

**An investigation into the management implications of  
double-shift schooling in the Khomas Region in Namibia**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree

of

**MASTER OF EDUCATION**

**(Educational Leadership and Management)**

Of

**RHODES UNIVERSITY**

by

**MARIA UENDJIUNDJA KATJAITA**

December 2011

## Abstract

This study seeks to help fill the gap that exists in our knowledge of double-shift schooling. The goal of this study is to critically investigate the experiences and perceptions of headmasters who are managing and leading double-shift schools. The focus is on how double-shift schooling is perceived as a management phenomenon by the principals of two schools in Namibia.

This research is a case study of two schools, working in the interpretive paradigm. I used semi-structured interviews and focus groups to explore participants' perceptions of the management of double-shift schooling. Findings suggest that managing double-shift schools is more complex than managing single shift schools. For example, decision-making in the double-shift system is more complex due to the delay in decision-making that is caused by the two separate sessions. The division of the school day into two sessions also results in less teaching time for the implementation of the official curriculum. This furthermore impacts negatively on the teacher-learner interaction time. These challenges are also experienced in all the other management tasks such as facilities, communication, planning, control and monitoring, human resource management as well as resource management and allocation.

The findings of the study will hopefully inform policy-makers in general but more specifically in Namibia so that they are in a better position when considering the educational and social factors when choosing double-shift schools as an alternative intervention. The study may assist leaders in double-shift schools to work against the negativity that surrounds double-shift schooling.

## **Acknowledgements**

This half thesis would not have been possible if it was not for the untiring encouragement, guidance and relentless supervision of my supervisor, Professor Hennie van der Mescht. I am forever indebted to you for being such a committed supervisor even during the times that I wanted to quit the program. Simply, thank you Hennie.

I am also indebted to my three interviewees who gave me valuable information on my research questions but also for the mere fact that they were some of the few school leaders who were willing to be interviewed. My sincere gratitude also goes to Richardine for being my partner and a source of inspiration in the completion of the thesis. In the same vein I would like to thank my friend Utjingirua for her knowledgeable input whenever I needed someone to straighten out issues before I sent them for correction.

Finally I thank my family, Peya, Tupeua, Nokoo, Ketu, Kate and Eppy for the role they played. You never complained when the demands to finalize my research paper became very demanding and I could not contribute to my responsibilities as a mother. In this regard special thanks go to Eppy for typing some of the work on the computer. Thank you so much for your understanding, encouragement, patience and support.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 .....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Motivation for this topic .....	1
1.3 Double-shift system put into perspective.....	3
1.4 Research goal .....	5
1.5 Methodology.....	6
1.6 Outline of the thesis.....	8
CHAPTER 2 .....	10
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
2.1 Introduction .....	10
2.2. Historical developments in education and educational management in Namibia.....	11
2.3 The motivational factors behind the implementation of the double-shift system in Namibia .....	13
2.4 What is the situation in other countries? .....	18
2.5 What is in a name?.....	18
2.6 The general atmosphere of double shift schools.....	22
2.7 Double-shift schooling and cognitive achievement.....	23
2.8 Curriculum Issues .....	24
2.9 Double-shift systems and social equity.....	26
2.10 Organisation of double-shift schools .....	27
2.11 Time- tabling .....	28
2.12 Staffing and management.....	28
2.13 Parental Involvement.....	31
2.13.1 What is it? .....	31
2.13.2 The importance of parental involvement in schools .....	32
2.14 The relevance of Bush's ambiguity model to the system of double-shift schooling .....	34
2.15 Leadership and management in complex and crisis situations .....	40
2.15.1 Defining school management and leadership .....	40
2.15.2 Organisational culture.....	43
2.15.3 Managing complex and crisis situations .....	44

CHAPTER 3 .....	47
METHODOLOGY .....	47
3.1 Introduction .....	47
3.2 What is research? .....	47
3.3 Research Paradigm.....	49
3.4 Research Method: Case Study .....	51
3.5 Selection of participants and site.....	53
3.6 Data-gathering tools .....	54
3.7 Data Analysis .....	56
3.8 Ethical Aspects .....	58
3.9 Limitations of the Research Methodology.....	60
CHAPTER 4 .....	63
DATA PRESENTATION - INTERVIEWS .....	63
4.1 Introduction .....	63
4.2 Why double-shift?.....	64
4.3 The implementation and organisation of afternoon sessions in Namibia.....	67
4.4 Teaching and learning: Time on task .....	68
4.5 Impact on teaching time .....	69
4.6 Impact on facilities .....	71
4.7 Implications for management.....	72
4.7.1 Communication.....	72
4.7.2 Decision-making.....	74
4.7.3 Planning.....	76
4.7.4 Control and monitoring.....	77
4.7.5 Human Resource Management .....	78
4.7.6 Resource management and allocation .....	81
4.7.7 Educational Reform.....	82
CHAPTER 5 .....	85
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS .....	85
5.1 Introduction .....	85
5.2 Rationale for the double-shift system .....	85

5.3 Implications for management: Increased ambiguity and complexity .....	87
5.4 Specific challenges emerging from the data .....	93
5.4.1 Parental involvement .....	94
5.4.2 The effect on buildings and facilities .....	95
5.4.3 The effects on the teachers .....	96
5.4.4 The effects on the learners .....	98
5.4.5 The effects on curricula and duration of instructional time .....	99
5.5 The impact of double-shift schooling on the Educational Reform .....	101
CHAPTER 6 .....	104
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	104
6.1 Introduction .....	104
6.2 Summary of main findings .....	104
6.3 Potential value of my research .....	108
6.4 Recommendations .....	109
6.5 Recommendations for future research.....	112
6.6 Limitation of my research .....	113
6.7 Conclusion .....	114
Reference List.....	115
Appendix A .....	120
Interview questions - Principals:.....	120
Appendix B .....	121
Interview questions - Heads of Department: .....	121
Appendix C .....	122
Interview questions - Focus Group: .....	122
Appendix D .....	123
Permission to conduct research .....	123

# **CHAPTER 1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter gives an overview of the rest of the thesis. In the first place I state the reasons why I chose this particular research topic. Thereafter I outline my topic and research question. Next, I present a brief note on the research approach I decided to adopt. Here I also explain the particular method and tools I used. This chapter also tries to explain the steps I took to facilitate the research process. Finally I provide an outline of how the thesis is structured.

### **1.2 Motivation for this topic**

Education ministries in developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean are confronted by increasing demands for access to basic education. Bray (1997, p. 188) claims that primary education increased four-fold in Africa and more than doubled in Asia between 1960 and 1980. These rapid increases forced low-income countries to expand their education systems beyond their economic capacities. The demand for primary education in Namibia has increased by almost 14% between 1992 and 2001. After independence the Namibian government also had to replace a huge number of inadequate temporary classroom structures - for example the so-called 'tree' schools (schools where learners were taught under trees) with permanent ones. Providing education to all in Namibia is not only costly but it is also labour-intensive due to the country's demographic and geographic patterns. The Apartheid Laws of divide and rule have divided Namibia into regions which are structured according to racial and tribal divisions. These are all factors one has to consider very seriously when addressing education in Namibia.

As a lecturer at the Windhoek College of Education, teaching Education Theory and Practice, one of my tasks is to assess students majoring in Lower Primary. Students majoring in Lower Primary teach from grade one up to grade two. These students are studying all the subject combinations taught in these grades. It was during such school-based study activities that I came to experience the double-shift system in the reality. The double-shift is a system whereby a school caters for two shifts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. According to Bray (2000, p. 12) through this practice the supply of school places is increased while serious strain on the budget is avoided. The school-based study chairperson at the college was not in favour of placing students at these schools but was left with no other choice since we could not accommodate all the students in the morning sessions. The student themselves were almost in tears and they came up with different excuses such as: We are missing out on the afternoon activities such as sport and guided practice seminars (these seminars are held twice per week in the afternoon to assist students with problems they experience while teaching in their major subjects for example mathematics, languages and Education Theory and Practice). The lecturers dealing with these students had their own share of problems. They had to arrange for special times to assist students and these arrangements were difficult and complicated since the visiting of the students in the morning sessions clashed with the times they could meet the afternoon-shift session students on campus for extra assistance and guidance. Headmasters literally begged the school-based study committee not to place student teachers in the afternoon sessions since these schools were already complicated and should not be disturbed in their day-to-day endeavours. It was at this juncture that my interest in the management of this type of system was triggered.

All these aspects drew my attention to the problems inherent in the system of double-shift schooling. I asked myself different questions such as: Are these problems insurmountable or can they be rectified through better planning, implementation and commitment? Before I could answer this I realised I would have to come to a clearer understanding of what the problems actually were.



I was intrigued by the complaints and problems which came from those working at double-shift schools. As a student studying educational leadership and management I studied Tony Bush's Theories of Educational Management and could relate strongly to his models and more specifically his ambiguity model. This model puts emphasis on the inherent instability and complexity of institutional life.

Since there was so much negativity surrounding this type of intervention I wanted to find out what the real experiences and perceptions were of those who were involved in leading and managing this type of schooling. I also wanted to know to what extent financial constraints restrain or limit policy choices, more particularly with regard to the practical attainment of Namibia's broad policy of goals of access, equity, quality and democracy. Beyond all this I realized that although a number of schools in Namibia operate under this system, policy documents rarely give any consideration to these schools. Double-shift schools are generally seen as a temporary measure when financial resources are constrained. However, what started out as a temporary expedient has developed into a permanent feature in Namibia.

### **1.3 Double-shift system put into perspective**

The double-shift system is not unique to Namibia. The term "platoon" is used interchangeably with the concepts afternoon session, double-shift and double session. In Zimbabwe, according to Graham-Brown (1993, p. 98), "these types of schools are also referred to as double-shift or "hot-seating". In Zambia, these schools are referred to as "double sessions" (Ibid, p. 95). The double-shift system is also used in the Egyptian education system to reduce class sizes; about 30 % of schools have instituted double-shifts (Lloyd, Mensch, Clark & Tawila, 2001). It is thus clear that the system is widely used around the world. The system is used in crisis situations where there is an immediate need in the hope of solving the problem of lack of space within a very short period. In general double-shifts are used because they can increase utilization of existing schools' capacity by as much as 100%.

Very little research on the impact on education of the double-shift system in Namibia in particular and the world in general exists. In a study conducted by Bray (undated, p. 6) the researcher suggested that little empirical data exists because double-sessions are viewed as temporary measures to deal with short-term crises. Lack of funds has compelled the Ministry of Education in Namibia to continue with the double-shift system, since it does at least give an option of increasing schooling capacity without having to build new schools. The double-shift system is, therefore, likely to remain in place for much longer than anticipated and a study of the management of double-shift schools is thus a priority.

Managing and leading double-shift schools places additional demands and challenges on school principals. The crux of the problem is that a double-shift school is two organizations in one, effectively managed by the same person. However, if the principals have to manage both sessions this would result in very long working hours, which would contravene the labour laws. Thus other senior staff members are delegated to manage the school on their behalf for the afternoon sessions, yet the principal still has to effectively control the whole school as one unit. They have to implement policies from the government, control and evaluate their successes, despite the fact that they are not really present in the one 'school'. So their tasks of management and leadership become more demanding and challenging.

A pilot study I conducted revealed that one of the greatest problems experienced by teachers is the fact that in the afternoon sessions they have to teach learners who are exhausted, dirty and hungry. This is not conducive to effective teaching and learning and teachers instructing under these circumstances have to work much harder to motivate learners to deliver. A greater demand is thus also placed on these headmasters to extrinsically motivate their teachers to work with unmotivated learners. Pressure on buildings and infrastructure is much greater in a double-shift school than a normal school. Every piece of furniture in the classroom is used twice every day and deterioration of equipment is thus quicker in these schools. Most of the time classes are dirty because when the morning shift is finished, there is no time to first clean the class before the next shift can start. This results in having dirty classrooms all the time or

forcing cleaners to come and clean over weekends which contravenes the labour laws. Due to the fact that sport is practised in the afternoon, the afternoon session learners do not get the chance to participate in sport. This valuable and important aspect of developing a child in totality is once again excluded.

Traditional management theories - which stress planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation - are unlikely to capture the complexity of what happens in a double-shift school. In my understanding, managing double-shift schooling is a case of managing complexity; therefore the ambiguity models of Bush (2003) mostly informed my studies. Ambiguity is a prevalent feature of complex organizations such as schools and colleges and is likely to be particularly acute in double-shift schools. The ambiguity model thus serves as the underpinning theory for my research. I also specifically looked at organizational structures, processes such as decision-making, communication, conflict and culture.

I also drew heavily on Mark Bray's *Double-shift schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-Effectiveness* (2000). Bray has written succinctly on the double-shift schooling and is regarded as an expert in this field.

#### **1.4 Research goal**

Against this background this study seeks to help fill the gaps that exist in our knowledge of double-shift schooling. Hence the goal of this study is to critically investigate the experiences and perceptions of headmasters who are managing and leading double-shift schools. This is an exploratory study, in the sense that it does not seek to gather base-line data, nor does it claim to present an overview of the state of double-shift schooling in Namibia. Rather the focus is on how double-shift schooling is perceived and experienced as a management phenomenon by the principals of two schools in Namibia. The study thus aims to deepen our understanding of the

challenges of double-shift schooling, and hence has the potential to inform policy makers and decision-making at regional and national levels.

## **1.5 Methodology**

I carried out this research within the interpretive paradigm. The paradigm affords the researcher the opportunity to interpret the situation of the phenomenon by putting oneself in the shoes of the participant. It is about gaining the insider's perspective as well as the meaning they give to their actions. In other words, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 20) "situations are fluid and changing rather than fixed and static; events and behaviour evolve over time and are richly affected by context - they are 'situated activities'. Events and individuals are unique and largely non-generalisable." Furthermore, Blumer as cited (in Cohen et al., 2007, p. 20) believe that "people are deliberate and creative in their actions; they act intentionally and make meanings in and through their activities". In other words reality is understood through the mental process of interpretation, which is influenced by and interacts with the social context. Cohen et al., (2007, p. 21) believe that in fact "people interpret events, context and situations, and act on the bases of those events (echoing Thomas's (1928) famous dictum that if people define their situations as real then they are real in their consequences". Within this paradigm "there are multiple interpretations of, and perspectives on, single events and situations. Reality is multi-layered and complex" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 21). It is therefore very clear that I needed to look into the subjective perceptions of my participants within their context. The interpretive paradigm is therefore the most appropriate paradigm for my study.

I conducted five interviews (see appendices A, B, and C) at two double-shift schools. Since my research was about the perceptions and experiences of the participants and their own accounts on events, the most suitable case study approach to use was one which relied on storytelling and picture-drawing. McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 40) suggest the use of case studies since the data analysis of qualitative research focuses on one phenomenon which the

researcher selects to understand in depth despite the number of sites, participants, or documents chosen for a study.

The aim of my study was to try to understand the experiences and perceptions of headmasters in double-shift schools, without needing or desiring to generalize the findings. I therefore made use of purposeful sampling, which is according to Patton (in McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 397) “selecting information-rich cases for study in depth”. Patton (Ibid, p. 397) is further of the opinion that purposive sampling is done “to increase the utility of information obtained from small samples. These samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon”, which is in this case the double-shift schooling system. I interviewed two headmasters and a head of department. To enrich my data I also interviewed two different focus groups. According to Mertens (2005, p. 245) “using focus groups as a research strategy would be appropriate when the researcher is interested in how individuals form schema or perspectives of a problem”. Since I am interested in the experiences and perceptions of those involved in double-shift schools I wanted to observe the interaction between the members because according to Mertens (Ibid, p. 245) it “allows the exhibition of a struggle for understanding how others interpret key terms and their agreement or disagreements with the issues raised”.

The research techniques I used were semi-structured interviews in order, as Cohen et al. (2007, p. 355) puts it “to engage, understand and interpret the key feature of the lifeworlds of the participants”. In the first place I sought permission from the regional director to conduct the research. To prepare the participants for the research programme I visited them prior to the interviews. These visits explained thoroughly what was expected from the headmasters. During these visits I also gave each participant a copy of the letter (see appendix D) allowing me to conduct research in these schools as well as to seek the permission, commitment and agreement from the side of the participants. This exercise in itself helped the participants to be prepared for their interviews by having time to think clearly and construct their viewpoints instead of having to do this during the interviewing process which could lead to answers that

were superficial. All interviews were recorded to enable me to listen more intently to the answers given and to probe deeper by asking further questions. I did the same with the focus groups. The focus groups were selected by the headmasters, consisting of teachers from the morning as well as the afternoon sessions. I told the headmasters of the two schools to select two teachers from the morning session and three from the afternoon session. Unfortunately teachers of the one school were not eager to be interviewed and I ended up having the headmaster as one of the participants.

With regard to the analysis of the data, I transcribed all the interviews and made notes of significant data recorded in the focus groups. Thereafter I looked for categories that related to my research goal and arranged the findings into themes. The information was collated to get the emerging meanings out of the different categories. This enables a degree of triangulation as Mertens (2005, p. 426) puts it "to support the strength of interpretations and conclusions in qualitative research".

## **1.6 Outline of the thesis**

In chapter two I present an overview of the literature. The main purpose of the chapter is to locate literature that addresses the issue of double-shift schooling. In the first place I review relevant literature that addresses the historical development of education in general in Namibia and the double-shift schooling in particular. Reviewing the literature on the complexity of double-shift schooling needs to account sensitively and critically for epistemological and contextual perspectives. My experience of the double-shift sessions is that the intervention is catering for crisis and complex situations and that ambiguity is a major factor in the management of double-shift-schooling. This is why I locate the discussion on the complexity of double-shift schooling in the framework of crisis management and the ambiguity model of Bush. In the third place I draw heavily on Mark Bray's book: *Double-Shift Schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-Effectiveness*, since Bray has written succinctly and clearly on the double-shift schooling system.

In chapter three I identify, select and provide a description and defence of the research paradigm I am working in. I describe what I understand by the paradigm ontologically and epistemologically. This is followed by a description and defence of the methodology I used, which is a multiple case study. This chapter also discusses data-gathering tools, selection of participants, data analysis, ethical implications, and finally a critique on my methodology. I open the chapter with a brief discussion of research as a scientific discipline.

Chapter four presents the data I obtained from my interviews. The chapter highlights the perceptions and experiences of the double-shift system as experienced by those dealing with it on a day-to-day basis. I present data as raw as possible to capture the meaning of the participants in their own idiom. I give a brief summary of the key questions I used in the interviews and thereafter a thorough discussion of the themes which emerged from the interviews.

In chapter five I analyse the data in terms of the categories and themes that emerge from the data comparing it with the information gained from the literature review and my own experiences and conclusions. In other words I discuss and try to explain the main trends, patterns, similarities and differences that emerged. The chapter ends with a summary of the main results, positive and negative.

The final chapter, which is chapter six, discusses how the main issues in the literature link up with the key findings in chapter four. In this chapter I discuss contradictions, gaps, surprise findings and deviations and suggest possible reasons for all of these. I summarize my arguments by stating the main question my thesis addresses. Finally I show how my findings contribute to the general academic dialogue and discuss some possible implications of my study for policy and practice.

The next chapter will address the literature relevant to my research.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The focus of this chapter is on how leadership and management are coping with the challenge of managing and leading double shift schools in general but more specifically in Namibia. The main purpose of the chapter is also to address the question: What does the literature have to say about double-shift schools or schooling? In the first place I will review relevant literature that addresses the historical development of education in Namibia and the double-shift system in particular. The following questions will guide me through these discussions:

- What does the literature say in general about implementation and organisation of education in Namibia?
- What are the motivational factors behind the implementation of double-shift schooling in Namibia?
- What are the experiences of double- shift schools in other countries?

To be able to understand the research question one has to put it in the context of the complexity of double-shift schooling. In general the meaning of complexity varies not only according to the educational context of a particular effort, but also in the context of the web of political, social, economic and cultural factors. What is regarded as complex depends on the values and perceptions of those involved. It is thus evident from the aforementioned argument that the task of reviewing the literature on the complexity of double-shift schooling needs to account sensitively and critically for epistemological and contextual perspectives. This is why I have decided to locate the discussion of the complexity of double-shift schooling in the framework of crisis management and the ambiguity model of Bush. This discussion will provide the research with a theoretical framework, which will cater for a better understanding of trends and happenings particularly during phases of uncertainty and crisis. My experience of the



double-shift sessions is that the intervention is catering for crisis and complex situations and that ambiguity is a major factor in the management of double-shift schooling. This notion is emphasised by March (as cited in Bush, 2003, p. 134) when he points out the jumbled reality in certain kinds of organisations and the fact that theories of choice underestimate the confusion and complexity surrounding actual decision-making in schools:

Many things are happening at once; technologies are changing and poorly understood; alliances, preferences, and perceptions are changing; problems, solutions, opportunities, ideas, people, and outcomes are mixed together in a way that makes their interpretation uncertain and their connections unclear.

This scenario of changing ideas is causing ambiguity within different organisations. Deliberating on the key ideas and issues of this school of thought will be the second part of the literature review.

In the third place I draw on Mark Bray's *Double-Shift Schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-Effectiveness*. I start with comments on focus and definitions. The historical background will consider the circumstances in which double-shift schools operate and then the issues raised by this type of intervention. In Namibia not much has been done about the double-shift system on a policy level. My research interest in the management and leadership challenges of double-shift schooling is thus a concern to many in the field of education. The absence of policy on double-shift schooling, the basic education reform of the post independence period and the implementation of the staffing norms all contribute to the question of how headmasters of double-shift schools are coping with the complexity and demands of their task. I conclude by considering how the system is a viable solution in countries such as Namibia, seeking to expand their education systems within resource constraints.

## **2.2. Historical developments in education and educational management in Namibia**

After the arrival of European settlers, missionaries found it easier to spread their influence amongst the indigenous people of Namibia. Mission schools were the source of formal

education for Africans, with the government providing education primarily to white children. According to Cohen (1994, p. 62): “Their education emphasised literacy, necessary for reading the Bible, hymnbooks and other evangelical literature”.

Some learners were taught skills to make them labourers in the household of the colonial masters. According to Mutorwa (2004, p. 1) on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December 1915 the League of Nations declared South West Africa (today Namibia) a mandate territory to be administered under South African law. This placed Namibia under one of the most severe colonial rules in Africa. The apartheid regime operated on the basis of separate development based not only on race and skin colour, but also on ethnicity, tribe and language. This state of affairs adversely affected education as well as many other areas of human endeavour and national development such as health, agriculture, religion, and settlement patterns. Needless to say the German rulers (1884-1915) and the South African rulers (1915-1990) have to a significant extent shaped and determined the current education policies in an independent Namibia. (Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education and Culture [MBEC], 1993, p. 21) states that “the policies of racial discrimination have left a legacy of differential allocation of resources to different racial groups”. In other words, the consequences of apartheid should be acknowledged whenever the education system in Namibia is revamped and reformed.

Another extensive consequence of the apartheid policies is proclamation AG8 of 1980 which created the eleven education systems which were based on ethnicity. After independence these eleven education systems were converted into seven Education Regions, under a single and unified Ministry of Education and Culture. The newly formed government of Namibia also defined for itself the educational policies of moving towards education for all. Four major goals were identified to operationalise the goals, namely 1) access to education, 2) quality of education, 3) equity in education and 4) democracy in education.

Presenting a paper at an Education Forum in February 1990 in Windhoek, Angula (1999, p. 14) by then the shadow minister of Education, Culture, Youth and Sport described the education

system as ineffective, wasteful, fragmented, racial, ethnic and unequal. Namibia therefore, as Mutorwa (2004, p. 9) explains, “entered into independence with a huge deficit and backlog to be addressed and rectified in the education and training sector”. Leistner and Esterhuysen (as cited in Mutorwa, 2004, p. 10) elaborated on the deficit and backlog by saying, “On the eve of political independence, the then department of National Education estimated that there was a shortage of 3000 classrooms”.

Before independence according to Mutorwa (2004, p. 10) the then Ovamboland had 59 learners on average per classroom, while the ratio in the white schools was a mere 14 learners per teacher on average. Therefore providing accessible, equitable, democratic and quality education to all Namibians has proven to be a formidable challenge. Policy makers are challenged to be creative, innovative and to find appropriate ways to address and redress the educational inequalities of the past as well as the complex challenges of the present and future. The double-shift system is one of the possible solutions to increase the supply of school places while avoiding serious strain on the budget.

### **2.3 The motivational factors behind the implementation of the double-shift system in Namibia**

As far as I could determine not much has been published about this system in Namibia. The only research effort on the system which has been documented is one written by Harper in 1987. In his research Harper distinguished clearly between a platoon system and the double session system. According to him (1987, p. 67) platoon classes are:

“Two different groups of children taught by different teachers utilizing the same classroom locale, one group during the morning session, the second group during the afternoon session”.

On the other hand double-shift classes according to him (Ibid, p. 67) are:

“Two different groups of children taught by the same teacher utilizing the same classroom locale, one group during the morning session, the second group during the afternoon session”.

The double-shift session or platoon system as it was known before independence was implemented in primary schools of the Department of National Education of South West Africa/Namibia as back as 1975. According to Harper, (1987, p. 5) the earliest record on file is a departmental Circular Minute Number 32 of 1987 issued by the then Department of Bantu Education. One of the paragraphs in this circular as cited by Harper (1987, p. 98) reads as follows:

because classrooms may not be available for additional staff, consideration must also be given to ways in which extended use can be made of the existing classrooms of a school, by introducing a platoon system. With this system in operation one classroom will be used by the one teacher during the mornings while another teacher will use the same classroom during the afternoon.

This paragraph is a clear indication of the rationale for the introduction of the platoon system. At the same time the Circular was also abolishing the use of the double session as it was used by the department of National Education. The abolition of the double session in Circular no. 32 of 1975 reads as follows:

It has become necessary to give high priority to the abolition of double sessions in the sub-standards, but it must be borne in mind once this has been done the retrograde step of re-introducing double sessions cannot again be considered.

According to Harper (1987, p. 98) the creation of additional teaching posts for the purpose of reducing or eliminating double sessions was at that time hampered by the difficult financial position which prevailed. The department made it clear in the circular that where the platoon system is introduced to extend the use of existing classrooms, the classes should be so arranged that the sub-standard A and sub-standard B classes will attend school during the first part of the school day, and the standard one and standard two classes during the latter part of the day. Taking the prevailing conditions of the apartheid system into consideration it is naive to believe

that the rationale behind the introduction of the platoon system was because of financial constraints. Harper (as cited in Mutorwa, 2004, p. 9) points out that in 1981, for example, “expenditure per head on Black pupils was R232 and for Coloureds it was R300. For Whites it was R1210”. The introduction of double-shift schooling could therefore be seen as a deliberate action from the colonial powers to bar education for blacks by allocating inadequate resources to them. The Department of National Education wanted to keep the status quo. They knew, as Harper (1987, p. 5) puts it:

the social and political ramifications of the decision to implement the platoon system are intense and predictable. Not only is the whole notion educationally unsound, but in a country anchored in a history typified by racial discrimination, it is politically volatile.

The political implications of the platoon system are equally complex. According to Harper (1987, p. 6) there could be possible long-term effects on the child’s future school career due to their exposure to this system. The community at large, although grudgingly, had to accept the system as a viable alternative to an intractable problem, for the system was at least providing access to school for their children.

In 1990 the newly independent state of Namibia faced according to Mutorwa (2004, p. 16) “a myriad of developmental challenges”. After independence the government introduced its educational policy reform agenda. Mutorwa (2004, p. 16) believed that many people expected the reform and the renewal process to be fast, radical, immediate, drastic and uncompromised. Societal expectations were also divided. (Namibia. Ministry of Basic Education and Culture [MBEC], 1993, p. 21) elaborates on this notion by putting it in this way:

On the one hand, the majority marginalised in the old system demands the redress of unequal allocations and social disadvantages. On the other hand, there persists concern, even fear, among the privileged minority that this redress may lead to declining quality in education and other adverse effects for them and their children.

The Development Brief was therefore introduced to try to strike a manageable balance between the breadth of participation and the clarity of decision. According to policy (Namibia.

MBEC 1993, p. 24) “the Development Brief is a schematic statement of goals, orientations, objectives, relationships, and priorities - in other words ‘a statement of vision’”.

After independence the ministry of Education issued Circular no. 15/p dated 15 October 1997 in which new arrangements for double sessions at some schools were stipulated. In the first place the circular talks about the reasons why it was necessary for the Namibian government to continue with the system:

Due to a shortage of classroom facilities, the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture has no other option but to continue double sessioning (platoon system) at some schools. Although afternoon sessions hold many disadvantages, without those double sessions a total number of 23880 learners in Namibia would not have access to school at all (1996 figures).

It was in the same circular that the Ministry’s Efficiency Workshop in December 1996 also resolved that the extra expenditure of special allowances for principals with double sessions could not be sustained. They therefore recommended alternatives and other cost-effective arrangements. The Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture arranged that, for example, as from the beginning of the first trimester of 1998, the Deputy Principal or a head of department would control and manage afternoon sessions, while receiving his/her normal salary. As with teachers of afternoon sessions, the Deputy Principal/head of department need not be present during the morning sessions. The principal of the school, while retaining overall control and accountability for the school, need also not be present at afternoon sessions. The necessity for extra allowances would thus fall away. This information was entailed in the only circular I could trace that informs managers at schools about the implementation and organisation of double sessions in Namibia.

This type of arrangement is what Bush (2003, p. 136) describes in his major features of the ambiguity models as organisations being characterised by fragmentation and loose coupling. Weick (as cited in Bush, 2003, p. 136) uses the term loose coupling to describe relationships between subunits:

By loose coupling the author intends to convey the image that coupled events are responsive, *but* that each event also preserves its own identity and some evidence of its physical and or logical separateness...their attachment may be circumscribed, infrequent, weak in its mutual effects, unimportant, and/or slow to respond...Loose coupling also carries connotations of impermanence, dissolvability, and tacitness all of which are potentially crucial properties of the 'glue' that holds organisations together.

The system of the double-shift schooling is a relevant example of fragmentation and loose coupling. Both sessions are supposed to have their own identity; each session operates "independently", yet they are led and managed by the same headmaster and have the same name. The attachment of the afternoon session is thus circumscribed in the sense that it has limited powers, rights and freedom. The afternoon session cannot take its own independent decision; they have to consult the morning session. The HOD of the afternoon session is accountable to the headmaster of the school. The double-shift is seen as a temporal intervention. This is also where the issue of impermanence comes in - since it is a temporary intervention to solve a crisis, it can be dissolved at any time when the crisis is over. There is thus an uncertainty over the relative powers of the double-shift session. Rights, powers, accountability and responsibilities overlap with the morning session. This makes the situation of managing double-shift schools complicated and complex. According to Bush (2003, p. 134): "The more complex the structures of the organisation the greater the potential for ambiguity".

Management of double-shift schools must be an extremely difficult task which may include, deploying teachers between the shifts; promoting a feeling of unity between the staff of different shifts; ensuring that extra-curricular activities are given appropriate attention and ensuring order in overlapping sessions when two groups are on the campus together. All these call for effective management and leadership. In some double-shift schools there is what Bush (2003, p. 138) calls "fluid participation" in the management of schools. Some double-shift sessions rotate the management functions and make it extremely difficult to attribute responsibility to those responsible for the sessions. This allows a kind of 'loose' responsibility and commitment, where the responsibility is passed on to the next person.

## **2.4 What is the situation in other countries?**

One of the most serious problems I encountered is the limited available information on double-shift schooling or multiple-shift schooling. In Namibia little is known about its planned and unintended consequences. Bray (1990, p. 73), one of the exponents of the multiple shift school system as it is organised and implemented in some parts of the world, himself admits to the paucity of the research. As earlier mentioned only one research effort on the “platoon system” has been documented in Namibia (Harper, 1987). Many papers on educational reform have seen the light after independence but none mention the double-shift system in whatever context. Mutorwa in his book *Access to Education 1999-2000* has written extensively about the actualisation of access as one of the national goals of education in Namibia, but there is no mention of the double-shift system in Namibia, and the impact it has on equitable access and efficiency. As mentioned before, in this section I will rely on Bray’s book, *Double-Shift Schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-Effectiveness*, published in 2000.

## **2.5 What is in a name?**

It is very important to get clarity on the different terminology used in describing the double-shift session. According to Bray (2000, p. 11) “sometimes the difference in terminology implies a difference in meaning”. This requires care when using terms in different contexts.

It is thus according to Bray (2000, p. 11) necessary to make sure of the meaning in different contexts. In most contexts, terminology describing the double-shift sessions such as bisessional and halfday can be used interchangeably, although there are also exceptions to the rule. This point is demonstrated by Bray (2000, p. 11) when he refers to different examples. According to him in Botswana the term double session has been used to describe schools which have different pupils in the mornings and afternoons, but the same number of classroom hours as pupils in single-session schools. These schools also have different teachers for the different sessions. Half-session schools have been formed in Botswana with different pupils in the mornings and afternoons but in which the total classroom hours are reduced. In this case the



two groups are taught by the same teacher. In Singapore, single-session schools operate according to Bray (2000, p. 11) on the traditional pattern from 7.30 am. to 1.00 pm. They are different from full-day schools which was an experiment in the past and which has been abandoned. Full-day schools had an extended curriculum and did not close till 3.30 pm. Bray (2000, p. 11) explains in the same breath that in some other countries evocative unofficial terminologies are used:

In Zimbabwe, double-session schooling is also called 'hot seating' because the seats are said never to have time to cool down! And staff in Mexico have been known as 'taxi teachers' because many jump straight into taxis at the end of every morning session in order to teach afternoon sessions elsewhere.

In South Africa and Namibia double-shift schooling is called 'platooning' which seems to imply a sort of military-style regimentation. In Namibia double-session schooling according to Harper (1987, p. 5) used to refer to a system which involved the teaching of two groups, one in the morning and another in the afternoon by the same teacher. The name in this kind of practice is therefore contextual and one has to make certain what situation the name is referring to. I prefer to use the name double-shift school in my study since this describes the system followed in Namibia adequately. In Namibia we do not have any other type of multiple shift systems such as the triple-shift or any other except the double-shift. The name double-shift will therefore not cause any confusion.

The main purpose of double-shift schooling is according to Bray (2000, p. 12):

to increase the supply of school places while avoiding serious strain on the budget. Introduction of double-shifts allows a single set of buildings and facilities to serve more pupils. This may be especially important in urban areas where land is scarce and buildings are expensive.

Bray (2000, p. 12) is therefore convinced that double-shift schooling has helped many countries to address the issue of access and to move towards universal primary and secondary education. In addition to addressing financial constraints and access to education, other purposes of the

double-shift system is also to use human resources more intensively and effectively, for example, in cases where the same teacher is teaching different sessions. This type of arrangement can reduce the political tension in education that arises from receiving a low basic salary. In some societies the double-shift system makes provision for some pupils to attend school and to work so as to be able to support themselves and their needy families. This arrangement reduces unit costs and thus also school fees. Double-shift schooling can also be used to address the issue of overcrowding.

On the other hand, Bray (2000, p. 12) is convinced that multiple shift schooling may create problems:

The school day, especially in triple-session systems, is often shortened. This implies that quality is being sacrificed for quantity, that pupils are losing some classroom teaching and extra-curricular activities. Also, if teachers work in more than one session, they are likely to be tired. This can cause a further deterioration in quality.

Multiple systems according to Bray (2000, p. 13) are also sometimes accused of causing social problems because children are occupied in school for shorter periods and so have more time to roam around the streets and get into trouble. This is why the system is grudgingly accepted by most communities and Namibia is no exception. In Namibia, the little that is known about double-shift schooling through the study of Harper is shrouded in negativity. Harper (1987, p. 7) makes reference to teachers who are “confronted in the afternoon by a group of tired, dirty and hungry children”.

Different models are used for double-shift schooling in order to provide a framework for subsequent analysis. I will mention them briefly without any discussion, but will go into detail about the model commonly used in the Namibian context. Bray (2000, p. 15) has identified the following models: End-on shifts, Overlapping shifts, Variations in length of school week, Different or shared teachers, One set of buildings for two levels of education, Urban and rural systems, Daily, weekly and monthly rotation, Classes for both children and adults and lastly

Borrowed and rented premises. The one that I thought related most to the Namibian context is the End-on shifts. According to Bray (2000, p. 15) most double-shift systems are of the End-on variety and this means "that one group of pupils leaves the school before the next group arrives".

In this type of double-shift schooling the first group of learners comes early in the morning but leaves at mid-day and the second group arrives at mid-day and leaves in the late afternoon. According to Bray (2000, p. 15) in Malaysia, for example a common pattern is:

1<sup>st</sup> Shift: 7.40 am. to 12.40 pm.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shift: 1.00pm. to 6.00 pm.

In countries like Zambia where a triple shift system is used the scenario is:

1<sup>st</sup> Shift: 7.00 am. to 10.45 am.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shift: 11.00 am. to 2.45pm.  
3<sup>rd</sup> Shift: 3.00pm. to 6.45 pm.

The Namibian double shift system uses this system:

1<sup>st</sup> Shift: 7.20 am. to 12.20 pm.  
2<sup>nd</sup> Shift: 1.00 pm. to 6.00 pm.

It was mentioned earlier that for an organisation to be effective it should be doing the right thing at the right time. The double-shift schooling arrangement in Namibia was implemented as a short term measure. The government is however faced by the ongoing growth of the population and acute resource constraints. In order for the government to reach the goal of education for all, it has no choice but to continue with the implementation of double-shift schooling.

## **2.6 The general atmosphere of double shift schools.**

In general, many countries view double-shift schooling as something negative and inferior. Bray (2000, p. 38) is of the opinion that: "Most educators agree that the atmosphere of double-shift schools is inferior to that of single shift schools".

Bray (2000, p. 38) mentions several factors which make the system inferior. According to him (Ibid) the double-shift schoolday is shorter and as a consequence its breaks are shortened and the teaching time is somewhat reduced. The socialisation factor is influenced negatively in the double-shift system, mostly when two head teachers are responsible for separate shifts. Because of time constraints children miss their breakfast and have to struggle to concentrate due to hunger. Afternoons are hotter, especially in countries like Namibia and children and teachers find it hard to concentrate, study and teach. In some countries some teachers instruct in more than one session and due to this they do not have enough time for preparation and marking of assignments. The shift change has its own complications. If the afternoon shift learners come too early to school they disturb the morning session. If the morning session lingers on after school they disturb the afternoon session.

On the other hand Bray (2000, p. 39) continues, if afternoon-shift pupils are prohibited from arriving until it is time for their lessons and if all the morning-shift children leave school as soon as classes are over, the transition period may be chaotic. The sudden emptying and refilling of the school reduces the children's' and teachers' sense of belonging. It makes the school feel like a teaching machine or factory. Due to the large numbers of learners it is very difficult for teachers to get to know them all and this can exacerbate discipline problems. Pupils and teachers also have less sense of ownership of their classrooms because the classes are used by different groups.

Although these problems according to Bray (2000, p. 39) do not have a “disastrous impact” on learners’ education, policy makers should be informed so that they are able to understand why implementing this system is difficult for leaders and staff at these schools. If this can be achieved, then policy makers as well as the implementers will not be discouraged by what they view as the ineffectiveness of their efforts, since reforming an education system is a dynamic and continuous process.

## **2.7 Double-shift schooling and cognitive achievement**

Sterman (2005, p. 2) is of the opinion that thoughtful leaders throughout society increasingly suspect that:

The policies we implement to address difficult challenges have not failed to solve the persistent problems we face, but are in fact causing them. All too often well intentioned programs create unanticipated “side effects”. The result is *policy resistance*, the tendency for interventions to be defeated by the system’s response to the intervention itself.

Earlier in this discussion Bray identified different factors that can be regarded as consequences or side effects of the implementation of the afternoon session. The intentions of the government that implements double-shift schooling is to provide access to education to as many children as possible, but the unanticipated resulting complexities of forces beyond the government’s control cannot be predicted. Perhaps this kind of exercise is needed to serve as first hand experience within a learning setting from which one gains experience and develops one’s own ways forward. Concerning the cognitive achievement of learners in double-shift schools, Bray (2000, p. 42) is of the opinion that there is no association between the level of academic performance and the number of sessions for which the school is utilised daily. In fact Bray (2000, p. 42) says that academic achievement of children in the double-shift system is often just as high as that of children in single shift systems. Two points in favour of double-shifts are worth mentioning:

Introduction of double-shifts may permit reduction in class size and therefore a more personalised teaching approach and double-shift schools are generally larger, and therefore find it easier to justify expenditure on libraries, laboratories, etc.

It follows then that double-shift schooling ought to improve the quality of results in schools, since teachers can pay individual attention to learners as the numbers are reduced. This can lead to better results. Perhaps the negativity towards double-shift schooling is more embedded in what Sterman (2005, p. 2) calls “the notion that human nature tends to view their situation as the result of forces outside themselves, forces largely unpredictable and uncontrollable. Whatever fails is measured against this notion”. Sterman (Ibid, p. 2) believes that the more complex the phenomenon the more difficult the task will be, the difficulty making it more convenient for the participant to attribute failure to factors outside their control. It may be that the Namibian government also conveniently sidelines the double-shift system in its policies. This is suggested by the fact that Mr Mutorwa, then minister of Basic Education and Culture, chose not to mention the double-shift system in his book *Access to Education 1990-2000*, as mentioned earlier. One would expect him to mention the double-shift as one of the interventions in addressing access in Namibia. This may be what Sterman (2005, p. 4) referred to as: “Those in power and authority routinely manipulate the policy process for ideological, and political, or pecuniary purposes”.

## 2.8 Curriculum Issues

The following table as taken from Bray (2000, p. 44) shows official data on primary schools teaching-time in thirteen countries. According to Bray (2000, p. 43) in seven countries teaching time has been shortened to accommodate extra shifts. However in six countries no reduction has been made. This scenario implies that if well planned double sessions do not need to be a needle-in-the-haystack problem. In fact this also implies good planning as Bray (2000, p. 43) puts it, “when classroom time is reduced because of the introduction of a shift system, the impact may not be disastrous; much depends on the length of curriculum time before the change”.

<b><i>Burkina Faso</i></b>	30h 00m	21h 00m	-
<b><i>The Gambia</i></b>	26h 00m	23h 45m	-
<b><i>Ghana</i></b>	22h 55m	19h 35m	-
<b><i>Hong Kong</i></b>	23h 20m	22h 10m	-
<b><i>Jamaica</i></b>	25h 00m	22h 30m	-
<b><i>Laos (junior)</i></b>	19h 00m	19h 00m	-
<b><i>(senior)</i></b>	22h 00m	22h 00m	-
<b><i>Malaysia (junior)</i></b>	22h 30m	22h 30m	-
<b><i>(senior)</i></b>	24h 00m	24h 00m	-
<b><i>Myanmar</i></b>	25h 00m	25h 00m	-
<b><i>Nigeria, Imo State</i></b>	25h 05m	22h 05m	-
<b><i>Philippines (junior)</i></b>	25h 00m	23h 20m	-
<b><i>(senior)</i></b>	30h 00m	24h 10m	-
<b><i>Senegal</i></b>	28h 00m	20h 00m	-
<b><i>Singapore (junior)</i></b>	22h 30m	22h 30m	-
<b><i>(senior)</i></b>	24h 30m	24h 30m	-
<b><i>Zambia (junior)</i></b>	20h 25m	20h 25m	17h 30m
<b><i>(senior)</i></b>	26h 40m	26h 40m	-

Table 1: Official Weekly Classroom-Instruction Time (Primary Schools)

Bray (2000, p. 44) is of the opinion that effective teachers who are well supported with curriculum resources and materials can achieve a great deal more in a short time than ineffective teachers with few materials can achieve in twice the time. What is essentially important here is that effective leaders and managers in schools maintain and improve quality of education in these schools by finding ways to get around the curriculum problems of shorter school days and congested school buildings. Extra-curricular activities need to be addressed in the same way to ensure success.

## 2.9 Double-shift systems and social equity

Bray (2000, p. 47) highlighted that double-shift systems can greatly contribute to social equity, for they permit government to increase access to education at a moderate cost. According to him many governments are faced by problems of either single shift schooling for some learners only or double-shift schooling for everybody. Obviously the second choice is more equitable, since societal resources are spread to provide access to everybody.

According to Bray (2000, p. 47) the double-shift system can help low-income groups in different ways. Some youths contribute to their family's livelihood by working part of the day. If these youths are now earning a living they look after the younger children. Double-shift schooling reduces school fees and thus allows poor children to attend school. The system thus provides a platform where responsibility is shared amongst family members. On the other hand Bray (2000, p. 49) warns that:

Unless policy-makers are careful, double-shift schooling reinforces social inequalities. Serious equity implications and problems evolve from the system. The system tends to polarise children and their immediate societies.

If double-shift schools are, for example, only found in poor communities this reinforces inequalities. Before independence in colonial Zimbabwe different racial groups had different education systems. According to Bray (2000, p. 49) shortly after independence in 1980:

The schools for European, Asian and Coloured populations were renamed Group A schools and those for Blacks were renamed Group B schools...Reflecting these disparities two decades after independence double-shift schooling is much more common in former Group B schools than in former Group A schools.

The situation in Namibia is similar to the one in Zimbabwe. In some other countries the system fosters competition between academically strong and academically weak schools. In support of this idea Bray (2000, p. 49) says:



During the 1980's and 1990's, in Trinidad and Tobago only junior secondary schools (forms 1-3) operated double-shifts. Full secondary schools (forms 1-5) had single shifts. Allocation was based on examination results. Pupils with good results went to full secondary schools, and the rest went to junior secondary schools

Bray (2000, p. 50) continues to argue that research has shown that academic performance is not just determined by children's inborn ability but it is also determined by home support and learning conditions. Thus, while at first the system in Trinidad and Tobago only differentiated between academically strong and weak children, in practice it also differentiated between rich and poor. Due to the problems associated with the double-shift system it might be unfair for some teachers and learners to benefit from the morning session for their entire school career. However, effective organisation for example the rotation of teachers and sessions from time to time could benefit all participants.

## **2.10 Organisation of double-shift schools**

Schools are generally regarded as complex organisations. If single shift schools are referred to as complex then multiple shift schools should be even more so. Multiple shift schools and thus double-shift schools will require careful planning and organisation, as well as management in order to function efficiently and effectively. In countries where finance to build new schools are unavailable, multiple shift schooling will not be easily abolished. The question is: which classes should be taught in which session and why? These variations have obvious implications for the effective organisation of double-shift schooling. Bray (2000, p. 53) has suggested six different options to be considered when planning for double-shift schools in primary schools:

- 1) Grades 1-6 in the morning, and parallel grades 1-6 in the afternoon
- 2) Grades 1, 2 and 3 in the morning, and grades 4, 5 and 6 in the afternoon
- 3) Grades 4, 5 and 6 in the morning and grades 1, 2 and 3 in the afternoon
- 4) Grades 1, 3 and 5 in the morning and grades 2, 4 and 6 in the afternoon
- 5) Grades 2, 4 and 6 in the morning and grades 1, 3 and 5 in the afternoon
- 6) Grades 1, 2, 5 and 6 in the morning and grades 3 and 4 in the afternoon

All these options have their own disadvantages and advantages according to Bray (2000, p. 53). Particular countries should therefore use the option that is more suitable in their context.

### **2.11 Time- tabling**

Bray (2000, p. 59) believes that managers of double-shift schools should ask themselves four basic questions when dealing with time-tabling:

- What is the earliest time that children can start school?
- How frequent and how long, should be the breaks within sessions?
- How much time is needed for the transition between shifts?
- What is the latest time by which classes must end?

The choice of a particular timetable is contextual and thus optional. Managers of double-shift schools should decide what is best in their own context.

### **2.12 Staffing and management**

Management is very challenging in double-shift schooling. According to Bray (2000, p. 67) in some countries double-shift schools have only one head teacher, but in other countries the sessions are managed by two different headmasters. In Namibia the double-shift schools are managed by the headmaster in the morning session and a head of department in the afternoon. Bray (2000, p. 68) believes that if double-shift schools have separate head teachers for each session, the schools often suffer from poorly organised maintenance of buildings and equipment. He (Ibid, p. 68) also mentions a few advantages of having only one head teacher. It is in the first place easier to guide the operation of the whole school. Another advantage is the fact that the headmaster can easily transfer learners and staff from one session to another. She/he can supervise maintenance of facilities and equipment and duplication of the purchase of equipment is done away with. If there is only one headmaster the authorities are not under pressure to appoint the best candidate for the prestigious morning session. It is furthermore

easier for parents who have children in both sessions to discuss their problems since they need to approach only one headmaster. Separate heads put an extra financial burden as well as a demand for talented teachers on education authorities.

However, having one principal for both sessions can also have negative effects as the working hours may be very long. The long day is exhausting and will take its toll on the head teacher. This arrangement can also be costly to the authorities since supplementary payments might be necessary to compensate for the long working hours. It is very difficult if not impossible for headmasters of double-shift schools to know the staff, as well as the learners individually, as the numbers in the school are too large. Having one headmaster for both sessions limits the promotional possibilities of other staff members.

In his study Bray (2000) also highlights the very crucial perceptions of teachers responsible for double-shift systems. According to Bray (2000, p. 70):

The attitudes of teachers are of course a crucial determinant of the success or failure of double-shift systems. If teachers like or are at least prepared to cooperate with the system, then the machinery can work smoothly. But if teachers feel overworked, inadequately compensated and professionally frustrated, then the innovation is unlikely to be successful.

Policymakers should therefore be realistic in their expectations to enable those in double-shift schools to continually expand their capacity and willingness to create the results they truly desire or are expected to deliver. The double-shift system always requires special arrangement to ensure that duties are covered appropriately. These responsibilities are likely to rest heavily on school principals and their management teams. The ancillary staff in double-shift schools is very complex to manage. Many double-shift schools have only one single team of ancillary staff. If a school operates from 7h30 am. to 6h30 pm., this implies that the ancillary staff works for more than the required eight hours per day. Since this is against the labour law, unions can become troublesome. A possible solution according to Bray, (2000, p. 70) is to make use of the overlapping shift system with different members arriving at different times of the school day.

Managing double-shift schools is therefore even more complicated and complex than single shift schools. Literature suggests that the approach to management in these schools should therefore be more participative and collaborative. This notion is supported by the report on education (South Africa. Department of Education [DoE], 1996, p.30) when they explain an integrative and collaborative education management for complex situations:

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. Decisions related to concerns such as student learning, resource management and staff management and development, is derived from premises found on common, agreed principles.

This approach links “goal setting, policy making, planning, budgeting and evaluation at all levels of the school (South Africa. DoE, 1996, p. 30)”. Furthermore, literature suggest that it is vitally important for education authorities, as a matter of urgency, to start recognising and supporting double-shift schools with sufficient expertise and resources so that schools are able to handle these complex situations. In poor and developing countries providing access to school for all children is a major challenge, especially when the alternatives are double-shift schooling.

Finally, one has to try to address the issue of quality of education in double-shift schools. Providing enough space for all children does not automatically translate into quality education. In fact studies have shown that many societies in which the system is operational regard it as second best. In my own opinion access without quality education cannot be meaningful. Tataar (as cited in Mutorwa, 2004, p. 28) argues that: “Quantitative expansion, unlinked from the notion of quality, would tend to reinforce existing inequalities in presenting disadvantaged schools”.

In other words, double-shift schools reinforce inequalities if they are only found or implemented in poor communities. Taking this argument into cognisance one would therefore suggest or argue that the implementation of double-shift schooling should also be introduced in

rich communities to apply social justice. Doing this will also do away with the negativity that clouds the double-shift system, because in actual fact as Bray (2000, p. 73) puts it:

Double-shift schools are not necessarily qualitatively inferior to single shift schools. Indeed if the choice is between single shift schools with huge classes and congested facilities or double-shift schools with smaller classes and more personal atmosphere, the double-shift schools may actually be better.

Effective leadership and supervision is thus needed in double-shift schooling. For headmasters of these schools to be effective and efficient they should do what Van der Westhuizen, Erasmus, Mentz & Theron (1996, p. 235) suggests, namely to try and seek a balance between good interpersonal relationships with the staff and the parent community on the one hand and accomplishing tasks on the other hand. In other words, leaders and managers of these schools should develop the culture of selling their ideas and staff buying in to them, to develop the culture of ownership.

## **2.13 Parental Involvement**

### **2.13.1 What is it?**

To explain the notion of parental involvement, it would be useful to start with a definition of the concept. According to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009, p. 13), “various writers use different terms to define parents’ contribution to schooling: Some talk about home-school partnerships while others include the community in this description. Some talk about parent involvement while others distinguish more narrowly between general involvement and parents in school governance”. They (Ibid, p. 14) continue by saying that:

In practical terms parent involvement can mean many things to many people - parents, learners, policy makers, teachers and the general public. For some, it is only associated with parents’ serving on school governing bodies or school councils where the main functions are matters of policy, finance and governance. Others see parent involvement as membership of Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) or parent committees where the main function may be fund-raising or helping to organise or be an audience for school activities and events. Others may see parent involvement as limited only to the parents’ financial

contribution to the school... In brief parent involvement can be described as the willing and active participation of parents in a wide range of school and home-based activities.

Furthermore, according to Dekker & Lemmer (as cited in Niitembu, 2006, p. 9):

Parents' involvement is a catch-all term that is used to describe a wide variety of activities that range from occasional attendance at school functions, efforts to become better teachers of their own children, to intensive efforts of serving in a school governance (position?) and making decisions in the interest of their children's education.

Squelch & Lemmer (1994:93) as cited in Niitembu (2006, p. 9) define parent involvement as follows:

It is the active and willing participation of parents in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities, which may be educational or non-educational. It extends from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home. Parent involvement implies mutual co-operation, sharing and support.

All these definitions have according to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009, p. 14) one thing in common: "All these activities seek to bring together in some way the separate domains of home and school in the interest of the child's learning and development".

### ***2.13.2 The importance of parental involvement in schools***

The involvement of parents in education has many advantages similar to the participation of other stakeholders such as teachers and learners. Van Wyk and Lemmer are of the opinion that: "If parents are made aware of the vital link between education at home and education in the school, they will wish to be involved in those activities that will promote their children's success at school (2009, p. 7)". According to Griffith, "involvement of parents in their children's education has long been advocated as integral to positive childhood development and school success". Griffith (2000, p. 162) adds that the beneficial effects of parental involvement are mostly visible in children's academic learning and performance. In addition Squelch and Lemmer (as cited in Niitembu, 2006, p. 13) claim "parental involvement is vital with benefits such as improving school performance, reducing drop-out rates, decreasing delinquency and

developing a more positive attitude towards the school". According to Crozier (2000, p. 10) "getting the 'right' parent usually means getting the powerful parent, which is not always so desirable for the classroom teacher even if it suits the senior management of the school. Moreover, getting the 'right kind' of parent can be used to get the 'right kind' of teacher or at least to fashion teachers into 'the right kind' ". Thus it is of vital importance to include parents in all school activities in general, but even more so in double-shift schools as explained below.

In the context of single shift 'normal' schools (According to Mendelsohn, as cited in Niitembu, 2006, p. 14) parental support for education in Namibia should be fostered for a number of reasons:

- Local communities, especially parents, need to be interested in education if the current high demand for education is to be sustained.
- The more interested parents are in schools, the more seriously their children are likely to take their schooling.
- The government is unable to manage all aspects of school administration and needs to use local structures to support the management of schools.

There is thus a moral imperative for parents to be involved in the education of their children and by doing so according to Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009, p. 24) their own children will feel cared for and encouraged to work hard to be successful . Parental involvement is therefore a very important ingredient in understanding the successes or failures in managing double-shift schools. According to Doherty, Jacob and Cutting (2009, p. 305) there are four main ideas to be considered when considering parental involvement:

First, parents can influence the world in which their children are growing. Second, parent educators can partner with parents in naming and deliberating on challenges that arise in the public sphere and identify ways to address these challenges. Third, parent educators can promote the skills of democracy through facilitating conversations where all parents have a voice, diverse perspectives are respected, and public issues are examined and addressed collaboratively. Four, providing this space and opportunity for parents requires an intentional educational process that goes beyond the traditional training of parent educators.

These principles apply equally to double-shift schools but become more difficult to adhere to since double-shift schooling places additional burdens on parenting. It is difficult, for example, for parents to oversee and monitor children's attendance at afternoon sessions when they are themselves at work. Afternoon sessions are sufficiently atypical to create challenges for parents and therefore for schools.

## **2.14 The relevance of Bush's ambiguity model to the system of double-shift schooling**

The theoretical framework for this study draws chiefly on the models devised by Bush (2003). Bush (2003) developed six models which represent different ways of looking at educational institutions. According to him the six approaches are all valid analyses but none provides a complete picture of the nature of educational management since their relevance varies according to their context. Bush's formal models (2003, p. 178) "dominated the early stages of theory development in educational management. Formal structure, rational decision-making and 'top-down' leadership were regarded as the central concepts of effective management and attention was given to refining these processes to increase efficiency".

The other five models of Bush (2003, p. 178) were developed according to him, "in response to his perceived weaknesses of what was then regarded as 'conventional theory'". Bush (2003, p. 178) is further of the opinion that these recent models were developed to demonstrate the limitations of the formal models and have put in place alternative conceptualizations that provide different portrayals of schools and other educational institutions. Although they are "all valid they are just as partial as the dominant perspective they seek to replace" (Ibid, p. 178).

According to Bush (2003, p. 179) the six models are broad categories, encompassing a variety of different perspectives on management in education. The collegial models are for example



attractive because they “advocate teacher participation in decision-making” (Ibid, p.179) while the cultural model’s place emphasis on values and beliefs and the subjective theorists’ emphasis is on the significance of individual meanings that appear to be plausible and ethical. The political models differ from the others in that they, according to Bush (2003, p. 101) “focus primarily on the *goals* of sub-units, or looser groups of individuals, rather than the objectives of the institution itself”. All the models however address four main aspects of management which are goals, organisational structure, the external environment and leadership.

The model which is likely to be most helpful in this study is the ‘ambiguity’ model (2003, p. 134) which includes all those approaches that stress uncertainty and unpredictability in organisations. Bush emphasises the instability and complexity of educational institutions. According to him these theories assume that organisational objectives are problematic and that institutions experience difficulty in prioritising their issues. He describes subunits as entities which are only loosely connected with one another and with the institution itself. According to Bush (2003, p. 134):

Decision-making occurs within formal and informal settings where participation is fluid. Individuals are part-time members of policy-making groups who move in and out of the picture according to the nature of the topic and the interest of the potential participants.

He therefore believes that ambiguity is a widespread feature of complex organisations such as schools and is likely to be particularly acute during periods of rapid change. Rapid change such as in the cases of the implementation of double shift schooling would therefore cause ambiguity.

Bush (2003, p. 134) continues to argue: “Unlike some other perspectives, the data supporting ambiguity models have been drawn largely from educational settings”. Schools thus according to Bush (2003, p. 135) are characterised as having uncertain goals, fluid participation in decision-making as well as unclear technology. It is evident from the above that the task of

reviewing the literature on the complexity of managing schools in general and double-shift schools in particular, should draw heavily on the ambiguity model of Bush.

However, Bush's notion of 'ambiguity' rests on the assumption that organisation members are aware of the uncertainty and ambiguity that characterises their work and have worked out ways of dealing with this or grown to accept it. This is unlikely to be the case at double-shift schools in Namibia. In other words, the ambiguity that may exist in the cases under investigation may not have been recognised as such by teachers and principals, nor is it intentional. Rather, it is an inevitable by-product of a situation too complex to be captured in conventional theory. Nevertheless, the ambiguity model is likely to be helpful in developing my understanding of the effects of double-shift schooling.

The ambiguity model has according to Bush (2003, p. 135) the following major features:

- Ambiguity theorists argue that organisations are characterised by fragmentation and loose coupling.
- With ambiguity models organisational structure is regarded as problematic.
- Ambiguity models tend to be particularly appropriate for professional client serving organisations.
- Ambiguity theorists emphasise that there is fluid participation in the management of organisations.
- A further source of ambiguity is provided by the signals emanating from the prevalence of unplanned decisions.
- Ambiguity models stress the advantages of decentralisation.

The ambiguity model is therefore an important contribution to the theory of educational management. According to Bush (2003, p. 143): "It is a descriptive and analytical model which sets out its proponents' views of how organisations are managed rather than a normative approach extolling the 'right' way to manage institutions".

Bush is furthermore of the opinion that ambiguity models differ from all other approaches such as the formal models, the collegial models and cultural models in stressing the problematic

nature of goals. According to Bush (2003, p. 144) the other theories “may emphasise the institution or subunit or the individual, but they all assume that objectives are clear at the levels identified”. On the other hand as stated by Cohen, March and Olsen (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 145) the ambiguity perspective has the distinctive quality that:

purposes are regarded not only as vague and unclear but also as an inadequate guide to behaviour: Events are not dominated by intention. The processes and the outcomes are likely to appear to have no close relation with the explicit intention of actors...intention is lost in context-dependent flow of problems, solutions, people, and choice opportunities.

Bush (2003, p. 145) is therefore emphasising that “ambiguity theorists argue that decision-making represents an opportunity for discovering goals rather than promoting policies based on existing objectives. The specific choice situation acts as a catalyst in helping individuals to clarify their preferences”. Hoyle (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 145) argues that the broad aims of schools are usually very general and uncontroversial but that difficulties arise when these goals are translated into specific commitments. He claims that the concept of organisational goal is “slippery” and appears to adopt an approach that combines the ambiguity and political models. In the next paragraphs I will highlight Bush’s views on organisational structure within the ambiguity model.

According to Bush (2003, p. 145) “Ambiguity models regard organisational structure as problematic. Institutions are portrayed as aggregations of loosely coupled subunits with structures that may be both ambiguous and subject to change”.

In double-shift schooling the two shifts comprise the structure of the school. These structures are ambiguous in the sense that they are supposed to operate as individual schools yet they fall under one headmaster. The afternoon session is loosely coupled to the morning session. Functions overlap and decision-making is complicated. This notion is echoed by Enderud (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 145) when he argues that “organisational structure may be subject to a variety of interpretations because of the ambiguity and subunit autonomy that exists in many

large and complex organisations". This could be described as an example of loose coupling which has come about because of circumstances rather than choice and is therefore a problem.

A further source of ambiguity according to Bush (2003, p. 146) concerns "the extent of participation within the organisational structure". He elaborated on this idea by arguing that some members by virtue of their positions in committees and other relevant positions may be part of decision-making, but even though such rights are necessary, they may not be sufficient criteria for actual involvement in decisions made. Bush also addresses the influence and nature the external environment has as a source contributing to the ambiguity in schools. According to him (2003, p. 147):

The external environment is a source of ambiguity, which adds to the unpredictability of organisations. Schools and colleges have a continuing existence only as they are able to satisfy the needs of their environments. So educational institutions have to be sensitive to the messages transmitted by external groups and individuals.

Bell (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 147) puts emphasis on the fact that schools are dependent on elements within their environments. According to him sometimes schools operate in a complex and unstable environment over which they exert only modest control and which is capable of producing effects, which penetrate the strongest and most selective of boundaries. As a result many schools cannot disregard or ignore pressure that is emanating from their surroundings. An example of externally generated turbulence in schools is the demand for access to education. In areas of rapid growth, new subdivisions and other housing are developed and sold. These areas become desirable and stable. Normally a school or two is also built to accommodate the children of the area. The number of school-aged children reaches a peak in a few years after the area has been filled. Authorities and their policy-makers in developing and poor countries are left with no other alternative than the introduction of double-shift schools to address the issue of access. The ambiguity of this external environment lies in the rapid growth of the school-age population. According to Bray (2000, p. 31) the peak age population will continue even up to twenty years but eventually it will drop. Authorities are caught between building too many resources and the introduction of double-shift sessions. This is why

Bush (2003, p. 147) makes the observation that: “A turbulent environment combined with the internal ambiguities may mean that management in education is often a hazardous and irrational activity”.

Another relevant issue Bush is addressing in his ambiguity model is the concept of leadership. According to Cohen and March (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 148) leaders in educational institutions face four fundamental ambiguities. They are:

- An ambiguity of purpose because the goals of the organisation are unclear.
- An ambiguity of power because it is difficult to make a clear assessment of the power of leaders.
- An ambiguity of experience because in conditions of uncertainty leaders may not be able to learn from the consequences of their actions
- An ambiguity of success because it is difficult to measure the achievements of leaders.

Cohen and March (as cited in Bush 2003, p. 149) are of the opinion that these uncertainties are problematic in their own right because when purpose is ambiguous:

ordinary theories of decision-making and intelligence become problematic. When power is ambiguous, ordinary theories of social order and control become problematic. When experience is ambiguous, ordinary theories of learning and adaptation become problematic. When success is ambiguous, ordinary theories of motivation and personal pleasure become problematic.

Due to these ambiguities, leaders according to Bush (2003, p. 149) become facilitators of a complex decision-making process creating opportunities for the discussion of problems, creating platforms for the participation of members and exposition of solutions. In such fluid circumstances Bush (2003, p. 150) is of the opinion that:

leaders serve primarily as catalysts. They do not so much lead the institutions as they channel its activities in subtle ways. They do not command, they negotiate. They do not plan comprehensively; they try to nudge problems together with pre-existing solutions. They are not heroic leaders; they are facilitators of an ongoing process.

This is exactly the experience of Bray on the leadership and management in double-shift schools. It is obvious that management tasks are more challenging in multiple shift schooling than in single shift schooling.

## **2.15 Leadership and management in complex and crisis situations**

The phenomenon of management and leadership form the basis of my research questions and it would be suitable to relate and explore these concepts extensively. Under this section I will therefore first place discuss school leadership and management and then address the issue of complexity and crisis management and their relevance to the double-shift system.

### ***2.15.1 Defining school management and leadership***

Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 36) define management and leadership as follows: “Leadership is the art of facilitating a school to ‘do the right thing at the right time’, while management is the discipline required to ensure that the school ‘does things right’ or functions well”. These concepts are intertwined and always need to be seen in their mutual context. However for a clearer discussion I will separate them.

Leadership is according to Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 168), “essentially about moving forward, and having a sense of direction. It is about ensuring that the school does not get stuck in a rut or become stale and reactive”. Leadership is thus a complex process by which the leader influences others in a coherent and cohesive manner. Leaders carry out this process by applying their knowledge, ethics, experiences, beliefs, values and skills. That is why leadership according to Davidoff & Lazarus (2002, p. 168) should be “visionary, looking towards the future, and nudging and challenging people within the organisation to be alert and awake to the

challenges. Being a good leader means making sure that all the people in your organisation can share your vision, or build upon it, challenge it and make it their own”.

Senge (1990, p. 9) supports this notion by putting more emphasis on the practice of shared vision. According to him (Ibid, p. 9) shared vision involves “the skills of unearthing shared pictures of the future that foster genuine commitment and enrolment rather than compliance. In mastering this discipline, leaders learn the counter-productiveness of trying to dictate a vision, no matter how heartfelt”.

In other words a good leader does not dictate to his/her followers but develops a shared feeling and vision for the road ahead to steer the organisation accordingly. It is thus very clear that a vision should never be imposed on members if a leader wants to ensure commitment. Furthermore, De Pree (as cited in Moelanyane, 2004, p. 13) argues that leadership is “like playing jazz; it is more an art than a science. Successful leaders are attuned to the needs and ideas of their followers and even step aside at times to let others lead. As a result, they spark vitality and productivity from their people”.

By doing this successful leaders cultivate communication and spontaneity, creativity and diversity within their followers. They try to tap on the unique potential of every person in the organisation so as to contribute to the success of the team. Leaders should therefore create communication channels by stimulating activities which will motivate members to attain common goals.

Management on the other hand according to Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 169) is about:

making sure that the school, as a whole, is functioning effectively and achieving its vision...Management is the function which ensures that things are operating smoothly, that structures are in place to support forward movement, that processes are contained, that the school is operating efficiently.

Management is thus concerned with setting up systems and administering them. It is as Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 169) explain, about 'holding' the organisation. Holding the organisation means establishing certainty, confidence and security for the organisation. Management should be the mechanism that is providing the framework for the school to fulfil its purpose. According to Davidoff and Lazarus (Ibid, p. 169) management functions are about ensuring that relevant structures and procedures are in place and that they are functioning effectively; it is about prioritising tasks, setting time-frames and keeping to them; it is about producing a working environment which does not cause unnecessary stress as well as developing mechanisms for dealing with conflict openly and productively.

Sergiovanni (2001, p. 101) argues that it is hard to imagine that a school can function properly without a strong presence of leadership. Schools are, after all, human-intensive, and the interpersonal needs of stakeholders are of sufficient importance that, if neglected, problems are likely to follow. He also argues that proper management is a basic requirement for all organisations if they are expected to function properly day-to-day to maintain the support of stakeholders.

Schools have many stakeholders and responding to all their articulated needs, while ensuring strong and constantly improving performances in public examinations and tests, is a major challenge for heads and their leadership teams. This situation is more challenging and complex in double-shift schools. It is very difficult for these headmasters to develop a specific vision for the school at times when national objectives are so explicit and powerful, yet do not address the double-shift system per se. The reason might be that in many countries double-shift sessions are used as short term strategies if alternative financing for future construction needs are not found. The Namibian education ministry has changed its name and operation mode three times and perhaps this lack of continuity affects its capacity for adequate policy formulation and management. It might also limit its ability to plan, implement and monitor the various activities necessary for improving the quality of basic education and consequently the double-shift system.



### **2.15.2 Organisational culture**

One of the aspects that need to be mentioned when talking about leading and managing organisations as well as complex situations is the concept of culture. Schein (1992, p. 4) is of the opinion that culture is most useful if it helps us to understand the hidden complex aspects of school life. Schein (Ibid, p. 4) continues by explaining that managers often encounter resistance to change at levels that seem out of proportion from subordinates. While leaders try to be more effective in facing severe environmental pressures, followers behave in ineffective ways which threaten the very existence of the organisation. A deeper understanding of the concept of culture helps explain all these phenomena:

If we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar and seemingly irrational behaviour of people in organisations, and we will have a deeper understanding not only of why various groups of people or organisations can be so different but also why it is so hard to change them (Schein, 1992, p. 4).

Schein (1992, p. 5) is of the opinion that one of the most decisive functions of leadership is the creation, management and sometimes even the destruction of culture. Leaders in schools help to create and change culture and managers and administrators should live within that culture. Leaders and managers cannot lead and manage schools without taking culture and its complexity into consideration. It is complex in the sense that culture is not easy to create nor is it easy to change. Its complexity is very clear in the definition given by Davidoff and Lazarus (2002, p. 51) as:

the peculiar and distinctive 'way of life' of the group or class, the meanings, values and ideas embodied in institutions, in social relations, in systems and beliefs, in mores and customs, in the uses of objects and material life. Culture is the distinctive shapes in which this material and social organisation of life express itself.

The culture of a school entails therefore the values and norms that determine the development of all other elements. Culture will for example affect the way in which teachers relate to each

other, the way the school is managed and run, it will affect the teachers' perceptions about teaching and learning. In double-shift schooling the creation of culture may be more complicated since the leaders and managers are managing and leading two schools in one. The question of which session takes the lead and is regarded as the 'real' school is a cultural as well as a structural issue. Whatever is done will involve the groups of both sessions.

### ***2.15.3 Managing complex and crisis situations***

Defining complexity and crisis situations in educational contexts is very complex in its own right. According to Cunningham (2000, p. 4) the study of complexity is essentially about the study of open systems, which behave in particular ways. Open systems are those which interact with the surroundings and in which there is likely to be an interchange of energy. This notion is supported by Bush (2003, p. 147):

Perhaps it needs to be recognised more explicitly that organisations, including schools, sometimes operate in a complex and unstable environment over which they exert only modest control and which is capable of producing effects which penetrate the strongest and most selective of boundaries.

Managers in schools are therefore as Bush (2003, p. 147) puts it, faced by "challenges and pressure emanating from their surrounding environment and in most cases they are not able to respond to the uncertainty which such external pressures often bring into their organisations". These situations are complex since according to Bush (2003, p. 147) the external pressures are, in many cases, too strong for schools to buffer themselves against the unforeseen or to gain control over the source of uncertainty and thus restore stability. Bush (2003, p. 148) furthermore stressed the point that external changes occur and distort the situation so that experience becomes an unreliable guide for future action. In double-shift schooling the scenario may be more complex because of the fluid structure in which these schools operate, as the decision-making process in double-shift schooling is more complex. Schools are furthermore as Chubb (as cited in Cunningham 2000, p. 2) explains, complex organisations

composed of interdependent parts, governed by well established rules and norms of behaviour, and adapted for stability. This complexity is experienced more in double-shift schools. Double-shift schooling offers challenges, particularly in Namibia where the challenge of providing education to all are intertwined with qualitative improvement of basic education.

In order to facilitate an investigation into the perception of headmasters leading and managing double-shift schools, complexity theory complements Bush's ambiguity model enabling the researcher to view double-shift schools through a holistic lens. The theory could help me to explain and understand the phenomenon's complexity and complicated patterns of the interacting structures and functions that exist within the schools' environment. The theory draws attention to the many relevant agencies and structures including teachers, learners, parents and other community leaders, the state and its education departments and many other stakeholders which play a role in the life of the system. According to Morrison (2008, p. 2):

Complexity theory ... breaks with simple successionist cause-and-effect models, linear predictability, and a reductionist approach to understanding phenomena, replacing them with organic, non-linear and holistic approaches respectively in which relations within interconnected networks are the order of the day.

One of the most important insights of complexity theory according to Mason (2008, pp.35-49) is:

this notion of emergence which implies that, given a sufficient degree of complexity in a particular environment, new (and to some extent unexpected) properties and behaviours emerge in that environment. The whole becomes, in a very real sense, more than the sum of its parts in that the emergent properties and behaviours are not contained in or able to be predicted from the essence of the constituent elements or agents.

This is a useful way of thinking about double-shift schooling, since it is through the interplay of various factors that a new organisation emerges. Role players need to acknowledge this newness and provide for it. Sufficient funds to support capital and further recurrent costs necessary to maintain and improve facilities at all schools have to be available before government can reconsider the abolishment of double-shift schools.

In the next chapter I will identify and justify the research methodology that I have chosen as relevant and suitable to achieve the goals of my research project.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The major focus of my study, as indicated in the introductory chapter, is the experiences and perceptions of headmasters managing and leading double-shift schools in Namibia. The nature of my research goal has implications for the choice of the methodological approach. To critically investigate the perceptions and experiences of my participants means gaining an understanding of the constructions held by people in their own context.

In this chapter I identify, select and provide a description and defence of the research paradigm I worked in. I describe what I understand by the paradigm ontologically and epistemologically. A description and defence of the methodology (a multiple case study) I used follows this. This chapter also discusses data-gathering tools, selection of participants, data analysis, and ethical implications and finally a critique of my methodology. I open with a brief discussion of research as a scientific discipline.

#### **3.2 What is research?**

Gay, Mills and Airasian (2009, p. 6) are of the opinion that “research is the formal, systematic application of the scientific method to the study of problems; educational research is the formal, systematic application of the scientific method to the study of educational problems”. Most research is undertaken to gain understanding about some issue or topic that those involved do not fully comprehend or understand. McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 9) define research “as a systematic process of collecting and logically analysing information for some purpose”. One common feature in research is that there must be a problem to investigate.

Furthermore, research can be categorised as basic, applied or evaluative (McMillan & Schumacher 1997, p. 19). Basic research, according to Kerlinger (as cited in McMillan and Schumacher, 1997, p. 19), is research done to test theory, with little or no thought of applications of the results of the research to practical problems. Applied research “is conducted in a field of common practice and is concerned with the application and development of research-based knowledge about that practice”, whilst evaluation research “focuses on a particular practice at a given site(s)” (Ibid, p. 19). A broader definition, according to Bassey, is that “research is a systematic, critical and self-critical enquiry which aims to contribute to the advancement of knowledge” (1995, p. 1). Bassey (1994, p. 1) explains the different key concepts in the following way:

It is an enquiry and not a random amassing of data. It is systematic in the sense that data are collected and analysed in a regular way within the framework of a particular theory. It is furthermore critical since the data are subject to close scrutiny to ensure its accuracy and that each item is what it purports to be. Research is furthermore also self-critical in the sense that researchers have to be self-critical of their own decisions in the pursuit of their conducted inquiries. The advancement of knowledge means the inquiry should aim to increase knowledge and should bring about new unknown information about things, events and processes.

Bassey’s thoughts are supported by McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 17): “We need research, we cannot do without research because research advances knowledge and improves practice”.

There is a special case for more educational research in Namibia. Educational research is needed in Namibia as we are such a young nation facing new challenges in education and also because of the need to evaluate the many new educational policies and programmes which have been implemented, but are as yet untested.

### 3.3 Research Paradigm

My research will be conducted within the interpretive paradigm and the following paragraphs seek to justify the use of this paradigm.

Patton (1990, p. 37) describes a paradigm as a:

worldview, a general perspective, a way of breaking down complexity of the real world. As such, paradigms are deeply embedded in the socialisation of adherents and practitioners: paradigms tell them what is important, legitimate and reasonable. Paradigms are also normative, telling practitioners what to do.

The fact that a paradigm is normative suggests that it provides guidelines for researchers. For me it served as a filter that helped define the nature of my inquiry. In other words as Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 4) puts it “paradigms are all-encompassing systems of interrelated practices and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their enquiry along three dimensions: ontology, epistemology and methodology”.

According to them (Ibid, p. 4) ontology specifies the nature of the reality that is to be studied and what can be known about it, while epistemology specifies the nature of the relationship between the researcher (knower) and what can be known and methodology specifies how a researcher may go about practically studying whatever he or she believes can be known.

My research topic is about finding out about the experiences and perceptions of headmasters leading and managing double-shift schools. My aim is therefore to try to explain or interpret the subjective reasons and meanings that lie behind the social actions, experiences, hopes and aspirations of the participants. Therefore my research study is located in the interpretive paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 21):

The central endeavour in the context of the interpretive paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experiences. To retain the integrity of the phenomena being investigated, efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within. The

imposition of an external form of structure is resisted, since this reflects the viewpoint of the observer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved.

Interpretivists therefore seek for the subjective perceptions of individuals. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 21) interpretive approaches focus on action. They (Ibid, p. 21) are of the opinion that action “may be thought of as behaviour-with-meaning; it is intentional behaviour and as such, future oriented. Actions are meaningful to us only in so far as we are able to ascertain the intention of actors to share their experiences”. The aim of scientific investigation for the interpretive researcher is according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 22) to “understand how this glossing of reality goes on at one time and in one place and compare it with what goes on in different times and places. Thus theory becomes sets of meaning which yield insight and understanding of people’s behaviour”.

The interpretive researcher considers that the rationality of one observer may not be the same as the rationality of another, and so accepts that, when these two observers talk to each other, the world may not seem rational and make sense. This is the case as different people do not interpret concepts of reality in the same way. Since rationality differs across observers, their account of reality will differ, and there will most probably be irreconcilable differences (such as between a fundamentalist Muslim and an atheist). If I, for example, meet someone with a radically different conception of reality, I might really be confused about what reality is, or I might simply think that the person is misinformed. Therefore as Bassey (1995, p. 1) noted,

to the interpretive researcher the purpose of research is to describe and interpret the phenomena of the world in an attempt to get shared meanings with others. Interpretation in search of deep perspectives on particular events and for theoretical insight may offer possibilities, but no certainties, as to the outcome of future events.

My aim is to get into the lived-in world of the headmasters and to access their interpretations of their experiences. This is possible with the interpretive paradigm, since the interpretive researcher admits the value-laden nature of this type of information. In other words, this type of study cannot be value-free, as Creswell (in Udjombala, 2002, p. 33) stated: “...the



investigator admits the value-laden nature of the study and actively reports his or her values, biases, as well as the value-laden nature of the information gathered from the field". It is thus obvious that objectivity is not possible and my results will automatically be influenced and/or shaped by the interaction between my participants and myself. Naturally this raises issues of quality and validity which I will address later on. Because of the above-mentioned facts, the interpretive paradigm is the appropriate one to use in my research. With this, I would like to go into a description and defence of the methodology I will use.

### **3.4 Research Method: Case Study**

The arguments in favour of using a case study as the appropriate method of collecting the information emerges from the literature – discussed below – and from the nature and objectives of the task of this research project.

According to Mertens (2005, p. 237), "a case study is a method for learning about a complex instance, based on a comprehensive understanding of that instance obtained by extensive descriptions and analysis of that instance taken as a whole and in its context". McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 393) believe that, "qualitative research uses a case study design, meaning that data analysis focuses on one phenomenon, which the researcher selects to understand in depth regardless of the number of sites, participants, or documents for a study". A case study is therefore according to Best and Kahn (2006, p. 259):

a way of organising social data for the purpose of viewing social reality. It examines a social unit as a whole. The unit may be a person, a family, a social group, a social institution or a community. The purpose is to understand the life cycle or an important part of the life cycle of the unit.

Lastly, the case study can be defined according to Winegardner (2001, p. 4) as "a methodology in terms of the process of actually carrying out the investigation, the unit of analysis (the case), or the end product". Yin in Winegardner (2001, p. 4) defines 'the case study' in terms of the

research process as “...an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. Stake, Smith, and Miles and Huberman (as cited in Winegardner, 2001, p. 4) call the case an integrated system, a bounded system, and a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context irrespectively. Finally, Merriam (as cited in Winegardner 2001, p. 4) views the product of investigation as “an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit”. I have realised that case studies seek to describe and understand reality and situations as opposed to trying to correlate and predict. The descriptive data of a case study highlights the complexity of relationships and thus provides broad insight into situations. I cannot go wrong in using a case study since my study is about a single phenomenon, namely the double-shift schooling system.

In conclusion, before I designed this study I had a general idea of the double-shift schools and I selected the case study since it was the appropriate design for my study. The intention behind the case study was to expose the multi-facetedness and complexity of double-shift schools, but maybe more importantly it was to learn from those experiencing this situation on a day-to-day basis which would enable me to develop new insight and ideas and also discover further issues pertinent to this type of schooling. The case study will therefore put me in a better situation to understand the life cycle or an important part of the life cycle of double-shift schools. In essence, I simply wanted to understand the subjective meanings and reasons that lay behind the social actions of these school managers.

This case study thus had to provide me with a detailed understanding of the themes voiced by my participants in their specific situations. I wanted to concentrate on the way the participants believed in what they were doing and how they rendered meaning to their actions and intentions. My purpose was not to draw comparisons between the two cases, but to try to understand the way they experienced and perceived the double-shift system.

### **3.5 Selection of participants and site**

After a written application to The Regional Director of Windhoek Educational Region for permission to do research in their schools, I was faced with the difficulty of making the selection. There are ten platoon or double-shift schools in Windhoek alone. It was very important for me to first find out the names of the headmasters and those who were running the afternoon session, as any personal relationship I might have with them would make it easier for them as participants to be truly willing and open in their views, to enable me to obtain the richest source of information. If possible, I wanted people to volunteer, as they would then be motivated to share their experiences with me. I really wanted this exercise to be a learning experience for both the participants and myself.

According to Mertens (2005, p. 307), “sampling refers to the method used to select a given number of people (or things) from a population”. She furthermore stresses that the “strategy for selecting your sample influences the quality of your data and the inferences that you can make from it” (Ibid, p. 307). Because of the nature of my research, I made use of purposeful sampling. According to Patton (as cited in McMillan and Schumacher, 1997, p. 397):

Purposeful sampling, in contrast to probabilistic sampling, is selecting information-rich cases for study in depth when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all cases.

McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 397) are furthermore of the opinion that “purposeful sampling requires that information be obtained about variations among the subunits before the sample is chosen”. They (Ibid, p. 397) also believe that “the researcher searches for information-rich key informants, groups, places, or events to study.” In other words, these samples are chosen because they are likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon the researcher is investigating.

First of all I phoned all the double-shift schools and got the names of the headmasters as well as of those heads of department responsible for the afternoon session. Fortunately, I knew most of the headmasters personally, as colleagues in education or as former schoolmates. At St Boniface Primary school the headmaster is a personal friend and the HOD for the afternoon session is a former schoolmate. This was crucial to me as I wanted participants to be truly willing and open in their views and if there is a personal connection already between us I would be able to get a richer source of information. On the other hand, I also wanted to keep a gender balance, so I wanted to interview two men and two women. At the end of the day, I succeeded in securing interviews with one man and two women. I was convinced that this selection would provide me with the necessary information.

The selection of the participants is related to the site selection. McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 397) point out that “for a site selection a clear definition of the criteria for such selection is essential. The criteria are related to and are appropriate for the research problem and purpose”. I selected the two schools because I know the headmaster at one of the schools and his HOD, personally. This was not originally my criterion for the selection of people to interview, but after a struggle to get people involved I decided to approach those whom I knew personally. On the other hand I was also convinced that these two participants are knowledgeable enough and could provide me with the information I needed. It also made it easier for me to collect the data. I selected the other school because the headmaster was willing to accommodate me without any difficulties.

### **3.6 Data-gathering tools**

This section discusses the data-gathering tools I used. Many types of data-collecting tools can be used in qualitative research, such as observation, questionnaires, focus groups, the study of relevant documents and interviews. I used interviews and focus groups as the only data collecting tools. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.349):

Interviews enable participants - be they interviewers or interviewees - to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view. In these senses the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness inescapable.

I therefore chose the interview, since it could produce in-depth data, which I possibly might not obtain through a questionnaire. According to Maree (2010, p. 87), “the aim of interviews is “always to obtain rich descriptive data that will help you to understand the participant’s construction of knowledge and social reality”.

In other words, according to Gay and Airasian (1996, p. 291), “the interview is most appropriate for asking questions that cannot effectively be structured into a multiple-choice format, such as questions of a personal nature or questions that require lengthy responses”. Furthermore, I chose the interview because of its flexible nature and the fact that it would also allow me to adapt the situation to each participant. This is emphasised by Cohen et al., (2007, p. 349) when they say:

The interview is a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. The order of the interview may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity, and the interviewer can press for not only complete answers but also for responses about complex and deep issues.

One of the advantages of an interview is that a rapport of trust can be established between the interviewer and interviewee. Through this relationship, the interviewer can often obtain data from the participant that she/he would not give in a questionnaire. I chose to make use of semi-structured interviews to enable me to probe for further clarifications of answers. Furthermore, I tape-recorded all my interviews with the consent of my participants. Lastly, I transcribed all the interviews. The interview questions are attached as Appendix A.

The other data collecting strategy I used in my research was focus groups. According to Krueger and Casey (in Mertens, 2005, p. 245), “focus groups, in essence, are group interviews that rely, not on a question-and-answer format of interview, but on the interaction within the group”. Mertens (2005, p. 245) is of the opinion that: “This reliance on interaction between

participants is designed to elicit more of the participants' points of view than would be evidenced in more researcher-dominated interviewing". Using focus groups as a research strategy is very appropriate in my study since I am interested in how my participants think about double-shift schools. This idea is emphasised by Mertens (2005, p. 245) when she says that: "The focus group interaction allows the exhibition of a struggle for understanding how others interpret key terms and their agreement or disagreements with the issues raised". My focus groups were comprised of groups of people that varied as to their positions held at their respective schools. They included teachers and headmasters that were chosen from two double-shift schools, other than those who were involved in the interviews. I used semi-structured questions to, according to Mertens (2005, p. 386), "ensure coverage of important issues yet to allow for flexibility in responding to group initiated concerns. By doing so more insight will be gained from the interaction of ideas among the group participants". I triangulated the individual interviews with the focus groups interviews. Questions used for focus groups are included as Appendix A.

Cohen *et al.*, (as cited in Niitembu, 2006, p. 37) defines triangulation as "the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspects of human behaviour". Triangulation therefore according to Mertens (2005, p. 426), "involves the use of multiple methods and multiple data to support the strength of interpretations and conclusions in qualitative research". My aim is, as Mertens puts it (2005, p. 426), "not to try and gloss over legitimate differences in interpretation data but I will try to preserve the diversity so that I could still hear the voices of the least empowered".

The next step in my research is to describe the data analysis strategies I used.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

According to Maree (2010, p. 99):

Qualitative data analysis is usually based on an interpretive philosophy that is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content of qualitative data. Phrased differently, it tries

to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon by analysing their perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to approximate their construction of the phenomenon.

Cohen et al., (2007, p.461) are of the opinion that qualitative data analysis involves “organizing, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of the data in terms of the participants’ definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities”. Analysis, therefore, involves working with data, organising it, breaking it down, synthesizing it, searching for patterns, discovering what is important and what is to be learned, and deciding what you will tell others. According to Maree (2010, p. 99) “qualitative data analysis tends to be an ongoing and iterative (non-linear) process, implying that the data collection, processing, analysis and reporting are intertwined, and not merely a number of successive steps.” There is thus, as Cohen et al. (2007, p.461) put it, “no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data; how one does it should abide by the issue of *fitness for purpose*”. This is also emphasised by Maree (2010, p. 100) when he says:

There is no single or best way and no fixed recipe, but broadly there are guidelines to ensure that what you find is credible and trustworthy. Secondly, you have to constantly keep in mind the research questions that guide your study and that you want to answer, as well as the aims and objectives of your study.

I therefore realised that I would have to find my own path to the meaning of my data. According to various authors, data analysis takes place simultaneously with data collection and the first step in data analysis is managing the data so that they can be studied. Bearing this in mind, I systematically searched for categories, integrated and interpreted the data I had collected, and ultimately provided my own understanding of these data. First of all, I listened to the taped interviews and transcribed them verbatim. I organised the data in the first instance according to individual participants. Then I grouped the answers derived from the standard questions together across the participants.

Throughout the analysis I kept on making constant comparisons of the identified topics and concepts to determine their distinctive characteristics so that I could place them in appropriate categories. I kept on modifying my categories as need arose to fit new data and I also tested them against new data. By doing this I was also indirectly forced not to stick with first impressions or assumptions.

After the data had been grouped in meaningful categories, I went through them once more to make sure that there was no irrelevant, overlapping or repetitive information. Finally I placed these categories into meaningful themes.

The emerging themes of the data will be discussed in the next chapter, which concerns data interpretation.

### **3.8 Ethical Aspects**

According to Mertens, (2005, p. 33) ethics in research “should be an integral part of the research planning and implementation process, not viewed as an afterthought or burden”. Because of this reality, I first, before I embarked on my research, approached the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture to get permission to conduct research in a few of their schools. Within a day, permission was granted with their blessing. Stake (1994, p. 7) is of the opinion that “qualitative researchers are guests in others’ private space. As with most qualitative work, case study research shares an intense interest in personal views and circumstances. Our *manners should be good and our ethics above reproach*. Poor judgement can affect later researchers’ access and undermine the whole research enterprise”. I therefore realised that there must be strict ethical guidelines for aspirant researchers like myself. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 418), “Ethical guidelines include, but are not limited to, informed consent, deception, confidentiality, anonymity, harm to subjects, and privacy of others”.



Informed consent was obtained from the participants and during these meetings I made it very clear to the participants what the research procedures and purpose was; that there was no risk and or harm involved, since the ministry had given its permission. I also tried to explain to them the potential benefits of the study. Finally I assured them that they could withdraw from the research at any time. Although most of the participants were ambivalent about anonymity throughout the study, I promised to keep anonymity and to use pseudonyms when referring to them, as well as to their schools.

According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 418), "Qualitative researchers need to be sensitive to ethical principles because of their research topic, face- to- face interactive data collection, an emergent design, and reciprocity with participants". Cavan (as cited in Cohen & Manion, 1994, p. 359) describes ethics as:

a matter of sensitivity to the rights of others. Being ethical limits the choices we can make in the pursuit of truth. Ethics say that while truth is good, respect of human dignity is better, even in if the extreme case, the respect of human nature leaves one ignorant of human nature". In other words, the roles researchers devise should elicit cooperation, trust and openness and acceptance.

Cooperation, trust, openness and acceptance can be easily or more successfully elicited if the participants are on good terms with the researcher. This does not necessarily refer to a personal relationship with the participants themselves but an 'implied relationship' through referrals by a third party know to both of you. According to Terre Blanche & Durrheim (1999, p. 4), "interpretive research emphasises rich experiential data" and knowing your participants will produce this kind of data. Literature suggest that from an interpretive perspective this context is the key to valid data since the participants will be at ease and comfortable.

### **3.9 Limitations of the Research Methodology**

According to Bassey (1995, p. 13), “data collected by interpretive researchers are usually verbal-fieldwork notes, diaries, and transcripts and reports of conversations”. This can be a limitation in itself, since people attach different meanings to language and may, through their questions, change the meaning of language and situations. While doing my interviews, I had the fear that I might not “hear” and “get the meaning” of what the participants were conveying to me. Sometimes the questions I asked were not answered in the way I would have expected and, as a consequence, the accounts of what were said are sometimes ambiguous. Winegardner (2001, p. 2) stressed the fact that “qualitative researchers must possess superior communication skills in order to empathize, establish rapport, elicit richly descriptive interview responses, and listen effectively. The interviewer must be able to establish an atmosphere of trust in order to obtain meaningful information. He or she must listen to what is said, what is implied, and what is not said”. By the time I went to conduct my interviews these valuable skills were not yet properly developed. Even though my interviews were unstructured, I still found it difficult to get an accurate understanding from what was said, which made it hard to adequately probe for more clarity. Furthermore, in some cases participants were hesitant to answer certain questions and I did not have the skills to quickly rephrase the questions in a more user-friendly manner.

As the facilitator of the focus groups I had serious problems with the second group that was not really forthcoming in their discussions. Perhaps I was inexperienced in controlling the interview process to enable all participants to express themselves. Even though my questions were semi-structured, to ensure, “coverage of important issues yet allow flexibility in responding to group-initiated concerns I had to probe for continuation in a non-verbal way” (Mertens, 2005, p. 386).

Anyone who embarks on an interpretive approach also adopts a subjective or qualitative research stand. Merriam (as cited in Winegardner, 2001, p. 3) says that “in qualitative research meaning is mediated through the investigator’s own perceptions and that the researcher is the

primary instrument for data collection and analysis. This has implications for key issues like objectivity, validity and reliability as well as for ethical issues". One can therefore be easily drawn into a morally problematic situation, because it could become difficult to separate research ethics from professional ethics and personal morality.

Before I went into the field to collect my data I read the document by Harper (1987) about the platoon system in Namibia. As a result I had some pre-conceptions of how the double-shift schools operated in Namibia. I am afraid that I could have been biased either in collecting or interpreting the data.

Another limitation of my methodology is found in the nature of interviews themselves. According to Best and Kahn (2006, p. 267), "interviews are used to gather information regarding an individual's experiences and knowledge; his or her opinions, beliefs, and feelings; and demographic data". Because of this nature, some degree of fabrication, exaggeration, distortion and deception could occur in the given information. During the interview sessions I experienced an element of nervousness from the participants, as if they wanted to always say the correct or acceptable answer according to the prevailing 'political atmosphere'.

Another limitation of the interview lies in the fact that "people say and do different things in different situations. Since the interview is a particular kind of situation, one cannot assume that what a person says during an interview is what the person believes or will do or say in another situation" Taylor & Bogdan (as cited in Udjombala, 2002, p. 42). Finally it is possible that I did not allow sufficient time for the participants to answer questions. as I was anticipating and cueing for potential answers and perhaps lacked the insight, tactfulness and timing to accomplish my interviews successfully.

It was the first time I had conducted interviews with focus groups and I think that the interaction that is so typical of a focus group was not really evidenced. Therefore the interaction of the focus group could not really, as Mertens (2005, p. 245) puts it, "allow the

exhibition of a struggle for understanding how others interpret key terms and their agreement or disagreement with the issue raised”.

Despite all these many difficulties I am convinced I was able to collect rich and relevant data, and that this research will make a significant contribution to the understanding of the double-shift schools in Namibia.

The next chapter is devoted to the presentation of the data.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **DATA PRESENTATION - INTERVIEWS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the data I obtained from my one-on-one interviews and focus groups. I interviewed three managers: two headmasters and a head of department. To enrich my data I also interviewed two focus groups. The purpose of the interviews was to gain contextual and background information as well as to understand the perceptions of the participants on how they manage and lead double- shift schools and how they experience teaching in these environments. In other words I will in a way tell a story about different aspects of how the managers experience and perceive the challenges of managing and teaching under the double-shift system. The data will be presented in categories suggested by the questions. The chapter is therefore trying to highlight the perceptions and experiences of the double-shift system as experienced by those dealing with it on a day-to-day basis. Data will be presented as raw as possible to capture the meaning of the participants in their own idiom.

The questions, which formed the basis for my interviews, were developed into meaningful themes. I identified different themes or headings from the information gathered. These themes were developed in different headings and or subheadings. Mr Tjeripo was the headmaster of St Boniface Primary School and his head of department Ms Kondjee was responsible for the afternoon session. The other participant was Mrs Somerset the headmistress of Sunday Primary school. The names of the participants as well as their schools are invented so as to protect their identity. The focus group at St Boniface Primary School is referred to as FG 1 and the one at Sunday Primary School FG2.

## 4.2 Why double-shift?

Although all three participants preferred the name afternoon session Ms Kondjee indicated that the kind of name used does not matter at all as long as the meaning is clear. She also claimed that most people use all three names interchangeably. For the focus groups it did not really matter which name was used but they all referred to the double-shift system or just plain “afternoon session”.

In response to a question regarding the origin of the double-shift system and the reasons why it was introduced to the Namibian education system, all three participants said that the Apartheid regime introduced the system only in the black schools because they did not regard Black education as a matter of concern. According to the participants not a single double-shift school was ever established in a residential area for those who were politically, economically and socially advantaged. This reality was emphasised by Mr Tjeripo when he said, “This system was only introduced in the black schools. Even the schools for the Coloureds and Basters did not have double-shift sessions.” Members of FG2 were of the opinion that if Government could introduce the system in the former Coloured or white schools it would be fair, as it seemed to them that it has only been introduced in Katutura (a former Black only township) schools. One member emphasised this by saying:

Why do only the Katutura principals accept the double-shift? Why don't they refuse like the principals in town or Khomasdal (former Coloured and Basters only township)? I think the double-session issue depends on the principals.

Another member said that the parents in the former black townships are actually to be blame as they have a preference for certain schools. They would rather their children go to a certain school even if that school is not in their area. As a result some schools become more overcrowded than others and the obvious solution is double-shifts.

Another member from FG1 had the following to say on the same issue:

The double-shift schools are only in the disadvantaged areas which are unfortunately the former black only townships. Due to the fact that parents do not have transport to send

their children to schools in other suburbs they prefer to send their children to these schools, although one might find space in some of the former advantaged schools. So double-shift schools are here to stay. It is not a case of those schools being earmarked for discrimination; these are simply the schools that are nearest to the community. They can walk and have easy access. These are the schools that are earmarked for the platoon system.

The learners of the afternoon session schools in Namibia comprised two groups who attended school at different times of the school day. Each of these groups uses the same school facilities at different times. After independence the Namibian government replaced a huge number of inadequate temporary classroom structures such as the tree-schools with permanent ones. But still the government could not build sufficient schools, to be able to replace the double-shift schools.

The school of Mr Tjeripo was for example built after independence to accommodate learners in a new suburb in Katutura, but the enrolment numbers have increased drastically. The Namibian government had no other choice than to introduce an afternoon session at St Boniface Primary School to address the problem temporarily. Mr Tjeripo stressed this idea when he said:

There was a demand at one stage, about five years ago, when we had five grade one classes. The demand was so high that we had to establish nine grade one classes at the school. The average number of learners per class was thirty-eight to thirty nine. We were actually forced by the numbers to implement an afternoon session in order for us to accommodate the grade twos and threes; otherwise the learners would end up on the street.

As indicated earlier there are several other schools in the former black only suburbs that have been operational under this system and one of these is the school of Mrs Somerset, Sunday Primary School. According to Mrs Somerset this school has had afternoon sessions for more than twenty years, before independence. Their school currently accommodates 1600 learners

in both sessions together. This scenario is proof enough that the government will not change the status quo in the near future.

One of the participants, Ms Kondjee (Head of Department of St Boniface Primary School and also head of the afternoon session), had a different reason why the government after independence has introduced the double session and is still continuing with it. According to her the government is to a certain extent addressing the staffing norms with the afternoon session. Ms Kondjee justifies her argument by mentioning the following:

Another school was overcrowded with teachers, in other words they were overstaffed. The government was supposed to accommodate those ten teachers. They thought that St Boniface Primary School was the right place to bring them because by that time we did not have an afternoon session. So they all started to work here and this is how the afternoon session was brought to our school, because of too many staff at one of the other schools in Katutura.

Another member from FG2 said that the existence or continuation of double-shift schools is caused by the poor planning of the National Planning Commission:

If they know for instance that in Windhoek this year so many children were born, obviously in about six years they will be ready for school. But I think they don't cater in advance, they don't plan in advance. If they thought in terms of the growth of the population, they could plan for the future, but most of the time they are trying to solve immediate problems and it is not working.

All three participants as well as the focus groups agreed that the government, in order for it to overcome the educational difficulties, such as financial constraints and other educational challenges, introduced the afternoon session. The system, they argued, is catering for an increased efficient usage of human as well as other resources. This system is currently therefore an immediate solution to arrange for additional school places for learners but most probably also to arrange for additional places for surplus staff as Ms Kondjee elaborated earlier.



### 4.3 The implementation and organisation of afternoon sessions in Namibia

The three participants stated that the formal legislation and ministerial directives made no explicit reference to afternoon session schooling. Neither did the administrative manual for school principals (1997) nor the pilot curriculum for schools (1997) give any guidelines as to how to organise these kinds of schools. According to Mr Tjeripo the only document on afternoon session schools received from government is: Circular no.: FORM ED 17/97 which is about “new arrangements for the management of double-sessions at some schools”. This circular states:

From the beginning of the first trimester of 1998, the deputy principal or a head of department will control and manage afternoon sessions while receiving his/her normal salary. As with teachers of the afternoon sessions, the Deputy Principal/ Head of Department need not be present during morning sessions. The principal of the school while retaining overall control and accountability for the school need not be present at afternoon sessions. The necessity for extra allowance will thus fall away.

According to Mr Tjeripo this is the only guideline from head office as to how the afternoon session should be implemented, and it ends there. It is left to the individual headmaster and those who will be responsible for the afternoon session to decide on the organisation of the session. Schools have thus had to develop their own internal practices to deal with programme organisation. The two schools I interviewed have adopted two different ways in the implementation of the double-shift system. Sunday Primary School used two heads of department to run the shift and both are responsible for grade four classes which are in the afternoon shift. At this school only the grade ones attend the morning session. This arrangement of having two heads of department in the afternoon was according to the FG2 only introduced at the beginning of this year (2011) and it was done to ensure flexibility in executing their management functions. This is how one of the heads of department puts it:

Lower primary HOD's are not excluded from teaching. During the past years we were fulltime teachers with our own classes and also fulltime HOD's, so we did not have enough time to go out and check our classes, go and visit our teachers and see how we could help

them. But now this year we are responsible for one grade four class, which allows us to do class visits during the three free periods each one of us has. Even if some of our teachers are in the morning session and we have to visit them we come earlier in the morning to see them.

Members of FG1 made it very clear that the double-shift system is “unmanageable”. Space, for example, is very limited and difficult to deal with. There is not enough space for both teachers who are sharing the one class to store their teaching aids and big projects. Teachers cannot prepare their materials beforehand for the next day because the class will be used by the next session and one’s materials are not safe. Teachers have to remove their materials before the next session and this is very complicated and difficult. Every now and then this causes conflict between teachers and management has to solve this without taking sides.

#### **4.4 Teaching and learning: Time on task**

The afternoon session learners also lose out on valuable teaching time. According to the participants, education has lost its rightful place as far as the afternoon session is concerned.

Mr Tjeripo has experienced this:

You have to cut and choose information in order to cover the curriculum...The Ministry of Basic Education introduced the pilot curriculum and it expects us to teach a number of periods for a number of minutes. When it comes to the afternoon sessions you have to allocate time and if you look back at the timetable, you will see that the learners are missing out on many hours of teaching time over a year.

Ms Kondjee confirmed Mr Tjeripo’s observation about the length of the afternoon session lessons. According to her, the afternoon session learners only have thirty minutes per period while the morning classes have forty to forty-five minutes. Focus group one and two echoed the same sentiments. According to them there is not enough time in the afternoon for learner

support and remedial teaching. Even if they come earlier there is no space where they can be accommodated since the grade ones and twos are occupying the classrooms. Neither can they keep the learners after five since it becomes dark early especially during winter.

Mrs Somerset supported and emphasised her colleagues' ideas:

It is not fair on the learners as they can't learn and they can't absorb everything effectively. Another impact on their education is that the children of the afternoon shift are generally tired and apathetic in class. This situation has detrimental effects on concentration and retention of knowledge. Since the learners are losing out on valuable time this could cause an educational deficit in the learners.

Basically all three participants and the focus groups were in agreement that the learners suffer tremendously under this system and that the system is having a negative impact on the performance of the learners, although all the participants agreed that it is better than children being left to their own devices.

#### **4.5 Impact on teaching time**

All three participants as well as the focus groups stated that the double-shift system has a significant impact on the effectiveness of the implementation of curricula. The afternoon sessions suffer a great deal in the sense that valuable teaching and learning time is lost. The division of the school day into two sessions results in less teaching time for the implementation of the official curriculum, which impacts negatively on teacher-learner-interaction time. It also influences the implementation of extra-curricular activities and there is little time left for teachers to assist learners with additional needs. One of the participants said:

With regards to teaching the afternoon shift, teachers don't get their rightful teaching time. As a headmaster, you have to cut into their teaching time and decide what you are going to teach in order to cover the curriculum otherwise the learners will lose out on what valuable teaching time they have.

Ms Kondjee was also not happy about the unfair time allocation for the afternoon session. Because of circumstances beyond their control they do not have a consistent time allocation for the afternoon sessions. They have fewer minutes per period unlike their colleagues in the morning. In summer children leave school at 17h00 and in winter they have to leave by 16h30 as it becomes dark earlier. Concerning the extra mural activities she has the following to say:

- Sport is conducted in the afternoons. The noise affects our teaching and learning and our learners can't take part in this valuable aspect of education. One of the biggest problems is punctuality. This problem is caused by the fact that there is no-one at home to tell the children to prepare themselves for school or to tell them that it is time to leave for school.

Truancy is more common in the afternoon session as one of the members in FG2 emphasised. As parents are at work and there is no-one to make sure that the learners arrive at school many learners just stay away. Children also lose out on important activities such as those that are planned for important national and international days, like the African Child Day. The afternoon session children lose out on these activities because they are normally planned for the mornings. If they are included in the activities then they have to cancel the afternoon session as by then the children will be exhausted. One of the participants of the focus groups pointed out that sometimes the government arranges workshops in such a way that will accommodate all sessions: the morning session will attend the workshop for example in the afternoon and the afternoon session in the morning. Although this is the best solution, the government does not apply this consistently.

All the participants also had a very serious problem with the lack of involvement of the parents concerning the learners. It seems as if the parents of the afternoon shift do not show serious concern for their children and as most of the time parents are at work during the day, the children are left to their own devices. There is no one to send them to school in time or to see that they have a decent meal before they go to school and that they are at least properly dressed. Members of the focus groups who teach the afternoon sessions believe that parents

have more respect and are more sensitive towards instructions coming from the morning session than the afternoon session.

#### **4.6 Impact on facilities**

One of the serious consequences of the double-shift schools is the rapid deterioration of the school equipment such as desks and buildings. According to the participants the maintenance of the facilities is a big struggle. Since the facilities are used by two different groups of teachers and learners they get worn out faster than in other schools with only one shift. Another problem is the fact that the afternoon teachers rarely get into clean classes, since the classes are only cleaned in the afternoon after the afternoon session. Mr Tjeripo elaborated on this issue by saying the following:

You hear complaints from teachers regarding removal of their teaching aids such as posters and especially about the cleanliness of the classes. This can't be helped - as learners are going out from the morning the afternoon learners are entering. It is a matter of five minutes. This is also affecting our management and maintenance of our resources... we need to keep them in good condition in order to provide a conducive environment for the next teacher.

Another serious problem they face with the cleaning of classes is with the Labour Act. According to Mr Tjeripo they either have to "freeze classes" so that the cleaners can sweep the classes or they have to make internal arrangements where they give the cleaners time off between 12 and 3pm to reduce their working hours and to allow them to clean the classes at five. Another alternative according to Mr Tjeripo is to clean the classes over the weekend but this is also in conflict with the labour law and the classes need to be swept every day. This was echoed by his deputy when she said that sometimes when she goes for class visits she sees papers scattered all over the place:

We, as the afternoon shift personnel don't get into clean classes, not at all. But the morning people have the advantage of getting into clean classes because the cleaner has

attended to the classrooms after hours. And it is a real irritation for the teachers who are in this situation. Some teachers will approach you and complain over their torn pictures.

Mrs Somerset was quick to say that the afternoon session at her school was managed very well and that they did not experience the same kind of problems. However, the members of the focus group at this school said that both sessions experience the problem of entering classes that were not cleaned as there is no time to do the cleaning.

## **4.7 Implications for management**

Under this theme I wanted the two headmasters to share their perceptions and experiences on how they deal with the complexity of their situations. How do they lead and manage two schools in one? For the head of department the multi-facetedness of her work lies in the fact that she is a teacher and head of department but also the 'headmaster' of the afternoon session. These questions were asked within the framework of leadership and management functions of decision-making, control, planning, monitoring, assessment and evaluation, communicating information, resource management and allocation, technical support, human resource management and conflict resolution. The focus groups were used to strengthen the experiences of their managers and leaders. I present this data in the following sub- headings.

### **4.7.1 Communication**

Although communication is mostly top-down, for example circulars or information from head office, Mr Tjeripo was of the opinion that they are trying at all costs to ensure open discussions and consultative communication. All three participants apply an open door policy of communication. This was confirmed by Mr Tjeripo when he said:

I normally call in my head of department for the afternoon, and tell her the following: these are the points we have discussed during break time this morning. Please take it to

your staff and give me feedback by tomorrow on this item or items. In this way we can come to a mutual agreement.

The afternoon session staff or group are at a bit of a disadvantage due to the fact that their information processing channels are somehow delayed. Information given to the morning staff is always immediate and input from their side can be sought there and then. The afternoon session staff is sometimes not a part of urgent and serious decisions and they have to fall in with decisions taken by others. Concerning the delay of information Mr Tjeripo has the following to say:

now that is the part that is very frustrating. The best time for meeting the teachers is in the morning, but you still have to wait for the input of the afternoon staff.

This was also confirmed by a member of FG1 when she said: "Sometimes we have not received some information which we need from the principal. Perhaps he sometimes forgets as he has already talked to the other group in the morning".

Concerning conflict situations Ms Kondjee tries to solve them herself but when they become complicated and serious then she normally calls in Mr Tjeripo to solve them. Mrs Somerset was of the opinion that the rotation of management in supervising the afternoon session is the solution to this problem. Whoever is in charge of that particular day's afternoon session has to resolve the conflict amicably. By this she meant that the HOD running the afternoon session should use his/ her discretion in solving problems while on duty. One member of FG2 who is a member of management said that if every teacher did their part of disciplining the learners in their own classroom and also committed themselves as a teacher to what was professionally sound, most of the conflict and disciplinary situations would not occur.

#### **4.7.2 Decision-making**

Taking decisions in a double-shift school is not as simple and easy as in a single shift school. Decision-making in the double-shift system is more complex due to the delay in decision-making that is caused by the two separate sessions. According to all three participants there is somewhat of a delay in decision-making if the input of both staff is required. It is therefore very difficult to involve both sessions in urgent decisions when the head office needs immediate feedback from schools. Although complicated Mrs Somerset has found a way around this:

After the holidays that first day is only for the teachers and it is when we have a meeting for the whole staff of the school. If during the term there is something urgent that we have to discuss than a meeting is called after five o' clock, after the afternoon session has been dismissed.

On the same issue Mr Tjeripo explained that although he is responsible and accountable for both sessions his head of department basically runs the afternoon session and once a month they have their management meetings. The head of department of the afternoon serves on the school management team and she has to attend these meetings and channel those decisions to her staff. Sometimes the afternoon staff expects Mr Tjeripo to be visible in their staff meetings too:

then I make time to talk to them, carry information over to them and also implement decisions that were taken by management. But I rely very much on my management member who represents me in the afternoon, since it is not always practical for me to be present at their meetings.

Mr Tjeripo indicated that another way both shifts staff members can exercise joint decisions is during the very first day of each term, since all teachers are required to start a day in advance before the arrival of the learners:



Our staff meetings are planned for the beginning of a trimester as well as at the end of a trimester when the learners are allowed to go home a bit earlier.

It is only in the middle of a trimester when urgent decisions need to be taken when decision-making becomes complicated. The morning session can be summoned very easily through the intercom to leave their classes and to attend to whatever is crucial and urgent. But the same cannot happen at the afternoon session. This type of information is normally conveyed to the schools during the morning hours. The afternoon sessions are either ignored or they have to be happy with the decisions taken by their counterparts in the morning. According to Mr Tjeripo he is trying to accommodate both sessions with regards to decision-making by making internal arrangements for the morning session learners to go home earlier and for the afternoon teachers to come to school earlier so that both the sessions can have a meeting between 12h00 and 13h00. This according to him happens very seldom:

We will only arrange this meeting if we have crucial issues that need to be discussed at the school and we need to give information that is urgent to head office. Otherwise the afternoon session will again be losing out on valuable instructional time.

According to Ms Kondjee decision-making depends on the seriousness of the matter. There are certain issues where she can take the decision on her own and just inform Mr Tjeripo, but in other cases she does not have the mandate to make the decision and needs to consult the headmaster. She could, for example, decide on her own whether she could allow a teacher to go on leave or not. What is necessary is that one follows the correct channels for granting leave by reporting everything to the headmaster and by handing in all the relevant documentation. In some cases where the staff demands the presence of the headmaster, decision-making becomes slow and complex.

Although it is difficult and complicated to get everyone's input, double-shift managers try to make as many decisions as possible in this manner as they believe in participative decision-making. As much as they would like everyone's input, sometimes when urgent decisions need

to be made the headmaster and the management members available have to take the decisions and the rest of the staff members have to be informed in due course.

#### **4.7.3 Planning**

Planning in double-shift schools is not very much different than in single shift schools. What makes it a little more complex is that one needs to plan for two different situations or two different schools at one locality. Time-tabling is, for example, one of the complex issues. This topic will be discussed a bit later in this chapter. Mr Tjeripo and Ms Kondjee agree that planning at their school is a joint venture, but that it follows a different path from the way it is done at the other schools. At their school, management plan on their own and then go and 'sell' their ideas to the rest of the staff, morning as well as afternoon:

the HOD goes back to the teachers, introduces the topic, gets their input and after that we finally implement the decision. It first starts at management level, then the HOD will try to convince the teachers. We mostly seek the input of the afternoon teachers as any decisions we make affect people's lives, commitments and social lives.

In their discussions it became clear that certain issues are planned at management level only and some others of less importance are taken to the teachers for their input, as Ms Kondjee put it clearly in the following statements:

Firstly we have what we call management meetings. During management meetings we plan for the trimester. But if I have to plan for some activity such as the cultural week or The African Child week I can plan it with my afternoon staff and only inform my headmaster.

At Somerset Primary School the FG felt that the lower primary phase is left to the two heads of department. At their school only the grade ones attend classes in the morning, the rest of the grades attend the afternoon shift. The two HODs are responsible for this session too. They have to come earlier in the morning to attend to all the problems and management functions of the

learners as well as the teachers of the morning session under their care. These include issues such as class visits, meetings, and solving problems with parents and learners.

#### **4.7.4 Control and monitoring**

In response to the question of how control and monitoring is implemented and maintained Mr Tjeripo made it clear that it is very difficult to control and monitor the afternoon session in his absence. While the afternoon session is fully entrusted to the HOD who is running the session, it is very clear that he is responsible and accountable for both sessions. He is the overall manager and is accountable for both schools to the Ministry of Education. Therefore according to him he will never allow any teacher to:

produce or deliver an inferior or lower standard of teaching, because my point is very clear: government is paying you and you are unfortunately just employed in the afternoon. As civil servants we are on duty from 08H00 to 17H00.

Mr Tjeripo asserted that with regards to the afternoon session, commitment and dedication is the key to success. He believes that proper control could be achieved with an extra management member in the afternoon, so that regular class visits can be done. Concerning assessment, his experience is that there is no difference between the afternoon and morning session. Management has to look at teachers' files and preparations and there is according to him continuous evaluation and control of both shifts.

Similarly Ms Kondjee mentioned that although very difficult and complicated, monitoring, control and evaluation is done. It is, according to her, complicated in the sense that she also has a full teaching load together with her managerial responsibilities. She has, for example, to attend to parents' queries and problems and she has to fit in all her class visits. Most of the time she has to fit this in her free or off periods and this is also the time that she has to attend

to the parents. Class visits are sometimes neglected because parents will demand to be attended to while you have planned class visits. Even so, their learners are performing just as well as those of the morning session. Mrs Somerset commented in the following way:

Two HODs permanently control the afternoon session. I will only come now and again to control and monitor. Each head of department has also their own turn per week to monitor and control.

According to her, assessment and evaluation is done on a regular basis. What can be problematic is the quality of the learners' work, as they are studying under very difficult conditions. Both FG's said that they do get class visits and assistance from the HODs but the headmaster needed to be more visible. FG2 said that their situation has improved to a certain extent since this year because of the arrangement to share one grade four class. Now they have more free periods to attend to their management responsibilities.

#### ***4.7.5 Human Resource Management***

The participants were asked to share their experiences and expectations on the issue of human resources. I wanted to know whether all the teachers in both sessions felt appreciated and worked with commitment and dedication. I also wanted to know if there were any incentives, conditions and opportunities in place at the school that help develop the quality of teachers? Two of the participants agreed that the afternoon session teachers are definitely losing out on capacity building programmes for teachers. This notion was emphasised by Ms Kondjee when she said:

We miss out on important visits from outside. We miss out on workshops because they are run in the afternoon for the majority of the morning session teachers and by then we are busy teaching our classes.

According to the three participants they basically lose out on every activity that is done in the afternoon. When activities are arranged in the morning it is also problematic for them as they have to consider the fact that their session still needs to be attended to and that it will be seriously affected by any morning activities they have to attend. This experience is applicable to both teachers and learners. If a morning activity occurs, afternoon shift learners are tired and therefore less receptive to teaching and learning. The focus groups were very clear on their dilemma concerning this aspect as they find themselves experiencing this reality every day.

Regarding the question on how the school leadership tries to motivate their teachers to be more effective, committed and to feel appreciated, all three participants were of the opinion that it is very difficult to motivate the teachers extrinsically since there are no incentives in place from the government's side or even from their own schools. The management of the schools are however trying very hard to give authentic praise to those teachers who really deserve it. They are acknowledged and valued for their contribution towards the school. Most of the afternoon session teachers themselves are very much intrinsically motivated, dedicated and committed. Some feel that this is their job and they have to do it since they do not have a choice. It was also very clear from all the participants that the afternoon session is not popular amongst most of the teachers. Most of the teachers prefer to teach in the morning although there are a few who love to teach in the afternoon. One of the members of the focus groups said that she has been teaching in both sessions, but the afternoon session is not her first choice. Perhaps the Government can try to address the problem by reducing the number of learners in the afternoon classes so that teachers can give individual attention to fewer learners. Even if learners are tired and hungry, at least the teacher can handle the smaller numbers more effectively.

According to Mr Tjeripo the afternoon shift is very unpopular amongst teachers. This was emphasised by Mr Tjeripo when he said:

Some teachers don't feel that comfortable to teach in the afternoon as they get upset and are frustrated. I have continuous request from teachers who rather want to teach in the morning.

Except for workshops and in-service programmes, there are no other programmes put in place by the government to upgrade teachers' qualifications. Whoever wants to upgrade his qualifications has to do so in his or her own time. According to Mr Tjeripo, staff development activities to upgrade teachers' skills, efficiency and effectiveness are mostly done in the afternoon when most of the teachers are free to attend. The afternoon session teachers cannot attend these activities as by then they are in the classrooms teaching. When asked why the government does not make provision for the afternoon session teachers to attend these courses in the morning, Mr Tjeripo said that the ministry of education couldn't afford to run the courses twice. They will run it when the majority of teachers can attend, which is in the morning.

According to Mrs Somerset, if teachers have to attend courses in the morning it is very disruptive and management has to make arrangement for supervision for the classes where the teachers are absent. At her school, a head of department is responsible for the compilation of the supervision time-table, which is compiled from all the *free* periods of the teachers on duty. In such circumstances teaching does not really take place. Teachers are only there to ensure the learners do not become unruly. This is why, according to her:

the Government keeps the activities in the afternoon, which means the afternoon teachers cannot attend. Schools themselves cannot embark on staff development since there are financial implications involved.

Mrs Somerset concluded by saying that many teachers however, have enrolled privately with different institutions to upgrade their qualifications. This is highly encouraged but that is also where it ends. No financial help is given to the teachers as a token of motivation or appreciation. In all these activities the afternoon teachers are more disadvantaged than their morning counterparts.

Concerning the conditions of service, all three participants and the focus groups were in agreement that what applies to all the other schools in the country is also applicable to the afternoon session. The criteria come from the Ministry of Education, they are transparent and fair and all teachers are aware of every aspect under which they are employed. Teachers of the afternoon session have to abide by these rules just like their counterparts in the morning. All the participants were in agreement that concerning this issue, problems experienced are not specifically caused by the double session, but are most likely to be found in any other school.

#### ***4.7.6 Resource management and allocation***

To the question what the challenges are of addressing the need for technical support for double session schools the three participants echoed the same sentiments. According to them the availability of school equipment and classroom maintenance can affect school development positively or negatively. The lack of resources are often at the root of interpersonal conflict in schools but more so in double-shift schools, since the same resources are used twice by two different groups. It is a tremendous task to make sure that the resources are both available and appropriate to the needs of those who are using them.

As indicated earlier, a simple aspect like getting into a clean class every day is a big problem in double-shift schools. Keeping the classes clean for both sessions is very difficult because by the time the morning session finishes, it is also the time the afternoon session begins entering the classroom. There is basically no time to clean the classes before the afternoon session can commence. At five when the afternoon session finishes there is on occasion no-one to clean and as a result the morning session will also enter into a dirty classroom the next morning. To solve this problem it is sometimes necessary to freeze classes so that the cleaners can sweep the classes in a rush. In doing so one takes away valuable teaching time from one of the classes. This whole notion was emphasised by Mr Tjeripo when he explained:

We have the concern and problem of teachers that complain that their teaching aids such as posters have been removed; they also complain about the lack of cleanliness when they return the next day. .

Teachers continuously complain about their teaching aids such as posters, which are removed and sometimes torn by their teaching colleagues or even learners in a different session. This is one of the disadvantages of having a shared classroom. The focus groups emphasised the lack of space. They feel they do not own any space in double-shift schools. Everything is shared and no one wants to take ownership and responsibility. To try and solve this problem, management of these schools goes to the extent of dividing the classroom into two halves, allocating a half to each teacher. All these issues, according to Mr Tjeripo, are affecting their management:

This is also affecting our management and maintenance of our resources... we need to keep them in good condition in order to provide a conducive environment for the next teacher. This is very problematic for us.

They all agreed that double-shifting is most likely to place increased burdens on school facilities such as buildings, which is likely to lead to higher maintenance costs and reduced lifespan. The tendency at these schools is that no one wants to take sole responsibility for classroom equipment and facilities, as everyone passes the responsibility to another colleague.

#### ***4.7.7 Educational Reform***

The last question was about the educational reform that the Namibian Government has put in place to try and address the legacies of the past. Taking the aim of the educational reform into consideration, the double-shift system accommodates or addresses equity, access, quality and democracy. It would thus seem as if the double-shift system has a long way to go.

All the participants said in no uncertain terms that the afternoon session should not be an alternative to single shift schooling. According to them this was an interim arrangement until



such time Government had enough schools to accommodate all the learners in single shift schools. It should not and cannot be the way forward. Mrs Somerset had the following to say on this question:

Yes, to give access to the learners we have to deal with the double-shift, but to ensure quality work I think this must be phased out. If we want to do quality work, especially with the grade one's and two's where the foundation is laid down, then I think it must be phased out.

Mr Tjeripo supported her by saying the following:

It is definitely not the way forward, unfortunately not. It was mentioned and I quote: "Afternoon sessions will not be abolished unless there is money on the table to build more schools." So these afternoon sessions I believe, are an interim arrangement until such time we have enough schools to accommodate all the learners in the morning.

Ms Kondjee also supported her colleagues very strongly that the afternoon session was not the best way forward. According to her, to accommodate the policy of education for all and most specifically access to education, maybe the Government could continue with the afternoon sessions, but placing all learners in schools by introducing the afternoon session, does not automatically translate into quality teaching and learning. To cater for effective and quality education and teaching one needs to do away with the afternoon session. She also highlighted the paradoxical nature of the afternoon session when she said:

On the one hand it is trying to address access and equity since the afternoon session is providing as many children as possible with places in schools. However, on the other hand, effective and quality teaching and learning is not taking place because of the reduced school time that is in actual fact depriving learners of the afternoon session, of important classroom and co-curricular opportunities.

All the participants were of the opinion that after independence, the goal of democracy is being applied. The afternoon sessions are also fostering democracy as the teachers teaching these sessions practise learner-centred education and thus allow democratic classroom practises to

take place. Through the policy of learner-centred education, learners are, for example, given opportunities to be an active part of the classroom activities and interactions. Teachers are trying as far as possible to involve learners in decision-making, but this is not that easy as the afternoon sessions only cater for lower primary learners. Teaching these children accountability is possible, but not easy task.

In conclusion it became very clear through the data presentation that making double-shift schools work efficiently is not easy, but they are at the heart of the Namibian educational enterprise. Due to resource constraints, the Namibian Government has had to make difficult decisions about how to maximise scarce resources especially where primary school enrolment has risen rapidly, but new funding has not. In a double-shift school system a school using existing resources such as classrooms efficiently increases places. Double-shift schooling places enormous pressure on those charged with managing and leading these schools and this has significant implications for the quality of education, for example, in the cases where instruction time is curtailed or condensed. Responsibilities and accountability are transferred from the headmaster of the school to heads of department leading and managing one of the sessions. Due to the lack of relevant policies, control and monitoring double-shift schools becomes a more complex task for headmasters in terms of their workload, the nature of their responsibility and accountability, as well as the skills and knowledge required to fulfil their complex roles. The negativity surrounding the double-shift system is another constraint that needs to be addressed seriously since this is making appointing staff more complex. Motivation and other incentives to become an afternoon teacher are severely limited if not non-existent.

In the next chapter I will analyse the collected data in terms of my research questions and goal, and emerging themes and by using the literature I consulted in chapter two.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

In chapter four I presented the experiences and perceptions of headmasters managing and leading double-shift schools. This chapter discusses the main findings, attempting to interpret the experiences and perceptions of the participants and give meaning to them with reference to relevant literature. My research questions were trying to solicit answers on the perceptions and experiences of the double-shift system as experienced by those dealing with it on a day-to-day basis. Data was presented as raw as possible to capture the meaning of the participants in their own idiom. Looking across the findings different themes emerged and my discussions will be based on these themes.

#### **5.2 Rationale for the double-shift system**

Historically the rationale for the introduction of the double shift system in Namibia was politically motivated. According to the participants the then South African Apartheid regime did not regard education for Blacks as a matter of concern. Consequently building enough schools for Blacks was not one of their priorities. In Namibia this system was and is currently only used in the primary schools and not a single high school, be it a former white or black school, is using the double-shift schooling system.

It was very clear from the participants and all the relevant literature that basically multiple shift systems are introduced in most developing countries to expand the number of school places and consequently to allow access and equity. Both schools where I did the research were built

and operated in the first instance as single shift schools but because of the rapid growth in enrolment numbers of school-age children, both were converted into double-shift schools. This confirms Bray's (2000, p. 12) view that the main purpose of double-shift schooling is, "to increase the supply of school places while avoiding serious strain on the budget". The introduction of double-shifts allows a single set of buildings and facilities to serve more learners. This may be especially important in urban areas where land is scarce and buildings are expensive but mostly in developing countries where the financial resources are very scarce. Bray (2000, p. 12) argues that double-shift schooling has helped many countries to move towards universal primary and secondary education. If enrolment rates are for example high, double-shift schooling may be introduced to reduce overcrowding. This is one of the reasons why Bray is a forerunner of the double-shift system. Bray (2000, p. 31) argues that the peak of the school-age population continues for a couple of years, even up to twenty years but eventually it begins to drop. The drop is not as rapid as the original increase but can eventually represent up to a 50% decrease from the peak population. Constructing new school buildings in an effort to accommodate the peak enrolment has therefore proven to be a futile exercise since long before the buildings are worn out school enrolments drop to a point where some of the schools are no longer needed. Double-shift schooling is therefore a better intervention to address these realities. The system can furthermore permit the reduction of class size and alleviate pressure on sport facilities, libraries and others. Double-shift schooling also helps governments to achieve goals of social equity since the expansion of the number of school places broadens access.

The data suggest that the double-shift system was a temporal solution, not the answer to the challenge of providing equitable access of education in Namibia to all, in the context of dwindling and diminishing resources, escalating costs and the rising needs and demands in education. Double-shift schooling was just a passable solution in so far as it only addressed access in the sense of building capacity. Furthermore all it did was to sacrifice quality for quantity.

These experiences are not similar to double-shift schooling in other countries. According to Bray (2000, p. 40) the experiences of educators in other countries do not necessarily imply the abolishment of double-shift schooling but they rather suggest a careful analysis of the educational cost versus other economic benefits. They do however admit the existence of some important contrasts between double-shift and single shift schooling. The data shows that with the current education problems experienced in Namibia, careful planning and implementation of the double-shift system is very crucial. Although the biggest portion of the national budget goes to education, it is still not adequate enough to address the problems in the education sector. The data suggests that policy makers have a lack of information and technical expertise as to how the double-shift system can best operate in Namibia. Teachers are forced to implement double-shifts but they do not receive the necessary support and guidance as to how to make the system work successfully.

### **5.3 Implications for management: Increased ambiguity and complexity**

In this section I want to highlight all the issues that make the double-shift schools so complex and complicated to manage. I will look into management functions of those managing and leading these schools as well as the support they receive from relevant stakeholders.

The findings indicated that managing double-shift schools is not an easy task. Both headmasters were of the opinion that they experienced various problems in the morning sessions. Adding the afternoon session, which is in actual fact run by someone else on their behalf, makes management more complicated. Headmasters have to trust the heads of department who manage the afternoon sessions on their behalf. It is expected from them to be present in the management of the afternoon session, yet they should allow their heads of department to run the afternoon shift independently. This may be what Bush (2003, p. 147) is referring to when he says that “perhaps it needs to be recognized more explicitly that organizations, including

schools, sometimes operates in a complex and unstable environment over which they exert only modest control and which is capable of producing effects, which penetrate the strongest and most selective of boundaries". Because they are so "complex, surprising, deceptive, and ambiguous, they are formidably difficult to understand and change" (Bush, 2003, p. 23).

According to all three participants deploying teachers between the shifts, promoting a feeling of unity between the staff of different shifts, ensuring that extra-curricular activities are given appropriate attention and ensuring order in overlapping sessions when two groups are on the campus together is a tremendous task. All these call for a different approach to management and leadership. The system needs to realise and accept that double-shift schools are different, more composite, with lines of communication and processes more complex and less linear.

In double-shift schools there is what Bush (2003:138) calls "fluid participation" in the management of schools. Some double-shift sessions, as in the school of Mrs Somerset, rotate the management functions and this makes it extremely difficult to attribute responsibility to those responsible for the sessions. This allows a kind of 'loose' responsibility and commitment. According to Ms Kondjee an attitude of 'the-next-person-will-take-the-responsibility' is created. Mrs Somerset experiences of 'loose' responsibility did not agree with Ms Kondjee and in actual fact was quite the opposite. Different heads of department supervise the afternoon-session and everyone is, according to her, very much aware of their accountability and responsibilities. However if one goes into a different function of the school such as communication for example, it becomes more complex and complicated in double-shift schools. Mrs Somerset explained that arranging meetings for both sessions is so problematic that the only suitable time to arrange a meeting for both sessions is in the late afternoons. This is after hours and can become an issue if teachers start to claim their rights.

Another issue that was transparent from the data is the fact that the morning and afternoon sessions have separate identities. This is a genuine concern since according to all three participants, learners and teachers of the afternoon session suffer a number of disadvantages

and they feel as if they are treated like second class citizens of the school. Mr Tjeripo for example said he has teachers who want to be transferred to the morning session every year. The morning session teachers do not want to get transferred to the afternoon shift. According to him, “no teacher will volunteer” to go to the afternoon session. The management has to therefore find ways and means to support and motivate the afternoon staff to continue teaching with a positive attitude. One of the aspects that needs to be mentioned when talking about leading and managing organisations, as well as complex situations, is the concept of culture. A deeper understanding of the concept of culture helps explain, according to Schein (1992, p. 4), these phenomena:

If we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar and seemingly irrational behaviour of people in organisations, and we will have a deeper understanding not only of why various groups of people or organisations can be so different but also why it is so hard to change them.

Leaders and managers cannot lead and manage schools without taking culture and its complexity into consideration. It is complex in the sense that culture is not easy to create nor is it easy to change. The culture of a school therefore entails the values and norms that determine the development of all other elements. Culture will for example affect the way in which teachers relate to each other, the way the school is managed and run and it will affect the teachers’ perceptions about teaching and learning. In double-shift schooling where the morning session is regarded as the “real” school, a perception that the afternoon session is inferior is easily created. This is why according to Mr Tjeripo no one wants to teach in the afternoon shift. In terms of organisational culture it would be difficult to extend and maintain a single, unique culture across the two sessions, especially where these are led by different people.

In countries where there is one principal for both sessions, negative effects are experienced. The working hours as explained by Bray (2000, p. 67) may be very long which can be exhausting and take its toll on the head teacher. This arrangement can also be costly to the authorities since supplementary payments might be necessary to compensate for the long working hours.

In his study Bray (2000, p. 70) also highlighted very crucial perceptions of teachers responsible for double-shift systems. According to Bray (2000, p. 70) the attitudes of teachers are of course a crucial determinant of the success or failure of double-shift systems. If teachers like or are at least prepared to cooperate with the system, then the machinery can work smoothly. But if teachers feel overworked, inadequately compensated and professionally frustrated, then the innovation is unlikely to be successful. Ms Kondjee was of the opinion that her teachers are very motivated to tackle the afternoon session but that they are discouraged by the learners who are less motivated. She believes that the problems that she experiences concerning teachers are the same as in any other school setup, but their degree of impact are more serious since they deal with different abnormalities such as the heat of the afternoon, exhausted learners and a shorter instructional time.

It is therefore expected from managers and their staff in double-shift schools to continually expand their capacity and willingness to create the results they truly desire or are expected to deliver. Managers and leaders in double-shift systems will always need to make special arrangements to ensure that duties are covered appropriately. The ancillary staff at double-shift schools is very complex to manage. Many double-shift schools have only one single team of ancillary staff. If a school operates from 07h30 to 18h30 this implies that the ancillary staff are working more than the required eight hours per day. Since this is against the labour law, unions can become troublesome. A possible solution according to Bray (2000, p. 70) is to make use of the overlapping shift system with different members arriving at different times of the school day. If additional staff members are needed this will have additional financial implications. Namibia and many other developing countries cannot afford this. Effective and efficient planning needs to be done by headmasters of double-shift schools to address these issues.

Managing double-shift schools therefore becomes an even more complicated and complex endeavour than managing single shift schools. It could be argued that a more participative and



collaborative management style would be more effective. This notion is supported by the Task Team Report (South Africa. DoE, 1996) on Education Management Development when they suggest an integrative and collaborative education management for complex situations.

Another relevant issue that Cohen and March (in Bush 2003, p. 148) address is the fact that leaders in educational institutions face four fundamental ambiguities. I would argue that these ambiguities are more prominent in multiple schooling. The first ambiguity they are referring to is the ambiguity of purpose generally experienced in educational institutions. According to all the participants, it is a mammoth task to facilitate decisions in double-shift schooling. Their experiences are that when decisions need to be taken very urgently it is problematic to get the leaders of both sessions together. The morning shift enjoys superiority and since they are the one headed by the headmaster of the school, decisions are taken without the input of the leader of the afternoon session and his/her staff. Consequently, ordinary ways of decision-making become more problematic in double-shift schooling. Even if the headmaster gets hold of the afternoon session leader, they would have to sacrifice their free time to come attend meetings during the morning session. As a result the information processing channels of the afternoon session becomes somewhat delayed, while the information to the morning staff is always immediate and input from their side can be sought immediately.

According to Cohen and March (Ibid, p. 148) there is also an ambiguity of power because it is difficult to make a clear assessment of the authority of leaders. The question one needs to ask here is: where do the powers of the head of the school begin and end and where do the powers of the afternoon session head of department begin and end? According to Ms Kondjee there are certain issues that are beyond her powers to decide upon. It is for example very difficult for her to make decisions on conflict situations. It is difficult in the sense that the afternoon staff feels that the headmaster can resolve the problem in a better way and that some cases should therefore be referred to him. Hence, although she is the head of the afternoon, the staff keep on demanding the presence of Mr Tjeripo. For me this was an indication that the staff regards Mr Tjeripo as their leader and Ms Kondjee as a supervisor of

the afternoon session with limited powers. The other participant, Mrs Somerset had quite a different experience of this scenario. In her school the afternoon session is run on a rotation basis. Whoever is in charge of that particular day's afternoon session has to resolve the conflict amicably. According to her this arrangement does not cause any problem at all.

The other ambiguity that is discussed by Cohen and March (ibid, p. 148) is the fact that there is an ambiguity of experience because in conditions of uncertainty, leaders may not be able to learn from the consequences of their actions. This is so because according to Bush (2003, p. 150), "leaders serve primarily as catalysts. They do not so much lead the institutions as channel its activities in subtle ways. They do not command; they negotiate. They do not plan comprehensively; they try to nudge problems together with pre-existing solutions. They are not heroic leaders; they are facilitators of an ongoing process". This situation is even more complex in double-shift schooling. If the school that Mrs Somerset manages experiences a conflict situation in the afternoon session, the parent can only come to school to discuss the problem the next day when the relevant head of department is back on duty again. In the meantime in an attempt to try and solve these problems, the school has tried to address them by allowing the two HODs to teach only one grade four class, so when the one HOD is busy teaching in the classroom the other one is managing the school. After a while they swap duties. According to them this was a positive step.

The fourth factor that Cohen and March (in Bush 2003, p. 148) address is the fact that there is an ambiguity of success because it is difficult to measure the achievements of leaders. They believe that when success is ambiguous ordinary ways of motivation and personal pleasure become problematic. In double-shift schools motivation of staff members becomes a crucial element. All the participants were in agreement that the afternoon session is unmanageable in the sense that the learners are exposed to unfavourable conditions and circumstances. It is also unmanageable in the sense that the afternoon session learners and teachers start their school day at one o'clock or at half past twelve and continue until five o'clock in the afternoon. The impact of this on the learners is tremendous. Learners are often worn out and hungry and their

level of concentration is very low. Teachers on the other hand are trying their best to keep the learners focused and interested. This is very difficult and as one of the participants explained, learners will go to any extreme, like faking a headache, to avoid the classroom teaching-learning environment.

It is very difficult for the headmaster and the afternoon session leader to be aware of all that is taking place in their sessions, but it is more ambiguous for the headmaster since he has to manage and lead the whole school and thus in effect, both sessions. The data suggest a different, more positive scenario in the case of the school of Mrs Somerset. Perhaps this is where the complexity theory comes in: emergence is the partner of self-organization. Systems possess the ability for self-organization. Further, self-organization emerges, it is internally generated; it is the antithesis of external control. As Kauffman (in Morrison) suggests,

order comes for free and replaces control. The self-organized order emerges of itself as the result of the interaction between the organism and its environment, and new structures emerge that could not have been predicted from a knowledge of initial conditions; that emerged system is, itself, complex and cannot be reduced to those parts that gave rise to the system.

Perhaps Mrs Somerset's school responded to its external environment and internal complexity to make necessary adjustments and developments in order to meet the demands of the changing environment in a more positive way.

#### **5.4 Specific challenges emerging from the data**

It was very clear from the data that managing double-shift schools has its own serious challenges. Many are similar to normal schooling systems but some are typical of these schools and need to be discussed in a broader context.

#### **5.4.1 Parental involvement**

All three participants had a very serious problem with the lack of involvement of the parents concerning the learners. It would seem as if the parents do not take the care of children attending the afternoon session very seriously, as the children are left to their own devices. As most of the time parents are at work in the day, there is no one to send them to school in time or to see that they have a decent meal before they go to school and that they are at least dressed properly and clean.

This experience is supported by Bray (2000, p. 35) when he says that except for the educational function, schools keep children busy and occupied during the day. This allows the parents to go on with their own work. However in half-day schools parents are forced to send the children either to relatives who operate from home or they have to employ people to look after the children in their absence. This can be a costly exercise for some poor communities. As mentioned earlier in Namibia this system is only found in the suburbs which were meant for Blacks only. These communities have a very low income and they can hardly afford child-minding services. Consequently children are hungry, dirty and tired when they go to the afternoon session. When they come back from school they have to finish their homework and study for their lessons the next day. Many of them are so tired that they fall asleep while doing their homework. This scenario could have been avoided if there was at least someone at home who could take care of the homework and studying in the morning.

This is not an insurmountable problem. With a little more effort from all the stakeholders this can be addressed amicably. Schools could do what the data is suggesting by educating the parent community to become active and willing participants in a wide range of school-based and home-based activities, which may be educational or non-educational. This would extend from supporting and upholding the school ethos to supervising children's homework at home. Parental involvement implies mutual co-operation, sharing and support. In doing so schools will be able to achieve what Van Wyk and Lemmer (2009, p. 14) refer to as "seeking to bring together in some way the separate domains of home and school in the interest of the child's learning and development". "Complexity theory, as a theory of change, development and evolution through relationships, promotes the notion of a re-awakening of schools to become agents of change" (Morrison, 2008, p. 7). Fullan in

Morrison (2008, p. 5) remarks, “change equals learning; learning is a central element in both complexity theory and education”.

#### ***5.4.2 The effect on buildings and facilities***

One of the most serious consequences of the double-shift schooling is the fast deterioration of the school equipment such as the furniture and buildings. According to the participants the maintenance of the facilities is a big struggle. Since the facilities are used by two different groups of teachers and learners they get worn out faster and sooner than in other schools with only one shift. Another problem is the fact that the afternoon teachers rarely get into clean classes, since the classes are only cleaned in the afternoon after the afternoon session. Mr Tjeripo was of the opinion that the extra use of the facilities creates a high maintenance cost and in most cases requires earlier replacement of facilities.

What appears to be absent in the schools is a sense of ownership and pride. Even under these trying circumstances of running two sessions in one day, it should be possible to instill a sense of pride in the school which will be reflected in the school’s culture. Schein (1992, p. 5) is of the opinion that “one of the most decisive functions of leadership is the creation, management and sometimes even the destruction of culture”. Leaders in double-shift schools could help with the creation and change of culture and managers and administrators should live within that culture. Leaders and managers cannot lead and manage schools without taking culture and its complexity into consideration. It is complex in the sense that culture is not easy to create nor is it easy to change. Sergiovanni (in Bush, 2003, p. 170) says that “excellent schools have central zones composed of values and beliefs that take on sacred or cultural characteristics.” Leaders in these schools are aware of their own emotional makeup, are sensitive and inspiring to others, and are able to deal with day-to-day problems as they work on more fundamental changes in the culture of the organization. For principals of double-shift schools the acknowledgment and acceptance of the school’s complexity could be a starting point in the creation of a caring culture.

### ***5.4.3 The effects on the teachers***

The teachers of both sessions using the same classroom for teaching often complain about the conditions in which they find the classrooms. The afternoon teachers hardly ever enter a clean classroom. Another problem which was highlighted by the findings is the fact that teachers complain that others are tampering with their teaching aids such as posters. The morning shift teachers cannot leave work on the chalkboard overnight because the afternoon session will clean the chalkboard for their own use, or vice versa. Mr Tjeripo and Mrs Somerset also have the same experience of not getting to know the learners from both shifts personally due to the large learner population. This makes the management functions of control complicated since this can exacerbate discipline problems.

According to the participants they try their utmost to motivate and encourage the teachers to be patient, tolerant and accommodating. This however does not seem to work effectively. The reason for this could be what Bray (2000, p. 39) regards as a “sense of less ownership of their classrooms”. Because the classrooms are shared by different teachers everyone is reluctant to take care of the classroom in order to provide an environment conducive to work for the next teacher.

This is a challenge to the management of the double-shift system and they have to address this more successfully. Bush (2003, p. 147) warns that in general managers in schools are faced by challenges and pressure emanating from their immediate environments. In most cases they are not able to respond to the ambiguities which such external pressures often bring into their schools. These situations are even more complex in double-shift schooling and gaining control over the sources of uncertainty is more complicated and complex. Mr. Tjeripo highlighted the problem they face with the Labor Act if their workers work longer than the required hours per day. In some cases they have to freeze the morning classes so that the cleaners can sweep or

they have to make internal arrangements whereby they allow the cleaners to have an hour longer lunch break. However, none of these alternatives are welcomed by the teachers and institutional workers, especially on a Friday afternoon when no-one wants to stay till five o'clock as many of them are traveling to other destinations over the weekend.

Planning, for managers of these schools, becomes more challenging and complicated as they have to plan for two schools in one. The afternoon session is less popular than the morning session and it may therefore be very difficult to find reliable and efficient teachers for the afternoon session. Bray (2000, p. 50) supports the idea of complexity by mentioning the fact that the staff and learners of the afternoon session do feel inferior. Managers should therefore find ways and means to boost the morale of the staff and learners. On the other hand, parents may exert pressure to get their children transferred from the afternoon to the morning session. This experience emphasises the point that external changes occur and distort situations so that experience becomes an unreliable guide for future action. (Bush, 2003, p. 148) This notion is illuminated by complexity theory when it alludes to the fact that

Schools exhibit many features of complex adaptive systems, being dynamical and unpredictable, non-linear organizations operating in unpredictable and changing external environments. Indeed schools both shape and adapt to macro- and micro-societal change, organizing themselves, responding to, and shaping their communities and society.

To decide which grades should be allocated to the afternoon session also demands careful planning and management. Managers in double-shift schools have to decide which groups should be allocated to which session. In some countries according to Bray (2000, p. 54):

Pupils in grades 1, 2 and 3 have to use the same desks and chairs as pupils in grades 4, 5 and 6, even though the children are physically of different sizes. Special furniture design may be needed.

Managers may thus decide on different options that could meet their needs, which would require careful planning and well thought out decision-making. According to Fullan (2002, p. 11) leaders with deep moral purpose provide guidance, but they can also have blinders on if

their ideas are not challenged through the dynamics of change, the give and take of relationships, and the ideas generated by new knowledge. Coherence is an integral part of complexity and can never be completely achieved. Leaders in a culture of change value and almost enjoy the tensions inherent in addressing hard to solve problems because that is where the greatest accomplishments lie.

#### ***5.4.4 The effects on the learners***

Learners of the afternoon shift suffer a great deal, according to the three participants. They are exhausted when they come to school. Children also find it hard to learn and study in the afternoon in summer because it is very hot. Their concentration span is short and the afternoon staff have a difficult task to keep them focused during the teaching and learning process. Many of them are not on time for the classes because there is no one at home to remind them to leave for school on time. They completely miss out on extra-mural activities. Teachers and learners experience a lack of a sense of belonging because they don't really socialize at the level that any sport activity can offer to a school. However, despite all these negative experiences all three participants admitted that the academic performances of the double-shift pupils are as good as those in single shifts. Bray (2000, p. 42) agrees with these findings when he says, "the studies suggest that the academic achievement of children in double-shift systems is often just as high as that of children in single shift systems."

Bray is justifying this situation by stressing two points in favour of the double-shift schooling. The first one is the fact that the introduction of double-shifts may permit reduction in class size and therefore allows a more personalized and individualized teaching approach. Secondly double-shift schools are reasonably larger and therefore find it easier to justify expenditure on sport fields, libraries and laboratories. Bray (2000, p. 50) attributes the poor performance in double-shift schools rather to socio-cultural factors than to the number of shifts in a school. In poor and developing countries like Namibia, managers in schools should rather concentrate on the positive aspects and do everything in their power to make the system work.



#### ***5.4.5 The effects on curricula and duration of instructional time***

All three participants are of the opinion that the afternoon session is losing out on instructional time. Mr Tjeripo says that one has to cut back on the teaching time of the afternoon session in order to cover the curriculum. According to him, The Ministry of Basic Education introduced the pilot curriculum and it expects the schools to teach a number of periods for a number of minutes. The experience of the afternoon session is that one cannot fit the entire curriculum into the time allocation in a way that can benefit the learners and the teachers.

The table in chapter two is an outline of official data on primary school teaching time in thirteen countries. According to Bray (2000, p. 44) the table shows seven countries in which the teaching time was shortened to accommodate extra shifts. In the other six countries no reduction has been made. This table by implication shows different aspects of time-tabling. In the first instance it highlights the fact that if classroom time is reduced it does not necessarily mean loss of effective teaching as effective teachers can achieve a great deal more in a short time than ineffective teachers can achieve in twice the time. A further point emerging from the table according to Bray (2000, p. 43) is that even the shortened double-shift allocation is longer in some countries than the full single shift allocation of other countries:

For instance, the 24 hours 10 minutes of the Philippines' senior primary schools is longer than the full single shifts of Ghana, Hong Kong, Laos and Nigeria. This implies that when classroom time is reduced because of the introduction of a shift system, the impact may not be disastrous. Much depends on the length of curriculum time before the change.

The argument here is that time reduction does not necessarily equate to poor performance and teachers should rather concentrate on how they could be effective even if the time at their disposal is reduced or limited. It is also obvious that whenever time is reduced the non-promotional subjects are always affected. As a result there is no difference in the performance of the promotional subjects since they are not actually the ones affected. However, according

to Bray (2000, p. 42) some research has shown that academic performance in double-shift schooling may be just as high and successful as in single shift schools. What educational ministries need according to Bray (2000, p. 46) are “administrators with imagination who may find ways to get round the problems of both the shorter school days and of congested school compounds”.

Achievement in school subjects is of course not the only goal of school life. To develop the child in totality, education should also promote healthy attitudes and physical development through extra-mural activities. Most of the extra-mural activities are fitted into the school day in the afternoon. The afternoon sessions suffer disturbances and noise. The afternoon session learners hardly participate in extra-mural activities. However Bray (2000, p. 77) is of the opinion that few obstacles to effective extra-curricular activities in double-shift schools are insurmountable. To substantiate his argument Bray (Ibid, p. 77) is of the opinion that:

If staff make the effort to find ways around the obstacles, extra-curricular activities in double-shift schools can be at least as good as those in single shift schools. Indeed in some respects they may even be better.

They could be better, because as Bray (2000, p. 43) believes, the larger the population of the double-shift school the easier it is for the managers of these schools to justify expenditure on libraries, laboratories, decent sport facilities, swimming pools and gymnasia. It is true that double-shift schooling may suffer educational disadvantages compared to single shift schools.

Headmasters and their supervisors of the afternoon sessions should find ways and means to improve the teacher-learner interaction time so that they can be successful at all times. Within complexity theories, learning is a process of emergence and co-evolution of the individual, the social group and the wider society. Emphasis is placed on the relationship between elements, rather than the elements themselves, and the human mind is regarded as a complex adaptive system (Morrison, 2008, p. 8). Knowledge, according to Morrison (Ibid, p. 8), is “emergent and the mind is emergent and developing. Our minds are not static; each new event is met and

learned by a new mind—it is not the same mind as it was moments before”. Double-shifts should therefore not be regarded as a cause of poor performance.

At least all the participants were of the opinion that whatever odds the afternoon children may experience, they do attend school even if they are a couple of minutes late. Absenteeism is therefore not really an issue of great concern in the afternoon session. This is a very positive feature and headmasters and their teachers need to exploit this.

## **5.5 The impact of double-shift schooling on the Educational Reform**

The data has revealed that the goal of access has been achieved to a certain extent with the implementation of double-shift schooling. The goal of access has been achieved because Government has done away with many of the temporary schools such as tree schools and others. New schools were built by the government and other stakeholders. The double-shift system was introduced where the government could not build new schools. However in the same vein they believe that placing all learners in schools by introducing the afternoon session, does not automatically translate into quality teaching and learning. This idea was echoed by Mrs Somerset when she said:

Yes, to give access to the learners we have to deal with the afternoon shift. But to ensure quality work I think this must be phased out. If we want to do quality work, especially with the grade one's and two's where the foundation is laid down, then I think it must be phased out.

The data suggest that the double-shift schooling is not popular in the schools. The participants also confirmed that the system is not popular amongst the parents, especially if children from the same family have to attend different shifts. They were of the opinion that to a certain extent double-shift schooling reinforces social inequalities since these schools are only found in the former Black schools. Thus according to Ms Kondjee the government is trying to address

access on the one hand but on the other hand it is creating inequalities. This is a paradox. Or maybe this is what Sterman (2005, p. 11) is referring to as:

the policies we implement to address difficult challenges have not failed to solve the persistent problems we face, but are in fact causing them. All too often well intentioned programs create unanticipated “side effects”. The result is *policy resistance* the tendency for interventions to be defeated by the system’s response to the intervention itself.

The intention of introducing the double-shift system was to address a persistent problem. However those implementing it now believe that this was not the best option and do not seem willing to give the system a fair chance to succeed. Perhaps if managers and teachers in double-shift schools are really passionate and committed the system could succeed. If both parties could pool together all their strengths and resources they could establish a successful environment. This is very challenging and complicated. According to Senge in an interview with O’Neil (online):

The education enterprise is especially complicated because not only does the organization have different levels, it’s very stratified. You have got teachers, principals, off-site administrators, school board members...Last but not least; this whole enterprise is embedded within the community. So it’s an extraordinarily complex organization and very stratified, very fragmented.

As mentioned earlier, those who are implementing and experiencing the double-shift system seem not to want to accept its inherent complexity and are thus resistant to acceptance and ownership. I return to this matter in the next chapter.

Policy makers therefore need to seriously consider the equity implications when introducing the double-shift system as a possible intervention. Bray (2000, p. 50) for example, is warning policy makers to consider certain aspects such as desirable versus undesirable sessions. Normally the morning sessions are more desirable for teachers and learners than the afternoon sessions. Government could address equity by also introducing the system in former advantaged communities. The same applies to urban versus rural schools. The system should

also not be perceived to perpetuate racial as well as class inequalities. Finally governments should guard against the implementation of double-shift schooling to address the issue of academically bright versus academically weak learners. Failing to take these aspects into cognizance can on the one hand challenge the privileges of the rich and therefore cause strong opposition from influential groups or on the other hand, the status quo can be maintained.

The participants raised many legitimate concerns about the quality of double-shift schooling. It also emerged from the data that management tasks are also more challenging in double-shift schools. However it was also very clear from the data and the literature that many of these problems are not insurmountable. According to Bray (2000, p. 82) double-shift systems can be highly cost-effective:

They can permit substantial financial savings, and do not necessarily cause a decline in quality. And even when introduction of double-shift schooling does cause some loss of quality, the benefits of reduced unit cost and of larger enrolments may outweigh the cost implied by the loss of quality.

Perhaps Government and all other stakeholders in education have an obligation of moral purpose toward education. According to Fullan (2002, p. 7) moral purpose means:

Closing the gap between high performing schools and lower performing schools; high performing and lower performing students, by raising the level of achievement of all, while closing the gap. This is the only way for large scale, sustainable reform to occur — and it is moral purpose of the highest order.

More fundamentally Fullan (2002, p. 15) believes that:

we will not have quality principals on any scale until we have quality teachers on a large scale, both for reasons of getting the job done, and in light of the fact that quality teachers (on a large scale) form the pool for appointing quality principals (on a large scale).

In the next chapter I will conclude my discussion and findings. I will also recommend possible suggestions and solutions which emerged from the research.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

The focus of my research was to examine the perceptions and experiences of headmasters managing and leading double-shift schools. I made use of purposeful sampling, to ensure that I selected information-rich cases for an in-depth study. I wanted to gain a better understanding about these two double-shift schools without needing or desiring to generalise the information to a larger spectrum. The purpose of the interview was to gain information as well as to understand the perceptions of the participants on how they manage and lead double-shift schools.

This chapter summarises the main findings as discussed in chapter five. In this chapter I further highlight the potential value of my study, suggest some recommendations for practice and future research and in conclusion I state the limitations of my study.

#### **6.2 Summary of main findings**

The main issue that emerged from the findings is the negativity that surrounds double-shift schooling in Namibia. Harper highlighted this negativity as early as 1987 and it is still very much the attitude I experienced in my research. The system was initially implemented as a part of the Apartheid education policies of that time to expand education using the limited resources which were made available to the politically and economically neglected communities. In Namibia this system was and is currently only used in the primary schools and not in any single high school. The system is also only used in the former Black suburbs. Even after independence little attention was given to the impact this system was having on equitable access to and

quality of education. It was clear from the findings that these schools felt as if they were singled out for punishment. The question on every one's lip was: If the Government believes seriously in double-shift schooling why are they not introducing the system in the former white and coloured schools too?

The findings further showed a kind of apathy or reluctance from the side of the authorities in providing sufficient and clear policies and directives as to how these schools should be managed. Although double-shift schooling appears to offer adequate education and is therefore a viable solution, at least in the short to medium term, for Namibia to expand its education within resource constraints, not much is known about these schools and the ways to make them more effective. This is so because of policy neglect. Headmasters have to struggle on their own to overcome the negative impact the system has on learners' performance. They have to decide for themselves how they can successfully implement the reduction of the curriculum forced by a cut in the school teaching time. They have furthermore to struggle on their own to address the negative impact the system has on extra-curricular activities as well as the fast deterioration of school facilities.

The lack of clear guidelines for the organisation of double-shift schooling in Namibia is leaving individual schools to generate their own informal practices to deal with programme implementation and school organization. This way of doing things can effectively block the realisation of the Namibian educational goals of equity of opportunity and school effectiveness. Education implementation needs policy and policy needs to be informed. While double-shift schooling broadens access to educational opportunities, it also struggles to maintain quality of educational services, thus creating conditions for possible educational disadvantages.

I was also puzzled by the apathy or reluctance, which is visible in the writings of the few people who wrote papers on the Namibian education system. Avenstrup (1994) in his unpublished paper 'Sustainability of Educational Reform' considers the better use of school facilities as one of the strong indicators of internal efficiency; he however fails to make one single reference to

double-shift schooling even though this intervention can be regarded as one of the ways of using school facilities more effectively and efficiently. Mutorwa (2004), the then minister of Basic Education, revisits the success of access to education after independence in his book *Access to Education 1990-2000: Reflection on the Implementation of Namibia's Policy of Towards Education for All*. No attention was paid to the impact of the double-shift system as an intervention addressing equitable access to education in Namibia. It is very clear from the data that the double-shift schools were created, but they are not acknowledged; they are not owned. No one is taking full responsibility for the successful implementation of the double-shift schooling. The ministry has shifted it on to the headmasters and the headmasters to their heads of department responsible for the afternoon sessions.

Leaders in most contemporary organizations find themselves faced with increasing complexity and schools in general are complex institutions. Managing double-shift schools is even more complex and extremely complicated. It stands out very clearly from the data that managing and leading double-shift schools needs a changed mindset on the part of leadership. Double-shift schools in Namibia are evolving and changing day by day, both as they respond to their relevant environments and, indeed, as they themselves contribute to that change. There is a need in schools in general but more specifically in double-shift schools to develop the capacity to understand and act within the individual, group and organisational dynamics which interact with and mutually influence the work itself. The experience at the moment is that the morning and afternoon sessions are separate schools with separate identities and separate organisation cultures, yet they reside under one headmaster. The afternoon session is regarded as inferior and is therefore less attractive to teachers and parents. The reason for this is usually on the grounds that these schools provide an inferior education even though there is no evidence for this.

I found therefore some contradicting information from the participants. They were adamant in convincing me that learners' performances are as good as in any other single shift school, yet they were also very convincing that the double-shift is not the way forward. The reasons could



be the political history as discussed above and not necessarily due to poor performance. This could also be one of the reasons why no one wants to own these schools.

Headmasters in double-shift schools have a tremendous task in motivating teachers to remain in the afternoon session or to convince teachers of the morning session to take up responsibilities in the afternoon session. If teachers feel overworked, not appreciated, inadequately compensated and professionally frustrated, then the innovation is unlikely to be successful. Deploying teachers between the shifts; promoting a feeling of unity between the staff of different shifts; ensuring that extra-curricular activities are given appropriate attention and ensuring order in overlapping sessions when two groups are on the campus together are tremendous tasks in double-shift schools and call for effective management and leadership. But this can only happen if the ambiguity and complexity of the system is acknowledged and incorporated into everyone's thinking, so that the schools can be seen more positively.

Finally I would like to conclude by highlighting the ambiguity that is very much operational in double-shift schools. It emerged from the data that in double-shift schools there is a "fluid participation" in the management of schools. Some afternoon sessions rotate the management functions and make it extremely difficult to attribute responsibility to those in charge of the sessions. This allows a kind of 'loose' responsibility and commitment. Consequently an attitude of 'the-next-person-will-take-the-responsibility' is created.

The other ambiguity that emerged from the data is the fact that the headmaster is not present for the afternoon session. His absence is causing an ambiguity of experience and authority. This is so because headmasters in double-shift schools serve primarily, as Bush explains, (Bush, 2003, p. 150) "as catalysts. They do not so much lead the institutions but only channel their activities in subtle ways. They do not command; they negotiate. They do not plan comprehensively for the afternoon session; they try to nudge problems together with pre-existing solutions. They are not heroic leaders; they are facilitators of an ongoing process". Headmasters of double-shift schools lack the 'hands-on' experience of managing and leading

one of the sessions, which is in most cases the afternoon session. All these aspects place emphasis on the ambiguity and complexity that is present in managing double-shift schools. It is true that all these characteristics are generally present in any school, but they are more vibrant and challenging in double-shift schools.

### **6.3 Potential value of my research**

The purpose of my study was to find out what the experiences and perceptions of managers and leaders are concerning the double-shift schools. I have realised that due to financial constraints this intervention has a long way to go and headmasters of schools need to come to terms with it.

While doing the research I gained more information about the double-shift system and I realised that it is not an intervention unique to Namibia but that it is used widely across different countries of the world. Another interesting factor that became evident from the readings is the fact that the intervention is also not meant for poor countries only but that it could be used in any country to address social equity and to alleviate poverty in some instances. Studying the book of Bray has shown that double-shift schooling can be highly cost-effective. The double-shift system can permit substantial savings and does not necessarily cause a decline in quality. Even if the introduction of double-shift schooling does cause some loss of quality, the benefits of reduced unit costs and of larger enrolments may outweigh the cost implied by the loss of quality.

Another element brought about by the study and which is relevant to our context is the point that was highlighted by Bray (2000, p. 31). The same experience is directly applicable to the Namibian context. After independence rapid development was the order of the day. In Windhoek for example new suburbs were developed and new subdivisions and housing were

developed and sold. Where the area was desirable and became stable the population was also growing rapidly. Growth in population also meant growth in the number of school-age children. The Namibian education authority has tended to meet this increasing number of school-age population by constructing school buildings in a sufficient number and size to accommodate the peak enrolments. This peak of school-age children will continue for a number of years, but eventually it will begin to drop and long before the buildings are worn out the enrolments will drop to a point where some of the schools will no longer be needed. This is a valuable lesson for Namibia to avoid building too many resources and rather opt for double-shift schooling.

Finally the value of this study lies in the fact that it is able to inform policy-makers about issues surrounding the double-shift system and its effective and efficient implementation and the role of leadership and management in particular. The findings are also very relevant to the Ministry of Education and other relevant stakeholders.

## **6.4 Recommendations**

- Headmasters in double-shift schools should seriously strive to create an atmosphere of cohesion in their schools. They should arrange gatherings where both sets of staff and learners can come together at the same time. This will ensure the establishment of cohesive and distinct school communities and cultures.
- The introduction of double-shift schooling may permit reduction in class size and therefore allows a more individualised and personalized teaching approach, which will assist in the successful implementation of the Learner Centred Approach.
- Government and more specifically the ministry of education should seriously support double-shift schools in allocating the necessary equipment such as books and the necessary infrastructure such as libraries, laboratories and sport facilities and equipment.

Government will save money and the image of the school will improve. This can contribute to the development of positive attitudes for these schools.

- Policy-makers must take account of the fact that although double-shift schooling can greatly contribute to social equity, as they permit governments to increase access to education at a moderate cost, they can also reinforce social inequalities. Thorough and careful planning and the implementation of different strategies should be considered when introducing double-shift schooling. I would therefore strongly recommend the two books written by Mark Bray to policymakers, education planners, inspectors and all other relevant stakeholders when dealing with issues pertaining to double-shift schooling. These books will give valuable insight into and appreciation of the double-shift system.
- Since the double-shift system in Namibia is shrouded in negativity the authorities should explain to relevant stakeholders why they consider double-shift schooling to be desirable. If they have to choose between two evils than they must also explain which evil is the better one. The message must be explained consistently to school inspectors, teachers' unions, teachers and their headmasters. This could possibly ensure the development of positive attitudes amongst the custodians of the system.
- The Namibian Government should also introduce the system in the former white and coloured schools to do away with the notion that the system is meant for the former Black and poor communities only. Maybe the implementation of this intervention in one of the elite schools can serve as a model of success and consequently prove its worth to those who believe that the double-shift system is not an option.
- Authorities should really assist managers of double-shift schools by providing them with the needed advice, facilities and extra buildings such as extra study rooms for the afternoon learners who come early and for the morning learners who stay late. Some classes can be designed in such a way to withstand the afternoon heat. Time-tables

should be designed in such a way that both sessions have equal opportunity to cater for the successful implementation of the curriculum.

- I would suggest that institutions of higher learning should prepare and equip aspirant teachers with the relevant know-how to be able to cope successfully in these schools. I personally work in teacher training and this issue of double-shift schooling is not addressed in any of the institution's programmes. This could be easily remedied.
- Furthermore, it is vitally important for education authorities, as a matter of urgency, to start recognizing and supporting double-shift schools with sufficient expertise and resources, for schools to be able to handle these complex situations. In poor and developing countries providing access to school for all children is a major challenge, more especially when the alternatives are double-shift schooling.
- Effective leadership and management are widely regarded as essential dimensions of successful schooling all over the world. To ensure effective leadership and management in double-shift schools, there is a need for leadership and management development. A double-shift school is not just another school like the rest, but it is a more complex intervention and it needs to be treated as such. This complexity should be reflected in principals' preparation and in-service training. There is a need to expose principals to organisational theory that emphasises complexity and ambiguity, as well as how to manage change.
- Parents should expand their abilities so that they can realise their personal goals, through educational programs. Providing this space and opportunity for parents requires an intentional educational process that goes beyond the traditional training of parent educators. Double-shift managers and their staff in collaboration with Government should embark upon these programs. Parental participation and community engagement are necessary to address the social problems that undermine success in double-shift schools.

## **6.5 Recommendations for future research**

Double-shift schooling is a relevant intervention for the Namibian education and Government should give it the acknowledgement it deserves. My study only looked at the experiences and perceptions of headmasters managing and leading double-shift schools. Very little research has been done on this particular aspect. While doing the research, so many possible topics became evident. I would therefore like to see the ministry of education supporting researchers who would want to undertake research in this phenomenon.

Policymakers could try the introduction of double-shift schooling in Namibian secondary schools. Since the cost involved in providing secondary education is much higher than in primary schools, economic savings may be achieved with the introduction of the double-shift system at the secondary level. Since secondary school learners are more mature they may use their leisure time more productively than what is the case with the primary schools.

Another issue that could be solved with the double-shift system is the accommodation of grade 10 repeaters. Double-shift systems can accommodate these learners in an afternoon session. Policy makers need thus to assess the factors that could contribute positively as well as negatively to the introduction of double-shift schooling in our own Namibian context.

One of the issues that came out prominently in my study is the negativity surrounding the double-shift system. The government needs to publicise why they consider the double-shift system to be desirable. If they have reason to think that quality will fall then they need to explain this fact to all stakeholders. If they believe that quality may fall but that the factor of access outweighs this factor, then they need to justify this to all stakeholders too. In the Namibian context much opposition to the double-shift schooling arises because people feel that the system is only implemented in the low-income groups. In the data the reasons why the intervention is currently implemented in the former disadvantaged areas only, has become apparent. Stakeholders of the double-shift schools need to be educated in these issues for

them to have a better understanding. Namibians should stop the culture of criticising what they have, if they cannot offer better alternatives or at least support what is at their disposal in a positive way.

I would for example suggest that the older children of grade six and seven attend the afternoon session since they are more mature and most of their problems if not all could be resolved. The children in this age group are able to do their homework on their own in the morning after a good night's rest. They are also able to go to school in time.

## **6.6 Limitation of my research**

I have identified several limitations to my research:

The first major limitation is the fact that my research was a small-scale study focussing only on two double-shift schools. I interviewed two headmasters and a head of department responsible for the afternoon session. Due to this reason my research cannot be generalized but it can create a better understanding and sensitivity towards managers and their staff in these schools. It can also inform other schools operating with the same system as well as policy-makers in their planning.

Another limitation is that I employed only one data collecting technique, which is interviewing. Perhaps if I had used the interview questions in a questionnaire to all the headmasters in Windhoek responsible for double-shift schools I could have gained more information. I also did not succeed in convincing the afternoon heads of department of the one school to grant me an interview.

While analysing the data I realised that maybe one of the focus groups could have consisted of parents of these schools to enable me to triangulate my data across a broader spectrum.

Another stressful and serious limitation is the lack of relevant resource materials about the double-shift schooling as an intervention. This is one of the reasons why Mark Bray, a guru in double-shift schooling is widely cited and used in my research. It also seemed as if the Namibian Government is making use of the double-shift system as an intervention to increase the average number of classes but beyond that most policy documents rarely give any consideration to these schools. As a result I could hardly find enough documents that mention double-shift schools in Namibia.

Finally for a wider range of information I could have interviewed all the schools in Windhoek dealing with the double-shift system, but this would have been clearly inappropriate for the requirements of a half-thesis.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

Finally I would like to end the discussion by putting emphasis on policy feedback. Sterman (2005, p. 5) is of the opinion that “among the elements of dynamic complexities people find most problematic are feedback, time delays, and stocks and flows”. He (Ibid, p. 5) warns that failure to focus on feedback in policy design has critical consequences. I am convinced by this study that the time has come for the Namibian Government to stop and reflect on the implications of double-shift schooling. By doing so we will be able to analyse the unanticipated effects of our actions, effects created by our inability to understand the double-shift system we have introduced in our society. In doing so the Namibian Government will according to Sterman (2005, p. 17) “create a healthy sustainable future which requires a fundamental shift in the way we generate, learn from, and act on evidence about the delayed effects of our technologies, policies, and institutions”.



## Reference List

- Angula, N. (1990). *The national integrated education system for emergent Namibia: Draft proposals for education reform and renewal*. Windhoek: Namibia Education and Training Trust Fund.
- Avenstrup. (2004) Lecture notes, NIED: BETD workshop
- Bassey, M. (1995). *Creating education through research*. New York: Kirklington Moor Press.
- Bassey, M. (1999). *Case study research in educational settings*. Buckingham: OU Press.
- Best, J.W. & Kahn, J. V. (2006). *Research in Education*. (10<sup>th</sup> ed.). United States of America: Pearson Education Inc.
- Bray, M. (2000). *Double-shift schooling: Design and Operation for Cost-Effectiveness*. London: Commonwealth Secretariat, Marlborough House.
- Bray, M. (n.d.). New Horizons for Learning. Policy issues: Double sessions. [http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/learning\\_environments/millet\\_issue1.htm](http://www.newhorizons.org/strategies/learning_environments/millet_issue1.htm). Accessed 13 February 2003.
- Bush, T. (2003). *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management*. (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Cohen, C. (1994). *Administering education in Namibia: The colonial period to the present*. Windhoek: Namibia Scientific Society.
- Cohen, L. & Manion, L. (1994). *Research Methods in Education* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). London Routledge

- Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge
- Crozier, G. (2000). *Parents and Schools: Partners or Protagonists?* Wiltshire: Cromwell Press Ltd.
- Cunningham, R. (2000). Chaos, Complexity and the Study of Education Communities. Retrieved on June 01, 2004, from <http://www.ioe.ac.uk/ccs/conference2000/papers/tpm/papers/cunningham.html>
- Davidoff, S., & Lazarus, S. (2002). *The learning school: An organisation development approach*. Cape Town: Juta and Co, Ltd.
- De Vos, A. S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C. B., & Delport C. S. L. (2005). *Research at grass roots: For the social sciences and human service professions*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Doherty, W. J., Jacob, J., & Cutting, B. (2009). Community Engaged Parent Education: Strengthening Civic Engagement Among Parents. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies*, 58 (July 2009), 303-315
- Fullan, M. (2002). Principles as leaders in a Culture of change Paper prepared for Educational Leadership, Special Issue, May 2002
- Gay, L. R., Mills, G. E., & Airasian, P. (Eds.). (2009). *Educational Research: Competencies for analysis and Applications*. London: Pearson Education Ltd.
- Graham-Brown, S., (1993). *Education in the developing world: Conflict and crisis*. London: Longman.
- Griffith, J. (2000). Principal leadership of parent involvement. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 39 (2), 162-186.

- Hargreaves, D. H., & Hopkins, D. (1992). *The empowered school: The management and practice of development planning*. London: Cassel Educational Limited.
- Harper, W.G. (1987). *The platoon system of education as implemented in primary schools of the department of national education of South West Africa/ Namibia*. Unpublished Master's thesis. WITS, Johannesburg.
- Henning, E., Van Rensburg, W., & Smit, B. (2004). *Finding your way in qualitative research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Lloyd, C.B., Mensch, B.S., Clark, W.H., & Tawila, S.E. (2001). *Illuminating the importance of school quality in Egypt. Population brief*, 7(4), 1-3. Retrieved January 20, 2003  
[http://www.popcouncil.org/publications/popbriefs/pb7 \(4\)4.html](http://www.popcouncil.org/publications/popbriefs/pb7 (4)4.html).
- Maree, K. (Ed.). (2007). *First Steps In Research*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.
- Mason, M. (2008), *What Is Complexity Theory and What Are Its Implications for Educational Change?*. *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 40 (1), 35–49. Retrieved December 5, 2011, from doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00413.x
- McMillan, J. H., & Schumacher, S. (1997). *Research in education: A conceptual introduction*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.
- Mertens, D. M. (2005). *Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods*. California: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Ministry of Basic Education and Culture. (1993). *Toward education for all: A development brief for education, culture and training*. Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Moelanyane, P.P.R. (2004). *School management team members' perceptions of how policy change has impacted on the leadership and management of education: A case study*: Unpublished master's thesis. Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Morrison, K. (2008). *Educational Philosophy and the Challenge of Complexity Theory*. 40(1), 1-17. Retrieved December 5, 2011, from doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00394.x
- Mutorwa, J. (2004). *Access to Education 1990-2000: Reflection on the Implementation of Namibia's Policy of Towards Education for All*: Windhoek: Gamsberg Macmillan Publishers(Pty) Ltd.
- Niitembu, M. M. (2006). *Stakeholders' perceptions of parents' involvement in the governance of a Namibian rural school*. Unpublished master's thesis. Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- O'Neil, J. (2011). *On Schools as Learning Organizations: A Conversation with Peter Senge*. Retrieved 21 June, 2011, from [http://edelpage.themooseboy.com/7000/schools\\_as\\_learning\\_organizations.html](http://edelpage.themooseboy.com/7000/schools_as_learning_organizations.html)
- Schein, E. (1992). *Organisational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice Of The Learning Organization*. New York: Currency Doubleday.
- Sergiovanni, T. J. (2001) *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon Publications Ltd.

- South Africa. Department of Education. (1996) Report of the Task Team on Education Management Development. Pretoria: Government Printers
- Stake, R. (1994). Case Studies. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook in Qualitative Research* (236-247). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Sterman, J.D., Forrester, J. W. (2005). *Learning from Evidence in a Complex World*. Retrieved May 25, 2006, from [web.mit.edu/jsterman/www](http://web.mit.edu/jsterman/www)
- Terre Blanche, M. & Durrheim, K. (1999). *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for Social Sciences*. Cape Town: UCT Press.
- Udjombala, M. (2002). *An investigation of the management and leadership experiences of female school principals in the Ondangua Education Region*. Unpublished master's thesis. Rhodes University, Grahamstown.
- Van der Westhuizen, P. C., Erasmus, M., Janson, C. A., Mentz, P. J., Theron, A. M. C. (1996). *Schools as Organisations*. Pretoria: J. L. Van Schaik Publishers.
- Van Wyk, N., & Lemmer, E. (2009). *Organising Parent Involvement: In SA Schools*. Cape Town: Juta and Company Ltd.
- Winegardner, K.E. (n.d.). *The case study methods of scholarly research*. Retrieved October 1, 2001, from <http://www.tgsa.edu/online/cybrary/case.html>

## Appendix A

### Interview questions - Principals:

1. How does the double-shift system work/ operate?
2. Which name amongst the following alternatives do you prefer:
  - Platoon
  - Double-shift
  - Afternoon-session
3. What are your experiences of leading and managing a double-shift school? In other words tell me your story of being a headmaster here.
4. How do you cope with the multi-facetedness of your work: being a headmaster of two schools in one? Think about leadership functions such as
  - decision-making,
  - control,
  - planning,
  - monitoring,
  - assessment,
  - evaluation,
  - communicating information,
  - resource management and allocation,
  - technical support,
  - human resource management,
  - conflict resolution,
  - cultural issues
5. Parental involvement.

According to your experience, do you think parents fulfil and understand their roles in the School?

6. Taking the aim of the Educational Reform into consideration do you think the double-shift system is the way to go? How does the double-shift system contribute to the effectiveness of the Reform?

## **Appendix B**

### **Interview questions - Heads of Department:**

1. How does the double-shift system work/ operate?
2. Which name amongst the following alternatives do you prefer:
  - platoon
  - Double-shift
  - Afternoon-session
3. What are your experiences of leading and managing a double-shift school? In other words tell me your story of being a Head of Department here.
4. How do you cope with the multi-facetedness of your work: being a Head of Department but also performing the functions of a Headmaster? Think about leadership functions such as:
  - decision-making,
  - control,
  - planning,
  - monitoring,
  - assessment,
  - evaluation,
  - communicating information,
  - resource management and allocation,
  - technical support,
  - human resource management,
  - conflict resolution,
  - cultural issues
5. Parental involvement.

According to your experience, do you think parents fulfill and understand their roles in the School?

6. Taking the aim of the Educational Reform into consideration do you think the double-shift system is the way to go? How does the double-shift system contribute to the effectiveness of the Reform?

## **Appendix C**

### **Interview questions - Focus Group:**

1. What are your experiences of teaching in a double-shift school? In other words tell me your story of being a teacher here.
2. According to your experience, do you think parents fulfill and understand their roles in this school?
3. What are the obstacles/challenges facing parents in this School?
4. How can parents' involvement in the school be improved?
5. What are the benefits/advantages of effective parents' involvement in a school?
6. As a teacher, how is your relationship with parents in the school?
7. Can you think of some contribution/achievement made by parents in the school?
8. What can teachers do to improve parental involvement?



## Appendix D

### Permission to conduct research



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

MINISTRY OF BASIC EDUCATION, SPORT AND CULTURE

Tel: (09 264 61) 293 4311  
Fax: (09 264 61) 231367

Private Bag 13236  
Windhoek

File No.: 12/2/4/4/2

July 4, 2003

The Principal  
Khomas Region

#### **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: MS M.U. KATJAITA**

Approval is hereby granted to the researcher in the possession of this letter to carry out her research study.

This approval is subjected to:

1. Prior arrangements should be made with the school principal to ensure that all logistic are put in place.
2. Normal school programme should not be disrupted.
3. Respondents to do so on a voluntarily basis.

We are wishing the researcher best of luck and hope to be provided with the final document for reference purposes.

Thanks to the principal for your usual cooperation.

Yours faithfully

