departure from a view of leadership that resides in one person to a more sophisticated and complex notion of leadership as a distributed property. The challenge for schools is to see leadership as an organizational resource that is maximised through interactions between individuals, and that leads to problem solving and new developments.

Structure – This is another barrier that Harris (2008) mentioned. The way schools are currently organized presents a set of barriers to distributing leadership and the challenge for schools is to find ways of removing these organizational structures and systems that restrict organizational learning.

Hofstede in his study of Nigeria cultural values and its implications for management practice (cited in Sokoya, 1998, p.226) also identified cultural orientation of the people as impediments to the distribution of leadership. He said that “the apparent ineffective transfer of some management know-how might be rooted in diverse cultural orientation”. According to Sokoya (1998), the personal value orientation of Nigeria managers fit into the four national cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede, which include power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity. These factors were classified as operative values by the Nigeria managers and it is likely to influence their behaviours and also their expectation of other’s behaviour. According to Hofstede’s definition, Masculinity is expected to be high in Nigeria. The reason is that the country has a high respect for values like Achievement, Material Successes, Profit Maximization, High productivity, Employee Welfare and Efficiency.

In my own point of view, the emergence of distributed leadership within organizations and especially in the field of educational management and leadership is a good thing to happen. The reason is that complex organizations like school where there are numerous leadership activities to attend to, cannot be left in the hand of a single hierarchical or individualistic person for accomplishment, but rather, if such leadership responsibilities are stretched over multiple leaders, it will give room for both specialization and quick result. The only thing I can recommend is that more field-work is needed to be carried out by the researchers in this field for more empirical evidences to substantiate the emergence of this distributed leadership and to let it retain its credibility. My view is in line with what Gronn (2000, p. 318) said “I will develop the argument that, if our perspectives of leadership are to continue to serve useful analytical and practical purpose, and then they must be grounded in a theory of action”. Harris (2008, p. 32) also supports this idea when she argues that “distributed leadership should not simply be taken at face value as a good thing. There are critical questions about its relationship with organizational development and change that require serious empirical investigation”. She further argues that while the emerging picture is positive, more work is needed.

2.6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the review of literature has provided me with theory and research relevant to my study. I have been able to explore various definitions of leadership and its two other overlapping and complementary concepts i.e. management and administration. I also paid attention to the relationship between leadership and management. Other areas of review include the traditional theories of leadership of leadership as the origin of leadership and its limitations as a singular leadership approach that led to the emergence of contemporary theories of leadership, especially distributed leadership which is the focus area of my study. In addition leadership practice from a distributed perspective was also reviewed and lastly, criticisms that trailed the emergence of distributed leadership as the leadership of the moment.

My belief is that if schools in my country (Nigeria) can embrace distributed leadership in the daily management of their institutions, it will go a long way to improve their school educational leadership and management and eventually, leading to effective teaching and learning. In the subsequent chapter, I present the methods and methodology underpinning my research matters such as sampling, ethics and limitations are also examined.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Knowing what you want to find out leads inexorably to the question of how you will get that information (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 42)

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In Chapter Two, I reviewed the related literature on educational leadership in general and distributed leadership in particular. This third chapter centres on research design and methodology. Methodology can be defined as a “general approach to studying research topic”, while, Methods can be defined as “techniques which take on a specific meaning according to the methodology in which they are used” (Silverman, 2000, p. 88). In other word, one’s methodology shapes which methods are used and how each method is used. Research methodology, according to Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 75, Table 4.1), “focuses on the process and the kinds of tools and procedures used, while research design looks towards what the end product will be”. Henning (2004) in her supports of this claim states that the end product, the design and all that is included in it are methodological issues by definition (p. 36). Research investigations have shown that a good design is the one in which the components work harmoniously together and promotes efficient and successful functioning while a flawed design leads to poor operation or failure. As a result, my focus of attention in this chapter includes the research design, the data collection and data analysis.

This chapter comprises the aim and research questions of the study, the description of the research paradigm utilised, methodology and research site, (including access and ethical issues) participants and sampling. It then gives a detailed description of the data collection process and technique used to gather data; and lastly, it explains how data were analysed, while ethical considerations, trust worthiness, limitations and challenges were also included.

3.2 GOAL AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main goal of my study was to explore the leadership practices in one public secondary school in Nigeria, shifting the focus of attention from the educational leader to leadership practices. Through a study of the practice, I was able to see ‘how’ leadership happened in two

situations in the case study school and how the different stakeholders related to each other in these situations. To be more specific, I was able to explore the level of interaction between the leaders and followers in a range of staff meetings and staff briefings meeting of the school.

As mentioned in Chapter One, my research endeavoured to answer the following questions:

- What leadership practices are evident in staff meetings and briefing meetings in the case study school?
- What are respondents' perceptions of leadership in the case study school?
- What are the factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership?

3.3 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Research studies have revealed that some thirty years back as a result of the linguistic turn in research, the qualitative research project took an interpretive turn; therefore researchers shifted their focus of attention to inquiring the way social meaning comes about in discourses and how these discourses are maintained (Henning, 2004). Consequently, by the mid-20th century, there was a shift of attention from positivism to studies that aimed to capture the lives of participants in order to understand and to interpret the meaning (p.19). Judging from the above description, one can say that the two differing paradigms that are of particular interest are the positivist and interpretive paradigms.

According to Bassey (1999, p. 42), a research paradigm can be defined as

A network of coherent ideas about the nature of the world and the function of researchers which, adhered to by a group of researchers, conditions the patterns of their thinking and underpins their research actions.

Maxwell (2005, p. 224) in his own definition of paradigm argues that a paradigm refers to “a set of very general philosophical assumptions about the nature of the world ontology and how we can understand it (epistemology)”.

My research study was therefore located within an interpretive research paradigm with its emphasis on experience and interpretation. I also discovered that the research I was doing centres on the behavioural sciences as it looks at people's perceptions and interactions

(Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 28). In addition, the interpretive paradigm is said to be good in producing descriptive analysis that emphasise deep interpretive understanding of social phenomena. Interpretive research being qualitative in nature, afforded me the opportunity to gain an understanding of the perceptions, values, actions of the people under study (Henning, 2004, p. 20). All these characteristics of the interpretive paradigm are in line with the focus of my study which is the exploration of leadership practices in a public high school in Nigeria. My research study seeks the understanding of individual participants' experiences and perceptions of their leadership practices as experienced in their daily management and leadership of the case study school.

Another characteristic that made the interpretive research paradigm suitable for my study includes its interest to understand something or want more insight into how others experience a phenomenon (Maree, 2007, p. 75). Also, employing interpretive research paradigm afforded me the opportunity to be able to work with smaller numbers of participants because the research was interested in individual subjective responses. My research was not to make generalizations, but rather to obtain a "rich, thick description" (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007, p. 21). Evidence has shown that research data in the interpretive tradition are usually qualitative, though statistical data may also sometimes be generated (Henning, 2004).

From the literature, the research method mostly preferred by the interpretive researcher is the case study. This is because in a case study, it is possible to employ a range of data gathering techniques. This was suitable for my research study because it gave me the chance to use a range of data gathering techniques such as observation, document analysis, interview, and questionnaire. Interpretive researchers always use more than one set of data in order to triangulate their findings. Lastly, I was able to carry out inquiry about the study in a natural setting in order to collect substantial situational information (Babbie & Mouton, 2001, p. 278).

3.4 METHODOLOGY: A CASE STUDY APPROACH

The word 'case study' is a combination of two different words joined together. In the light of this I was able to examine the meaning of each of them before defining the word case study as a research method. A case is a "specific example of something that belongs to a larger

category of instances” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 4). A case is also “a particular instance that refers to the circumstances or situation of a particular person, thing or action (Unabridged Dictionary). In short, a case might be a classroom, a person, a process, a programme, a problem, an institution or even a country. The word ‘study’ on the other hand can be defined as “an investigation into or of something” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 4). It can also mean the process of acquisition of knowledge. A case study therefore, as a research method preferred mostly by qualitative researchers, attracts different meanings according to the experience and research findings of individual authors.

My case in this study is ‘leadership practice’ and my methodology is a case study. I have decided therefore to adopt a case study approach because “examining a particular case is manageable and achievable, and will give me room to select an example that is familiar to me and to which I have access (Rule & John, 2010). In this section therefore, I discussed the following in relation to case study as my methodology or approach: definition of case study; features of case study; and weaknesses of case study.

3.4.1 Defining a case study

From the literature, multiple definitions and understandings of case study are found. According to Bromley (1990, cited in Rule & John, 2010), case study research is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest”. A case study can also be defined as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident” (Yin, 2009, p. 18). In their own definition, Rule and John (2011, p. 4), argue that a case study is “a systematic and in-depth investigation of a particular instance in its context in order to generate knowledge”. A case study consists in the “imagination of the case and the invention of the study” (Bassey, 1999). In addition, a case study can be used to refer to the process of conducting an investigation (studying the case), the unit of study (the case that is studied) and the product of this type of investigation (the final written document) (Merriam, 1998). In addition, Merriam further claims that a case study is employed to “gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved”. She further states that the interest is in process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in

discovering rather than confirmation. Similarly, Stake argues that a case study is both “a process of inquiry about the case and the product of that inquiry” (2000, p. 436).

Stake (2000) identifies three types of case study; intrinsic case study, instrumental case study and collective case study. According to him, intrinsic case study focuses on the case because it is interesting in itself; while an instrumental case study on the other hand examines the case to explore a broader issue; and collective case study is defined as instrumental study extended to several cases. Another way to classify case studies is according to their purposes. Yin (2003) identified three forms of case studies; they are exploratory, explanatory and descriptive case study. According to him, a descriptive case study presents a complete description of a phenomenon within its context. An exploratory case study examines a phenomenon that has not been investigated before and can lay the basis for further studies while, according to him, explanatory case study attempts to explain what happens in a particular case or why it happens. Using Stake’s and Yin’s classifications of case studies, my case is both intrinsic and exploratory in nature. It has intrinsic interest in the research, it examined a phenomenon that has not been investigated and laid basis for further studies.

3.4.2 Features of case study

For many social researchers to have adopted a case study as their preferred research approach, then case study must have some outstanding features. Case studies, according to Yin (2009, p. 2), is the preferred method when: (a) the investigator has little control over events, and (b) the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context. Yin (2009) further explains that this situation distinguishes case study research from other types of social science research. Case study is equally capable of providing rich insights into particular situations, events, organizations, classroom and even persons (Rule & John, 2011).

Prominent among features of case studies which Yin (2009) highlights include: the case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than points, and as A result, case study relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion. Some case study goes beyond being a type of qualitative research, by using a mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence “the case study method is not just a form of “qualitative research” even though, it

may be recognized among array of qualitative research choices” (Creswell, 2007, cited in Yin, 2009). Although case studies are usually qualitative research methods, “can include, and even be limited to quantitative evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 19). Hence my decision and justification for adopting questionnaire in the case study methodology for my research study. Evidence from research literature shows that case study research includes both single and multiple case studies and can be conducted and written with many different motives. According to Cronbach & Associate (1980, in Yin, 2009), case studies have “a distinctive place in evaluation research”. In their contribution to the features of case studies, Rule & John (2011) have the following categories which include: depth, flexibility, and manageability.

Depth – a case study is intensive rather than extensive, therefore, its study approach allowed me to examine the leadership practices that were prevalent in the study school in a great deal of depth, rather than looking at multiple instances superficially.

Flexibility – a case study is very flexible in terms of what it studies. Its flexibility afforded me the opportunity to use variety of methods, both for data collection and for data analysis.

Manageability – According to Rule and John (2011), the singularity of focus of a case study can make it more manageable than a large scale survey or wide ranging policy review, especially in a research situation facing constraints of time and resources. The singularity of the focus of my case study made this point suitable especially when one looks at the time frame available for the study.

3.4.3 Weaknesses of case study

Yin (2009, p. 11), identifies three limitations of a case study approach. First, case studies have been viewed as a less desirable form of inquiry than either experiments or survey by positivist researchers. Secondly, case studies provide little basis for scientific generalization, “how can you generalize from a single case?” is a frequently heard question. The answer is not simple (Kennedy, 1976, cited in Yin, 2009, p. 15). The third complaint about case studies is that they take too long, and they result in massive, unreadable documents.

Finally, a major criticism that emerged from some social scientist investigators is that of a misconception that case studies can only be used for the exploratory stage of an investigation, that for descriptive phase, surveys and histories are the appropriate methods, while experimental is the best method for explanatory or causal inquiries. The critics further held

the view that case studies are only a preliminary research method and cannot be used to describe or test propositions. However, these misconceptions have been proved to be false with the belief that this research approach can be used for all the three purposes i.e. exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory inquiries. Therefore, there may be exploratory case studies, descriptive case studies and explanatory case studies.

In conclusion, criticism of case study methodology is mainly on its dependence on a single case and it is therefore claimed that case study research is incapable of providing a generalising conclusion (Maree et al, 2007). Despite this criticism and others, I still used case study as my research method, this is because through its usage, I was able to gather a thick, rich and descriptive data that led to the painting of an in –depth picture of the case. It also allowed me to use a range of different methods of data gathering such as observation, questionnaire, interview and document analysis, included is the accessibility to a range of people such as the SMT and the teachers that led to trustworthiness of the case. More importantly, the purpose of case study is not to generalise, but to gain greater insight and understanding of the dynamics of a specific situation.

3.4.4 The case site

In this section, my intention was to give a vivid description of the school where my research study took place. This school was a public secondary school in Nigeria. It was situated in Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria. Ibadan is the state capital of Oyo state in the south-west part of Nigeria. The school was one of the metropolitan schools in the state. It was originally owned by the missionaries, but later taken over by the state government some years back in order to offer better funding, erase religious discrimination, and to boast the free-education programme of the federal government of Nigeria.

The school was one of the public secondary schools in the state established as far back as the 1970s and which has maintained a standard of academic excellence. Being a senior secondary school, all the teaching staff possesses either a first degree or masters' certificate in their respective areas of specialization. The following facilities were available in the school: a school library, a science laboratory, electricity, water, a foot-ball field, computing facilities, a school fence, an assembly-hall, and toilets.

There was a total of 28 teaching staff, including the SMT in the case study school. The percentage of the female staff members was around 75% compared to that of the male

counterparts which was 25%. Teacher/Student ratio was 1:30. In accordance with the Nigeria National Policy on Education (Nigeria, 1981) on public secondary schools, no school fees were charged, however, students were expected to pay compulsory development fees of about N1, 500:00 (one thousand five hundred naira). There was a total of 814 students in the school, comprises both male and female and they were drawn from parents who live within the school vicinity. The organization structure of the school was organised hierarchically and consisted of the principal at the top, the vice-principals, (the academic and administrative vice-principals) at the second level, the HOD's at the third level, the teachers at the fourth level with the learners at the bottom of the pyramid. The staff population of the case study school comprised of Christians, Muslims and African Traditional Religion worshippers.

The Ministry of Education in Oyo state, Nigeria was one of the state Ministries that were saddled with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of educational institutions, including supervision/inspection of secondary schools in the state. The state Ministry of Education was directly under the leadership, management, administration and control of the Honourable commissioner of Education appointed by the Executive Governor of the state. In support of this claim, the Nigeria National Policy on Education (Nigeria, 1981, pp. 44 & 45) explains that "the co-ordination, planning, financing, and direction of the total educational effort within the state are placed in the hands of the state Ministry of Education".

In Nigeria where the study took place; it is part of the societal culture of the Yoruba tribe of the country to give respect to the elders and to the people in position of authority. This is done by bowing down for such person or stand up to speak to that person. In support of the above claim, Bankole (2009, p. 66) argued that "elders are respected individuals identified by age and other qualities which mark them out in their families, communities nations, religions and the world". He further states that the elders are taken to be the repository of communal wisdom and therefore they are conceded leadership in the affairs of the people. This cultural value factor was important to this study because of the way it affected the leadership activities of the school.

The reason for choosing this school as my research study school was not unconnected with my intention to obtain a rich description of the research. My familiarity with one of the HOD's and some of the teachers, who were my one time colleagues and who knew my present condition of disability as a wheelchair user, was another reason for choosing the school. Their knowledge about my condition made them to be ready to assist with the

coordination and administration of the data collection process. I was neither a teacher nor a worker in this case study school.

3.4.5 Access issues

Due to my disability and the distance between Nigeria and South Africa, I was not able to travel to Nigeria to collect data. However, despite this obstacle, I was able to collect data with the assistance of ex-colleagues from the case study school. Thus the school was accessible virtually through Skype and electronic technology. Skype is a scenario that is happening more and more these days because it helps employers cut costs and save time (Sugar, 2011). In addition, Sweeney, (2011, cited in Sugar 2011) states that “Skype is just like a face-to-face conversation; there is an etiquette to keep in mind when being interviewed on the Skype whether you are the interviewer or the interviewee”. On convenience sampling, Henning (2004, p. 71) argues that “the people most suitable to ‘wander with’ on the research journey are selected at the time that they are needed”. In accordance with the argument of Henning (2004) above, I selected my ex-colleague who has been assisting me with both the coordinating and facilitating the process as my field-assistant.

In addition, I also agree with the assertion of Cohen et al (2007) who state that “investigators cannot expect access to a school, college or University as a matter of right and they need to demonstrate that they are worthy as researchers and human beings to be accorded the facilities to conduct their investigations” (p. 55). This is an indication that accessibility is a negotiated process. Therefore, the accessibility of and professional relationship which I had with my field-assistant, I think was an advantage for me to gain access to some important documents and people (my participants) relating to the research study.

In addition to the relationship which I had with my field-assistants, I also gained official consent from various parties concerned like the school principal, the vice-principal, the HOD’s and the teachers through my consent letters and the declaration form which they all signed.

3.4.6 Participants for the study

My primary participants for the study included the entire population of the school management team i.e. the principal, the vice-principal (academics) and the HOD’s. I also drew on the entire teaching staff to gather breadth of information on my topic. I agree with

Henning (2004) when she states that the participants to the research are spokespersons for the topic of inquiry, they are not representative of a population and the findings from my study cannot therefore be generated to a population.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

It was my intention to spend between 4 – 6 weeks collecting data from my participants, but I ended spending about 8 weeks. This was due to the problem of conveyance of the disc and flash drive that contained the video coverage for the observation. In addition, the other major problem associated with my data gathering process was communication, because of the distance between Nigeria and South Africa. Internet at times was not reliable and in Nigeria, there used to be intermittent electricity interruption. What we did to overcome this problem was to use private computer centres that had a generating plant and offered private internet facilities. Another challenge was that schools in my home country where the study took place were on vacation and I had to wait for them to resume before I could complete the collection of my data. For my data collection process, I did not have the conventional data collection process; instead, I relied on my field-assistant to do the coordination for me through virtual data collection process. Virtual worlds “offer a new research platform where behaviours and social interactions can be tracked precisely and automatically over time” (Yee, 2008). Also, on virtual data collection, Given (2011) argues that “studies of research practice, including ethical and legal implications of conducting research in virtual environments, are needed to facilitate innovative and appropriate use of these new technologies for social research”.

On selection of a suitable school, as a disabled person in a wheelchair, it was more convenient for me to select a school in my place of study Grahamstown, South Africa. But due to the goal of Ford Foundation International fellowship program, the organisation that sponsored me, I was committed to researching in my home country. In this regard, the IFP fellows’ hand-book (2009) states that

Our program seeks to provide opportunities for advance study to exceptional individuals who will use their education to become leaders in their respective fields, **to further development in their countries**, and to create greater economic and social justice worldwide” (p. 9).

Therefore, in accordance with the goal of the IFP organization, I decided to carry out my research in one of the public high schools in Nigeria, due to geographical space/distance between my host country South Africa and my home country Nigeria.

In this next section, I presented the data collection methods employed, as well as a motivation of my choices. Furthermore the benefits and limitations of each method were addressed. My primary sources of data collection were observation and interviews, while I used four different tools of data collection to obtain information for my study namely: Document analysis, observation, questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

3.5.1 Document Analysis

Documents are useful because they “provide information from the distant or more recent past” (Johnson, 1994, p.25). Document analysis, as one of my tools of data collection, afforded me the opportunity to gain access to some vital information and a descriptive picture of the leadership practices evident in the case study school. The important documents which I was able to gain access to included: the minutes of the briefing and staff meetings over the past two years. Through these documents, I was able to determine the leadership practices prevalent in the case study school, and also garner a sense of history about the way in which the briefing and staff meetings were conducted. This data gathering tool was much of an advantage to me because once I received the documents from my field-assistant; I had access to it at time convenient for me (Creswell, 2003, p. 187).

3.5.2 Observation

Observation was my primary data collection tool while both questionnaires and the interviews were my secondary tools which closely followed the observations, and were based on the video footage of the briefing and staff meetings. According to Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 106) the purpose of observational research is “to probe deeply and to analyse intensively”. Considering my condition of disability and the distance of my home country Nigeria, I carried out my observation through the watching of a video-coverage of staff meetings and staff briefing meetings that were carried out in the case study school between the SMT and staff members. Through the video-coverage, I was able to watch and listen to interactions of the leaders and followers in these particular situations and recorded my observations in a journal.

My observations were guided by an observation schedule which contained both closed and open ended questions. It included questions such as (i) was there an agenda for the meeting? (ii) What was the purpose of the meeting? (iii) What was the actual content of the meeting? (IV) How did SMT members and teachers interact with each other during the meetings? (VA) Was the meeting dominated by the principal and/or the SMT or was there space for teacher participation? (VB) what was the area and depth of teacher participation? (VI) How involved were teachers in whole school decision-making? (Vii) was a culture of collaboration and debate evident or were the majority of the staff passive and voiceless?

3.5.3 Questionnaires

A questionnaire can be defined as “a series of questions set out on papers, and to be answered on paper rather than verbally. The questions are usually, but not always, related to a single topic, focus or area of interest” (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p.95). Cohen & Manion further state that questionnaires generally either provide space for an answer or offer a number of fix alternatives from which the respondent is required to make a choice. Questionnaires, as Rule and John explain, “are printed sets of field questions to which participants respond on their own (self-administered) or in the presence of the researcher. They can thus be administered through the post, electronically (e.g. through e-mail) or face-to-face” (2011, p. 66).

A total number of 28 questionnaires were electronically sent to my field-assistant in Nigeria for distribution to my participants at the case study school. The questionnaires were given to the SMT and the teaching staff members to probe what happened during the meetings observed. The SMT were six in number while the teachers were 30 in number. Out of these 28 questionnaires, which my field-assistant distributed, 23 questionnaires were returned and sent back to me electronically. The percentage of the questionnaires returned was 82%. These completed questionnaires which were sent to me were used to probe what happened during the videoed SMT meeting and staff meetings at the case school. The usefulness of questionnaire, as presented in the literature, is numerous. Its use may even overlap with or be integrated with other approaches such as interviewing or observation. Also, a key element in questionnaire use is that they can be designed and structured to suit specific needs and purposes (Cohen & Manion, 1994, p.95). Although a questionnaire might take long to design, it is quick in collecting data. I used both open and closed ended questions. Questionnaire was standardized – easy to code and analyse. Its disadvantage is that respondents sometimes

'guess' at answers rather than providing true feelings. The questionnaires were answered by the whole staff from their memory of the videoed staff and briefing meetings.

The purpose of my chosen questionnaire for this study was to unpack the leadership practices, i.e. the joint interactions of the leaders and the followers that manifest during staff meetings and briefing meetings of the case study school, also to gather responses to my research question on perceptions of participants on leadership in general. I was able to receive answers to questions like, who led and in what situations? Was the leadership during staff meetings primarily the domain of the SMT?

3.5.4 Semi-structured interviews

This was another important tool that I employed to obtain information on leadership practices, in the case study school. Semi-structured interviewing, according to Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 277) "enables the respondent to give his/her own answer as fully as he/she chooses rather than being constrained in some way by the nature of the questions". Interviews also provide access to the context of people's behaviour and are thus a way for researchers to understand the meaning of that behaviour (Seidman, 1991 p. 4). In particular I used video stimulated recall (SR) interviews to probe further what happened during a range of meetings observed. Using a technique of SR is not new; it has been used both nationally and internationally for teaching and research purpose. Stimulated recall (SR) "has been used extensively in research into teaching and continuous to be popular" (Lyle, 2003, p. 863), but it has not been used much in the field of ELM in African countries such as South Africa and Nigeria. Stimulated recall can be defined as "a family of introspective research procedures through which cognitive processes can be investigated by inviting subjects to recall, when prompted by a video sequence, their concurrent thinking during that event" (Lyle, 2003, p. 861). SR has certain strengths, it enhances change in practices and growth of the individual in new learning; the procedure also maintains the benefits of the naturalistic context, while its major challenge is that validating the degree of accuracy may be difficult. Six participants, i.e. the entire SMT, were individually interviewed. The purpose of interviewing them was to explore their experience and reflections on their participation in the briefing meetings and staff meetings videoed for the purposes of this study in order to obtain relevant information on the leadership practices prevalent during these two situations, which I was able to write up, once I have done the interviews and experienced the challenges/successes thereof.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Stake (1995) describes the process of data analysis as unlocking information hidden in the data and transforming it into meaningful and useful information. Data collected from document analysis and questionnaires gave me a general ‘feel’ while observation through video footage and stimulated recall interviews gave me a more detailed ‘feel’ of the interactions in the staff and briefing meetings and provided me with data needed for this exploratory study.

I used categorising strategies such as coding and then adopted a thematic analysis. Evidence from literature have shown that the process of working from codes to themes is commonly used in case study research. Codes are labels that highlight different themes of foci within the data, while coding can be defined as a process of choosing labels and assigning them to different parts of data (Rule & John, 2011, p. 77).

Included among the strengths of coding is that it is an integral part of data analysis, and it provides a good opportunity for getting close to data. Its weakness is that it is a time consuming task. The data from the documents, observations, questionnaires and interviews were coded. Maxwell (2005, p. 96) in addition refers to coding as the fracturing of data and to then rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparisons between things in the same categories and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts. After coding process the next step I adopted was the thematic analysis of the data. Thematic analysis according to Rule & John (2011) means “working with the codes to identify patterns”, such as the similarities and differences. I was able to write them up, once I have completed the analysis of the data.

3.7 VALIDITY

Validity, according to Rule and John (2011, p. 104), “allows the researcher to make claims that what was chosen as the focus or phenomenon to be studied, was actually studied”. The data collected from the document analysis, observations, questionnaire and semi-structured interviews were triangulated for validity purposes. Triangulation refers to “the process of using multiple sources and methods to support propositions or findings generated in a case study” (Rule & John, 2011, p. 109). Similarly, Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 233) refer to triangulation as “the use of multiple data sources and data collection methods to validate research findings”. In my study, triangulation was done through the use of four data collection methods, getting views from both SMT and teachers.

3.8 ETHICAL ISSUES

A researcher has the responsibility to see that the research is ethical, by carrying out the research within an ethics of respect for persons, respect for knowledge, respect for democratic values and respect for the quality of educational research (Bassey, 1995, p. 73). Ethical issues were addressed in this research study. The issues of confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation and the right of the participants to withdraw were given priority. Before the research was conducted, I was sure that consent letters were given to the school management team and teachers at the case study school and ensured permission was granted before embarking on the research study. All the participants were assured of my utmost confidentiality of the information that was shared with me. Consent declaration forms were signed by them.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this Chapter Three, I outlined the research methodology and design of my study. I also gathered in-depth and rich data to answer my research questions. Other areas where I had provided a detailed account include: data collection process, ethical issues, data analysis and validity. In the next Chapter, I discuss presentation of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to present the findings that emerged from the data collected from the case study school through questionnaires, documents, stimulated recall interviews and observation as mentioned in my previous chapter. This chapter is divided into various categories as they emerged from the data and they are discussed systematically in order to find suitable answers to the research questions which I repeat here for ease of reading.

- What leadership practices are evident in staff meetings and briefing meetings in the case study school?
- What are respondents' perceptions of leadership in the case study school?
- What are the factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership?

In determining how to organise the findings in this chapter, I initially struggled. How best was I to present the findings in order that my reader could get a real 'picture' of the leadership practices in my case study school? After many attempts and much deliberation, I decided to begin with an account of the format of staff and briefing meetings in the case study school. I elected to do this given that this was the main focus of my study and, as explained in Chapter Three, my primary sources of data collection were my observations of these meetings were followed by the stimulated recall interviews with the participants.

Initially the focus of my research study seems to be on management rather than leadership, and this is largely due to the fact that the kind of leadership evident in the school was of a managerial nature. Thus I begin the chapter with an account of the format of the meetings in the case study school. Extending this management focus further, I move on to a discussion of additional management and administrative practices in the school as a whole. Thereafter I explore the culture of the school as well as the decision-making processes that emerge in my

study. Finally, I turn my gaze to the leadership practices in the case study school and discuss this in the light of new and already presented data. Thus, by the end of the chapter, I am in a good position to be able to answer the three research questions and this I do in Chapter Five of the thesis.

Furthermore, in this chapter, for ease of reading, I use codes to present my findings. While all the educators in the case study school participated in the study, the focus was on the primary participants. I refer to the primary participants in this chapter as follows: P – Principal; V.P – Vice-principal; T – Teacher; SMT – School Management Team; MoE – Ministry of Education. In addition, a range of data collection methods were used and I refer to them in this chapter as follows: Q – Questionnaire; SRI – Stimulated recall interview; O – Observation and; Do – Documents. Finally, I make reference to a number of meetings in this chapter and use the following codes: BM – Briefing meetings; SM – Staff meetings.

4.2 STAFF AND BRIEFING MEETINGS: A FORMAL PROCESS

The staff and briefing meetings of the case study school were conducted in a formal way, according to documentary evidence and my observation notes. The procedure for conducting their school staff meetings included: preparation of the agenda for the meetings which was part of the routine of the school in their meeting situations. Meetings were then opened in a format speech by the chairman, the attendance register was marked, and there was reading and adoption of the previous minutes of the meetings. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings were then raised after which the main business of the day was discussed. This was followed by any other business (AOB) and the closure of the meeting.

4.2.1 Agenda for the meeting

Data indicated that there was an agenda for all staff meetings held by the case study school (SMT Q 25, p. 6). However, as to the question of who decided the contents and agenda of the meetings, there were contradicting views. The majority of the SMT members agreed that the principal of the school decided the content and agenda of the staff meetings (SMT, Q 25, p. 6). In a similar vein, the majority of the teachers supported the idea (T Q 9, p. 9). However, the SMT members and the teachers interviewed expressed contrary opinions. Both the SMT

members and teachers interviewed said that the secretary in collaboration with the vice-principal administration decide the content and agenda of the meetings.

For example, in an interview with the principal of the school, he said that *“the school staff secretary used to put the agenda together; after writing out the contents; she would come and discuss it with me or with the vice-principal before we could use such agenda for the meetings”* (SRI, p. 2, 20/07/2012). Speaking in a similar way, the vice-principal supported the claim of the principal on this issue (SRI, p. 5, 20/07/2012). One of the teachers interviewed on the matter said that *“the school secretary was the person in charge of writing and distribution of the agenda”* (SRI, p. 8, 20/07/2012).

Judging from information obtained from the data above, it was quite possible that the staff members did not know who was involved in putting the agenda together. However, considering the information from both the principal, the vice-principal and another teacher interviewed, it seem that it was the secretary who put the agenda together but subject to the approval of the HOD in charge and the vice-principal administration.

4.2.2 Attendance and seating arrangement at meetings

Indications from questionnaire data revealed that attendance of the case study school staff and brief meetings was important and compulsory. For example, the staff agreed that attendance in the meetings was compulsory, and that one needed permission to absent oneself from the staff meetings (T Q 8, p. 9). In similar vein, some of the participants interviewed supported the importance of attending the meetings. For example, in an interview with the principal, he said that *“attendance in the staff meetings was very compulsory for all teachers in the school”* (SRI p. 2, 20/07/2012). He further said that if any staff should absent himself/herself without a genuine reason, the person may get a query for doing so. Also, I observed that during one of the school staff meetings, the principal maintained strong control. My observation notes stated that *“the first thing that took place was the attendance roll call of the participants present in the meeting by the principal of the case study school”* (O, p. 1, 20/07/2012).

In addition, data indicated that the seating arrangement in the staff meetings of the case study school was traditional, according to a hierarchical division of labour. It was observed that in some of the staff meetings, the seating position of the principal was in the front of the meeting venue, followed on his left side by the vice-principals, followed by the HODs and

then the staff secretary, while other teachers sat and faced the SMT during the meetings. For example, in the observation of a staff meeting conducted (Figure 1), my observation notes read

the seating position was hierarchically arranged. The principal was seen sitting separately in front of the classroom at the big ‘teacher’s desk’. His management team members sat close to him – to his left in the front of the meeting venue. The teachers sat on their various chairs behind learners desks and face the school management team (O, p, 1, 20/07/2012).

In an interview conducted with some teachers on this issue, one of the teachers said that “*the principal is the overall head and chairperson of the meetings, so his seating position must be different; you can also see that the vice-principals sat close to him with the HODs*” (SRI, p. 4, 20/07/2012). Another teacher interviewed was of the opinion that “*our principal is a simple person who doesn’t count things so much. He sat at the place ‘prepared for him’ during the meeting as the overall head*” (SRI, p. 8, 20/07/2012). This teacher further revealed that the principal was the chairperson of the staff meetings and that the seating positions of the vice-principals were equally visible in the meeting.

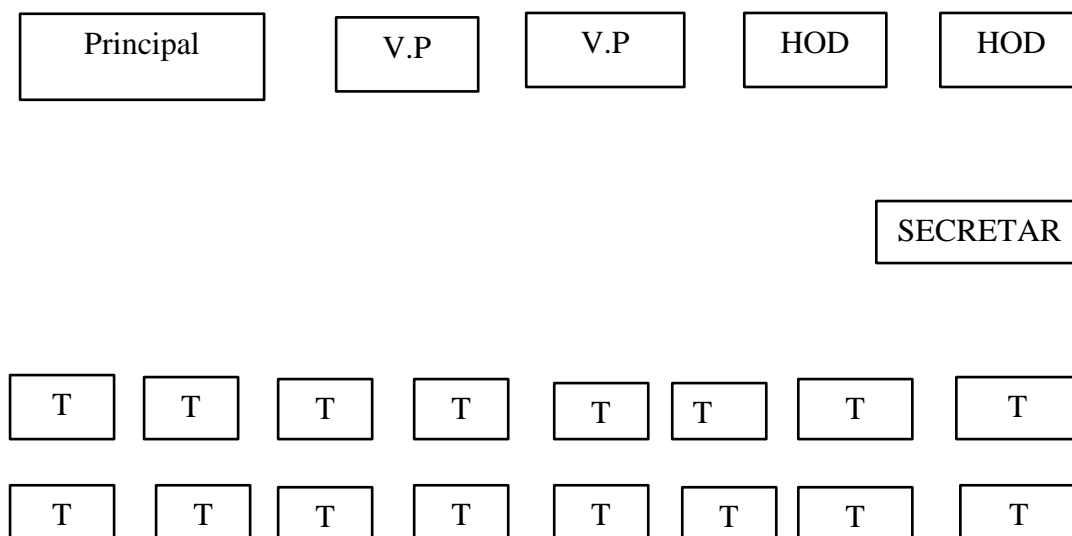


Figure 1 - Seating position in one of the staff meetings

4.2.3 The principal as the permanent chairperson of staff and briefing meetings

Indications from data revealed that majority of the SMT agreed that the principal of the case study school was the permanent chairperson of the staff and briefing meetings (SMT Q 22, p. 5). This fact was equally supported by the teachers (T Q 6, p. 9). Also from my observation notes, it was discovered that the principal chaired the staff and briefing meetings. My observation notes read *“the principal of the school, who was also the chairperson of the meeting, advised that students without good results should not be promoted”* (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012). In support of this claim, one teacher said *“the principal is regarded as the overall head of both academic and administration in the school and he is the chairman of the staff and briefing meetings”* (SRI, p. 4, 20/07/2012).

While the entire SMT agreed that their staff could lead as well as the SMT could (SMT, Q 13, p. 3), in practice what emerged appeared contrary to these views. For example, one teacher said that *“if the principal is around for briefing meetings, he would be the chairman, but in the absence of the principal, the vice-principal or any HOD may chair such occasion”* (SRI, p. 6, 20/07/2012).

4.2.4 The meeting secretary

The position of a secretary is an important one in any organisation. The principal of the case study school, by making some teachers secretaries of various committees and staff meetings, gave room for teacher participation in the practice of leadership. Data indicated that a female teacher was made the secretary of the staff meetings of the case study school. She was the person in charge of putting the agenda together with the administrative vice-principal. Other functions performed by her included: the distribution of copies of agenda to the participants as well as the writing and reading of the minutes of meetings which were part of the routine of the case study school. For example, the principal in an interview confirmed the administrative role of the secretary in this regard (SRI, p. 2, 20/07/2012). In an interview with one of the HODs who happened to be a chairperson of one of the committees, on the question of who the secretary of the various committees in the school was, she explained that *“each individual committee has its own chairperson and secretary as well. They were selected by*

the members of the committees. For example, I am the chairperson of social committee and my secretary is Mrs X, who is also one of the teachers and members of the committee” (SRI, p. 10, 20/07/2012).

4.2.5 The opening speeches

Both documentary and observation data indicated that all the staff meetings held by the case study school observed the tradition of an opening prayer by the chairman of the meetings followed by the opening speech. It was observed that it was the culture of the school, primarily driven by the principal, to start meetings with an opening prayer. For example, in one of the meetings of the school observed, there was an open invitation from the principal for one of the participants to offer an opening prayer before the meeting began. Observation notes stated that *“a female teacher rose up her hand to signify her intention to pray and the principal said, ‘Sade’ pray for us”* (O, p. 1, 20/07/2012). In another staff meeting of the school, the secretary noted in her minutes of the staff meetings book that a similar thing occurred on opening prayer (Do, p. 12, 20/07/2012).

Still on the religious culture of the principal of the case study school, data also indicated that the religious culture of the school was maintained by the principal. For example, in one of the staff meetings, it was observed that *“the principal started his opening speech according to the agenda of the meeting by thanking God for His mercy and protections over each and every member of staff”* (O, p. 2, 20/07/2012). In the interview with the principal of the school, he said that *“I believed that every living soul should learn to give thanks to God at all times”* (SRI, p. 1, 20/07/2012). In another staff meeting, the principal enjoined all the participants to appreciate God and later mandated some teachers to specifically pray for the safety of the staff and students in the political elections coming up in that country. For example, the secretary noted that *“the principal asked Mr X and Mrs Y to pray for election safety of the staff and students during the holiday”* (Do, p. 14, 19/12/2009).

Documentary and observation evidence also showed that all the staff and briefing meetings of the case study school were concluded in similarly formal and religious manner. For example, in one of the staff meetings observed, it was noted that *“...after this, there was an open invitation for a closing prayer which was said by one of the teachers”* (O, p. 4, 20/07/2012).

4.2.6 Reading and adoption of minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting

Results from the data indicated that in all the staff and briefing meetings held at the case study school, the procedures of reading and adoption of the minutes and matters arising from the previous meeting were always observed. For example, it was observed in one of the staff meetings that both the reading and adoption of the minutes of the previous meeting took place. My observation notes revealed that *“the secretary read the minutes of the last meeting which took about 10% of the meeting time and the principal called for the adoption of the said minute”* (O, p. 2, 20/07/2012).

In addition, the data revealed that the tradition of matters arising from past meetings were consistently observed at all the staff meetings of the case study school (O, p. 3, 21/09/2010; p. 5, 18/01/2011) For example, from my observation notes, it was written that *“the principal said, next on the agenda was the matter arising from the minute of the last meeting”* (O, p. 2, 20/07/2012). It was further observed that one of the matters arising from the minutes of the past meeting was the screening exercise of the promotion of teachers in the school. In another similar meeting, the secretary noted in her minutes of the staff meeting book that the issue that came up under matter arising was *“the time table had been fully prepared and in use. The chairman of the committee on time table reiterated that he had not received any complaint”* (Do, p. 12, 19/12/2009). These are all indications of the formality of procedures which seems to typify the school’s administrative structures.

4.2.7 Main business of the meeting

Results from data indicated that the main business of discussion in many of the previous meetings at the case study school and the ones I observed included decision-making on some issues affecting the school, giving of vital information and finding solutions to some of the problems confronting the school, whether academically or administratively. For example, I observed that the principal said that *“the main business of today is to determine the criteria for promotion exercise of the students”* (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012).

In similar vein, documentary evidence indicated the main business from the previous agendas and minutes of the staff and briefing meetings. Prominent among these included: discussion on punctuality of teachers to school when an external supervisor from the Ministry of Education visited the school (Do, p. 1. 15/04/2011); record keeping and updating of other

school documents (Do, p. 3. 21/09/2010); report submitted by the committee on parents' complaints? (Do, p. 4, 11/10/2010); lateness of teachers to school during the vacation and registration of students for external examinations (Do, p. 5. 18/01/2011); deadline for the submission of second term examination results (Do, p. 8. 21/04/2011); report on the readiness of the time table and promotion exercise of students (Do, p. 12. 19/12/2009); updating of important school records like registers, scheme of work and mark sheets of students' examination results (Do, p. 15. 22/07/2009); and screening exercise for the promotion of teachers (O, p. 1. 20/07/2012).

So far I have focused on procedures related to meetings where a high degree of formality can be observed. Meetings constitute an important component of management structures and processes in schools. I now move on to explore management practices in the case study school beyond the formal meetings.

4.3 BEYOND MEETINGS: EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICES IN THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

According to Clarke (2007, p. 3) "management is about getting systems to operate effectively". He further states that there are four key strategies managers use to ensure operational effectiveness; they are planning and budgeting, organising and staffing, controlling and problem solving and predictability and order". This means that management involves dealing with systems, structures and the culture of a school for effective and smooth day-to-day operations". In this section, indications from the data further revealed that the case study school was very effective and efficient at record keeping and the management of human and material resources. The issue of punctuality was very important, while goals and objectives of the school were taken seriously.

4.3.1 Academic records, human and material resources

Data indicated that the SMT in the case study school adequately kept and upgraded academic records such as student attendance registers, lesson notes, schemes of work, the admission register book, the teachers' attendance register, time book and the student performance register. For example in one of the staff meetings, the secretary wrote in the school minutes of a meeting that "*the principal admonished all class teachers to put a finishing touch to all*

records such as register, scheme of works etc.” (Do, p. 2, 15/04/2011). In another staff meeting, the secretary wrote that *“the principal mandated all teachers to write the scheme of work and the lesson note for the first week right from Monday 1st period”* (Do, p. 10, SM-18/01/2011).

Aside from the keeping of important school records, results from data also indicated that the SMT was able to manage their staff and students effectively in their day-to-day school operations. Of the SMT, the majority agreed on the importance of their management functions (SMT Q 2, p. 2). In an interview with the principal, he said that *“attendance in the staff meetings is very important and compulsory for all teachers in our school, and there is penalty for any teacher who absent from the meeting”* (SRI, p. 2, 20/07/2012). He further stated that such a teacher would receive a query for doing so. Data also indicated the efficient management of material resources like the maintenance of the school building. In an interview, one of the teachers confirmed that *“the school assembly hall is the permanent venue for our staff meetings, but it is under renovation now”* (SRI, p. 7, 20/07/2012). In support of this fact, the secretary of the meeting wrote in the minutes of the staff meeting book that *“the principal said, the approval for the renovation of the school hall money has been granted and work will soon commence there”* (Do, p. 10, 21/04/2010).

4.3.2 Punctuality/lateness and discipline

The issues of punctuality, lateness and discipline of teachers were also prominent in the data as an important part of the SMT management practices in the case study school. The school had rules and regulations guiding the running and operation of the school. Punctuality was commended, while there was a penalty for late comers. For example, the issue of punctuality was addressed in one of the staff meetings when an external supervisor from the state Ministry of Education visited the school and met almost all teachers who had already reported to the school by 7:30 a.m. The secretary wrote in the minutes book that *“Mrs....commended the teachers for their remarkable improvement during the term in the area of punctuality especially during the visitation of the external supervisor to the school”* (Do, p. 1, 15/04/2011). In another development on the importance of punctuality of the staff, the secretary wrote in the minutes that *“the attitude of some teachers coming late to school after the examination was frowned at by the principal”* (Do, p. 7, 18/01/2011). The principal further noted that the affected teachers were not “business-minded”. However, he warned that those teachers should stop such an attitude or they would face disciplinary action.

On the issue of discipline for absence from meetings, the data indicated a penalty for anybody that absented him/herself from the meeting. For example, when the principal of the case study school was interviewed, he argued that *“there was penalty for any teacher that absent himself or herself from the meeting without genuine reason and evidence to support such reason, hence the person may receive query for being absent from the meeting”* (SRI, p. 2. 20/07/2012). Also, in support of this claim, the vice-principal (Academics) said in an interview that *“...there is penalty for the violation of any of the rules and regulations. Even, the person affected must be ready to convince us very well before he/she would not be given query for being absent from the meeting”* (SRI, p. 5. 20/07/2012). He further said that the query could come either from the principal or from the vice-principal.

In the next section, I look at the relations between the staff and the school principal as it reflects the cultural background of the people of the area where the study took place.

4.4 A CULTURE OF CORDIAL AND RESPECTFUL RELATIONS

Data indicated that there existed cordial, mutual and friendly relations between the SMT members and the teachers in the case study school. SMT members claimed that they interacted freely with their followers and that their teachers were accessible to them and could dialogue with them at any time. Data also revealed the respectful relations of the teachers to the principal of the case study school, such as standing up to talk to the principal as part of the culture of the people of that area in Nigeria.

4.4.1 Cordial relations

Questionnaire data confirmed that all the SMT members agreed that they enjoyed mutual interaction between them and their teachers (SMT Q 17, p. 4). This idea was also supported by the majority of the teachers; most agreed that they usually interacted with each other during the staff and briefing meetings, which represented their situation of interaction (T Q 5, pp. 9 & 10). However, some felt that interaction occurred only when a decision was to be taken.

Both from my observation notes and documentary evidence there were indications that interactions actually took place during some of the staff meetings, especially when decisions were to be taken on some issues. For example, when the issue of determining the criteria to

be used for the promotion exercise of students for their classes came up, there was an open invitation for teachers to contribute. Although there was a hot argument before they arrived at a conclusion, interactions indeed took place. My observation notes read *“there was an open invitation by the principal for them to determine the number of passes for promotion”* (O, p. 3 & 4, 20/07/2012). In another similar staff meeting situation, one teacher suggested that there should be an extension of the time table from 40 minutes for a period to one hour during the holiday coaching for the students, to which all the staff members agreed. In addition, other teachers suggested that they should continue with that extension till the final external examination time of the students. The secretary noted in her book that *“Mrs X suggested the adjustment of time table to one hour. Mrs A supported the idea and Mr B suggested its use till the students’ final examination”* (Do, p. 6, 18/01/2011).

In another development, indications from data revealed that all SMT members agreed that they had a good relationship with their teachers (SMT Q 28, p. 6). Some of them described the type of relationship that existed between them and their teachers as cordial and friendly. Data also indicated that teachers supported this claim. A high percentage of the teachers supported this issue of intimate relationship between them and the SMT (T Q 12, p. 10). For example, T-1 said that *“there is always smooth relationship with the SMT in the school”* (T Q 12, p. 10). T-2 said that there existed a *“good relationship with SMT”* (T Q 12, p. 10). However, some teachers had contrary opinions concerning this issue. Take for example, T-3 who argued that the relationship at times with the SMT was *“official and sometimes friendly”* (T Q 12, p. 10). Also, on this issue, the principal of the school when interviewed said that *“I have a very cordial relationship with my staff members. Some of them used to seek my advice on personal issues; however they still give me my official respect as the principal of the school”* (SRI, p. 2, 20/07/2012). The vice-principal (academics) also supported this claim when he explained that *“when I was transferred from this school to another school as the vice-principal, it was my principal that used his influence to make sure that they retained me here as the vice-principal”*. This he further said demonstrated the extent of the relationship between them (SRI, p. 6, 20/07/2012).

4.4.2. Respectful relations

In almost all the staff meetings of the case study school, data revealed the respectful behaviour of the teachers. For example, in one of the staff meetings observed, when the principal asked one of the participants to lead the opening prayer, notes revealed that *“a*

female teacher rose up her hand to signify her intention to pray” (O, p. 1, 20/07/2012). In another staff meeting which was on the promotion of students, my observation notes read *“whenever a class teacher was called upon to announce the result of his/her students, he/ she had to stand up to do so”* (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012). It could also be said that the behaviour observed here was part of the culture of respect for elders or the person in a position of leadership. For example, this attitude was demonstrated when the principal asked a woman teacher a question on promotions and examination results, my observation notes revealed that *“the woman stood up and said ‘sir’, expecting the principal to repeat his question”* (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012).

Next, I move on to discuss the process of decision-making in the case study school.

4.5 DECISION-MAKING: A CONSULTATIVE PROCESS?

Literature has shown that the success or the failure of any educational organisational depends largely on the quality of decision-making (Everard, Morris & Wilson, 2004). In this section, indications from data revealed that there were various types of decisions taken by the principal of the case study school. In some cases, decisions were taken before consultation and later sold to teachers while, in another situation, decisions were taken through voting or through mutual agreement among the staff. Indications from across the data sets confirmed the fact that staff and briefing meetings of the case study school took place primarily for decision-making.

4.5.1 Varying degrees of decision-making

In this section, I discuss varying degrees of decision-making by the SMT of the case study school. For example, questionnaire data indicated that all the SMT members of the school agreed that they always tried to include one or more members in determining what to do, and how to do it; however, they maintained the final decision-making (SMT Q 9, p. 3). Still on decision-making result from data revealed that most of the SMT members agreed that they always voted whenever a major decision had to be taken during the staff meetings (SMT Q 10, p.3). However, indications from my observation notes were that participants, in some situations, unanimously agreed on major issues during staff meeting, but not through voting. For example, in one of the staff meetings observed, when a decision was to be taken on

criteria for students' promotion to the next class, it was observed that teachers brought forward suggestions and, after much argument, they eventually agreed on certain passes as criteria for promotion. My observation notes read *"it was time for decision-making on the number of passes to be considered for promotion. There was an open invitation by the principal for them to determine the number of passes for promotion"* (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012). The observation note further indicated *"later they all eventually agreed on X passing after a heated debate"*.

In addition, the whole population of the SMT strongly agreed that they believed in consultation and sharing of ideas with their staff. This view was confirmed in the staff meeting conducted on 18 January, 2011. This quality was demonstrated by the principal when all the staff members of the case study school agreed on special arrangement on the coaching of the final year students. After all the staff had agreed, and the principal was consulted, he concurred with the wish and agreement of the majority. The secretary in her minute of the meetings book wrote that *"Mrs X suggested the adjustment of the time table to one hour, Mrs Y supported the idea and that all students should be put together while the principal agreed to the special arrangement"* (Do, p. 6,-18/01/2011).

Questionnaire data further indicated that most of the teachers agreed that decisions were taken through mutual agreement among staff members during staff and briefing meetings, while a few were of the view that decision-making was primarily the domain of the principal (T Q 4, P. 8). However, this belief by both the SMT members and teachers was contrary to the observation carried out. In the staff meeting I observed there was heated debate before they arrived at a particular decision (O, p. 3, 20/07/2012). This was not mutual. However, documentary evidence revealed that in another staff meeting on the promotion of students, mutual agreement prevailed. For example, the secretary noted in her minutes of staff meetings that *"having gone through the table, the whole house agreed to X number of passes"* (Do, p. 3, 21/09/2010).

4.5.2 Staff involvement in decision-making

Indications from the data revealed that many teachers were involved in decision-making in the case study school. The principal of the case study school supported the notion of teacher leadership and believed that teachers could and lead. This he demonstrated by involving his teachers in decision-making. For example, in one of the school staff meetings, a staff member suggested having a bank account for social issues and other social commitments. This

suggestion was equally unanimously supported. The secretary wrote in her minutes of school staff meeting that “...Mrs T was therefore asked as the chairperson of the social committee to go and open a bank savings account” (Do, p. 2, 15/04/2011). In another staff meeting, as already mentioned in section 4.5.1, one of the teachers suggested the extension of lesson period from 40 minutes to one hour for the final year students for them to be able to cope very well academically. This decision was unanimously accepted and ratified by the whole house including the principal of the school. The secretary noted in her minutes of meeting that “Mrs B suggested the adjustment of the school time table period to extend to one hour, Mrs X supported the idea and the whole house agreed including the principal” (Do, p. 6, 18/01/2010). I repeat this quotation from the secretary’s note to show how teacher leadership was enabled; however, this example is more teacher management rather than teacher leadership. In relation to decision-making, staff believed their principal was democratic. Data indicated that majority of the teachers (77%) agreed that their principal’s leadership style was democratic, while only 11% of the teachers believed that it was authoritarian type of leadership (T Q 2, p. 7). Majority of the teachers who agreed that their principal used a democratic leadership style gave reasons for their claims. Some believed that the principal was democratic because he provided room for teachers to express their feelings and opinions, that he allowed room for interactions, gave room for freedom of expression and allowed teacher participation in decision-making. For example, T-1 said that “the principal allows the teachers to participate in decision-making process before a decision is taken” (T Q 2, p. 7). T-2 argued that “before a decision is taken, a staff meeting is usually called and base on the staff interaction, decision are taken” (T Q 2, p. 7). In support of this claim, T-3 said “my principal is democratic in nature because he gives everybody working under him chance to contribute to the development of the school and he doesn’t dominate” (T Q 2, p. 7). However, 12% of the teachers had contrary opinion. For example, T-4 said “he exercises his authority with little or no time for you to question his order” (T Q 2, p. 8).

4.5.3 Parental involvement in decision-making

Indications from the data revealed how powerful and influential some parents and community people were in the organizational structure of the school when it came to the issue of decision-making. For example, when one of the teachers was interviewed as to whether or not the school ethos encouraged or discouraged him to take a lead in decision-making in the school, he argued that “no, not at all, there are a lot of barriers militating against taking such

a step in decision-making in the school. Some of these include: the environmental and political factors and community people as well” (SRI, p. 9, 20/07/2012). He further said that if a teacher or principal steps on the toes of some parents when taking certain decisions, *“they (the parents) can use their political influence to remove you from office”*. In other words being the principal of the school did not make any difference in relation to parents.

In another development similar to the situation above, some parents came to the school to complain that their children were not promoted due to their low academic performance in the promotion examinations conducted in the school. Despite this, they wanted their children to be promoted. In response, the principal explained that there was nothing that could be done. The secretary, in her minutes, quoted the principal as saying that *“he (principal) wondered why students and parents would be requesting for such considerations, but because of the environmental factor, there was nothing the school can do” (Do, p. 5, 18/01/2011).*

In an interview with one of the teachers of the school to elaborate further on what the principal meant by environmental factors, he spoke extensively on the issue. He said the principal was referring to the low academic performance of the students and the negative attitudes of many of the parents that contributed toward the falling standard of education in the state. He spoke of the non-availability of some infrastructural facilities that could go a long way to enhancing effective learning. However, when the school asked students to contribute money for the provision of such amenities, *“the parents would go and report the school to the Governor through various radio programmes run by the government to hear the views of the people on state of things in the state” (SRI, p. 10. 20/07/2012).* This teacher also said *“the state government, is only in some cases playing politics with free education in the state, this is because essential facilities are lacking and any attempt by the school management to ask students to contribute money, the parents would say after all, ‘education is free’ and this is affecting effective teaching and learning in the school” (SRI, p. 11. 20/07/2012).*

In my next section, I discuss leadership practices that were prevalent in the case study school.

4.6 LEADERSHIP IN THE CASE STUDY SCHOOL

Empirical evidence has shown that leading a complex organisation like a school will require formal and informal leadership knowledge that is broad based. According to Harris (2008, p. 3), “to identify and develop the leaders of tomorrow is both urgent and necessary for system transformation”. Data indicated various perceptions of leadership: leadership within a hierarchical chain of command, downward communication practices and teacher management practices.

4.6.1 Perceptions of leadership

Data showed that all staff members believed they could lead but to varying degrees, depending on the individual’s leadership ability and perspective. While some staff viewed leadership as positional, others thought otherwise. Some SMT members saw themselves only as leaders, while others believed that they were both leaders and at the same time followers. For example, questionnaire data revealed that majority of the SMT viewed themselves as leaders, while some viewed themselves both as a leader and a follower (SMT, Q 19, p. 4). In addition, these SMT participants provided reasons for their choices. One participant said that “*since I have been put in a position of leadership, I believe, I have to show leadership*” (SMT Q 19, p. 4.). Another participant said “*I am a leader because I possess every quality of a good leader and I lead by example*” (SMT Q 19, p.5). The participant that said he/she was both a leader and follower argued that “*I am a leader to my students and as well a follower to my principal*” (SMT Q 19, p. 5).

However, reactions from the teachers’ angle were quite different on this issue of leadership. The majority of the teachers viewed themselves as both leaders and followers, while some viewed themselves as leaders only (T Q 1, p. 7). The teachers, who claimed to be both leaders and followers, gave various reasons for their claims. For example, T-1 argued that “*as a teacher, I serve as a role model to students, and as a follower, I take instructions from my boss and their leadership styles*” (T Q 1, p. 7). T-2, in supporting his claim, said that “*I am a leader in the sense that I provide/exhibit leadership character as a teacher to students and follower when it comes to decision-making*” (T Q 1, p. 7). From the above, it became clear that the general consensus was that leadership was not only positional but, in certain situations, could become a shared activity where teachers could lead. However, this leadership could only work in a hierarchical chain of command and I discuss this in section 4.6.2.

Indications from both the questionnaire and documentary evidence revealed that all SMT members of the case study school valued the input and contributions of their staff in order to achieve the school desired goal and overall development of the school. In support of this claim, documentary evidence showed that when the school was experiencing a shortage of teachers in some subjects, the principal mentioned that some teachers were ready to assist by introducing some of their colleagues who were qualified and looking for jobs through the Parents Teacher Association's (PTA) teacher scheme. The secretary in her minutes of staff meetings book wrote that "*Mrs X mentioned the issue of PTA teacher and that she had someone if the school was willing to employ*" (Do, p. 13, 19/12/2009).

4.6.2 The dominant practice: leadership within a hierarchical chain of command

This section shows how leadership functions were executed in the case study school. From the perceptions of the participants, result from data indicated that the majority of the SMT participants believed that they led by example and in addition, they all believed in consultation and sharing of ideas with their staff. For example, of the total population of the SMT participants, the majority agreed that they led others by example (SMT Q 1, p. 2). In another situation, one of the teachers gave a reason why their principal was democratic in his leadership style. The teacher argued that "*my principal is democratic in nature, because he gives everybody working under him chance to contribute to the development of the school and he doesn't dominate*" (T Q 2, p. 8). Looking at the statement above by one of the teachers that the principal gave everybody working 'under him' a chance to participate, indicated the notion of a hierarchical chain of command whereby a directive came from the top and was not questioned but followed downward in the hierarchy.

In addition, there was another important part of the communication procedure in the school organisation that had to do with a hierarchical chain of command in the case study school. Data indicated that instructions or information was always from the top downward i.e. from the principal to the vice-principal to the HOD and then to the teachers before it would get to the students in the school. In one of the interviews conducted, an SMT member said that "*the secretary used to put the agenda together, and passed it to the HOD before it would be approved by the vice-principal administration, and principal being the overall head would be calling the items on the agenda one-by-one for discussion in the meeting*" (SRI, p. 5, 20/07/2012).

4.6.2.1 Delegation of authority

Delegation of authority can be defined as the assigning of leadership work to ‘subordinates’ (Everard, Morris & Wilson, 2004, p. 55). There was much delegation of authority to certain teachers in the case study school. In the main, management and administrative functions were delegated and mostly to senior teachers. Data indicated that some teachers were selected by the principal and ‘**mandated**’ to sign the principal’s comment in the students’ academic report sheets. For example, in one of the staff meetings, the secretary wrote in the minutes of the meeting book that *“the following teachers have been ‘appointed’ to sign the principal’s comment...”* (Do, p. 11, 18/01/2011). In another staff meeting, data revealed that those appointed were given the opportunity to take the students’ academic report sheets home for completion. The secretary wrote in the minutes of meetings book that *“those who will be writing the principal’s comment can take the cards home for completion”* (Do, p. 13, 19/12/2009). In another interview with one of the SMT members and the HOD of one of the departments, in her reaction to the issue of delegation of authority by the principal, explained *“our principal as the overall head has got more than sufficient tasks to accomplish both academically and administratively”* (SRI, p. 10, 20/07/2012). She further said that therefore, for the principal to ease his work, the best for him was to authorize senior teachers to sign his comment on his behalf. She also said that *“Our school is a very big school with many students; those teachers appointed to sign the principal’s comment were HODs, senior teachers and grade level 14 officers”* (SRI, p. 11, 20/07/2012)

4.6.2.2 Heads of various committees

Indications from the data show that various teachers were made the chairpersons of various committees in the staff meetings of the case study school. Such committees included: the environmental committee, the social committee, the curriculum-review committee, the timetable and roster duty committee and the staff finance committee. For example, the secretary wrote in the minute book that *“Mr and Mrs KK were therefore asked to prepare the teachers duty roster and the school time table as applicable to each office”* (Do, p. 2, 15/04/2011). In another staff meeting, the secretary wrote in the staff minutes book that *“Mr and Mr FF were given the mandate to brief the senior secondary class three students on the new development on behalf of the school management”* (Do, p. 2, 15/04/2011). On the issue of opening a bank account by the chairperson of social committee, the secretary wrote *“...therefore, Mrs A was asked as the chairperson of social committee to open a savings account”* (Do, p. 2,

15/04/2011). Other committees which the data indicated included a parents' complaints committee headed by a teacher (Do, p. 4, 11/10/2010), and a finance committee headed by a woman teacher (Do, p. 9, 21/04/2010).

4.6.2.3 A motivational culture for teachers

Teachers in the case study school were being motivated by the principal of the school through the award for the best teacher of the year, unanimously selected by the teachers. Data indicated that some teachers were nominated to emerge as the best teacher of the year for the school. There was an award for the best teacher that distinguished himself/herself in the discharge of his/her duty during the year. This was to stimulate teachers for better performance in the future. For example, in one of the staff meetings, the secretary wrote that *"...the principal asked the teachers to write and submit the name of the best teacher for the session in the course of the meeting"* (Do, p. 15, 22/07/2009).

4.6.2.4 The centrality of goals and objectives of the school

On the issue of goals and objectives of the school, results from data indicated that the fundamental goal and objective of the school which is effective teaching and learning was being pursued both effectively and efficiently by the case study school. The majority of the teachers agreed that the school context encouraged them in the realization of the school goal (T Q 11, p. 9). For example, one of the SMT members said *"teachers are encouraged to use their initiative, but are 'monitored/guided' in line with the objectives and goal of the school"* (SMT Q 27, p. 6). Another respondent in support of this fact argued that *"every teacher is free to contribute his/her quota to the development of the school. We pursue the same goals and objectives"* (T Q 11, p.10). In addition, in one of the staff meetings, the secretary wrote in the minute book that *"Mrs X observed that during the session, students have really improved academically"* (Do, p. 17, SM-22/07/2009). On external examinations especially for the senior secondary school final year students, data indicated that the SMT managed the issue effectively. For example, the staff secretary wrote in the staff minutes of meeting that *"...the principal informed students to get their passport photographs and subjects ready for West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) registration"* (Do, p. 7, SM-18/01/2011). All these are pointers to the fact that the school was very strong in executing its management functions.

4.6.3 Influence of the Ministry of Education on the case study school

There were revelations from the data on the powerful position of the state Ministry of education in the structure of the organisation of the case study school. Documentary evidence showed that in some of the staff meetings, participants had to wait for directives from the state Ministry of Education before they could finalise decisions on some important issues affecting the school academically or administratively.

The Ministry of Education in Oyo state, Nigeria is one of the state Ministries saddled with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of educational institutions, including supervision/inspection of secondary schools in the state. The state Ministry of Education is directly under the leadership, management, administration and control of the Honourable Commissioner of Education appointed by the Executive Governor of the state. In support of this claim, the 'Nigeria National Policy on Education' (Nigeria, 1981, pp. 44 & 45), explains that "the co-ordination, planning, financing, and direction of the total educational effort within the state are placed in the hands of the state Ministry of Education".

In an interview with one of the teachers of the school, the teacher spoke extensively on the influence of the Ministry of Education as part of the school structure affecting the school or discouraging teachers in some areas. He said that *"...if care is not taken or you are not dancing to the will [sic] of some people, you may discover that you received a letter from the Ministry of Education warning you to be in order or be relieved of your post"* (SRI, p. 9, 20/07/2012).

Data also indicated how directives came from the State Ministry of Education in a hierarchical order of events and schools were made to comply. For example, when there was a teachers' protest in Nigeria, the SMT was confused on whether or not to close the school. They had to wait for the instruction from the Honourable Commissioner of Education before they knew what step to take. The secretary noted in her minutes of staff meetings that *"the principal made it known that the short notice related in the news that morning was a report from the Honourable commissioner of education and that there was no information for teachers not to come to school"* (Do, p. 6, 18/01/2011).

In another development, in one of the staff meetings, the decision on the closing date for the payment of the fees for the final year examination could not be taken due to the fact that the state government was silent on the amount to be paid for the registration. For example, the

secretary noted in her minutes of a staff meeting that *“registration closes by middle of January, but the government was silent about the amount to be paid”* (Do, p. 7, 10/10/2011). Lastly, another instance was during the promotion examinations for those students who were going to the final year classes, the principal was not sure of the number of subjects on which they had to base their tests. For example, the secretary wrote in her minute of the staff meetings that *“he (the principal) was not sure on the subjects to be tested neither was he sure of the number. The Ministry of education would have to inform us about that later”* (Do, p. 10, 21/04/2010).

4.7 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this chapter, Data indicated that the school operates traditional leadership practices and that the school was very strong in the management, administrative and control of both human and material resources. In the next chapter, I discuss the findings in relation to the research questions and the theory.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the discussion of the main findings of my research study in relation to the research questions. I start with what leadership practices were evident in the staff and briefing meetings of the case study school, followed by respondents' perceptions of leadership in the case study school, and finally, the factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership in the case study school. All these findings are discussed in line with relevant literature in accordance with my review in Chapter Two of this study.

5.2 Answering the research questions

In this section, I provide answers to the following research questions of this study as indicated in my chapter one:

- What leadership practices are evident in staff meetings and briefing meetings in the case study school?
- What are respondents' perceptions of leadership in the case study school?
- What are the factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership?

5.2.1 Leadership practices evident in the case study school

5.2.1.1 Traditional leadership

In reference to my first research question, findings from the case study school staff and briefing meetings indicated that there was limited evidence of distributed leadership in the management and administration of the school. By limited evidence of distributed leadership I mean that the case study school has not been practising distributed leadership while the limited examples of delegated leadership discovered was predominantly the making of the

principal of the school. The school seemed to be dominated by traditional leadership approaches. Traditional leadership in sense, serve as foundation for the emergence of contemporary theories of leadership but the problem with this heroic type of leadership was that it places its confidence and leadership responsibilities in a single authoritarian person. According to Clarke (2007, p. 13), due to their shortcomings, traditional leadership theories became out dated as a result of the emergence of new leadership theories that share leadership responsibilities among multiple leaders and followers.

As discussed in Chapter two, traditional theories of leadership have significant shortcomings which make them unsuitable for modern organisations. For example Simkins (2005, p. 12,) argues that the traditional views hold the belief that leadership resides in individual, leadership is hierarchically based and linked to office, to the traditional view, leadership occurs when leaders do things to followers, in the emerging views of leadership, leadership is a complex process of mutual influence; also, traditional views believe that leadership is different from and more important than management. In Chapter Two, I also referred to Spillane (2006, p. 4) who refers to traditional leadership as “heroic” leadership, and argues that

the heroics of leadership is problematic for some reasons: first, heroic epics typically equate school leadership with school principals and their valiant actions; secondly, most accounts of school leadership pay scant attention to the practice of leadership; and lastly concentration on individual actions fails to capture the significance of interactions.

The study also found that the seating arrangement was hierarchical and traditional in nature but the teachers could not question the authority of the principal. This type of seating arrangement depicts traditional practices of leadership in the case study school. With the emergence of distributed leadership, in a staff or briefing meeting situation like these, one could hardly recognise who was the principal. This type of practice is closely linked with traditional situational theories of leadership and a manifestation of high Power Distance in the decision making and running of the school administration (Hofstede, 1998, cited in Sokoya, 1998). I return to this issue later in this chapter.

The first example of leadership practice which the data indicated was in the area of leading by example. Both the SMT and the teachers believed that they led by example. This idea of leading by example is much related with the traditional great man and trait theories of leadership. Clarke (2007, p. 13) argues that “there was a belief that leaders were born not

made but that those who aspired to positions of leadership needed to emulate the personality traits, behaviour and values of the heroes of history”. In a sense this belief of leading by example shows how the teachers are stuck in an out-dated belief about leadership.

Findings also indicated that the principal of the case study school was the permanent chairperson of the staff and briefing meetings. This idea of only one person dominating the chairmanship of meetings could be termed traditional and undemocratic. Democratic or dispersed leadership in the school means that the leadership in the school takes on a flatter structure by moving away from the formal workings of a hierarchy (Wood, 2004, cited in Grant, 2009, p. 53). In this case, there was buy-in from the staff, they accepted the hierarchy and authority as the legitimate one that cannot be questioned or queried. However, the practice of leadership demands that leading a school requires multiple leaders. In some cases, it may involve other leaders who share the responsibility of leadership with the head. To substantiate this fact, one of the teachers confirmed that it is only in the absence of the principal that the vice-principal or HOD may chair staff or briefing meetings. This again is another notion of a hierarchical chain of command in the organisation of the school. Therefore, it could be concluded that, because the principal of the case study school retained the permanent chair of the school meetings, he operated within a traditional leadership paradigm.

However, a possible reason for the principal clinging to the chairmanship of the staff and briefing meetings may not be unconnected from national directives from the Nigerian government. The Nigeria National Policy on Education states that firm support will be given by education authorities to principals of schools to help maintain their authority and thus assist them to enforce discipline over staff and students. This issue seems centrally important, because Nigeria National Policy actually promotes authoritarianism, compared to South Africa where the task team report promotes participation and sharing. For example, Nigeria National Policy on Education states that “firm support will be given by education authorities to principals of schools to help maintain their authority and thus assist them to enforce discipline over staff and students” (Nigeria, 1981, p. 21), while South Africa task team report explains that “the approach to education management which we propose is an integrative and collaborative one: collaborative in that it involves all staff and stakeholders, and integrative in so far as it informs all management processes and outcomes in an organisational setting” (South Africa. Task Team Report, 1996, p. 30).

5.2.1.2 Hierarchical chain of command

Data indicated that all other areas of school activities were dominated by a hierarchical chain of command, which included: the seating arrangement of the SMT members and teachers during the staff meetings in the school; the principal of the school as the permanent chairman of the staff and briefing meetings. Another area where this hierarchical chain of command was noted was during the opening speeches of the meetings, and the control of the school which was in the hands of the state Ministry of Education. In support of this claim, the Nigeria National Policy on Education (Nigeria, pp. 44 & 45) explains that “the co-ordination, planning, financing, and direction of the total educational effort within the state are placed in the hands of the state Ministry of Education”. Also the idea that school activities were dominated by a hierarchical chain of command was closely linked to Bush (2003, p. 37) Formal Models of Theories of Educational leadership and Management. Bush argues that

in formal models the official structures of the organization tend to be hierarchical. Organization charts emphasize vertical relationships between staff. In secondary schools and colleges staffs are responsible to heads of department who, in turn, are answerable to heads and principals for the activities of their departments. The hierarchy thus represents a means of control for leaders over their staff.

In another situation, data indicated that some teachers were selected by the principal and ‘mandated’ to sign the principal’s comment in the students’ academic report sheets. One of the senior teachers gave a possible reason for the school principal’s action. She said that, for the principal to ease his work, the best for him was to authorize senior teachers to sign his comment on his behalf. This action by the principal was more of teacher management rather than distributed leadership, my reason for saying so was that management deals with maintenance rather than change. In this regard, the teachers were solely appointed by the principal, it was not a voluntary action from the people affected and more so that only the senior staff members were given such opportunity to act in this capacity.

Lastly, findings revealed the practice of leadership through the leadership style of the school principal. The majority of the staff believed that their principal was democratic in his style. For example, in support of their claim, some of them gave reasons why their principal was democratic in his leadership style. The teachers argued that their principal was democratic in nature, because he gave everybody working under him a chance to contribute to the development of the school and he did not dominate in decision making. Looking at the statement above by one of the teachers that the principal gave everybody working ‘under

him’ a chance to participate, indicated the notion of a hierarchical chain of command whereby a directive came from the top and was not questioned but followed downward in the hierarchy. There is a semblance of democratic leadership but this is within a context of hierarchical control – it is not real sharing. Woods (2004, p. 132) argues that the purpose of ‘democratic leadership’ is “to create and help sustain an environment that enables everyone who is deemed a free, creative agent to be part of ... inter-linking democratic rationalities”.

5.2.1.3 A culture of teacher management and collegiality

In another finding, the data revealed that the principal enabled a culture of teacher management in the case study school. The principal has demonstrated this teacher management through delegation of authority. Data indicated that some teachers were selected by the principal and ‘mandated’ to sign the principal’s comment in the students’ academic report sheets. According to Everard, Morris and Wilson (2004, p. 55), delegation of authority is “the assigning of leadership work to subordinates”. However, looking at the definition of management provided by Astin & Astin (cited in Grant & Singh, 2009), it could be concluded that this delegation of authority was a good management rather than teacher leadership. It can also be said to be a system of passing administrative responsibility to the teachers, especially when the head has too much to handle. For example, one of the senior teachers gave a possible reason for the school principal’s action. She said that, for the principal to ease his administrative workload, the best for him was to authorize senior teachers to sign his comment on his behalf. This is more of teacher management rather than teacher leadership, because teacher leadership is understood as leadership exercised by teachers regardless of position or designation (Harris and Muijs, 2005).

Data points to teacher management rather than teacher leadership. This was manifested in the appointment of teachers as chairpersons and secretaries of various committees during the staff meetings of the case study school. Such committees included: the environmental committee, the social committee, the curriculum-review committee, the time-table and roster duty committee and the staff finance committee. Other committees which the data indicated included: parents’ complaints committee and finance committee. The principal of the case study school, by making some teachers chairpersons and secretaries of various committees and staff meetings, gave room for teacher participation in the practice of leadership. I think it shows that opportunities for leadership are created – and teachers are appointed to formal positions by the principal. So, it is delegation rather than distributed leadership or at most

authorised distributed leadership. According to Gunter (2005), authorised distributed leadership is “where tasks are distributed from the principal to others in a hierarchical system of relations where the principal has positional authority”.

However, in contrast to teacher management above, data also show that the SMT believed in consultation and sharing of ideas with their staff. This idea in practice was demonstrated by the principal of the school when he involved his teachers in decision making. For example, in one of the school staff meetings, a staff member suggested having a bank account for social issues and other social commitments. This suggestion was equally unanimously supported. Thus the study showed that the staffs were involved in decision making process. The principal through this attitude demonstrated participative or collegiality type of leadership by recognising the input and contribution of his staff member in this situation. Collegial models according to Bush (2003, p. 64) assume that

organizations determine policy and make decisions through a process of discussion leading to consensus. Power is shared among some or all members of the organization who are thought to have a shared understanding about the aims of the institution.

This feature of the principal’s leadership seems almost to contradict the overall picture of strong overhead control and is an encouraging sign that there may be potential for growth towards more inclusive forms of leadership.

5.2.1.4 Strong management practices by the case study school

As mentioned earlier in the chapter the findings indicated teacher management rather than leadership. This issue needs to be discussed briefly because management, while different from leadership, is also related. For example, with reference to my Chapter two, Bolman and Deal (1997, in Bush, 2003, p. 9) state that

leadership and managing are distinct, but both are important, organisations which are over managed but under led eventually lose any sense of spirit or purpose. Poorly managed organisations with strong charismatic leaders may soar temporarily only to crash shortly thereafter, the challenge of modern organisations requires the objective perspective of the manager as well as the flashes of vision and commitment wise leadership provides.

Indications from the data revealed that the case study school was very effective and efficient in record keeping and the management of human and material resources. The issue of

punctuality was very important to the school management, while goals and objectives of the school were taken seriously. Record keeping according to Clarke (2007, p. 17), is “an effective system of recording and retrieving data, is a powerful and valuable tool for any organization”. Aside from the keeping of important school records, results from data also indicated that the SMT was able to manage their staff and students effectively in their day-to-day school operations. For example on whether attendance was compulsory during the staff and briefing meetings of the school, the principal confirmed it that apart from the fact that attendance was compulsory, any teacher that failed to turn up or came late to the meetings would be given a query. From the above, it can be concluded that the case study school was strong in management and in the control of both human and material resources.

Looking at the list of the main business that featured prominently in most of the school staff and briefing meetings, it could be observed that what mainly dominated the school meetings were management issues such as punctuality, record-keeping, lateness, examination issues, promotion issues and registration of students for examinations. Given these main business topics therefore, it suggested that the case study school was very strong in their management functions involving systems and procedures to ensure the systematic and effective running of the school. However, the aspect of leadership was missing. For example, I noted that there was no main business which involved in-service training, mentoring, staff and professional development programmes. However, the professional development of teachers in leadership is widely supported in the literature (Grant, 2008, p. 85). Furthermore, Harris & Lambert (2003) in her contribution contends that training programmes for principals can focus on the concept of distributive leadership and that principals need to be convinced that distributed leadership does not disregard their positional authority as the main leaders of the school.

5.2.2 Respondents’ perceptions of leadership

In reference to research question two on the respondents’ perceptions of leadership in the case study school; findings indicated various perceptions of leadership by the people. Data indicated that majority of SMT members perceived that they were leaders only, while teachers believed that they were both leaders and followers. Various reasons were given for why they called themselves as leaders only. For example, the SMT members saw themselves as leaders because they held positions of leadership, while teachers saw themselves as both leaders and followers because they were leaders to their students and followers to their SMT

members. The SMT therefore attached leadership to the position of authority. Leadership as positional is traditional in nature; its time is fading away. Because of the out datedness of traditional leadership, Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003, cited in Timperley, 2007) advocate for its replacement when they argue that “a more achievable and sustainable conceptualization of leadership has been coming increasingly to the fore to replace the model of a single ‘heroic’ leader standing atop a hierarchy, bending the school community to his/her purpose”.

Furthermore, on respondents’ perception of leadership, data revealed that SMT members believed in participative decision making with their staff. This quality was demonstrated by the principal when all the staff members of the case study school agreed to extend the teaching period of the final year students from 40 minutes to one hour. After all the staff had agreed, and the principal was consulted, he concurred with the wish and agreement of the majority. This was in line with the claim of Spillane (2006) that “leadership takes shape in the interactions among leaders, followers and their situations”. In addition, indications from the data revealed that many teachers were involved in decision making in the case study school. The principal of the case study school supported the notion of teacher leadership and believed that teachers could and lead.

In another situation, data indicated that teachers’ perception seemed to suggest that leadership as a shared activity, as described by the participants, was understood only to operate within a hierarchy of relations. Data revealed that instructions or information was always from the top downward i.e. from the principal to the vice-principal to the HOD and then to the teachers before it would get to the students in the school. In this situation, leadership was determined by one’s position in the hierarchy of the school organisation. This is contrary to the views of Spillane (2006, p. 4) in his criticism of the heroic type of leadership. He said that this type of leadership is unsuitable or acceptable as the ideal type of leadership of the moment because “heroic epics typically equate school leadership with school principals and their valiant actions”.

Finally on the issue of respondents’ perceptions of leadership in the case study school, findings revealed that majority of the SMT believed that as a leader, they determined what to do, how to do it, and they maintained the final decision making authority. Looking at the four types of decision taking by Everard, Morris and Wilson (2004), this type of decision taking could be termed autocratic. Autocratic decision making according to Everard, Morris and

Wilson is when decision is taken without consultation, then others are informed of what is to be done and what is expected of them. This type of decision making was traditional, whereas leadership activities should be a shared responsibility among the leaders and followers.

5.2.3 Factors enabling or constraining the distribution of leadership

In this section, I discuss factors enabling and constraining the distribution of leadership in the case study school. In my attempt to do this, I first discuss the enabling factors which were quite limited and then later discuss the inhibiting factors.

Enabling factors:

5.2.3.1 *Culture of mutual and friendly relations*

On factors enabling the distribution of leadership in the case study school, there existed the culture of cordial, mutual and friendly relations between the SMT members and the teachers in the case study school. SMT members claimed that they interacted freely with their followers and that their teachers were accessible to them and could dialogue with them at any time. This could be termed an enabling factor. However, despite this cordial relation, the principal still maintained that his staff still gave him his official respect as the principal of the school. From the above, it can be concluded that the interactions that existed between the school SMT and their teachers appeared cordial. However, leadership as positional still prevailed in the case study school. For example, the statement that they still give me **‘my official culture of respect’** as the principal of the school was an indication of hierarchical or traditional leadership in the school.

5.2.3.2 *Award for the best teacher*

Data indicated that teachers in the case study school were being motivated by the principal of the school through the award for the best teacher of the year for the school. There was an award for the best teacher that distinguished himself/herself in the discharge of his/her duty during the year. This was to stimulate teachers for better performance in the future. In accordance with the data above, motivation as defined by Everard, Morris & Wilson (2004, p. 25) involves ‘getting results through people’ or ‘getting the best out of people’ towards efficiency and effectiveness. They further explain that in a hierarchical organisation, subordinates are obvious candidates for ‘motivation’ and that people work at their best when they are achieving the greatest satisfaction from their work. It was clear that in the case study

school, teachers were being motivated to improve their levels of management and administration rather than their leadership.

Constraining factors

Here, I will be discussing the constraining factors which appeared more prominent in the case study school than the enabling factors. These include: cultural orientation of the people, exclusionary religious practices, school staff members as barriers and lastly the state Ministry of Education as a barrier.

5.2.3.3 Cultural orientation of the people

The first major barrier that served as an impediment or that inhibited the adoption and application of distributed leadership in the case study school was the cultural value of the people where the school was located. This claim was supported by Hofstede's study of Nigerian cultural values and its implications for management practice (cited in Sokoya, 1998, p.226) that "the apparent ineffective transfer of some management know-how might be rooted in diverse cultural orientation". According to Sokoya (1998), the personal value orientation of Nigerian managers (including educational managers) fit into the four national cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede, which include power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism and masculinity. These factors were classified as operative values by the Nigeria managers and it is likely to influence their behaviours and also their expectation of other's behaviour.

Hofstede's assertions that value is more dictated by cultural influence, rather than organizational culture was manifested in the Nigerian context by looking at Power Distance which was very high. According to Sokoya (1998) the Nigerian is "overtly class conscious and such class-consciousness is not only socially acceptable, but also rewarded". Also value concepts such as 'My boss and My subordinates' are operative values in Nigeria context and they indicate awareness and importance of one's position. All these values seem to indicate that Nigeria managers have a high Power Distance index and it inhibits the distribution of leadership within their organizations such as schools. This Power Distance factor was very relevant to this study because with its existence, distributed leadership was unlikely to take place. This idea influences how people relate with leaders in their leadership positions, and it will continue to be a constraining factor. Another important factor mentioned by Hofstede in his study of Nigeria cultural values is Masculinity. According to Hofstede's definition,

Masculinity is expected to be high in Nigeria. This reason is that the country has a high respect for values like Achievement, Material Successes, Profit Maximization, High Productivity, Employee Welfare and Efficiency. Therefore, in any country where respect is given to these types of values, to achieve authentic distribution of leadership would be a mirage.

5.2.3.4 Exclusionary religious practices

Findings also revealed that the principal of the case study school engaged in the practice of exclusionary religious practice which might serve as a constraining factor as well. It was observed that it was the culture of the school primarily driven by the principal in particular to start their meetings with an opening prayer. Apart from this, data also indicated that it was the constant religious culture of the school principal to start his opening address or speech with thanks giving to God, imploring other participants to continue giving thanks to God for His protection and mercy. From the data above, it could be concluded that the principal of the case study school imposed his religious views on to his staff, many of whom were not Christian. This behaviour of his was exclusionary because his staff included not only Christians, but people from other religions such as Muslims and traditional worshippers. This practice was thus an example of an exclusionary leadership practice because it is mandatory for non-christianbelievers to join the prayers. The fact must not be forgotten that this cultural attitude and the imposition of the Christian religious practices influenced the leadership and management of the school.

5.2.3.5 Staff members as barriers

Data presented both the SMT and the teachers as barriers to the distribution of leadership in the case study school. These barriers were manifested in their belief and in the discharging of their daily school activities. For example, some of the teachers believed that the principal is the overall head and chairperson of the meetings, so his seating position must be different. From the above, it could be concluded that the staff believed that it is the legal or positional right of the principal to automatically become the permanent chairperson of the school meetings thereby giving room for hierarchical chain of command in the distribution of leadership in the school, and hierarchy thus represents a means of control for leaders over their staff, whereas distributed leadership in the contrary emphasises a move towards a more

shared and participatory approach to the practice of leadership and management in schools (Grant, Gardner, Kajee, Moodley & Somaroo, 2010).

5.2.3.6 State Ministry of Education as a barrier

Finally, findings revealed the powerful position of the state Ministry of education in the structure of the organisation of the case study school as a barrier to the distribution of distributed leadership. Documentary evidence showed that in some of the staff meetings, participants had to wait for directives from the state Ministry of Education before they could finalise decisions on some important issues affecting the school academically or administratively. Data also indicated how directives came from the State Ministry of Education in a hierarchical order of events and schools were made to comply. For example, when there was a teachers' protest in Nigeria, the SMT was confused on whether or not to close the school. They had to wait for the instruction from the Honourable Commissioner of Education before they knew what step to take.

From the above discussion it could be concluded that the influence of the State Ministry of Education on the case study school was hierarchical and top down in nature. This factor also serves as impediment to distributed leadership in the school. On this issue, Bush (2003, p. 37) argues that organisational structure is closely linked to formal models of the theories of Educational Leadership and Management. He argues that "in formal models, the official structures of the organisation tend to be hierarchical. Organisational charts emphasize vertical relationship between staff". He further explains that the hierarchy thus represents a means of control for leaders over their staff.

Considering the data on the influence of the Ministry of Education on the case study school, this goes some way to explain why the school operated within a traditional leadership paradigm.

5.3 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this chapter, I answered the three research questions. In the next chapter, I conclude and make recommendations.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the leadership practices in one public high school in Nigeria, shifting the focus of attention from educational leader to leadership practices. Also it explored the level of interaction between leaders and followers in a range of staff and briefing meetings of the case study school. This final chapter summarises the main findings of the study. These are simply the main threads from Chapter Five. The chapter also presents the recommendations for both practice and future research. It discusses the potential value of the study and presents the challenges and limitations with brief conclusion.

6.2 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section summarises the main findings of the study based on my research goal, research questions and the data obtained from questionnaires, document analysis, stimulated recall interviews and observations.

Findings from the main study indicated that the case study school was still operating traditional leadership in the management and administration of the school. School activities were dominated by a hierarchical chain of command. What emerged in the leadership of the school in practice was authorized distributed leadership. This is because the leadership in evidence was strictly under the mandate of the school principal. There was some form of restricted teacher leadership in the management and administration of the school.

Data also revealed that the school was very strong in management and administrative functions. It was indicated that the school was very effective and efficient in the controlling and management of both human and material resources. It was revealed that the school was very good at record keeping and other aspects of managing human and material resources.

On the issue of respondents' perceptions of leadership, findings revealed that the SMT perceived that they were mainly leaders because they were put into positions of authority. In other words, the notion of leadership as positional prevailed. It is argued that this is partly due to the high power distance index in Nigerian culture (Hofstede, 1998, cited in Sokoya, 1998). Data also indicated that teachers saw themselves as both leaders and followers, because they were leaders to their students and followers of their leaders. SMT members also believed in consultation and sharing of ideas with their staff members which was demonstrated by the principal appointing some teachers as chairpersons and secretaries of various committees, thereby giving room for controlled teacher participation in the practice of leadership.

Finally, the research uncovered factors serving as enabling factors in the distribution of leadership in the case study school, such as a culture of mutual and friendly relations and a system of recognition of good teaching. However, some factors also served to inhibit the distribution of leadership in the school. These included factors like the cultural background of the people within the area where the case study school was located and exclusionary religious practices by the principal of the school. Strong hierarchical control from the Ministry of Education was also seen to contribute to the impediment of distributed leadership in the case study school.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The fact remains indisputable that we are now living in a changing world where what was fashionable yesterday is outdated today. Findings from case study school indicated that the school was very strong in system procedure and effective management of both human and material resources, but limited in terms of embracing contemporary leadership practices. For a complex organisation like schools to prosper, it requires the effective application of both leadership and management. This claim is supported by Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2009) when they argue that "leadership and management need to be given equal prominence if schools and colleges are to operate effectively and achieve their objectives". As a result, I would like to make the following recommendations:

- No leadership development programme was discovered in the case study school. For school leaders to enable development in their schools, they must be ready to embrace professional training especially in leadership. This is in line with Harris (2009, in

Bush, Bell & Middlewood, 2009), when she argues that “meeting the need of twenty first century schooling will demand that principals concentrate their efforts on developing the leadership capability and capacity of others”. Also, to ensure systematic and effective running of the school, the principal and other stakeholders of the case study school must be ready to take the issue of leadership seriously. Areas that require attention include: in-service training for teachers, mentoring of novice teachers and staff and professional development.

- School leaders must realise the fact that the era of singular leadership is becoming out dated, and therefore schools must be ready to embrace distributed leadership. This is the leadership type that is currently gaining popularity for its importance in improving and developing schools.
- Principals and other leaders of schools should be enlightened that distributed leadership does not seek the removal of formal leadership structures but assumes that a relationship exists “between vertical and lateral leadership processes” and that the focus of leadership is on interaction between these processes (Leithwood et al, 2006, p. 46).
- The Ministry of Education would be wise to organise professional leadership training for principals of schools under their control and administration and they should be motivated to have the courage and willingness to accept criticism and admit mistakes.
- Work by Little (1995) suggests that where teachers learn from one another through mentoring, observation, peer coaching and mutual reflection, the possibilities of generating teacher leadership are significantly enhanced. This suggestion by Little (1995) is also applicable to my case study school.
- The hierarchical structure of communication that made the case study school to be waiting endlessly at times for directives from the state Ministry of education was not making leadership and management easy . Therefore, the state government through the Ministry of Education should be ready to give schools some freedom of operation in the management of their schools. The notion of decentralisation needs to be accepted and promoted.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

- Nigerian secondary schools and colleges are noted mainly for management and administrative practices, but not for leadership practices. Therefore for future research, it is recommended the more research should be carried out on distributed leadership and how it could take root in the management and administration of the public and private high schools in Nigeria.
- Another important area that requires future attention is the teachers' professional development programmes on leadership. Research can be conducted to explore the effects of these development programmes on the schools' development.

6.5 POTENTIAL VALUE OF THE STUDY

My belief is that the practice of taking up leadership is a gradual process in accordance with the claim of Grant (2009) that “to lead a school is to become a participant in the practice of leadership, initially as a novice and then, over time, as a full participant in the practice” (p. 52). From the study carried out, it was discovered that limited practice of distributed leadership was found in the case study school. Therefore, this research study will go a long way to arousing awareness of the whole population of the school staff of the significance of distributed leadership towards the development of the school in general. Already the school is very good at management practices and authorised leadership. I think with these, they can start the practice of distributed leadership gradually and later develop to more professional levels.

The exploration of leadership practices in the case study school has given room for the awareness of the strengths and shortcomings of the school in the running and management of the school. This I believe will serve as a basis or foundation to finding a lasting solution to the shortcomings. In addition, if recommendations in this study for the state government are implemented, it will encourage the Ministry of Education, as the policy maker and implementer of policies to embrace distributed leadership instead of the traditional and hierarchical way of directing and controlling the school from the top without involving them before decisions were taken. Finally, this research study will remind the state Ministry of Education of the need to organise a professional development programme for both the principals of schools and the teachers in secondary schools to improve their teaching,

leadership, management and administrative experiences to transform educational system through their new experiences to the practice of distributed leadership.

Lastly, as a proprietor of a school, the research work has tremendously improved my professional knowledge of the application of distributed leadership and better management in the leadership and management of my school.

6.6 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

As a novice researcher, it was my intention to explore leadership practices operating in the case study school. I was particularly interested in how and to what extent the school had adopted leadership approaches that are current today, both academically and professionally. Empirical evidence from the literature shows that leadership is now gaining a greater recognition of importance within the broad field of educational management, administration and leadership. According to Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2009), “there is a growing recognition of leadership at the level of policy and practice, that schools and other educational organisations need to be led capably as well as being managed competently”. This claim is supported in South Africa too by those researchers who advocate that leaders move towards a democratic approach that is inclusive, participative and consultative (Van der Mescht and Tyala, 2008).

However, findings in this study indicate a limited practice of distributed leadership: traditional leadership and very strong management control prevailed. While there are signs of willingness to enable participative leadership and in some cases enabling circumstances exist, there were strongly framed within a hierarchical chain of command.

It is clear that both leadership and management must be given equal prominence for Nigerian schools to develop, prosper and achieve their fundamental goal which is effective teaching and learning of students.

Finally, I wish to add that the knowledge which I have acquired in educational leadership and management from the University within the duration I spent for my master’s degree course had equipped me academically to be able to contribute positively to the improvement of education in Nigeria.

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APPENDIX 1: Participants' Consent Form

I (full names of the participant) hereby confirm that I understand the content of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in the research project. I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

.....

Signature of participant

.....

Date

APPENDIX 2: LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear SMT members,

This questionnaire is part of my Masters of Education degree research program, exploring the leadership practices in a public high school in Nigeria. This questionnaire is anonymous and at no stage will your identity be revealed. I appreciate your input and thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Instruction – Please tick the correct answer to you.

Kindly indicate your official post.

- Principal ☐
- Vice-principal ☐
- H.O.D. ☐

For each of the statements below, please indicate the extent of your agreement or disagreement by placing a tick in the appropriate box.

1 – Strongly Disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Undecided/Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

		1	2	3	4	5
1	I lead by example	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	I can manage staff effectively	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	I am able to find solutions to all the problems in my school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	I execute all aspects of my work diligently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	I believe in consultation and sharing of ideas with my staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6	Both my staff and community people are always comfortable around me.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	I often try to stay a step ahead of everyone else in the school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I always retain the final decision making authority during the staff or briefing meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	I always try to include one or more staff members in determining what to do, and how to do it; however, I maintain the final decision-making authority.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	I and other staff members always vote whenever a major decision has to be taken during the staff meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	I don't share my leadership activities with other staff; they may not be able to do it the way I like.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	I tell my staff and others what to do and how it should be done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	During a staff meeting or briefing meeting I always take a lead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	I always direct the affairs of the staff or briefing meetings, and frame the agenda of the next meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	My staff can lead themselves just as well as I can.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	I believe every staff member is important & can lead in decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	I interact freely with my staff members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18	I value the input and contribution that other staff members make.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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19. Do you view yourself as a

- ☐ Leader
- ☐ Follower
- ☐ Leader and Follower

19.1 Please provide reasons for your above choice

20. How are decisions taken at staff and briefing meetings?

- ☐ Primarily the domain of the principal
- ☐ Through voting by staff members
- ☐ Through mutual agreement among staff members

21. Are staff members allowed to interact freely with each other during the staff meetings?

- ☐ They usually interact with each other
- ☐ They always maintain quietness in the meeting
- ☐ They interact only when a decision is to be taken

22. Who chairs the staff meetings?

- ☐ Principal is the permanent chairperson
- ☐ Vice-principal or HOD
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ All of the above

23. How accessible are your teachers to you?

- ☐ We meet only for official issues
- ☐ We meet both officially and unofficially
- ☐ I am free to dialogue with them anytime

24. Attendance during the staff meetings

- ☐ Attendance is compulsory
- ☐ Attendance is voluntary
- ☐ With permission, staff members may absent themselves

25. Who decides the content and agenda of the staff meetings?

- ☐ The principal
- ☐ The vice-principal or SMT members
- ☐ The teachers
- ☐ All the above

26. How many times are staff meetings held in a term?

- ☐ Once

- Twice ☐
- Thrice ☐
- No fixed no. of times ☐

27. Does the school context/ethos encourage or discourage teachers from taking a lead in decision making during staff meetings. Kindly explain.

28. Can you briefly explain the type of relationship you have with your teachers in the school.

Thanks for providing the data. Your input is highly appreciated.

John Oluwole Adediji

Department of Education

Rhodes University

Grahamstown, South Africa

LEADERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire is part of my Masters of Education degree program, exploring the leadership practices in a public high school in Nigeria. The questionnaire is anonymously answered and at no stage will your identity be revealed. I appreciate your input and thank you for completing this questionnaire.

Instruction – Please tick the correct answer.

1 Do you view yourself as a

- Leader ☐
- Follower ☐
- Leader and follower ☐

1.1 Please provide reasons for your above choice

 --

 --

 --

 --

2 In your opinion, what type of leadership style does your school Principal use?

- Authoritarian ☐
- Democratic ☐
- Laissez-faire ☐
- other ☐

2.1 Please provide reasons for your above choice

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3 In your opinion, what is the leadership style of your head of department (HOD)

- Authoritarian ☐
- Democratic ☐
- Laissez-faire ☐
- Other ☐

3.1 please provide reasons for your above response

4 How are decisions taken at staff and briefing meetings?

- Primarily the domain of the principal ☐
- Through voting by staff members ☐
- Through mutual agreement among staff members ☐

5 Are staff members allowed to interact freely with each other during the staff meetings?

- We usually interact with each other ☐
- We always maintain quietness in the meeting ☐
- We interact only when a decision is to be taken ☐

6 Who chairs the staff meetings?

- Principal is the permanent chairperson ☐
- Vice-principal or HOD ☐
- Teacher ☐
- All of the above ☐

7 How accessible is your principal to you?

- We meet only for official issues ☐
- We meet both officially and unofficially ☐
- I'm free to dialogue with him/her anytime ☐

8 Attendance during the staff meetings

- Attendance is compulsory ☐
- Attendance is voluntary ☐
- With permission, you may absent yourself ☐

9 Who decides the contents and agenda of the staff meetings?

- The principal ☐
- The vice-principal ☐
- The teachers ☐
- All the above ☐

10 How many times are staff meetings held in a term?

- Once ☐

- Twice ☐
- Thrice ☐
- No fixed no. of times ☐

11 Does the school context/ethos encourage or discourage you from taking a lead in decision making during staff meetings? Kindly explain

-

12 Can you briefly explain the type of relationship you have with the SMT in the school

-

Thanks for providing the data. Your input is highly appreciated.

John Oluwale Adediji
 Department of Education
 Rhodes University
 Grahamstown, South Africa

APPENDIX 3: Letter requesting permission for conducting research

Rhodes University
Department of Education
Grahamstown
South Africa 6140
10th July 2012

The Principal

xxx

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A RESEARCH STUDY

I am a master's degree student from the Department of Educational Leadership and Management, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I wish to seek your consent to carry out a research study on Leadership in your school, and I shall be grateful if you will allow me and also give me your full support to carry out the said research study.

Please be informed that this research study is not an evaluation of the brilliancy or competence of any participant, but just for research purposes. There is no right or wrong answer, each individual participant is free to express his/her mind the way he/she feels about the questions.

I wish to assure you of the anonymity and confidentiality of the information to be shared with me during the process of the research study. I also wish to let the participants know that they are free to withdraw from the research study at any time if they are no longer interested in taking part.

For any concern or question on the said research study, my supervisors can be contacted:
Professor Hennie Vander Mescht +27466038384 e-mail h.vandermescht@ru.ac.za and Dr.
Callie Grant +27466037508 e-mail c.grant@ru.ac.za

Thanks in anticipation of your cooperation

Yours faithfully

John Oluwole Adediji

+27780904260

APPENDIX 4: LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

Rhodes University
Department of Education
Grahamstown
South Africa 6140
10th July 2012

Dear Sir/Madam,

INVITATION TO TAKE PART IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

I am a master's degree student from the Department of Educational Leadership and Management, Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa.

I wish to carry out a research study on leadership in your school and I shall be grateful if you will agree to be one of my participants.

The said research study is not an evaluation of your performance or competence. Therefore, there is no right or wrong answer, and you are free to express your mind about the question. You also have the right to withdraw from taking part in the research study anytime if you are no longer interested.

Thanks in anticipation of your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

John Oluwole Adediji

+27780904260

APPENDIX 5: PARTICIPANT'S BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

(1.) Gender

Male ☐

Female ☐

(2.) Current position in the school

Principal ☐

Vice-Principal ☐

H.O.D. ☐

Class teacher ☐

(3.) Age 21 – 30 Years ☐

31 – 40 Years ☐

41 – 50 Years ☐

51 Years and above ☐

(4.) Formal Qualification

N.C.E. ☐

First Degree ☐

Master's ☐

Ph.D ☐

(5.) Years of teaching experience

0 – 5 years ☐

6 – 10 years ☐

11 – 15 years ☐

16 – 20 years ☐

21 years and above ☐

(6.) Native Language _____

CASE STUDY SCHOOL BIOGRAPHY

(1) Name of the school -----

--

(2) Total No. of students in JSS classes -----

(3) Total No. of students in SSS classes -----

(4) Total No .of teachers including the principal -----

-

(5) Total No .of Female teachers -----

--

(6) Total No .of male teachers -----

--

(7) Teacher/learners Ratio-----

--

B – Please tick Yes/No

Do you have the following in your school:

	Yes	NO
School Library		
Science Laboratory		
Electricity		
Water		

Football field		
Computing facilities		
School fence		
Assembly Hall		
Toilets		

Thanks.

Date -----

Principal's Signature/Official stamp

APPENDIX 6: VIDEO STIMULATED RECALL (SR) INTERVIEW

The purpose of this video stimulated recall (SR) interview was to explore the participants experience and reflections on their participation in the briefing and staff meetings videoed for the purpose of this study in order to obtain relevant information on the leadership practices prevalent during these situations.

1. Was there an agenda for the meeting?
2. What was the purpose of the meeting?
3. What was the actual content of the meeting?
4. How did SMT members and teachers interact with each other during the meeting?
5. Was the meeting dominated by the principal and/or the SMT or was there space for teacher participation?
(A) What was the area and depth of teacher participation?
6. How involved were teachers in whole school decision making?
7. was a culture of collaboration and debate evident or were the majority of the staff

Passive and voiceless?