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EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

**The perceived impact of policy change on leadership and
management: A case study of a Namibian school**

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

The transformation of education has been central to the programme of the first democratically elected government in Namibia, both because of the democratic demands for equality, equity and access, and as a means towards the wider transformation of Namibian community.

The study provides a brief history of the pre- and post-independence education policy environment in Namibia with regard to how management and leadership of schools gave rise to opportunities for the development of democratic participation. Adopting an interpretive approach, the study examines several key stakeholders' perceptions of the impact of transformation initiatives on their leadership and management thinking and practice. The sample comprised four teachers, a principal, a director, a school board member, two learners and a hostel matron.

The findings reveal that, in order to create a democratic school community, the stakeholders' role is largely a matter of opposing and transcending the contradictions, inadequacies and limitations inherent in the educational ideas, policies and practices caused by the previous Apartheid education system. There is a reasonable amount of success in the implementation process of democratic leadership and management of schools. The findings further highlight contradictory tendencies, in that the Ministry of Basic Education Sports and Culture established a uniform system of education but also entertained the principle of decentralised governance through the introduction of school based management practice incorporating the main stakeholders at local level. The data confirms a communication gap between stakeholders, lack of adequate education and training in participatory management and leadership for learners, parents, teachers and school boards, and insufficient support from the national and the regional authorities. The study concludes with some specific recommendations that might strengthen stakeholders' sense of their participation in democratic practices for longer-term cost effective

implementation to occur. This is supported by the belief that education policy change only becomes a reality once understood, owned and appreciated at local level.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The chapter that follows explains what inspired me to undertake this research. It starts by giving the historical and research context, along with my personal background, which prompted me to undertake this research. Then follows a brief discussion of my research goals and the research approach I have chosen. I also outline the structure of my study.

1.2 Historical and research context

I worked as a teacher for 14 years at primary and secondary level, from 1986 to 2000. During my teaching career I served as a Head of Department in Languages and a hostel superintendent before and after independence. I therefore experienced both the management and leadership of the 'new' (post independence) and old (pre-independence) education systems. I encountered some challenges in my role as teacher and leader in trying to implement post-independence expectations. Firstly the Apartheid education system was characterized by a top-down approach, which caused resentment. Secondly after independence, the education system encouraged inclusion and equal opportunities for all, and that posed some challenges to implementation. These new participatory leadership and management challenges have, at times, outstripped the capacity of school communities to deal with them.

Fortunately, I went abroad in 1990 and then again in 2000, first for the study of different teaching and learning techniques and later to further my studies in human resource development at postgraduate level. I gained some valuable skills and knowledge concerning democratic leadership and management styles that helped shape me into a teacher and later a programme coordinator who values participation, innovation, democracy and a bottom-up approach. I realized the importance of 'the learner-centred'

approach to teaching and participative leadership and management styles as a means of promoting democracy and participation.

Having this personal experience, I am of the opinion that the recent changes to the Namibian system of education governance and management have found teachers, learners and principals unprepared for roles which require development of shared vision, self managing schools and democratic governance, which in turn will result in creating learning organisations. School communities are caught in a web of contradictions when it comes to practising sound and democratic management and leadership practices, as they were on the receiving end of the Apartheid education system that inhibited participation and involvement of stakeholders in decision-making. They were conditioned into the use of a management paradigm that is completely at odds with the new one.

Upon my return to Namibia in the year 2000 with the introduction of the new democratic education system, I realised that the old habits of top-down decision-making and autocratic leadership had persisted long past their time. These 'old habits' inhibit clear communication of policies, and the inefficient implementation of policies further inhibits the effective democratic management of schools (Schmuck 1986; Department of Education 1996 and Smit 2001).

It is against this background that I chose to investigate how education leaders and managers had been affected by the previous education system and how the envisaged democratic education system impacted on their leadership and management styles. What transpired during my teaching career and my current working experience is that it became difficult to implement democratic leadership and management aspirations in the classroom and in the school according to the guidelines set out by the *Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training: Towards Education for All*. The autocratic and authoritarian old practices of the Apartheid system have, I believe, been unconsciously internalised and perpetuated in the new system. Morrish (1976:10) confirming this behaviour, notes that:

...people question their own occupied ability to stop existing practices or to introduce new, more effective or desirable ones. This means that as a result of Apartheid people hold fast for a long time to an original interpretation or belief concerning which they feel certain and to which they are stigmatised to believe as true.

Furthermore the study will support my work, because I am involved in a programme called the *Namibia Total Child Organisation* that has been operating in the Omaheke Region in 6 schools since 1998. The school I have chosen to study is one of these six schools. The *Namibia Total Child Organisation* facilitates empowerment and conscientiousness training and processes in line with the democratic stance of education on the request of these schools. The programmes of the *Namibia Total Child Organisation* are holistic and among others, include participatory management and leadership skills, group dynamics, school board and staff development, forum theatre, learner-centred approaches and social exclusion analysis and early childhood socialization.

Hence the study may be of value to the *Total Child* staff, the Ministry of Basic Education, Sports and Culture, Non-Governmental Organisations and school communities because it will help to understand how communities that have been exposed to the training and processes mentioned above experience the education change. It will inform them of the perceptions of the chosen school in Aminuis and how the envisaged democratic management and leadership policy has impacted on the particular school community.

The school that I have chosen is situated in a rural area called Aminius, my birthplace, in the Omaheke Region, which is about 400 kilometres from the seat of the Government, Windhoek. The school runs from Grade 1 – 7. There are 300 learners, 12 teachers, 14 hostel workers and 9 school board members. I discussed the study I intended to conduct with the Inspector and the Regional Director, who have both shown appreciation and commitment to this date.

Before I entered into any agreement with my respondents I presented my intended research goals to them. This helped them get a clear understanding of what I intended to

find out. After seeing the presentation the teachers and hostel staff became eager to participate in my study. The next section will briefly highlight my research goals.

1.3 Research goals

My research goal was to investigate how various members of the school's management team experience the democratic leadership and management position promoted by the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture. The aim was to provide the respondents a chance to share the impact of the education policy change that advocates in favour of democratic leadership and management. I aimed to uncover how they have absorbed the challenges into different aspects of management in classrooms as well as outside environments.

In order for me to achieve the research goals I had to conduct the research within a paradigm that would make it possible to generate relevant data for meaningful interpretation, and this is the theme of the next section.

1.4 Research approach

My study is conducted within the interpretive research paradigm using qualitative methodology. The outcome of my research is qualitative in nature, which means it includes a considerable amount of the perceptions of different respondents who narrated to me how they shape and relate realities in their specific context. Therefore it will be a multi-case study.

I used a qualitative research method to collect data; this included open-ended interviews, observations and document analysis. The open-ended interview could be adjusted as I went along to fit the different respondents. According to Cohen and Manion (1994), a researcher will only understand, interpret and try to give meaning to specific social settings by interacting and listening to the people exposed to those specific social settings. The interpretive paradigm renders an opportunity for me to interact with the respondents and to ask questions related to the leadership and management as informed by literature. The questions, among others, included: experiences before and after

independence; changes they have gone through as a result of the changed leadership and management styles; importance of vision or mission statements; perceptions of the importance of participation, dialogue, communication and commitment; and classroom management. I also, through observation of the school management on-site, collected information and attempted to determine whether what the respondents said was actually being practised. I studied and analysed some school documents such as, the five-year plan, the year plan, the mission statement and minutes of the meeting.

All these generated volumes of data, which I recorded on tapes for transcription. I listened to the tapes several times and even played them when I was driving my car. Afterwards, I transcribed the data from the tapes by hand on the Personal Computer. As I read through the notes, some issues and themes emerged naturally, and it was by reference to these themes that I started to arrange my data. I had to be selective, which was very challenging, because every datum was relevant and succinct. All of the respondents, except the two learners, that I interviewed had a considerable amount of experience of both education systems, because they had been in the system for a range of between 17-30 years. It is also important to mention that I interviewed some respondents in the language that they felt comfortable to discuss their lived experiences in. Therefore I had to translate some of the data into English to fulfil the requirements of this study.

I used a qualitative method to analyse the data, which was qualitative in nature, and tried to give meaning to this data by intertwining literature with my interpretations. I should admit that interpreting data requires insightful reading of data and good analytical skills, which helps with the clear representation of the information.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

In Chapter two I present an overview of management and leadership implications from the Apartheid to the democratic education system, as informed by the literature. I discuss how the Apartheid system undermined the leadership and management abilities of black Namibians and their search for democratic education. I rely heavily on Amukugo's and Freire's theses, coupled with some other schools of thought. I further define the concept

of leadership and management in the context of education and organizations. A brief discussion of the following leadership theories follows after the above definition: trait, situation and group function. In Chapter Two, I discuss democratic leadership and management, followed by the transformational and instructional leadership in the overall leadership thinking. I conclude Chapter Two by discussing the concept of schools as learning organization. Here I draw heavily from the work of Senge.

In Chapter Three I present and discuss the methodology within which I have conducted my research. I further discuss the following three research paradigms namely critical science, positivism and the interpretive paradigm. I also discuss the rationale for choosing the interpretive paradigm. I explain why and how I started with the research, the process of data collection and how it is presented and discussed. I also brief the reader on the ethical implications that I considered, as well as the limitations, and critiques, of my chosen methodology. The validity of my study is discussed in the concluding section of Chapter Three.

In Chapter Four I present the data, coupled with discussions and some schools of thought to support or critique my findings. This includes the responses from the respondents in my study. There are seven themes that emerged from the data that I collected, which form the basis of my discussions and analysis to inform my research questions and goals. These seven main themes form the structure of this chapter. Following the themes I discuss the observations I did at the school and also some document analysis.

In Chapter Five I summarize my conclusions of the main finding as informed by the seven themes that I presented and analysed in Chapter Four. Chapter Five discusses and recommends involvement and participation of communities as important catalysts to accelerate change and how this can be explored to initiate positive change of attitudes and behaviour towards democratic leadership and management in schools. Further suggestions follow on how to harness democratic leadership and management from global, national to local levels, resulting in democratic education for all. This chapter suggests some recommendations that arose from the study throughout the sections. I look

at the potential value of my study and its limitations. Finally I suggest some possible future research questions.

Chapter two, which is the literature review, follows.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Management and leadership implications of the change from Apartheid education to the 'new' democratic education system

It is necessary to address, in this literature review, how the Apartheid education system was transformed into the democratic education system, concentrating specifically on the development of leadership and managerial capacity of stakeholders.

According to Kathema (2002: 153), and Amukugo (1993: 152), the South African colonial government neglected the training of black teachers in leadership, management and administration. The teacher training programmes were fragmented, disorganized, non-uniform and uncoordinated. Many black principals were appointed based on their performances in the classrooms and, at times, on their loyalty to the system. This was a way of maintaining the Apartheid system at the expense of the blacks. It was an education system that encouraged top-down and authoritative decision-making traits (Amukugo 1993: 59).

The result of this administrative system was that the quality of education received by the black teachers and then transmitted to the community was what Freire (1972: 46-47) would have described as education that inhibits dialogue and critical reflection. Freire (1972: 121) argued that rather than thinking of education as a body of facts in a particular discipline, one should see it as means by which habits of thinking critically and creatively as well as the ability to analyse their own social or political situation, are nurtured. The understanding of this ideology may result in taking action against the oppressive elements of reality. The Apartheid system provided very little room for an ideology such as this to flourish among black school administrators.

Principals were only expected to ensure that rules and regulations, as mandated by the South African Apartheid government, were carried out and adhered to by the school community. Usually they were not equipped with managerial skills to be able to govern the schools effectively and democratically. Teacher training did not produce critical and democratic leaders, whether or not it was intended to do so, who could improvise and enhance a rich and broad understanding of what education entails (Kallaway, Kruss, Donn and Fataar 1997: 170). According to Wallace (1996: Online), "managerial abilities are variable and depend, to a certain extent, on the quality of training provided and the reliability and quality of information available."

It is evident that the colonial regime did not have a consistent quality control and as a result resources were not equally distributed in schools throughout the country. This caused resentment among teachers, learners and parents. Some black Namibians resisted this type of education and were identified as troublemakers. Those protecting their economic and social survival tried to be successful leaders but could not succeed within the racially unbalanced and unsupportive colonial system. As a teacher during that era I can bear personal testimony to the debilitating effects of unequal distribution of resources and lack of support from government.

These circumstances led to the misconception and assumption, not only of black principals being unsuccessful leaders or managers or black schools being mismanaged and chaotic in general, but also a belief held by black people that they were unable to lead and manage schools effectively (Moelanjane 2001: 13-14). This is a classic manifestation of Freire's thesis that the oppressed buys into the belief structure of the oppressor. This happens due to pragmatism; not everyone has the courage to resist the system, and so one adopts a way of thinking which allows one to do as well as possible within the framework of the oppressor's point of view. The internalisation and acceptance of the inferior status and low self-esteem, coupled with a racially based discrepancy in resources, must surely have affected the principals and the school community leadership and management capabilities. As *Towards Education for All* puts it:

The people of Namibia have undergone an era of oppression and dehumanisation that eroded the capacity to think critically and act independently. Pervasive low self-esteem replaced their ability to be innovative, democratic and to analyse their situation critically (MEC 1993 in Moelanjane 2001:20).

Ravele (1997: 11) confirms this notion (referring to South African Apartheid education) arguing that "Apartheid laws in education impaired effectiveness in the majority of schools, particularly historically black schools". This was the case in Namibia schools especially given the framework in which schools are centrally managed. This includes the underdevelopment of managers and the ignorance of the wider community on the understanding of the parameters or qualities of successful and effective schools.

Given the backdrop of dehumanisation and education disparity experienced by many countries that were subjugated, political emancipation created the context for the national government to address educational needs (Amukugo 1993: 177). Similarly, after independence, Namibia embarked upon educational reform and transformation in line with democratic principles (Kamupingene 2002: 125 and Amukugo, 1993: 198). According to Muyunda (2002: 46), at independence, the new government adopted a policy of democratic change in education by introducing the strategies of national reconciliation and compromise in curriculum renewal and implementation. This required radical and massive changes of mindset in our communities to understand democratic education, which enhanced participation in the planning and management of the school that was denied for such a long time.

The changes in education require an understanding of both the necessity for change and the benefits to be accrued. For example, there is a need to understand why the School Board should play a vital role in management and development of school, why a shared vision is essential for keeping the school community focused and involved, why a learner-centred approach was adopted and how it links to participation and involvement, which are the cornerstones of democracy. We need to answer the question concerning

why the decentralization process has become essential for the effective management of schools.

It is therefore essential to acknowledge, to re-evaluate and unlearn some of the outdated ideas about how we manage, lead and administer the education system, both nationally and locally. According to Damens (2002: 106), the management and organizational culture of the schools has changed from a top-down hierarchical approach to a participative consultative one. In classrooms, this translates into a learner-centred pedagogy. Materials for learning that were formerly centrally selected are now left to teachers and schools to decide upon. This was the beginning of a long challenging journey to accomplish the benchmark of the four major goals of education in Namibia - access, equity, quality and democracy - as stipulated in the policy document *Towards Education for All* (MEC, 1993: 32). It is also crucial to be careful about the implementation of this change because, as Tribus (1996: 69) argues, it is virtually impossible to establish new habits before the old and more recent have been reconciled. This will result in teachers resorting to the past authoritarian ways of maintaining order and discipline as a way of leading and managing. Morrish (1976: 10), in explaining this behaviour, notes that,

...people question their own occupied ability to stop existing practices or to introduce new, more effective or more desirable ones. ... People hold fast for a long time to an original interpretation or belief ... which ... they are stigmatized to believe as true.

These changes need to be well facilitated and nurtured, otherwise they will outstrip the capacity of people to deal with and manage change. In recognising the support needed during the change process, the Annual Report (1998: 9) of the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture stipulates:

To try address this situation, efforts are being made to equip primary school principals with the necessary skills to enable them to lead and manage their schools efficiently and effectively. For example, workshops focussing on school leadership and management are being organised at national level.

Although some principals are aware that they need to change the way they lead and manage, they say that they need training and guidance in developing their skills and knowledge. They feel that the Ministry of Basic Education Sport and Culture has not fulfilled its responsibilities in preparing and resourcing them. They are, however, less aware of the attitudinal shifts that they themselves have to make as individuals adopting a democratic leadership and management stance towards challenging societal norms in the way teachers and adults interact with each other and children (Kandirikirira 1999: 45).

The importance of training and education in the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes required to understand what leadership and management entail in the new education system, a system where management and administrative authority has been decentralized, cannot be overemphasized. Hoy and Miskel (1996: 385) state that effective leadership and management can play a significant role in improving school effectiveness and efficiency by developing a sound and shared vision within the national policy of democratic principles and values, relevant to the context of operation.

Since leadership and management form the basis of this study, at this juncture I need to explore these concepts more extensively.

2.2 Leadership and management defined

Leadership requires both desire and willpower. Leadership develops through a never-ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. Organisations are investing heavily in developing their intellectual capital, as they train people to think critically and creatively (Luisser and Achua 2001:40).

Effective leadership has the capacity to inspire people to higher levels of teamwork. In order to achieve this, there are a few factors or skills that one needs to know and do. These factors do not come naturally, but are acquired through work and study. The key to

optimal leadership is to continually work on, and study towards, improving leadership skills (Sergiovanni 2001:221).

Leadership, according to Brungardt (1998: Online), and Day, Harris, Hadfield, Tolley, and Beresford (2000:76), is a complex process by which a person influences others to accomplish a mission, task, or objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent. A person carries out this process by applying his or her leadership attributes (belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge, and skills). Leadership makes people want to achieve high goals and objectives. Leadership, argues De Pree (1992: Online):

...islike 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. They cultivate communication and spontaneity, creativity and diversity, and the unique potential of every person in the organisation to contribute to the success of the team.

Management, on the other hand, is more concerned with setting up systems and administering them. Management, then, is about structures needed to achieve the direction and vision. Hence it can be argued that management is an aspect of leadership, in that the ability to delegate management responsibility and roles is a leadership function. Today managers have an evolving role: Successful managers use a truly democratic form of leadership as they share the responsibility of management with employees. Managers should be able to lead as well as manage. Thus they must continue to manage and focus on leading to be successful. Figure 1.1 outlines the differences:

Management	Leadership
Is viewed as implementation of the leader's vision and changes introduced by the leaders, and the maintenance and administration of organisational infrastructure.	Is viewed as involving the articulation of organisational vision and the introduction of major organisational change.
<p>Focuses on the tasks when performing the management function of planning, organisation, and controlling.</p> <p>Planning. Establishes detailed objectives and plans for achieving plans.</p> <p>Organising and staffing. Sets up structure for employees so they do the job the way the managers want it done.</p> <p>Controlling. Monitors results against plans and takes corrective action.</p> <p>Predictable. Plans, organises and controls with consistent behaviour. Prefers stability.</p>	<p>Focuses on the interpersonal (people) leadership management function.</p> <p>Establishes directions; develops a vision and the strategies needed for its achievement.</p> <p>Innovates and allows employees to do the job the way they want, so long as they get the results that relate to the vision.</p> <p>Motivates and inspire employees to accomplish the vision in creative ways.</p> <p>Makes innovative, quick changes that are not predictable. Prefers change.</p>

Managers do things right.	Leaders do the right things.
The focus is on stability, control, competition, works, and uniformity.	The focus is change, empowerment, collaboration, people, and diversity.
The focus is on a short-term view, avoiding risks, maintaining, and imitating.	The focus is long-term view, taking risks, innovating and originating.

Figure 2.1 Management and Leadership differences. Adapted from Lussier and Achua (2001: 18)

Although the position of manager gives one the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this power does not make one a leader. . According to Hoy and Miskel (1996: 373), leadership is the key to understanding and improving organisations such as schools. In fact, contemporary definitions most often reject the idea that leadership revolves around the leader's ability, behaviours, styles or charisma. Today, scholars discuss the basic nature of leadership in terms of the "interaction" among the people involved in the process: both leaders and followers. Thus, leadership is not the work of a single person: rather it can be explained and defined as a collaborative endeavour among group members. Therefore, the essence of leadership is not the leader, but the relationship (Rost 1993 in Brungardt 1998: Online). The degree of the success of this relationship is highly influenced by the charisma of the leader. Lambert, in Sergiovanni (2001:156) refers to this combination as "constructivist leadership" and points out that it promotes learning and encourages acceptance of a collective responsibility for the success of the school. When the purpose of leadership becomes constructing meaning, facilitating learning, and developing collective responsibility, leadership is linked to the very heart of a school's culture. Rost (1993 in Brungardt 1998: Online) defines leadership as an influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes or the organisational objectives.

Leadership deals with vision, with keeping the mission in sight and with effectiveness and results. Management is concerned with establishing structures and systems to get those results. It focuses on efficiency, cost-benefit analyses, logistics, methods, procedures and policies. Leadership derives its power from values and correct principles. Management organises resources to serve the collective objectives. Most organisation and teams require a manager to "manage" ... coordinate, schedule, liaise, contact, procure ... their affairs. Thus management is needed to create orderly results. Leadership is needed to create change. It primarily involves a process of influence. Management roles need not presuppose any ability to influence. A leader, on the other hand, must have the ability to influence other team members. In fact, not all leaders are managers, and similarly, not all managers are leaders. Within team environments, 'manager' and 'leader' are simply roles taken on by members of the organisation (Ratzburg 2001: Online and Bennis in Ratzburg 2001: Online).

Schmuck (1986: 6) combined the use of leadership and management by successful principals in their administrative role by mentioning some of their leadership skills they might portray as: building trust, confidence, and respect; communicating dreams and visions; creating an urgency to act; and establishing a feeling of pulling together. These might be practised by leadership skills that articulate visions of the good school and by modelling openness to feedback from teachers. Principals might also exhibit some management skills which are: initiating collaborative planning, running effective meetings, coordinating cooperative problem solving, and monitoring follow-up on new action being implemented. Through these roles the principal might exhibit management skills that support regular data collections in the school on how things are going and by encouraging continual efforts to increase the efficiency of the school's operations. The essence is promoting democratic leadership and management practices in education. This will be discussed in the section that follows.

2.3 Democratic leadership and management practices in education

Democratic leadership involves followers and can foster a belief in democratic principles and processes, such as self-determination and participation. According to Doyle and Smith (2001: Online: no page numbers) for such leadership to develop there are three things that must be given attention:

Ownership. Problems and issues need to become a responsibility of all, with proper chances for people to share and participate.

Learning. An emphasis on learning and development is necessary so that people can share, understand and contribute to the organisation.

Sharing. Open, respectful and informed conversation is central.

Democracy is used in this study to interpret the values and principles of the Namibian constitution, the Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter on the Rights of the Child, *Towards Education for All* and their maintenance through participation and demands for accountability and transparency at all levels of society, from individual, through family, community and institutions to government.

Whether the Namibian Education system and Namibia at large achieves the values and principles of democracy depends, to a large extent, on the type of leadership that facilitates the process. This process requires leadership that facilitates and leads, while maintaining the values of democracy in education. This entails motivating the stakeholders and the creation of a platform for sharing and exposure to new ideas. It is anticipated that such a process requires and leads to democratic leadership traits, which are group-centred and lay emphasis on what happens in the group, on the solidarity of the group and on the way the members cooperate. According to Covey (1989: 239), a democratic leader leads by discussion and consultation, as this will enhance the performance of the leader's duties. A democratic leader views the group as responsible and motivated and encourages them to be creative and act on their own initiative. Here the communication is a transparent two-way process in which the team often reaches

consensus through participation. In this way it can be argued that democratic practices value people as people, and strive for the development of human potential.

Schmuck and Runkel (1985: 1) stress the importance of human potential in organisations:

Schools and colleges are social organizations. Without human collaboration and commitment, they are only wood, concrete and paper. Typically, educational improvement requires less change in the paper and more in patterns of human action.

The role of leadership is, however, crucial in change processes. Sergiovanni (2001: 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. Also, he argues that proper management is a basic requirement for all organizations if they are expected to function properly day-by-day to maintain the support of stakeholders.

According to research conducted by Grace (1995), in Europe, the Laboratory of Democratic Educational Research at the Royal Danish School of Educational Studies in Copenhagen has disseminated examples of the process of democratisation in schools. There are examples of power sharing in education to be studied in Denmark (school democratization, in Germany Oberstufen-Kolleg, Bielefeld) in France (The Villeneuve Project), in the Netherlands (The Kinkerhoek Project), in Portugal (democratic school management) and in Spain (elected head teachers).

The constant factor of discussion is a commitment to power sharing in education and upholding the idea that education is the central responsibility of a democratic community. Simons (1987: 50), arguing for greater democratic involvement, recognizes that:

It will take time and patience and planning to achieve local level or any form of democratization that has a chance of empowering the traditionally powerless both within the classroom and within the community.

Achieving some 'form of democratisation' is what is currently unfolding in the Namibian Education system, which tries to enhance democratic principles and values among the communities. As has been argued, the role of leadership is key to this process and I now turn to a brief overview of leadership thinking, culminating in transformational leadership, which seems to underpin the drive to democracy.

2.3.1 An overview of leadership theories

In this section, the three traditional leadership theories, namely 'trait' theory, 'situation' theory and 'group function' theory will be briefly introduced.

2.3.1.1 Trait theory

According to the trait theory, the leader is a particular kind of person blessed with character traits to which his or her capability as a leader can be ascribed. Supporters of this theory hold the view that leaders are leaders because they possess specific personality traits or combinations of these traits, which followers either do not possess or have in limited proportions. There are strong critics of the trait theory: for example, Joubert and Steyn (in Cawood *et al.* 1965: 37) state that the trait theory contributed relatively little knowledge of leadership because no personal characteristic could be established which would ensure leadership traits are represented. The criticism is that the skills or traits a leader portrays may be determined by a given situation. In an interpretive study such as this one, there would be little to be gained by studying 'leadership' out of the context in which it functions. In fact, one of the arguments on which the study is built is that particular kinds of leadership have been shaped by historical and political circumstances.

2.3.1.2 Situation theory

Proponents of the situation theory reject the idea that a leader is a particular kind of a person possessing a set of excellent qualities. They insist that the peculiar nature of the circumstances under which a person becomes a leader, the nature of the particular group of people he/she will lead and the particular reason for being together will determine what kind of a person the leader will become, what will be expected of him/her and what he/she will be allowed to do in his or her efforts to guide the group's activities (Doyle and Smith 2001: Online). Clearly this approach is more appropriate to this study, for reasons given above. The situation theory is a richer and more complex explanation of leadership.

2.3.1.3 Group function theory

The group function theory places emphasis on group formation and group dynamics and hence the way the leader helps the group to function effectively as a team. Leadership need not be associated with a particular person and it can be related to the actions of more than one person in a particular group. Leadership is what happens when a group works well. This theory concentrates on keeping the group together and maximising members' capabilities by availing opportunities for learning and working as a group to achieve one goal. By this it is meant that people who work together as a group, in whatever roles of authority and power they may have, will be thought of as reciprocating partners in determining what makes sense, how to adapt to change and what is the useful direction – the guiding vision (Van Velsor and McCauley 2003: 21). Group function theory is likely to be relevant to this investigation, since democratic leadership and management approaches emphasise group or team work. Group function theory strongly holds that individual leaders can no longer accomplish leadership by virtue of their authority or their own leadership capacity. Instead, individuals and groups need to carry out the leadership tasks together in a way that integrates differing perspectives and recognises

areas of interdependence and shared work (Van Velsor and McCauley 2003: 21-22). Group function theory also seems to underlie the contemporary thinking, such as is evident in “transformational leadership” which will be discussed in the next section.

2.3.1.4 Transformational leadership

According to Bass and Avolio (1994), theories about transformational leadership have emerged during the last two decades. Transformational leadership theory is defined most explicitly by Bass (1990) and is based on the idea of Burns (1978) of transactional and transformational leadership. Burns states that transactional leadership motivates followers by providing incentives in exchange for the service rendered; for example, a higher salary for an accomplished assignment. In organizations such as schools, the transactional leader recognizes what employees want from work and tries to provide them with what they want, if their performance warrants it. Put differently, transactional leaders give followers things they want in exchange for things leaders want (Hoy and Miskel 1996: 393).

Transformational leadership, by contrast, works with high order values and needs. According to Bass and Avolio (1994: 1-2), many organizations and societies at all levels have acquired transformational leadership and charismatic leaders for social movements and organizations. Krishnan (2001: 126) argues that the constant change that has become a part of life for many organizations highlights the increasing importance of transformational leadership. According to Bass and Avolio (1994: 1), transformational leadership is an inherent part of the full range of leadership that includes the highly inactive and ineffective laissez-faire leadership to the highly active and effective inspirational, visionary, and ideally, influential leadership.

Bass and Avolio (1994:28) explain:

transformational leadership is coping with change by means of setting the direction (vision), aligning people to that direction (communicating the vision), and motivating and inspiring people (moving toward the vision).

Bass (1994: 4) argues that this may lead people to do more than they originally intended and often more than they thought possible. Burns (1978: 4) says that transformational leadership occurs when a person or persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. This results in a transforming effect for both leaders and followers. According to Krishman (2001: 130), the result of transformational leadership is a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders and may convert leaders into moral agents. Leaders are truly transformational when they increase awareness of what is right, good, important, and beautiful, when they help to elevate followers' needs for achievement and self-actualisation, when they foster followers' higher moral maturity, and when they move followers to go beyond their self-interests for the good of their group, organization, or society (Bass in Wright 1996: 123).

Transformational leadership is seen when leaders:

- Stimulate interest among colleagues and followers to review their work from new perspectives

- Generate awareness of mission and vision of the team and organization

- Develop colleagues and followers to higher levels of ability and potential, and

- Motivate colleagues and followers to look beyond their own interests toward those that benefit the group (Bass and Avolio 1994:2).

According to Bass and Avolio (1994:131), effective transformational leadership involves the envisioning of goals and the development of an appropriate culture to accomplish

these goals together as a group. Effectiveness is measured by the extent to which compelling vision empowers others to excel; the extent to which meaning is found in one's work; and the extent to which individual organizations are bonded together by common commitment in a mutually rewarding symbiotic relationship (Sergiovanni 1984: 73).

Bass and Avolio (1994: 3) introduced the notion of the Four "I"s, which are ways in which transformational leaders may achieve extraordinary results:

♦ **Idealised influence.** Leaders are admired, respected, trusted and they are role models for their followers as a result of their behaviour. Consistency and reliability are prerequisites for a transformational leader. Other behaviours that transformational leaders display in applying idealized influence can be summarized as:

Demonstrating high standards of ethical and moral conduct

Sharing risks with followers in setting goals

Considering the needs of others over their own

Using power only when necessary and never for their own gain.

♦ **Inspirational motivation.** Transformational leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning and challenge to their followers' work. Team spirit is aroused. Enthusiasm and optimism are displayed. The leader creates clearly communicated expectations that followers want to meet and also demonstrates commitment to goals and shared vision. Team spirit, enthusiasm, optimism, goal commitment, and shared vision arise and coalesce within the work group or school.

♦ **Intellectual stimulation.** Transformational leaders stimulate their followers' efforts to be innovative and creative by questioning assumptions, reframing problems and approaching old situations in new ways. Transformational leaders insist on constant open examination of everything and total receptivity to change. They encourage explorations and new ways of doing things.

♦**Individualised consideration.** Transformational leaders pay special attention to each individual's needs for achievement and growth by acting as coach or mentor. Followers are helped to reach their highest potential levels. New learning opportunities are created, along with a supportive climate. Individual differences in terms of needs and desires are recognized.

It is clear that the ideals encapsulated in transformational leadership are in line with what is envisaged in bringing about truly democratic practice. This approach to leadership honours and promotes innovation of a person as a human being, and appeals to high order needs, such as norms and values. Today, however, there is considerable support for leadership that is more closely focused on task and on personal and professional development.

2.3.1.5 Instructional leadership

A study that was carried out in America with 800 teachers revealed two themes of effective instructional leadership: talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth (Blase and Blase 1999: 130).

As a result of this study in America Blase and Blase (1999: 130) describe instructional leadership as:

the integration of the tasks of direct assistance to teachers, group development, staff development, curriculum development, and action research ... a democratic developmental and transformational activity based on equality and growth ... an inquiry-oriented endeavour that encourages teacher voice ... a discursive, critical study of classroom interaction to achieve social justice.

It is clear how instructional leadership emerged from and was influenced by transformational thinking, particularly in its emphasis on 'equality', and 'social justice'.

But instructional leadership is more clearly practice-based. It draws on a participative approach to learning, essentially a learner centred approach, which among other things, strives to promote the learners' skills of interacting with new information as well as new thinking skills. Learning is a process driven inevitably by the learner; it always involves moving back and forth between the thinking and action domains. For Prawat (1993:9) the goal is a 'learning community':

the goal in a learning community is to build connections between people, socially and intellectually. Control interferes with this process; it distances people from another. Commitment strengthens interpersonal connections...building a learning community is tantamount to developing a commitment to shared learning.

This approach requires the empowerment of teachers and the implementation of school-based shared decision-making that will result in abandoning bureaucratic control and moving towards a more democratic professionalisation of teaching and education.

According to Blase and Blase (1999: 138), effective instructional leadership creates cultures of collaboration, inquiry, lifelong learning, experimentation and reflection, consistent with the principles of adult learning and an understanding of teachers' life cycles, roles and motivation.

The discussion above considers the role of leaders as consisting of the creation of a shared vision in schools, and the creation of a learning organization that is willing to learn and continue to learn as a team, both of which will be discussed in the next section.

2.4 The learning organisation

Educational management and leadership are attained, on one hand, through systematic and organised learning processes. On the other hand, learning is attained spontaneously through exposure to and interaction with the environments that promote learning. A

learned behaviour enables the individual within the organisation to execute tasks assigned to him or her in a manner accepted by norms set by the organisation. Furthermore, learning enhances the sustainability and a continuous development of organisational activities. The notion of a learning organisation thus informs much of our current thinking on management and leadership.

According to Senge (1990: 4), the rate at which organisations learn can become a sustainable source of competitiveness, and lifelong learning results if learning organisation is fully developed and maintained. Thus the learning organisation entails gaining knowledge and developing skills, which empower people to understand and act effectively within social institutions such as businesses, government departments, schools or charities. This view professes that learning is a social activity and that organisations exist through collaboration.

It is thus important for teachers and educators to nurture the concepts of the learning organisation that will create an understanding that learning is a process not a product. That is, learning aims to achieve the total personal development and promote learner's active participation in the learning process.

According to Covey (1990: 246):

a learning organisation is designed to build collaborative relationships in order to draw strength from the diverse knowledge, experience, capabilities, and ways of doing things that people and communities have and use.

Senge (1990:3) describes learning organisations as:

organisations where people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together.

It is logical therefore, to conclude that the learning organisation is an important aspect of educational management and leadership. The learning organisation enhances and sustains the cohesive culture of the organisations and educational institutions. It focuses on building the organisation and nurturing professional individual capability to learn from each other and to think creatively in order to contribute to the success of the organisation.

A learning organisation encourages its members to get actively involved and reflect on their own actions as well as the actions of others in relation to the organisational goals. This cultivates the capacity to learn and to innovate so as to mobilise and use resources efficiently (Senge 1990: 140).

It is appropriate to consider learning organisation theory in the development of democratic education systems in Namibia because, as argued in Chapter One, learners and teachers need to be given an ample opportunity to be actively involved in the process of learning instead of being relegated to the role of passive recipient of ready-made ideas. It is probably true that schools in Namibia are still mostly recipients of ready-made ideas. Schools implement curriculum and management actions based on the standard guidelines set by the ministry. The existing differences between schools in Namibia as far as adopting learning organisation behaviour is concerned may perhaps be attributed to the individual leadership style.

Watkins and Marsick (1993: Online) agree that learning organisations start with the assumption that learning is valuable, continuous and most effective when shared and that every experience is an opportunity for learning, whether a success or failure. They outline the following characteristics of learning organisations, which are relevant to the schooling environment:

- They provide continuous learning opportunities.

- They use learning to reach goals.

- They link individual performance with organisational performance.

- They foster inquiry and dialogue, making it safe for people to share and take risks.

They embrace creative tension as a source of energy and renewal.

They are continuously aware of and interact with their environment (*Ibid.* Online).

Schools in Namibia, within the framework of recent educational reforms, are urged to embrace a culture of lifelong learning as stated in *Towards Education for All* (MEC, 1993: 11). This will assist members of schools to improve their performance that will lead to the attainment of the schools' objectives. Individuals in schools are given the opportunity for self-actualisation in their search for the new knowledge. This conception further provides teachers, learners and the school management an environment conducive to experimenting with new ideas. It is also important for schools to work collaboratively with the external environment, as this creates and promotes a better working relationship. The concept of the learning organisation is central to the cluster school system recently introduced in Namibia. The cluster system promotes the concept of sharing knowledge and experiences of the successful schools within the cluster.

Senge (2000: 7-8 and 1990:5) lists five disciplines (2.4.1 - 2.4.5) that must be practised continuously by an organisation. As these provide the foundations of the learning organisation I discuss each briefly with reference to the Namibian situation.

2.4.1 Systems thinking

Systems thinking is the cornerstone of how learning organisations think about their world. According to Senge (1990: 7), systems thinking is the most important and underlies the rest. The essence of systems thinking lies in a shift of mind. It looks at the interrelationships of factors within the organisation rather than linear cause and effect as contributing factors to effective leadership and success of the institutions. Systems thinking anticipates holistic processes of change rather than snapshots. This systematic perspective further allows the leader to understand that his or her actions may produce negative or positive consequences as an outcome of those actions. Therefore school communities need to have a clear understanding of how their schools work at the structural level. The understanding of the change process in education would help school

communities to see the interdependence and interrelations of the education system and the patterns that lie behind everyday events and this will actually simplify the problems and challenges in the education change process (Corporate Leadership Council 1999: 5).

It is not surprising to note that many good and useful ideas die prematurely because the system does not allow for new ideas from the grassroots to challenge the old thinking. Furthermore, people do not even try because they believe that their ideas cannot be implemented in an education system that seems solid and settled.

According to Aronson (1996: Online), the character of systems thinking makes it extremely effective for solving difficult problems, those problems that involve complex issues, those that depend a great deal on the past or actions of others, and those stemming from ineffective coordination among those involved.

A major challenge to this approach is the understanding of where a system begins and ends. Any system is most often a subsystem of a larger system. The problem within the major system lies in setting the boundaries or parameters where the subsystems will operate. Another challenge is the capacity to interpret the systems either narrowly or broadly because this may yield complex interrelations or some dynamics relevant to the success of the school may be passed over.

The education system in Namibia was fragmented for a long time and this fragmentation is internalised. The concept of system thinking probably does not exist and needs to be cultivated among teachers and communities to enable them to participate fully in the education system building process. In so doing the school and the communities will realise that schools have linkages to many different levels of the education system. It is especially important that they establish common goals unifying and authorising the work of all those involved. Bringing this understanding to the majority of stakeholders in education still remains a task that those involved in the reform process need to address in the Namibian context.

It is common in Namibia that teachers are sent to workshops and other in service training to acquire new ideas. Rarely, however, does this approach incorporate meaningful, enduring follow-up. School communities in Namibia need professional growth, not in terms of workshops but in terms of learning both at school level and beyond the school. In the Namibian context, there is an enormous need to integrate systems thinking as a foundation for education. Changes in policies that involve the bringing of systems perspective into the mainstream of education will essentially help people to make sense of systems, and to learn how to use knowledge across various disciplinary boundaries. Schools that focus on systems thinking will thus prepare learners for a world of increasing interdependency and increasing understanding of the concept of systems thinking.

2.4.2 Personal mastery

Personal mastery is the discipline of continually clarifying and deepening our personal vision of focusing our energies of developing patience and reality objectively. The discipline of personal mastery includes a series of practices and principles (Senge 2000: 59; Corporate Leadership Council 1999: 5). These three important elements are personal vision, creative tension and commitment to truth.

Personal vision: Most people have goals and objectives, but no real sense of vision focusing on the means, not the result. The ability to focus on ultimate desires is a cornerstone of personal mastery. Vision differs from purpose. Vision is a definite picture of a desired future, while purpose is more abstract. But vision without a sense of purpose is equally futile.

Creative tension: It is unavoidable that there will be gaps between the vision and the current reality; what you want and what you have often create tension. Gaps may be discouraging but the gap is itself the source of creative energy. There are only two ways to resolve the tension between reality and the vision. Either vision pulls reality toward it, or reality pulls the vision downwards. These are the dynamics of compromise and

mediocrity. Creative people use the gap between what they want and what is to generate energy for change and remain true to their vision.

Commitment to truth. This is relentless willingness to uncover ways we limit and deceive ourselves, and a willingness to challenge the status quo, which characterise those with a high degree of mastery. Their quest for truth leads to a deepening awareness of the structures that underlie and generate events, and this awareness leads to the ability to change the structure to produce the results they seek.

The essence of the discipline of personal mastery calls on school communities to make choices. It includes taking the courageous act of choosing and picking the results and actions that they will make into their destiny (Senge, 2000:65). In the Namibian situation making choices is limited due to existing policy guidelines set by the ministry that are difficult to side step. However, it is important to acknowledge the fact that there is a difference between the private and government schools in terms of choices and changes made at the school level. People with a high level of personal mastery live in continual learning mode. They never arrive; they keep on deepening and expanding their vision. The journey is the reward.

School communities should be developed to have a high level of personal mastery for them to keep learning, to be creative, innovative, to be courageous to discover and re-discover new opportunities for learning and act proactively in the changing education system. 'Mastery' implies working finding ways forward, even within what is perceived as constraining policy.

2.4.3 Mental models

The first critical step in building a learning organisation is to encourage people to adopt different mental models that better reflect competitiveness and realities at the workplace. As individuals, school communities should understand the world and take action in it

based on built-in notions and assumptions. School communities may not be fully aware of the effect models have on our perception and behaviour, yet these models have the power to move school communities forward or hold us back. Good new ideas often do not get into practice because they conflict with deep-seated internal images of how the world or the school works. These mental models limit us to familiar ways of thinking and acting, often to our disadvantage. Mental models thus limit people's ability to change.

Managing mental models, discovering them, testing validity, and improving them can be a breakthrough concept for schools to become learning organisations in the changing environment. This is so because mental models govern how we make sense of the world and how we take action in the world. As has been noted, Namibians may perceive themselves to be struggling to shake off the burden of Apartheid, and may experience policy as constraining: this is an example of where changing the mental model may bring about the freedom to change.

Working with mental models may also bring about increased understanding of different stakeholders' perceptions of their roles. Teachers should understand the dynamics that inhibit parental participation and be able to mediate the gap that causes the tension. The tension between teachers and the parents remains a problem in many schools despite efforts taken by the Namibian government to empower parents in running and monitoring the school affairs.

2.4.4 Shared vision

It is important for every organisation to have goals and visions that become shared throughout the organisation. A genuine vision breeds excellence and learning because the people in the organisation want to pursue these goals. The answer to the question of what organisations want to create is the vision the organisation creates and shares. Shared visions create a commonality that gives a sense of purpose and coherence to all activities the organisation carries out (Senge 1990: 206).

According to Caldwell and Spinks (1992: 51), shared visions are not only limited to personal contact, they can easily incorporate multiple communities together. Learning organisations do not accommodate the concept of a vision that comes from one person or a small group of people and is imposed on the organisation.

Vision building is both an individual and a group enterprise. A common vision begins with the vision of each individual involved. At the school level, the principal provides the leadership for the creation of, and the agreement on, a common and shared vision. According to Wallace (1996: Online), the process of a shared vision has two elements: First, it requires extensive dialogue between the key stakeholders to agree on a statement of beliefs about a desired future state of the school. Second, it requires each participant to think seriously about personal beliefs regarding knowledge, learning, teaching, assessment, etc.

Senge (2000: 293) provides a shared vision process design that has the following three separate but related purposes:

First, the process addresses current problems and concerns. People experience enormous relief when the system gives voice to their concern. Second, a shared vision process must be generative: People must be able to talk about their deepest hopes and desires for their children and the community. This gives a genuine sense of hope. This provides a chance for the people concerned to recognize the source of each other's aspirations, enough to generate momentum and trust. The third, is action: The will to rebuild and reshape the school together here should be inherent. Support must be unconditional and from within.

Senge (2000: 291) points out that:

schools are partnerships, between teachers, learners, parents, legislators and community members - all by nature act autonomously. Thus, a shared vision effort in a school should bring people together to think and act, with the power they already have, about the things that are important to them.

Wallace (1996: Online) argues that parents and community leaders would support the agenda prevailing from the vision to the extent that they are involved in its development.

Key parent and community participation can be directly involved in developing the vision statements through membership of the school board at school level. Senge (2000: 26) regards the building of support as the key responsibility of the leader and the best way to do so is involve key stakeholders in the planning process right from the beginning.

According to Senge (1990: 9-10), successful education reform of any kind is driven by a broadly held and shared vision by stakeholders. A strong vision articulates clear and compelling characteristics or outcomes, and usually articulates the optimal characteristics of the learning organizations seeking to produce that change. This study, in addressing shared vision, intends to create awareness that, for the school communities to become involved in their children's education and to understand the complexity of change, they might be enlightened by having an insight into vision formulation in order to have shared ownership and meaning to the objectives of the school. Creating a shared vision may be a challenge in the Namibian context. My personal observations indicate that the creation of a vision is often regarded as an event rather than as a process.

2.4.5 Team learning

Team learning is a discipline of practices designed over time to get the members of a team thinking and acting together. They become coherent and cohesive through regular practise of doing things together: they develop the competence together. In high-functioning teams, each member is committed to continual improvement, each suspends judgement as to what is possible and removes mental limitations, each shares a vision of greatness, and the team's collective competence is far greater than any individual's. There is a clear understanding in team learning that learning situations based on groups have advantages over those involving individuals. Team members recognise and understand the system in which they operate and how they can influence it (Senge 1990: 10).

These characteristics describe the essence of a learning organisation. As with any team, the organisation is not immediately successful: it learns to be successful. Team learning is a process of aligning a team to avoid wasted energy and to create the results the members want collectively. Team learning builds on the disciplines of shared vision and personal

mastery, because talented teams are made up of talented individuals. Because the combined talent of a team is much higher than that of any of its members, teams are becoming the key learning-unit in organisations.

The discipline of team learning involves mastering the practices of dialogue and discussion. In discussion, views are presented and defended and the team searches for the best view to support decisions. Respondents in discussions often want to win and see their view prevail. While dialogue and discussions can be complementary, most teams cannot distinguish between them.

The concept of team learning is not new in Namibian schools. Many schools are organising various learning activities aiming at enhancing teaching and strengthening school management systems. Schools, in conjunction with various government bodies and NGOs, operate training activities jointly in promoting the concept of team learning.

In sum, a learning organisation is an organisation that continually learns and encourages learning among its people. It enhances the exchange of information among the people for collective and shared decisions to be the end result for the success of the organisational goals. The basic rationale for learning organisations is that in situations of rapid change only those that are flexible, adaptive and productive behaviour will excel. For this to happen, Senge (1990: 10) argues, organisations need to discover how to tap people's commitment and capacity to learn at all levels.

Dialogue, the ability and willingness to learn, to adapt and be flexible in the changing environment is a significant factor that helps schools to remain focussed during the education change process as regarded by many writers. The discipline of team learning is a crucial to this study because it aims to investigate the potential synergy of teams during the change process.

2.5 Overview

This chapter has provided a framework to guide the empirical study that follows. I have argued that the principles one would expect to find in a democratic education system are fundamental to leadership and management approaches that drive learning organisations. Transformational and instructional leadership thinking are presented as cornerstones of democratic management, since they value human dignity, self-development, values and teamwork. These views, in the chapter, also focused on the importance of shared vision, understanding systems thinking, personal mastery and mental models for creating schools as learning organisations which could lead to comprehensive school improvement.

The chapter also addressed the thought of leadership more as a way of thinking about ourselves, our colleagues, our jobs, and the nature of the community we serve. This includes altering power relationships, which comprise the realisation of the importance of sharing of power, the idea of enhancing of innovation, the benefits of stakeholders' involvement and participation, as opposed to thinking of leadership as the capacity to take charge and get things done. The chapter argued that changes in leadership are not only about how leadership is defined but also about how people practise leadership, that is, what people in workgroups, teams, and schools actually do to achieve their shared goals. What people actually do depends a lot on what they think together; ideas and definitions provide frameworks for action. Changes in leadership thus reflect changes both in action and in thinking about action as individuals and as teams.

The chapter also looked at the theoretically defined differences between leadership and management and how they can be interrelated in practice. Leadership roles and processes, in the chapter, were discussed as those that facilitate setting the direction, creating alignment, influencing and maintaining commitment in individuals and groups of people who share common work. Management is exercised and maintained through an organisational structure. Its powerbase is the legitimacy to control procedures and actions of others to be in line with institutional interests. The merging in the use of leadership

and management skills was argued, in this chapter, as leading and managing in a collaborative, dialogical, participative and democratic way.

The following chapter addresses the research methodology within which the study is conducted.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I first describe the goal of my research, then define research before discussing the underlying assumptions and beliefs of the different research paradigms. The research paradigms that I discuss are critical science, positivism and the interpretive research paradigm. This leads to a discussion of the reasons that led me to conduct my research within the interpretive research paradigm. I further look into the case study as a research method, the sample that I selected, the tools that I used to collect my data and how I analysed the data. I then discuss the ethical issues that I considered and challenges encountered before I critique the study by discussing the limitations. Finally I consider the validity of my study.

3.2 Goals of my research

The goal of my research is to investigate how members of a school community perceive, experience and understand the impact of the implementation of the new democratic management policy as opposed to the old colonial education dispensation.

This will focus on: (1) their understanding of the philosophy and nature of the management changes; (2) their experience of the nature of the education system under the previous and the new dispensation; (3) changes in their thinking about leadership and management; (4) perceived changes in their practice of leadership and management.

It is essential for me to conduct my research within a certain context that will provide me with the necessary information to answer my research question. It might be appropriate at this stage to define research from different schools of thought: the subject of the next section.

3.3 What is research?

Howard and Sharp, in Bell (1999: 2) define research simply as,

seeking through methodical process to add to one's own body of knowledge and, hopefully, to that of others, by discovery of non-trivial facts and insights.

This captures my attention because the definition stipulates clearly that research serves a particular purpose: to inform the reader and to add to existing bodies of knowledge. I tend to agree with that definition, to some extent, because in my experience, the more I read about a particular subject the more knowledgeable I become about how certain things or events happen the way they do. Bell (1999:6) further adds to the previous definition that,

research is a systematic approach that involves collection of data through interviews, questionnaires, study of documents etc., where orderly record keeping and thorough planning is essential.

It means that the researcher works steadily, thoroughly and analytically, that is with reflection. Kerlinger, in Cohen and Manion (1994:5) similarly defines research as,

...systematic, controlled, empirical and critical investigation of hypothetical propositions about the presumed relations among natural phenomena.

It can thus be summarised that research cannot be done haphazardly. It should be done systematically. The definition makes it clear that research is self-correcting. I argue that research involves creativity, experience and reasoning in its attempts to produce new knowledge and new insights. It is crucial for the researcher to be conversant with the different research paradigms before attempting to choose one. For these reasons, I briefly define the major research paradigms. Thereafter, I discuss three research paradigms in the sections which follow.

3.4 The research paradigms

Research paradigms consist of three characteristics that assist the researcher during the research process. The first characteristic is ontology, that is the nature of reality; the second is epistemology, that is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and knowledge; and the third is the methodology; how the researcher may go about discovering what the researchers believe can be known (Cantrell 1998; Bassey 1999 and Cohen *et al.* 2000). The choice of a research paradigm is influenced by the nature of the researcher's context and the research goals and questions. I conduct my research within the interpretive research paradigm, but discuss critical science and positivism to clarify my position.

3.4.1 Critical science research paradigm

According to Cantrell (1993:83, the critical science approach

emancipates people through critiques of ideologies that promote inequity and through changes in personal understanding and action that lead to transformation of self-consciousness and social conditions.

This means that events are understood within the social and economic context with emphasis on ideological critique and praxis. It is value-bound and critiques inequities. I cannot claim direct emancipatory outcomes for this research. The study is critical in orientation, and may (should) bring about new understandings among research participants and of course the reader, but change of this kind is not overtly on my agenda.

3.4.2 Positivism

Positivists, according to Cantrell (1993:83), believe that reality exists apart from the researcher and is knowable. They seek to separate values from facts and offer

explanations of reality, which are empirically verifiable. The argument of this research paradigm is that reality is value-free. Positivists argue further that from the epistemological point of view, events are based on knowable facts, real causes or simultaneous effects (Cantrell 1993). My research contains no element of positivism at all. Indeed, the study rests on the assumption that what people experience and perceive is value laden and shaped by context.

3.4.3 Interpretive paradigm

Interpretivists strongly hold that social reality is constructed, and that inquiry is a matter of offering interpretations of reality (Cantrell 1993:83). Bassey (1999: 44) asserts that

the purpose of the interpretive paradigm is to advance knowledge, describing and interpreting the phenomena of the world in an attempt to get shared meanings with others.

According to Cohen *et al.* (2000), Cantrell (1993), and Vulliamy, Lewin and Stephens (1990), interpretivists seek subjective perceptions of individuals. Interpretivists accept the inseparable bond between values and facts and attempt to understand reality, especially the behaviour of people, within a social context. The interpretive paradigm therefore seeks to uncover what people believe, and render meaning concerning their actions and intentions. This is done through dialogue and interactions with the respondents (Vulliamy *et al.* 1990: 8). According to Yin (1994:47), the interpretive paradigm is holistic and includes interpretation of information and this helps one to understand meanings constructed by individuals and groups. These inter-relations make it extremely difficult to sideline values.

3.5 Rationale for choosing the interpretive paradigm

I use an interpretive orientation to guide me in my attempt to understand a particular school community that operates in a particular setting. I want to understand how

members of the community give meaning to their daily activities. Cantrell (1993:83) stated that the interpretive paradigm provides an opportunity to understand and interpret daily occurrences and social structures as well as the meaning people give to their lived experiences. People act on the basis of the sense that they individually make of a situation, rather than to respond directly to external stimuli. My role as researcher will be to gather the respondents' perceptions and interpret the occurring patterns and, most importantly, appreciate the constructions and meanings that people place upon their experience.

My research focuses on the respondents' experiences of, and feelings about, the changes in education. Their experiences and feelings determine how these changes impact on their leadership and management styles. The changes can be experienced differently by individuals – it is not “facts” that I am after but rather different people's experience of a phenomenon. My aim is to find out what meaning they make of the phenomenon. Therefore, the interpretive approach is appropriate. In support of this view, Vulliamy *et al* (1990: 8) argue: “sociological explanation must be related to the actual ways in which groups themselves interpret their social situations”.

To accomplish this goal I use the case study method, which will allow me to interact with the selected respondents and obtain qualitative data.

3.6 Case study

I use a case study approach because it is appropriate for the individual researcher, as it gives an opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in depth within a limited period (Bell 1999:10). Stuurman, in Bassey (1999:26) defines a case study as

an investigation of an individual, group or phenomenon ... In a case study, human systems develop a characteristic wholeness of integrity and are not simply loose collection of traits.

The case study provides the necessary platform for me as a researcher to understand the case, to explain why things happen the way they do, and make recommendations from a single example. Hence this will require me to do an in-depth investigation of the interdependence of the parts and of the patterns that emerge.

Bell (1990: 10) further described a case study as “an umbrella term for a family of research methods having in common the decision to focus on inquiry around an instance”. Hence Winegardner (2001: Online) pointed out that the case study data collection process is a multi-method usually involving interviews, observations and analyses of documents. She argued that the use of multiple data sources enhances reliability, validity and comprehensibility (Winegardner 2001: Online).

3.7 The sample

The school I selected as my case was suitable in that all of the respondents, except the two learners (head girl and head boy) had experienced both pre- and post independence education systems. They were thus well placed to reflect on both education systems. They had experienced the leadership and management changes in theory and practice of both education systems. The selection of the students was based on their current experiences and being leaders of other students.

I purposefully selected and interviewed 11 respondents. They were selected chiefly by virtue of their positions of seniority or leadership within the system. Thus the regional inspector, the principal, the deputy principal, the head of department, the matron, the director, the head girl and head boy were really self-selected. Two teachers were also interviewed on the basis of their experience of both pre- and post-independence education systems.

3.8 Data collection tools

I used semi structured-interviews as my chief data source. The open-ended questions I asked encouraged in-depth discussions, because they provided respondents with an opportunity to narrate anecdotes and to give examples of their past and lived experiences. This includes their experiences of the Apartheid education system with regard to management and leadership and how the changes in education were being experienced today. Semi-structured interviews also provided an opportunity to interact dialogically with the respondents that helped to uncover what they experienced and how they gave meaning and value to their actions and intentions (Cantrell 1993: 84). I used a tape recorder and transcribed the data.

3.9 Data analysis process

The data collected were in the form of notes taken during the interviews and transcripts derived from the audiotapes. These helped me to identify the themes that formed the final basis of my data analysis. I listened to the raw data on tapes while driving before transcribing them. This helped me to become familiar with the data. When I was listening to the voices of respondents, I started to understand and become enriched. When I was transcribing I identified striking data recurring in different respondents' answers. These helped me to arrange my data into themes.

Chapter Four presents and interprets the data. The nature of qualitative data that I obtained, and the fact that I was operating within the interpretive paradigm, required me to present a descriptive and interpretive account that incorporates quotations from respondents' answers.

In order to conduct research and thereafter to present the data there are some ethical issues to be considered, which form the subject of the next section.

3.10 Ethics

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:292) argued that it is important to take note of the following ethical issues: informed consent, access and acceptance. Among other issues I gave serious thought to these ethical issues during my research.

Firstly, I arranged a meeting with the school to discuss the purpose of my study. I felt that it was necessary to involve all the teachers at the initial stage so that they could become aware of my presence at school. Therefore I presented the research to the staff and received commitment from everyone to participate. I informed the staff about the other respondents that would be involved. I discussed my research with the matron, the head boy and the head girl and they all agreed to participate. The arrangement was that they would be available after school or during break time. The inspector and the director were supportive and committed to my study from the outset and tried to accommodate me in their hectic programmes.

Bell (1999:45) recommends that “the researcher and the respondents should decide on what is meant by confidentiality and anonymity”, while Bassey (1995:74) mentions respect for democratic values as one of the ethical issues. I accommodated these recommendations as follows.

During the meetings I discussed the issues of confidentiality and anonymity and found the respondents were not concerned about anonymity as they felt they would reflect the truth of their daily lives. However it was agreed that participation was voluntarily and it was everyone’s democratic right to participate or to withdraw at any time.

Finally, I agreed to honour the school and the education regional office by providing copies of my study.

3.11 Critique of the study

Many writers argue that no method is without limitations and challenges. This is the case with the interpretive paradigm and the case study methodology. I now discuss potential limitations of my study.

3.11.1 Limitations

The concepts of democratic management, participatory leadership and management are, in theory, appropriate and easy to define but proved to be difficult to explain in practice to some respondents. I was therefore obliged to spend more time explaining the concepts than I would have liked. The extent to which this may have ‘shaped’ respondents’ answers is difficult to determine, but I would suggest that the open-endedness of my agenda was unlikely to have biased responses significantly.

Another possible weak point of case studies, according to Cohen *et al.* (2000:84), is that, “results of a case study do not render themselves to generalisation unless there is agreement of application from other readers or researchers”. Therefore, given the unique nature of each situation, it is difficult to generalise from my research project to other situations. This does not mean that the results of a case study are not necessarily applicable to a wider context. In instances where a single school is the case, Winegardner (2001: Online) refers to the generalisability of the case study as “context- naturalistic”, which means context-specific and potentially in harmony with the reader’s experience.

Another limitation, according to Cohen *et al.* (2000: 85), is that at times the researcher might overlook a pertinent issue in the understanding of the case because it is infrequent and unrepresentative. I tried to combat this by keeping an open mind and resisting the temptation to code and classify data too early, thus closing off my mind against unique responses.

3.11.2 Validity and trustworthiness

According to Bassey (1999:75), the concepts of validity and reliability developed in positivistic contexts and are not easily applicable to interpretive case studies. Citing Guba and Lincoln, Bassey (1999:75) suggests “trustworthiness ... as an alternative to reliability and validity”, a notion that relates to sound and systematic research practice. This is in line with Cohen *et al.*’s (2000: 105) comment that:

validity depends on the degree of honesty, the depth, richness and scope of the data achieved, the respondents approached, the extent of the use of different methods (triangulation) and the objectivity of the researcher.

Since I have used only one data-collection method I can obviously not claim triangulation. The validity of this study rests on the ‘honesty, depth and richness’ of the data collected, and on the extent to which the study paints a convincing picture.

The data are presented and discussed in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

I interviewed four teachers, one principal, two learners, one school board member, a matron, a director and an inspector in the Omaheke Region.

This chapter presents the data collected and discussions that include relevant literature where appropriate. I tended, in most instances, to formulate my interpretations as I went along. I have presented the respondents' actual words in blocked text throughout the written report. I have tried to include every piece of information I regarded as useful to this study. This was done due to the fact that, to a qualitative researcher, no data are trivial or unworthy of notice. Data collected by means of interviews or any other method mean very little until they are analysed and assessed. A researcher can then go some way to solving a particular problem or recommending an informed discussion of how a particular problem might be handled or argued (Bell 1999: 171 and Cantrell 1993: 96). The purpose of this study is to elicit from respondents their experiences concerning the impact of the changes in Education in Namibia and how these influence their leadership and management styles.

There are seven themes that emerged from the semi-structured interview questions. The presentation is done in the order in which they emerged from the data. Grouping of the respondents' positions will not necessarily dictate the format of the presentation and discussion of data. I have instead, at times, as many as three similar or contradicting responses in the discussion from different respondents as they emerged in the themes. This allowed me to critically reflect on and discuss similar or different experiences and deliberations of respondents while they were engaged in the same setting. The respondents involved are identified by codes and positions held at the time of the interview. The codes appear at the end of the responses. I then briefly refer to observation

notes under the themes discussed in the section. The ranks and codes of respondents are as follows:

Titles of Respondents	Codes of Respondents
Teacher	T1
Teacher	T2
Teacher	T3
Teacher	T4
Principal	P
Learner	L1
Learner	L2
Director	D
Inspector	I
Matron	M
School Board Member	SB

4.2 Presentation of data

What follows is the presentation of the respondents' perceptions and experiences of both the education systems and how they have impacted on their leadership and management styles.

4.2.1 The experiences of the respondents of the education system management before and after independence

It has already been highlighted in Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 that the education system before independence was dehumanising and prohibited dialogue and community participation. Kamupingene (2002: 143) and Amukugo (1993: 62) argued that the South African Apartheid education system used an authoritarian doctrine derived from Christian National Education. It promoted division among the people, and enforced its acceptance by authoritarian methods. During the interviews, I thought it imperative for the director to paint his own picture with regard to his experiences of both the education systems. This is what the Director (D) reflected upon:

... during the era of Apartheid, the education was not planned at regional or school level ... education was planned centrally, by the colonial administration, so teachers were not involved in any planning ... they were simply tools for teaching in the classrooms, to carry out the requirements of the curriculum or the syllabus, during those days, with very minimum input ... (D).

The deliberations of the principal below further reaffirm that the previous education system was fragmented and did not apply democratic education:

Education was fragmented according to 11 ethnic groups known as second tier governments. There was a Director, Inspector, Advisor but democracy was vague ... did not work. There was a big gap when it comes to consultation of principals with regard to policy formulation. These were only circulated for implementation ... no dialogue was allowed (P).

According to Amukugo (1993: 62), Apartheid education as such did not only undermine unity but was part and parcel of the ideology of separate development. With regard to the education system before independence, the School Board Member (SB) remarked that:

I was a member of a school board before independence but we were just told what to do and how to do ... everything was prescribed for us we had no responsibility ... we only had to listen but add nothing to decisions already taken by the principal for example the school fund or the welfare of learners and workers or teachers ... as I said we were only shadows that moved with the tree but now things have changed. There was no design of our responsibility and the power vested in us during the Apartheid Education (SB).

This opinion is in agreement with Amukugo's (1993: 62) argument that Apartheid education was an instrument of domination that prepared the black population to conform rather than question the existing order. During the Apartheid system there was neither participation nor consultation; teachers were only tools to implement, not to contribute to, any planning. Yet in terms of the National Education Act (Act No. 30 of 1980: Section 4h) ... "the active involvement of parents and communities shall be given a place in the education system". At the same time even while the Administrator General advocated for parents' and communities' participation in school governance, he was solely responsible for establishing the school committee or advisory board for every government school. Even worse, he could, whenever he deemed it necessary, dissolve any school committee or advisory board, withdraw power and duties, as well as replace members of such committees and board (Section 8). Therefore active participation of teachers, parents and the community (*let alone* the learners) in the education and school system was limited and controlled by the Administrator General. A teacher at the school explicitly described both systems as follows:

... the education system has changed dramatically ... in the past everything was just done by the government or by the inspectors themselves ... whereby the teachers were only given tasks to fulfil ... the syllabus itself was compiled by the education officers and teachers just to deliver it at school ... so we were not directly involved in the central education system itself ... today it is up to us to make the syllabus work for us ... the syllabus is just a guideline and from there you find your own way and it's easier to make choices that will influence your success. The principals are not as they were in the past ... we were afraid of the principal ... afraid to talk or give advice ... in the past they were oppressed from the top [Government] and they were there to force things on us that were coming from the top and you have to do it without discussions ... it [the Government] was like the Alpha

and the Omega ... today principals are just normal people; they also need some advice from us and we need to work together as a team ...(T4).

Bush (1995: 65) emphasises that there are two central ideas of leadership within educational political arenas. The first is that the principal is a crucial participant in the process of bargaining and negotiation. Leaders have their own values and policy objectives, which they endeavour to achieve. The second is that the principals take responsibility to uphold the feasibility of an organisation. This is achieved by building alliances to support the policies. This was the experience of the teacher above and that thinking is supported by the response of the principal (given below), a person who became a central figure in the decentralisation of decision-making and implementation processes at the school. The principal also played a pivotal role in changing the viability of the school by acquiring parental and learner support even if the central education system neglected participation. This neglect caused resentment from some stakeholders in education, evident in the principal's response:

I felt neglected from the top and at school felt like imposing even if you felt that some circulars were not relevant to teachers... I resisted the colonial regime and emphasized more consultation and more participation at national level so my management style before independence was very clear democracy not the vague one ... I wanted the parents, the teachers and the learners to have a say on the whole education system. I did not like the ethnic competition (P).

The political situation at the time and the respondent's educational background affected his career. The respondent spent some months in England furthering his education by completing a Management and Leadership Course. During this time, he became more politically aware of the injustices in society due to the policy of Apartheid. These exposures overseas shaped his political and social awareness, and turned his management and leadership philosophy towards a more participative and democratic stance. This philosophy was only allowed to come to fruition in policy documents after independence with the change of government in 1990, but they contradicted the goals and beliefs underlying the education system at the time and caused power struggles.

Examples the respondent gave of this kind of power struggle were the removal of the Afrikaans inspector, and the implementation of English as a medium of instruction before independence, in attempts to implement changes in a school and, in his own words:

For example, we resisted Afrikaans as a language of instruction as we saw it as a sign of colonising through the language. It led to the removal of the Afrikaans inspector from our circuit. We managed to implement English as a medium of instruction in 1986/7 in Otjozondjupa (P).

It seems obvious that the principal was part of a disadvantaged group and worked in a system with a policy of separate development and oppression. However without any official power and authority he managed to exercise liberal power over those who were oppressing them and this scenario certainly caused a power struggle in the Department of Education. With reference to the notion of power in transformation, Freire (1972, in Kallaway 2002: 141) stated that the oppressed could not liberate themselves without a thorough understanding of the concept of power. Schmuck and Runkel (1994: 332) argue:

Power struggles typically arise when some respondents attempt to gain advantage over others. This occurs ... when there is a conflict of interest, when resources are scarce or when opinions differ on the relative autonomy or interdependence of individuals or sub groups.

It was not only the principal who wished to oppose the Afrikaans language as medium of instruction or the decreasing of the school fund but it was the concern of the entire school community, whether literate or illiterate. Freire (1975) in, Amukugo 1993: 189 pointed out that while education can serve as an instrument for achieving critical consciousness, it should be borne in mind that consciousness is never a mere reflection upon material reality; that it forms the actual society in which we live, the way that the society is structured and how it functions – our daily objective reality. This suggests that education in itself does not act as an agent of liberation, but that our material reality, together with

our educational experience, contributes to critical consciousness. This explains why semi-illiterate and illiterate members of society can participate as active agents in the struggle for liberation.

The inspector contrasted both systems of education in Namibia by emphasising the “different representative authorities for the interim Government period ...” (I). Amukugo (1993: 78) referred to this as oppression in an invisible way. Actually, the idea behind the introduction of the eleven ethnic second tier governments in Namibia was the Apartheid policy with a new face. Dr. H. Verwoerd the former Administrator-General of Namibia during its colonial occupation by South Africa who also designed the Bantu Education System both in South Africa and Namibia spelled out the objective of the system in 1962 as follows:

When I have control of Native Education I will reform it so that Natives will be taught from childhood to realise that equality with Europeans is not for them. People who believe in equality are not desirable teachers for the Natives. Education must train and teach people in accordance with their opportunities in life, according to the spheres in which they live (Amukugo 1993: 57 and Viteli in, Kokkala 1995: 55).

Given the background of the previous Apartheid system the inspector highlighted the hypocrisy of the Apartheid:

... Yes, of course that impression those days as far as management is concerned more or less correlates with what we are concentrating on now specifically when it comes to planning ... principals had to work in close relationship with their school committee and we also offered leadership courses to principals of the schools ... what we are doing now is basically the extension of what we did at that time (I)

According to Amukugo (1993: 94), even though the ethnic groups bore responsibility for education, they had no real political power and no substantial changes occurred in the

content or quality of schooling. The Apartheid government was good at saying one thing and doing the exact opposite. This was a strategy to reproduce the old society in a new guise. So basically what the respondent might mean is that the current government recommends many of the same things the previous Apartheid government was recommending, with the difference that the current government is simply keeping its word.

Zeinchner and Dahlstrom (1999: xvi) stated that even if today there is an official political agenda for change, there is also a dominant culture of education born in the previous system, which still, to a large extent, frames the common knowledge of educators. Viteli, in Kokkala (1995: 64-65) further advised that:

In these situations, the role of education takes on even more importance, since new knowledge, new ethics, and a new reality seek to replace the old. This is one reason that those committed to more participatory and democratic cultures inside and outside schools must give serious attention to change their official knowledge by learning from those nations that have sought to overthrow their colonial oppressors.

The respondent below reflected his experience on the two education systems, before and after independence and how they were contrasting:

The management before independence was difficult ... the government was far away from the people. So the community had difficulties in meeting officials in the management of schools. The principal as well as inspectors were on their own, did not consult or involve communities. But now education is nearer to people, like there is decentralization so education is brought closer to the community. So you find it easy to meet with people in the government, who are responsible with education management (T1).

But how do the changes in the management and leadership of schools from the authoritarian Apartheid system to the democratic education system impact on the respondents' leadership and management today? This is the theme of the next section.

4.2.2 How changes to democratic education system affect and influence the respondents' leadership and management styles in schools now.

While the evidence certainly shows that democratic education does help to foster an active and knowledgeable citizenry, we can by no means conclude that a democratic education system that promotes community participation *per se* will trigger a renaissance in human development. It would be unwise to count on people generally becoming more democratic, cooperative and dedicated to the common good. It would be wiser to presuppose that people will not perform substantially better, either morally or intellectually than they do at present (Garr and Hartnett 1996: 189). Comments from respondents, often reflecting puzzlement regarding the effect of the emerging participant paradigms, follow below:

After independence, maybe our work on the hostel side, there is a difference, I don't know where this difference comes from ... does it come from the workers and those who let us work, because we were happy with our work in the past? When you are given a task to complete, you completed it with no problem, no questions, but now there are a lot of excuses. People end up quarrelling at work, you tell the person to do a certain task, she/he will tell you that she/he will do it another way, but we were always ready to work and accept any task you were given (M).

Teachers are finding it difficult to adjust to the new system. Different policies were introduced like the Rights of the Child, Learner Centred Education etc. All these were new concepts to many of the teachers that had never experienced such participatory approaches. Children as well used this opportunity of uncertainty to demand their rights without taking responsibility thereof (P).

The responses from the matron and the principal above show that the impact of the changes in education from the more controlled authoritarian leadership and management to a democratic style of leadership is not without its challenges. It is felt and experienced differently. Freedom of expression as part of democracy is, at times, misinterpreted and misused to the same extent that some people feel insecure and out of control. The response from the matron above indicates that there is some degree of appreciation but also a degree of uncertainty and lack of understanding of how to make democratic management and leadership work. It suggests that people who have been exposed to autocratic leadership and top-down decision-making hold on to it, believing that it is easier to receive instructions and carry them out than being involved in dialogue.

On a similar note Marope and Weeks (1996: 79) argue that learners have been affected by the authoritarian structures in schools and tended to be extremist in their attempt to solve problems. Rather than negotiate they demanded; and if their demands were not met they resorted to other forceful measures, causing turbulence in schools. The work of Rogers (1969) supports this finding arguing that such potentially significant shifts of change of minds from authoritarian to democratic stance are bound to create turbulence. These can be overcome with time, given continued commitment and participation by those involved.

On another note of appreciation for the new democratic education system, the School Board member, the principal and a teacher reacted as follows during the interview:

At least today we say *our* government, *our* education, *our* school, that is a change. In the Apartheid system we said: the SA government, the Apartheid education, the government school etc: that is change. The Namibian Government has given room for people, for the community to do things themselves. There is change, there is participation, involvement. For example I have seen and talked to the director and the inspector many times about school issues ... there is an open channel from us to Directors to principals ... everyone has become involved (SB).

I try to balance autocratic and democratic styles. I always listen and control the tone and the attitude of myself towards others. I am aware that the language can make or break. At times you may request and at times you may put your foot down. I am very aware that in any communication you should take a win-win approach and a two-way communication but for example if you do not at times take action where you had already agreed on rules or programmes for people to execute then your leadership and management of the school is at stake (P).

When I look at nowadays and those days, decisions were difficult ... not ours because it was on one side but not on both sides; but nowadays it is on both sides, which you can change. You can give your opinion ... nowadays we get better education because it come from all sides [structures] from the school board to the Ministry and to the parents and we take hands all together and work together (T2).

Change is less likely to occur if communities do not understand the benefits of participatory management, which result in ownership of decisions. The respondents above give an indication that they understand why there has been change and what benefits are to be accrued by the education change process and appreciate its significance. I now turn to the structures and functions that have been put in place to facilitate the education change process and how stakeholders that I interviewed are experiencing this.

4.2.3 The structures of management and leadership functions now and how these are being experienced by stakeholders

The respondents have seen structures put in place that actively involve respondents at various levels of decision-making. Examples cited include establishment of school boards, regional education offices, and forums and teachers unions. The stakeholders' presence is felt through the acquisition of their responsibility, and so a sense of ownership has developed. Two respondents clearly stated that:

What we are planning to do very recently is for school to have the school boards in terms of the education act. The ministry also is very committed as far as the implementation of the decentralisation process and the education act is concerned. It articulates structures that will create a platform where the community itself comes in. It requests that regional offices filter through to community leaders and district level to have the community involved in educational issues. The Regional Education Forum will play a very important role in motivating communities to become involved through representatives from the constituency and districts. Once again it depends on what basis information dissemination will be organised to reach all with the same impact ... by ways that will bring the parent's interest back to the school (I).

But nowadays duties are allocated to each and every teaching staff member whereby he/she is having the freedom and a room for deciding on how he/she will deal with the tasks. The government is also involved. The policy clearly states that each and every member employed by the government has a role to play within the education. When it comes to decision-making, starting from the learners this is clearly indicated by the Learners Representatives Council whereby they come together with management of the school and decide, help with issues that affect them, but comparing to the past, it was just decided for them. Teachers also have roles for deciding on things, which will benefit education like having the freedom to join unions concerning their well being. This is done directly at school or through teacher unions. But in the past this was not allowed (T3).

This change requires a crucial shift in the mindset of the stakeholders, including the leaders and managers. The *Task Team Report* (South Africa 1996: 32) recommends the necessity "of open lines of communication, participation and involvement of all stakeholders, and an atmosphere of facilitation, support, negotiation and agreement." The respondents discussed at length the importance of these qualities in a leader and related them to a democratic style of leadership. One example used by the principal in practising these characteristics was having an open door policy:

I apply an open door policy but gradually introduce them [parents] to a process of making appointments but this is quite difficult because communities have limited access to telephone to arrange meetings. I always like to sit and talk and appreciate people that come with new ideas ... I do accommodate them (P).

According to Bush (1995: 111), this open door approach by principals encourages innovation and maximises the acceptability of decisions and so creates an atmosphere where partners feel they can participate freely and without fear. However, with every change process, turbulence of this nature is inevitable and can be inferred from the principal's further comments:

We are still growing and if you grow at times you learn from a very hard departure. Teachers went through the colonial education system that inhibited dialogue from teachers, learners and the whole community. Therefore they still have a distance to walk and hills to climb.

The school board role has changed completely: in the past they were not considered as an important organ [structure] but now the Namibian Government promotes their participation in the management of the schools. The new education act pronounces their roles upfront and encourages community participation. They are expected to be advisors and decision-makers with the principal in managing the school discipline, School Development Fund and hostel management. They are the ones to share meetings and they are to understand that communication is a two way process.

However, they lack skills. Most of the parents never had a stake in the education system and therefore only depends on teachers to participate they are not forthcoming with ideas and lacks pro-activeness. They need training and development of their capacity to understand and participate more effectively and efficiently (P).

The Education Act has put strategies and structures in place and, according to the *Task Team Report* (South Africa 1996: 26); underlying these strategies is a fundamental shift that would help individuals in understanding the concept of appropriate governance in education. This fundamental shift involves the process by which authority is mediated in the system and will enable participation from the level of the national ministry to the

individual school. This can be seen from the remark by the principal cited above. This remark is supported by the *Task Team Report* (South Africa 1996: 27) as it indicated that:

...management and leadership of schools nowadays is about doing things and working with people to make things happen. It is a process to which all contribute and in which everyone in an organisation ought to be involved. Good management and leadership are essential aspects of any education service, but the central goal is the promotion of effective teaching and learning in schools.

It can also be noted that the principal, in his response, put emphasis on the need for training of school boards to fulfil their roles of effective participation. The need for training and building of capacity for School Boards and continuous education for the community on the importance of participation in their children's education cannot be overemphasised.

There seems to be a gap between the ideal of practising and implementing democratic leadership and management, required from some stakeholders, and the capacity to implement such leadership and management, the subject of the next section.

4.2.4 The perceptions of the respondents about democratic leadership

The essence of promoting democratic leadership and management in schools is best addressed in the *Development Brief for Education, Culture, and Training: Towards Education for All*, which refers to democracy as,

... our commitment to developing an education system that will play a central role in transforming our society. To teach democracy we must be democratic. And being democratic will enable us to expand access, promote equity, and raise quality (MEC 1993b: 67).

According to Chisholm (in Kallaway *et al.* 1997: 50), schools in South Africa, as in Namibia (including my own case study) today are, in general, less authoritarian and more open, relaxed and informal. Teachers, learners and parents are represented in governing bodies, and many schools have parent-teacher associations, staff committees and learners' representative councils. There has also been an increase in consultation and management structures. However, it is a debatable point whether these developments have been accompanied by any increase of understanding of democratic leadership, management and participation as a process. Two teachers acknowledged the challenge posed by the democratic stance and complained that:

It takes too long to make decisions ... it's expensive because you have to phone, convene meetings, wait for long to hear the opinions of other stakeholders before you implement ... democratic leadership is good but difficult to maintain and pursue (T4).

In principle, democratic leadership is good, good in a sense that you are having the right to oppose the management and to be part of decisions. If you think that the policy is not to the benefit of the learners or the school, you are having the right to channel your grievances up to the highest level, up to the minister concerned ... but applying democratic leadership has a long way to go, because these are long-term issues... I can even tell you today, a lot of teachers and principals [*let alone* the parents] are not at the stage or standard when it comes to democratic decision-making (T3).

According to Reimers and McGinn (1997: 42), any change cannot be ruled by decree. Change takes time. Unfortunately, too many educational reform proposals expect too much change from school communities without giving proper consideration to the new skills and understandings that must be developed for all key stakeholders to be able to participate in the intended change state. Failure to allow time for the development of these skills and understanding leads to uncertainty, frustration and resistance to change.

In addressing this uncertainty Mbeki (1998: 90) said that,

The phenomenon of uncertainty should not be imposed [internalised] on our thinking as a scarecrow that frightens us away from embarking on a journey of change. All genuine change must, by definition, produce uncertainty. But without change all social organisms atrophy and die ... absence of change will inevitably lead to destructive explosion.

Towards Education for All (MEC 1993b: 40) noticed this challenge of change to democratic leadership and management styles and pointed out that:

If Namibian adults have been raised in a democratic society, then we might simply have left it to our civic instructors to teach our young people about democratic leadership. But for nearly all this century the laws and regulations of our country have been phrased in the language of democracy and at the same time excluded most Namibians from it. Becoming independent was in large part a struggle for democracy, a struggle for all Namibians to be citizens in their own societies.

Despite the challenges, the experiences of a learner, as well as an inspector, concerning democratic leadership and decentralisation (given below) bear evidence of progress:

Yes, we do participate in some decisions, for example we were told to play at that playground outside the school, which had stones, and thorns and we were afraid that the stones would hurt us. We spoke to the teachers through the learners' council. The decision was changed, and we got another fenced and better playground (L2).

The inspector remarked that:

As I said in the past consultation was more on a formal basis, maybe on a remote control basis, where nowadays you are in a personal contact with the school communities; it's easier to get contact with the principal, with decentralisation it is easy because you have less schools to handle and to visit during the course of the year; it is possible to give more attention, advice and have close monitoring at those schools than it was in the past. In the past you were more centrally situated in your office and then on a distance basis you had to contact the principal and this was very isolating ...

nowadays ... for the principals, teachers, learners and parents themselves ... it's easier to access our regional or local offices (I).

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that decentralisation is part of a democratic process of governance. Decentralisation follows the principle that any public function that does not necessarily have to be handled by central authority can be entrusted to governmental authorities at regional level (Dobiey 2000: 12). Decentralisation as a democratic practice of leading and managing does not only affect structural processes but also brings administrative processes closer to people to enhance involvement of people in determining their own destiny through self-governance and self-determination, while addressing problems at local level (MEC 1993b: 170). In a nutshell, decentralisation strives to promote participatory democracy, empower local populations to make their own decisions and determine their own destiny (MEC 1993b: 168). Once empowered, the local people should be able to hold both their appointed and elected leaders accountable, as the teacher said:

Democratic management of the school has taken the right direction. What I have to say to the leaders is that when they are working, they should not work alone, they should work with the other, the teacher, community and learners must be part [of it]. The school principals and the ministerial cohort must not make use of their power to enforce decisions on people; we must work together with people, from the learners to the teachers. This will make it easier for the democratic leadership and management to function well. It's not like this school is theirs, they should become friends of all. Anyone should be free to contribute ideas or ask any question, without being afraid (T1).

According to Totemeyer (in National Institute for Democracy 2000: 45):

...there is a nexus between grass roots development and grass roots democracy. Democracy at central level cannot be functional and cannot become properly operative if it is not supported by democracy at grass-roots level.

The director supports this by saying:

As a Director of Education, we are expected to involve key stakeholders in education even in the preparation of any new policy to be implemented. Before the policy is actually circulated, right from the start, one has to involve the stakeholders.

Even if you come to implementation, you also have to involve the stakeholders in the implementation. Then comes the issue of policy evaluation. When it comes to evaluation you have to evaluate and give feedback to stakeholders, in order for them to see that the policy has been implemented. So in my view there is a clear need for facilitation in structures on the part of the Ministry Office and this is also expected from other implementers such as the Inspectors of Education, such as school principals, so that all these implementers have a clear role to play in order to facilitate, the democratic participation of all stakeholders (D).

However, policy (MEC 1993b: 41) argues that:

That it is not to say that every decision in a school must be subjected to participation or that the role of the youngest children will be identical to those of their parents. Rather, it is to be clear that we must work diligently and consistently to facilitate broad participation in making major decisions about our education and how we implement them.

As already discussed, the Education Act stipulates clear structures which delineate the roles of all stakeholders (learners, teachers and parents). The onus is on the people in these education structures to see to it that the policy documents are well understood shared and implemented effectively. As the policy (MEC 1993b:42) says:

Just as education is a foundation for development, so is it a foundation for democracy. Building those foundations should be a conscious process in which “all learners” are engaged.

The *Task Team Report* (South Africa 1996: 30) and Sergiovanni (1995: 151) further stated that effective school leadership promotes a conscious feeling of empowerment among stakeholders, which contributes to ownership and increased commitment to implementation. For example, when teachers feel ignored and their contribution is not valued, they perform with reduced commitment and undesirable behaviours, which leads to reduced quality of education and thus poor results. Sergiovanni (1995: 173-174) states that shared goals and purposes that lead to agreed work plans are the nerve centre of a successful school. This highlights the importance of adopting a democratic style of leadership and management in managing schools (Sibeya 2002: 143). The fruition of the democratic leadership and management of schools was best summarised by a teacher:

It has become easier for the work of the principal, because at most where you had to decide on your own or tell people about orders you have received from the top it was difficult for people to agree with you. It could have been easier, if you could have worked together, decide together and if she/he [one] is part of the decision making, he /she [one] does not oppose much. So you don't have problems because it's something that have came out of us, beside if something is forced on to someone and told to do it, there will be problems, that was the problem that was in the past (T1).

From the perspectives of the respondents and literature it is apparent that a changed education system is one where people do things differently and where they can talk about what they are doing differently, why they are doing it and with what results. Only when conversations about change construct a common vision and an enabling environment can conditions in schools begin to improve (Reimers and McGinn 1997: 190). It is to this theme of visions and mission that the next section now turns and for the purpose of this study these two concepts (mission and vision) are used interchangeably.

4.2.5 The importance of understanding the need for the school mission or vision statement

According to (Covey 1990: 139), “a mission or vision statement has to come from within the bowels of the organization”. Everyone should participate in a meaningful way - not just the top management. Once again the involvement is as important as the written product. In a learning organisation, as discussed in chapter 2, a written product is not the end of the realisation of the mission statement but people should continually reflect on and articulate what it is they really trying to achieve. It's a never ending process which involves a lot of reflection and a great deal of listening and mutual understanding. During my interviews it became apparent that the school had a mission and vision statement. Therefore, I became interested in finding out how the mission and vision statement was realised. The teacher, the inspector and the director had the following to say with regard to the mission statement:

Yes, the parents' involvement is not much, but parents have a role in school activities, but it's very weak ...this mission statement was implemented to focus on teachers at school ... Learners yes, but the problem is that the learners at our school are too young, they are not at that stage of giving an opinion, which will set up a mission statement. As they are too young, not yet matured in mind, so their contribution is weak (T1).

You see, you start with your mission statement and it's not only you alone who is responsible for that mission statement you get your school board together, because of the whole concept of the ownership of the school. Unless a school has a vision it has an endless and aimless journey. The moment when you succeed in having a mission/vision statement for the school there would be a clear plan to draw up a long term plan that will enable one to meet the objectives ... and eventually to say I ran the race I completed the race and now I can see the fruits ... This will enable you to monitor your progress on a daily routine basis which is stipulated in the daily plans. As far as Omaheke is concerned you are going to monitor whether every school is in possession of a good vision statement. A vision is an empowerment tool that sets the pace and can always be referred to when some members waiver (I).

It is actually important. I think they say you cannot know where you go if you don't have a vision, you might have the direction, but a vision puts the organisation in a focus in order to go in that direction. Any school is expected to have a clear vision statement, this is something that we encourage and ever since I started here in Gobabis as Director of Education ... the whole issue of the mission or vision statement is on top of our agenda. We encourage it, and some schools are already having clear vision and mission statement in their schools ... and even the parents can become familiar with the mission or vision statement of their schools (D).

The teacher's remark is inconsistent with the contention of Speak (2000: 9) that children also have ideas and indeed the decisions of today will affect them in future, just like they affected those who lived through the Apartheid era that denied participation. The teacher's response does however not suggest that the existence of the mission statement is as a result of involvement and collaboration of all concerned. Speak (2000: 9) further argues that "we must recognise that with responsibility come rights, the right to be consulted, and have one's views acted upon." It is of course understandable that in a primary school the learners are not perceived to have the responsibility for their education, and therefore not the right to participate. It also appears from the data that parents have been minimally involved.

The essence of collaboration during the drafting of the mission or vision is also consistent with the organisational learning perspective, which suggests, as Senge (1990: 114) argues, that until members of the organisation move beyond preoccupation with power and toward issues of shared vision and inquiry, collectively held models, increased (professional) mastery of work, they will consistently arrive at the wrong solutions to the wrong problems. This leads schools to develop negative perceptions, which negate the motivation of teachers at such schools.

The inspector's reference to a school without a vision being on an "endless and aimless journey" is significant here. Schools that continually fail to learn from their failures and

to respond effectively to challenges as a result of lack of clear vision are bound to create resentment and mistrust from parents who enrol their children at those schools. Murgatroyd and Morgan (1992: 84) share this notion and note: "without a mission the school will end up somewhere else". Senge (1990: 206) states: "a shared vision is not just an idea but also rather a force of immense power in people's hearts". Senge (*Ibid.*: 208) holds that,

Visions are exhilarating. They create the spark, the excitement that lifts an organisation out of the mundane ... A shared vision is the first step in allowing people who mistrusted each other to begin to work together. It creates common identity. In fact, an organisation's shared sense of purpose, vision, and operating values establish the most basic level of commonality ... Shared visions compel courage so naturally that people do not even realise the extent of their courage. Courage is simply doing whatever is needed in pursuit of vision.

The establishment of a shared vision statement requires a leader that sets the pace of participation and involvement of stakeholders and at the same time is able to share expertise on the process. For this reason, it can be noted that the principal's response below shows a close ownership of the setting of pace in the development of the vision:

I drafted that mission statement. When I came here I realised that you cannot operate without a vision or plan so we developed one and now we have a five-year plan. I was the mastermind but tried to involve other teachers and we tried to analyse together (P).

It is clear that this leader felt the need to 'set the pace', but perhaps did not go far enough in gaining widespread involvement. The *Task Team Report* (South Africa 1996: 29) advocates that everything is driven by the values and mission of the school and that these are developed and owned by more than just the principal, or just by a few. An effective leadership and supportive management culture can only thrive in a school where the major stakeholders feel ownership of the school's mission and ethos. It is insufficient merely to adopt a formal vision statement. The mission statement is only useful to the

extent that it provides a visible symbol of what the teachers, parents and students in the school really believe in. The *Task Team Report (Ibid. :30)* further states: "...the values that underpin the mission of the school shape the notion of quality for that school, but do not by themselves achieve that quality". This has been discussed extensively in the learning organisation concept that only by actively involving all members of the school community in the realisation of the mission one would hope to generate the kind of commitment necessary to foster continuous school improvement through continuous learning. According to Senge's learning organisation's view, for the school to accomplish these improvements, schools must cultivate and learn from the ideas and expertise of their various members. Caldwell and Spinks (1988: 174) emphasise that school leadership can play a significant role in improving the school's efficiency by developing good and shared visions, missions and goals for their schools.

Here are some important questions to consider when developing a mission or vision:

Are communities and schools' purpose and vision grounded in the reality of the change?

Have stakeholders been involved in the development of the vision?

Is the vision communicated efficiently and effectively?

Do communities and schools have a sense of urgency about bringing change into their schools (*Ibid: 175*)

These questions will lead us into the next section, which will look at how the respondents viewed the importance of participation of parents in their children's education.

4.2.6 Importance of participation and involvement of parents through school boards as a strategy of community mobilisation

According to the Human Rights Watch Report (2001: Online), the Southern African region faces a number of challenges in the educational field, which South Africa, [just like Namibia], cannot escape. In recent years, South Africa [and Namibia] has seen an exponential growth in the number of school dropouts, indiscipline and teenage

pregnancies. All these happen against the backdrop of systems that provide poor assistance for parental support and involvement in the education of their children. The report mentions that the situation in rural areas is worse than it is in the urban centres. This situation is classic and relevant to Namibia, as the school board member whom I interviewed in line with the South African situation explained:

... we still have rivers to cross and we need bridges and experts to teach us to build them. I mean we lack the skills, the understanding of the bigger picture. You know I am not educated and working with educated people is at times complicated. So at least you must be well informed. For example, we have the power to manage but lack the resources and the capacity to assist us in fulfilling our duties. For example, how regularly can I attend meetings and monitor progress of our decisions, for example teachers, learners or workers' absenteeism if I do not visit the school regularly? How can I monitor food rationing if I am not there? So we are given a very important task that can help the schools to do better and improve academically and socially but without the means to accomplish them. In mobilizing the communities to take part in the education of their children we try to use different platforms in order to help parents come closer to school but we need financial assistant to travel to meet our objectives. At times we use cattle auctions, funerals and community meetings as platforms to disseminate education information (SB).

Though the Government of the Republic of Namibia has recognized these problems, efforts to address them are constrained by a number of factors, including resources and distances. And even if resources were available, the particular issues involved need situation-specific focuses. Despite these challenges, The National Education Policy Investigation (1993:166) emphasises that: "school boards must be guaranteed meaningful access to resources, knowledge and skills if their authority is to have any substance that will secure their commitment to have meaning to the change process". Morrish (1996: 78) further argues that it is not easy getting the commitment of the communities before they realise the envisaged benefits of participation at any level. Hence the truism commonly held by teachers that "...our parents are still behind, their interest in school activities of children is weak; they don't come, even if you call them, but our aim is to work together" (T1)... should be revisited and re-evaluated from that perspective. Reluctance of community participation in bottom-up approaches cannot be overlooked

and is sometimes caused by political, economic and power-related influences that exist within the community. However Fowler (1997: 107-108) pointed out that sometimes, when the complaint is made that bottom-up approaches do not work, most often participation has not seriously been tried, or else has been wrongly facilitated. On the other hand, he further argued that it should be noted that the more intensive the top-down approach is practised, the higher the resistance, leading to less transformation, which will be more costly in the longer term. The following responses from the teacher and the matron indicate that there still exists a gap and discontent between those at the top and those at the bottom:

At the moment I am really going to say how much the Government helps out in rural areas because the Government works at the slow pace. The Regional office is there with the director but the functions and the resources are just overlooked ... what the Government does is to put it in writing but when it come to practice, I don't think so... I think Total Child, the local NGO, is more active in practising what the Government is putting in writing (T4).

Those people [the inspector and director] are far away, they do not meet with people. That is one of the obstacles. We just hear that the inspector has come and than he goes into the office of the principal or supervisor. The inspector does not come to us to look for our problems. That is one of the little problems; we must also meet these people (M).

However, the same matron could easily and positively narrate that the local school board had become helpful and closer to them than the director and inspector:

Early in the school board, we just saw people. We just saw people that we do not know; we just saw people holding meetings at school but now we came to realize what the school board looks like, the meeting is held and you are told that this is the school board. When you have problems, you can bring them to the school board, maybe you are having a problem between workers ... these things must come to the school board. Maybe there are cases of learners and teachers at the school. In the past those things were just there, you knew nothing about it but now they are brought closer to us,

so that we can know that there are cases of learners or teachers who have done this and this, but most things we hear them now. School boards are the mouthpiece of the parents; they help the school and parents to relate to each other (M).

The foregoing response from the matron indicates a mind shift of understanding of the roles of boards and the importance of participation of the school community. *Towards Education for All* also acknowledged that:

The most important influences on the quality of our education and many of the most significant resources for improving it are located at the local level ... in practice, it is our teachers, along with learners and their parents, who make our schools and other education programmes what they are (Ministry of Education and Culture 1993b :168).

It may be interesting to assess, by means of qualitative judgments in the next section from the respondents and some discussion supported by literature, just how the changes in education are affecting classroom management and whether learners' participation, previously neglected by enforcing rote learning, is being nurtured and enhanced or not.

4.2.7 How the change to learner-centred education has affected classroom management and learners' participation in schools after independence

As a Namibian, I attended school before our independence and went through the then Bantu Education system. In those days the authority of the teachers and school was final: it was not questioned. Even when I was a teacher, a Head of Department in the eighties and nineties, the situation was still the same. But it started to change in the late nineties. The change was, and is still, characterised by complaints from the teachers and parents alike that learners are misbehaving, have lost interest in education, are noisy during classes and disrupt lessons. It may be assumed that the authority of the school and the teacher are now being questioned or learners are demanding their rights without upholding the responsibilities that go with the rights. Doubt, uncertainty, and criticism on the part of the learner have crept in, making classroom management more complex for

the teachers who are used to teacher-centred education and thus struggle to accommodate learners' participation and inquiring attitudes.

It may be argued that this less positive development has to do with an uncomfortable attitudinal shift which the teachers have to make in the new way they are obliged to deal with learners. It may be argued that individualism, adopting children's rights, learner-centred approaches and the democratic stance are beginning to undo outmoded societal norms and legacies. It may be that some of the teachers are irrationally relating the new democratic stance of education, which is leading to consequential empowerment of learners, to their own loss of power (Moelanjane 2001: 53). These questions are part of what prompted me to conduct this study in order to find out how the changes to learner-centred education have impacted on classroom management and learner participation in schools.

In Namibia, during the period of Apartheid education, the content of teaching was imposed as the only content acceptable in the classroom. Not only did the continued policing of the school subject inspectors reinforce this through the debilitating backwash influence of the national matriculation examinations, but the subject materials available and the type of teaching style promoted also augmented it. Teachers were trained according to the principles of fundamental pedagogy, whereby the teacher was regarded as the mature adult authority whose responsibility was to form and mould immature students, who were consequently regarded by many teachers as passive recipients of knowledge. Apartheid education also commanded its own teacher education system to indoctrinate the entire nation with the complete Apartheid status quo (Amukugo 1993: 152). The end result, within this framework of teacher education, was to create a class of unreflective and obedient teachers. Critical thought was discouraged and the Bible used to justify subservience and compliance. This is a tradition which demands compliance and fear of authority and which also breeds an unquestioning attitude (Mayumbelo and Nyambe in Zeichner and Dahlstrom 1999: 64). A teacher during the interview confirmed that

...before independence education was different. When you are in class, the conduct with the learners has changed... In the early years ... the teacher stood in front of the class, taught them a lesson and started asking them questions, so the learners only had a part when it comes to answering questions (T1).

Now active participation is encouraged through learner-centred education. Active participation in learner-centred education improves the learners' ability to verbally communicate in a shared manner. This is related to the ability to critique, analyse and evaluate a given situation and reach conclusions in an independent fashion. Teachers today are given the opportunity to select the teaching content and appropriate classroom management styles (MEC 1993b: 76). A teacher who encountered this experience said that:

In subjects we [teachers and learners] are not working according to the textbook alone but we [teachers and learners] have to look for more information about the topic...and should find different ways to come with relevant and interesting teaching ways to get participation ... (T4)

The responsibility to introduce participatory learning styles lies with both students and teachers. Learners are liable to baulk at the ideal answers and decide to argue and defend rather than accept them as definite facts. The fact is that rote learning which focuses merely on memorising and rote repetition has never guaranteed critical thinking, creativity, participation and proactive citizens (MEC 1993b: 119). It can thus be noted, from the two responses below, that in general there is an appreciation of the change from the teacher-centred approach to a new learner-centred approach:

After independence they introduced a new teaching approach, which is called learner-centred approach. When you start entering the class getting to the learners, you are not the only one giving the lesson, but you try to get advice from the learners. But in most cases we underestimate the learners, thinking that they don't know, but while they know and if you get something out of the learner, he/she does not forget because that thing came out of him/her. But if you tell him/her lesson he/she forgets easily. I think

this new education system - the learner-centred approach - is very helpful (T2).

... it is a clear encouragement, that learners should be involved in their own learning ... now, facilitation of teaching and learning here, in my understanding, can be found in the policy document ... which encourages learner-centred education ... this was not the case before independence ... (D).

Deming, in Hicks (1992: 6) stresses that only participation without fear should encourage individuals to have the freedom to fail. An education system which encourages freedom to fail and then a chance to learn from failures, is one in which we gain our biggest lessons. The responses of the teacher and the director resonates with the thinking of Deming that involving children in how the lessons develop beyond the planning stage is an integral part of their taking ownership of the learning process. Students become co-managers of their education. The class becomes participatory and accepts responsibility for learning. Knowledge becomes something sought after by students instead of something done to them. Senge, in Chapter 2 in this study, also emphasised that learning should maximise opportunities of learning and the willingness to take risks and challenges during the learning process, whereby failure and success should be viewed responsibly as a learning process. The learning process should allow for new ideas from the learners to concur the old thinking. A teacher shares this notion by saying that, "but if in most cases we underestimate the learners' [ability]... and if you get something out of the learner, she/he does not forget easily" (T2). It might be worth concluding that a learner-centred approach, just like experiential learning, can be best summarized by the famous African proverb: 'Tell me and I will forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me, and I will understand.'

The concern for children calls for leadership and participation that extends beyond the traditional sectors and government and has witnessed a mushrooming in mass-action based people's movements to articulate the needs of children across the globe. There is a greater recognition all over the world that the power to move forward and gain the respect of other nations depends on the individual country's effort to address the vestiges

of the repressive social, economic and political regimes that undermine children's participation and involvement. In Namibia, the opportunity to address the situation of children could not be better, when considering the developments of the past few years in favour of children, among which is the ratification of several global children's charters and conventions including the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1990, the setting up of a Women and Child Welfare Ministry in Namibia and the introduction of learner-centred education. Learner-centred education, according to the learner I interviewed, "allows you [Learners] to participate so that you cannot be afraid, so that you can contribute in class or tell your problem which you have without fear" (L1).

This confirms and re-affirms in one single sentence the significance of nurturing learners' potential for the betterment of the situation of the world's most precious resource: the children. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12: 1 UNICEF 1990: 50) has been carefully worded and explicitly urges

governments to assure to the child who is capable of forming her or his own views to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with age and the maturity of the child.

The focus on survival, education, protection, development and participation has been strongly emphasized (UNICEF 1990). It may be interesting to hear how positively the principal in the school of my study regards the importance of children's participation:

The process of consultation and participation is very open. The more children are involved at the early age, the more you find they also start to understand and involve others; the more they start to understand the importance of consultation and involvement. But the degree of involvement differs (P).

According to Viteli (in Kokkala 1995: 63), "even very young children have a store of rich experiences". A major challenge is to plan participation and involvement at a level

appropriate to the level of learners with whom you are working. If the level of participation expected from them is too high, then learners may turn away in frustration. If the level is too low, the learners are not challenged. This has considerable impact on the learning of the learner in the longer term. The quality of participation today has repercussions with regard to the relevance of the knowledge, skills and attitudes the learner acquires for life after school, not only for employment but also to the insertion of the young people into the cultural, social and political contexts of the society that surrounds them (Viteli, in Kokkala 1995 and Carr and Hartnett 1996: 190).

The actual process of classroom instruction and classroom climate that promotes participation presents another set of influences on learning or participation of the learner. Classroom management, learner and teacher social interactions, the quantity and quality of instruction, academic interactions and assessment constitute the main instructional factors that impact on the learning or participation of learners inside or outside the classroom (Schmuck and Runkel 1994). For instance, effective classroom management influences the learning of the learner by increasing learner engagement, decreasing disruptive behaviours and enabling teachers to make efficient use of different teaching materials and styles that incorporate different learning styles of learners. This comes about when teachers employ common classroom management strategies of group learning, role-playing, and experiential learning, to mention but a few, and providing a climate conducive to dialogical opportunities. Moreover, this type of education is aimed at the continuous growth and expansion of the learner and teacher social interactions that promote participative learning, which is really concerned with fostering students' sense of belonging, mutual understanding and to remain faithful to their own self image: a form of practical reasoning that requires collective deliberation aimed at realising the common good (Carr and Hartnett 1996: 65).

According to Cairney (1995: 525), the response to the dilemma of facilitating these changes in teaching and learning is not to keep telling teachers that they need to change but rather to engage them in social evolutionary development by providing opportunities and alternative programmes that will challenge existing education practices. Freire (in

Moelanjane 2001: 66) argues that programmes like these need to offer a revolution in thinking to shred ingrained attitudes that have become automatic and therefore resist change and remain fixed to outmoded systems. This means that the elements of education management development should be interrelated and a participatory holistic approach of training and education which will impact on the management of classrooms and schools should be advocated. This will discourage the view of management training as being the privilege of the few (South Africa 1996: 33). Consequently, this participatory holistic approach of training and education will change the school culture for the stakeholders to understand why education transformation is needed and what benefits are to be accrued. The learning organisation concept argues that changes in the culture of the school will be necessary to counter the norms of teachers' isolation and curricular fragmentation. These changes will promote collaborative learning among administrators, teachers, parents, and others involved in the school enterprise.

4.3 Observation

Although observation was not intended to be a data source for this study, I did observe several interesting tendencies during my visit to the school, and I report them here to strengthen my findings.

During my visits to the school I witnessed a collegial atmosphere characterized by freedom of speech. I became exposed to an environment where the teachers, the principal, and the institution workers were truly communicating on different issues and assisting each other with tasks unconditionally. Learners' entrance to the staff room was not restricted as was the case in the past days, when learners were just not welcome in the staff room. When I spoke to a learner, she was appreciative of the school, because corporal punishment had become minimal and the teachers listened to their ideas in some cases. She complained that: "...the problem is food we do not get enough so at times we go hungry to classes ... when the prefects ask the teachers or the matrons they say ... it's the Government..." This seems to be a persistent problem which surfaced during my study, but I was unable to properly address this issue, due to the limitations imposed by the scope of my study.

Another observation was the freedom of movement, especially of the teachers. I observed that some teachers were moving freely to the staff room or visiting their houses. When speaking to one teacher about this she said that:

...well at times it's our free periods or we go to the staff room or our houses for a quick collection of some important teaching material ... yes it does not look good ...it gives a bad impression but what can one do ... almost everyone is doing it ...

This has compounded misunderstandings and misconceptions that become consolidated into mistrust and attribution of blame between stakeholders. As a parent responded

well that is the trend at our schools, not only this one ... I think it's new fashion ... Who is responsible to see that this is not happening anyway ... it's a waste of time and our money at some of these schools ...

Judging from the conflicting responses of the teacher and the parent the developments above should be regarded as a natural development, professionally, for a school to become less rigorous – as overhead control weakens, professional people behave more independently. Movement of teachers should not be viewed in a negative light. If teachers are doing their work they can surely decide whether they need to fetch something at home or not – this is their professional right. The old-fashioned, bureaucratic model of schools restricted teachers' movements but nowadays teachers need to be treated professionally as long as they carry the aspirations of their schools upfront that would lead to collective institutional achievement. It is this shift of mind that stakeholders in education need to make in order to promote conducive and stress free working environment for teachers. Hence *Towards Education for All* (MEC 1993b: 29) pointed out that, “although there is a broad agreement on the general direction our education system should develop ... There remain problems of communication and suspicion about motives”

The concept of the learning organisation discussed in Chapter 2 encourages the suspension of suspicions and hidden agendas and rather promotes the notion of working together collegially which would help to overcome the risks of isolation and to create a global climate to help us see and to listen.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

Given the backdrop provided in this study through literature and the case study, it seems apparent that, thirteen years from independence, the transition to democracy remains complex, as the Apartheid education system was a system designed to work its way negatively into the roots of all levels of educational, socio-economical and political organisation. Additionally, it systematically infiltrated the minds of many Namibians, regardless of their colour, ethnicity or political allegiances (Melber 1996). However, in my view, Apartheid is rarely understood to be the cause of the failure of the many attempts at educational or economic development.

If the earlier discussion of the problematic legacy of Apartheid in the education system in my study is valid, then what seems to challenge the educational reform policies and changes to take place might be hidden in the concepts of knowledge of involvement and participation as the basic principles of democracy. Rogers (1969), Ronnby (1995) and Fowler (1997) viewed these concepts as enabling the communities to understand and value the reasons for change: ownership of change. One might wonder whether the process of planning and implementation of policies in fact inhibits participation and involvement. What actions can be taken then to implement changes in education? Is it true that civil servants uphold power on the one hand and see people as recipients on the other? Is it not the right time for gradual decentralisation of power and responsibilities to promote creativity and self-governance that was inhibited for so long? It is with these frequently-asked questions in mind that my study was conducted to elicit views from stakeholders on how they experience education policy change and what they perceive to be factors that inhibit or enhance educational reform process.

The question still remains as to how long institutions will be reluctant to change. Attention has been drawn in Chapter Four to the manner in which educational structures have been part of the struggle for a new Namibia by forming a platform on which

tensions and opportunities (such as hierarchical power, ethnicity, uncertainty, acquisition of skills and knowledge) have been and are being played out.

My research goal was expressed as follows:

... to investigate how various members of the school's management team experience the democratic leadership and management position promoted by the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture. The aim was to provide the respondents a chance to share the impact of the education policy change that advocates in favour of democratic leadership and management. I aimed to uncover how they have absorbed the challenges into different aspects of management in classrooms as well as outside environments (page 4).

It is appropriate that I now consider to what extent this study has addressed these goals, and provided answers to the underlying research questions. I begin by summarising my chief findings, and then using the points raised as the basis of my concluding argument.

The main findings of this study may be summarised as follows:

- Respondents show significant awareness of changes that have come about as a result of education policy. Chief developments noted are the moves towards greater involvement, decentralisation and participation (see 4.2.1). These tendencies are in line with principles of democratic management, and the fact they are clearly articulated by the respondents is an indication of a measure of success in bringing about change.
- However, perceptions of changes of this nature do not necessarily articulate with changed practice. Section 4.2.2 reports how respondents at all levels are finding democratic and participate practices challenging. This suggests that transforming authoritarian mindsets is a complex and long-term process.
- Section 4.2.3 focused on the gap between the ideal and the reality of practising democratic and participative management. The need for appropriate training was highlighted, including the community.

- Respondents also identified specific problems arising from democratic management practices. These range from the fact that they are time-consuming, to the idea of lack of readiness (section 4.2.4). The painfulness and stressful nature of change emerged as a major inhibitor of change.
- Decentralisation was identified as a major pre-requisite or characteristic of democratic management (section 4.2.4), and empowerment emerged as a positive consequence.
- Section 4.2.5 revealed that the central notion of joint vision building seems not to have taken root at this school. Parents' involvement was weak, and the principal seemed to have taken virtually sole responsibility for the task. This conflicts with literature and research (as reported earlier) emphasising the importance of joint visioning.
- The involvement of parents is presented as problematic in Section 4.2.6. There seem to be several restraining factors.
- The role of the school board emerges as a partial success story (section 4.2.6) as the Matron recounts her positive experiences of using the school board as sounding boards.
- Finally, new policy has brought about changes in classroom practice, but these too are a complex mix of positive and negative. Poor behaviour and absenteeism are seen as consequences of learner-centred approach; but the approach is also extolled for shifting the responsibility for learning away from teachers to where it belongs, with the learners (section 4.2.7).

These points are the basis for these summative comments.

5.1.1 Building the Namibian education reality today on the experiences of yesteryear

The reality of Namibia, as it is in South Africa, as a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and multi-racial society, part of the African continent, should be a new starting point for implementation of policies during this change period. This according to Greenstein, in Kallaway *et al.* (1997: 136) will certainly require an awareness of the “contradictions and discontinuities in Namibian society” and the diversity caused by hierarchy, ethnicity and other factors. In this framework, cultural and ethnic diversity would not be seen as an obstacle but a fundamental and necessary ingredient to accelerate educational change.

This homage of diversity is at times undermined, although the claim is made that all differences concur to the project of nation building, through the consciousness of common history, common values and common interests between stakeholders.

Greenstein, in Kallaway *et al.* (1997: 37) stated:

If this is indeed the case, and nation building is a process that emerges and develops as an inevitable response to social and political contradictions, then the contradictions and discontinuities identified earlier in the study can be no more than temporary aberrations destined to be brushed aside by history.

In this spirit the Namibian Deputy Minister of Education, Buddy Wentworth, stated:

It is in the area of school and class management and school discipline that some of our most challenging reforms must be made. To maintain the highest effectiveness of teaching and learning while at the same time finding ways to protect the dignity and rights of all citizens – students, teachers, parents and administrators – is truly nation building in its most basic sense (MEC 1993: b).

The study assumes the position that if only positive elements of difference (those which do not preserve or reproduce the legacy of domination and oppression) are to be accommodated in order to enrich and consolidate dialogue, commonness and unity, only then can lasting educational change as the result of organizational learning of the different interdependence components of the education system be achieved. Dialogue through meaningful participation is necessary for constructive reflections to occur. The latter idea will be discussed in the next section.

5.1.2 How dialogical opportunities enhance self-reflection

Organisations, such as schools, cannot learn from their experiences if people who work in them have no information about the results of their actions, clarity about their purpose, or the possibility to explore alternatives to achieve these shared objectives. My study provided this opportunity of dialogical reflection of their actions and has, to some extent enabled the respondents to assess their experiences and to explore alternatives. Respondents in my study included teachers, learners, matrons, parents, inspectors and directors of education, because if research is to inform change it has to enable these stakeholders of the education process to change their understanding, their attitudes, their skills and their motivations through self-critical reflection. Change will not only come about because high level administrators can pull policy levers that will induce change in an educational machinery, but because a number of people are given opportunities to reflect on progress and constraints. This will make them understand their progress, as well as identify constraints and enable them to want to do things differently (Reimers and McGinn 1997).

It should be understood that education reforms are more than the intentions of senior leaders sitting in the top of the bureaucracy, and they are more than regulations and norms. Live education reforms are made possible by middle-level administrators, by principals, by teachers, by children; their understandings, attitudes, and competencies are the foundation of meaningful change in the school (most importantly the classroom).

There should be clear interaction between the different levels from top to the bottom in education and this should be systematic and synergetic because what each level does is reinforced or resisted by the levels on top or at the bottom. Each of these levels of stakeholders represents a system which is interlocked with the other systems. Each defines the degrees of freedom of the other and has their degrees of freedom defined by the rest. Literature drawn from Senge in Chapter Two under the section titled 'learning organisation with specific reference to systems thinking' and the findings of this research in Chapter Four, have explored this notion.

It is my sincere belief that future planning will be, to some extent, a natural consequence of this research. Smit (2001: 69) argued that education change becomes alive when every teacher begins a systematic reflection about conditions, which influence their own learning, and begins to organize actions to improve these conditions. The emphasis here is on teams, rather than individuals, as the target of organizational change. The assumption generated from my study is that it takes several persons, together, to accept and support each other in a change effort. This is consistent with the view that any given answer to the problem can always be improved, and that only open dialogue allows people to deal with complex problems during change (Senge 1990: 12, 13). This has been discussed in Chapter Two and Three and affirmed by lived experiences of the respondents in Chapter Four.

From this study it can be argued that qualitative judgment is an essential ingredient in policy reform and that such judgment is best informed by consultation through research with all key stakeholders. From this perspective, inspectors and directors absorb the function of research, like this one, as they apply their methods to the construction of knowledge in order to obtain a better understanding of the changes they are trying to implement, the challenges they face and the alternatives available.

It is my hope that the outcome of my research and analysis should become part of a collective public debate and part of the shared sets of meaning for stakeholders who act within the education system. Managers should adopt the approach of the experimental

scientist and use this research to assess impact of new change initiatives. This means those goals, such as education for democracy, the encouragement of civic participation, accountability and responsibility, should be revamped, conceptualised and implemented against these and other related research findings and recommendations.

5.1.3 Potential benefits of participation and some strategies for reaching local communities

There are a number of imperatives that the study recommends as preferences when taking into consideration the current changes in educational management policy.

There has to be ownership of any reform strategy. Ownership in education change involves participation by respondents, not objects. Communities are brought into any reform programmes at an early stage. Participation improves the quality of the knowledge, generally to inform options, because it incorporates the experiences and perceptions of people who are directly affected by policies. If we assume that collective choices should reflect the value preferences of those affected, then democratic participation of those affected by choices is necessary to celebrate value preferences.

The study clearly revealed in Chapter Four that the respondents had some basic understanding of the direction of the new education system as a result of the bottom-up approach that was used, though much still needs to be done. The Namibian Government needs to be made aware that the importance of participation and ownership is beginning to receive some attention, as revealed by the study. An example of this, of which the author bears testimony, is the process of community participation through the Presidential Commission on Education that was fundamental to the formulation of the new Namibian Education Act.

If this study is to recommend issues from local experiences relating to policy, approaches may need to be highlighted. This study would certainly advocate for commitment and

understanding of a bottom-up approach in executing educational policies and their provision, bearing in mind the following potential benefits:

- As local communities get consulted on opinions leading to policy design, they simultaneously acquire respect for the policy, based on the initial stake they had in it.
- Their day-to-day experiences feed back quickly to single out areas where policies should be adjusted.
- Empowerment. The degree to which central government is involved in operationalising the policy declines as local communities take charge. Indirectly, this can also cut down on expenditure of government as responsibility shifts to the people.
- Partnership. Developing workable relationships and partnerships with local expertise such as non-governmental organisations, as well as community-based organisations, will reduce further government expenditures to help the government implement education programmes (Moelanjane 2001).

Botes and van Rensburgh (2000), Tribus (1996) and Morrish (1976) share similar sentiments that the extent to which the societies are engaged and involved in the initial policy formulation processes might determine the societies' commitment and determination to make them a success. On the other hand, it has to be borne in mind that such a state of affairs may only be realised through:

- Continued joint efforts, mutual understanding and support between the likes of the Non-Governmental Organisations, Community-Based Organisations, Business people, the ministry and institutionalised community set-ups.
- Optimum resource allocation, especially in training local capacities of, for example, school board members, matrons, learner representative councils, and

other related local bodies that might keep the link with the ministry on regular basis and develop the other stakeholders' capacities in turn.

- Gradual introduction of Organisational Development by piloting through the Cluster System in schools that will help facilitate the education change process through, for example, Survey, Data and Feedback (or any other situation-specific intervention strategy) to assist in different issues of management and leadership.
- Constant monitoring and evaluation of progress among parties, based on clearly set and agreed objectives.
- Encouragement of interdependent relationships as well as independent autonomy of each stakeholder in such relationships.

The list is endless. But unless such reinforcements are in place, bottom-up approaches can remain a dream. Moreover, this may have to be viewed from the transformation perspective as opposed to being a 'big bang' change. That said, remnants of the old top-down approaches could still be experienced for a while (Moelanjane 2001).

5.1.4 Some challenges of bottom-up approaches

However, it should be borne in mind that there are many challenges to the participatory approach to creating knowledge to support education policy change. The first drawback highlighted by the study is that participation takes time and is costly, while the scarcity of resources poses another challenge. On the other hand, it is true that, while the participatory approach is costly in the analysis and design stage, if we view the policy formulation as extending into implementation, participation may substantially decrease cost at the latter stage, because communities will have a sense of ownership and this leads to less resistance and more efficient transformation during this stage. Greater participation in the early stages equates to better-planned action. "Measure twice and cut once", as the North African says. It has already been established through the literature review in my study in Chapter Two that, at times, when the complaint is made that

bottom up or participatory approaches do not work, most often participation has not seriously been tried, or else has been wrongly facilitated.

The study also revealed in Chapter Four that there is a lack of expertise on the part of the educational researchers and planners in the participatory methodologies. For example, from the study, children and female teachers are not forthcoming in discussions and this is influenced by taboos in some traditions and cultural practices that prohibit women and children from participating in public debates. This is another major difficulty with participatory approaches in education policy dialogue: that many organisational, social and political cultures are not supportive of participation and democracy. The reflection at some management levels of schools, regional offices or national level is highly male-dominated and participatory approaches for women and children represent a major cultural challenge.

A major finding for me was also the fact that various stakeholders are uneasy with real participative management approaches, and almost preferred the outdated top-down approach.

5.1.5 Thinking globally and acting locally

Successful modern societies and organisations, as in my study, suggest the elimination of artificial hierarchies in social organization, in the organization and management of the work, and in the way which learning is organized. They require citizens, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or political background, with a strong foundation of general education; the desire and the ability to continue to learn; to adapt to and develop new knowledge skills and attitudes; the ability to take responsibility for personal and organizational performance, to set and achieve high standards, and to work cooperatively (Christie, in Kallaway *et al.* 1997; Senge 1990).

The experience of other countries could therefore also be of great help in this regard. However, to copy mechanically models from widely different circumstances may not yield good results, unless the local conditions are taken into account. Avoiding the pitfalls of uncritically borrowing on the one hand and insularity on the other, the education stakeholders should indeed continue to look for creative ways of meshing the specificity of the Namibian condition with the quest for universally acknowledged educational achievements (Christie, in Kallaway, Kruss, Donn, and Fataar 1997).

Developments mentioned above may create a new mindset, for example at school level (teachers) and most probably at Teacher Training Colleges. This could lead to teachers developing constructive outlooks in education, which do not solely depend on textbooks and subject knowledge. Such a mindset should enable teachers to incorporate global (total) education ethos, drawing from day-to-day practical and local experience (Mamman 2000 and Van der Mescht 2002).

5.1.6 Potential value of my research

The study has shown that, in order to create a democratic school community, the stakeholders' role is now largely a matter of opposing and transcending the contradictions, inadequacies and limitations inherent in the educational ideas, policies and practices caused by the previous Apartheid education system.

Also the study revealed the need for the present generation to become actively engaged in this struggle for democratic education, in order for the future generations to have a chance of receiving an education which does not just fit them into the culture and traditions of an aristocratic or noble society that is dead and gone, but empowers them to participate in, and contribute to, the kind of open, pluralistic and democratic society appropriate to the world of the twenty first century, a notion also held by Garr and Hartnett (1996). This may be achieved when learners and teachers see democracy through learner-centred education, which relates the rights and obligations of both

learners and teachers to involvement in the production of knowledge; which broadens this involvement beyond the doors of the classroom into the community and helps to develop schools into learning communities where sharing and cooperation are part of the institutional culture (Swarts *et al.* 1999).

The ideal of the government and other stakeholders to create and prepare a Namibian personality with an understanding of the pillars of democratic leadership in schools emerges throughout the data. Some of the pillars are accountability, human dignity, appreciation of diversity, achievement of quality and equity, openness, the rule of law, sense of self respect and respect for others and things, tolerance and thankfulness – for the future citizens of the country: the children (Diescho 2000, in Namibia Institute for Democracy and Oxfam 2000). These pillars are incorporated in democratic life as well as the belief in the worth and dignity of individuals and the value of their expressions and participation.

Reverence for freedom of expression, intelligence and inquiry as well as the responsibility of individuals to explore and choose collaboratively, causes a joint practical action and a belief that people can make a difference. All these form part of the fabric of democratic life and have consistently been articulated throughout the study. This notion is in line with the broader international democratic ideals and the values of a society, which is espoused by Oxfam (Oxfam 2000). Hence it can be argued that what the study has contributed is of potential value and may inform those who will be exposed to it.

5.1.7 Limitations of my study

One of the limitations of my study is that it only represents a drop in the ocean, which is only one school in Namibia and in particular in the Omaheke Region. Hence, the views and analyses are the author's, supported by consulted literature reviews, while no claims are made to any generalisations of these findings. Generalisable findings would require a large-scale ethnographic study eliciting data for generalization from a much broader scope.

The study was also conducted and driven by academic principles and hence had many limitations, such as time limitations and the scope of research, and this limited my continuous curiosity to find more and more data from respondents and literature. There is no doubt that additional data sources (such as observation and document analysis) would strengthen my findings, but were beyond the scope of the study.

Despite these limitations what this study has revealed at the level of the school can be of significant value to the respondents, as well as those in a similar situation.

5.1.8 General recommendations for further studies

It emerged quite strongly in my study that institutions are required to manage and lead differently. I recommend that future studies should give attention on a larger scale to how the change programmes aimed at governmental or and institutional levels spill over into the change practices of local communities by answering the following questions:

- What mechanisms are in place to regulate regular communication and feedbacks at all levels that help evaluate the progress and the impact of change in policies from the Apartheid authoritarian leadership to the Namibian democratic and participatory approach?

- Are these institutions easy or difficult to manage and lead in the post-Apartheid environment?
- How do government, institution and local community understand and contribute to democratic leadership and management of schools?
- What will be the role of good leadership and how will that be developed?
- Who evaluates/researches who, what, when and how? And is this evaluation turned into practical working alternatives at government, school and community level?

Taking cognizance of these questions and the outcome of this study may trigger the recognition that education systems are not machines, but arenas of conflict. This study revealed, for me, that what education systems do, and reflected how people construct their perceptions, meaning and roles regarding those systems. It is thus indisputable that researchers should facilitate and generate the development of new knowledge that would help schools to become learning organisations. The basic requirements for such changes to happen are democratic dialogue, empowerment, time, persistence and patience.

Finally, the discussions and suggestions that emerged from this study are not panaceas, quick fixes, or magic bullets that will lead to successful education policy changes everywhere, but are preferences to the alternatives that culminated from the study (Reinners and McGuinn 1997). Indeed, a study of this kind, just like history, can help people to judge the events of the previous episode objectively, in order to create clear understanding of the present and an accurate forecast of the future: there is more to it than collecting and analysing data. Moreover, everything in the present may be traced to something in the past, which, in its turn, does not spring upon the world out of nowhere. As the ancients knew, nothing comes from nothing.

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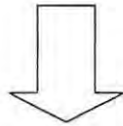
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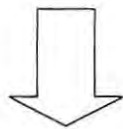
APPENDIX – INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Overview of Interview

Your experience of the education system (before and after independence)



Experience of the Management and governance changes within the education system (before and after independence)



How have the changes affected your Management & Leadership practices today, after independence? (i.e. What are you doing now that is different?)

Interview Schedules

Principal

Part A - Before Independence

What position(s) did you hold prior to Independence?

In your position, can you describe the planning, consultation and decision-making processes that you were involved in from the top structures?

How did you feel about your involvement or lack of it of this process?

Were there any constraints (political, financial, HR) in this system? If so, what were they?

Did you involve others in the processes at your level?

What was the reaction from other stakeholders in the process? (eg. was there resistance, acceptance, rejection....)

How did the realities of these processes and reactions shape your management/leadership practices?

Can you give some examples?

How did you regard your management styles?

How did you see your role in *'the whole system'*?

Did you feel your role was a valuable one?

Did you feel you were valued?

Was there a role for parents, students, community members and other stakeholders in the system? If so:

What role did they play?

Where in the system were they?

In your opinion, was it effective?

Part B - After Independence

What have been or is your position(s) since Independence?

With Independence comes policy change. In your position do you have a *sense of real change* in terms of leadership and management practices as a result of these policy changes?

Can you give examples?

Which policies promote participatory leadership and inclusion of stakeholders?

How well are they received and understood by all stakeholders? Examples?

To what extent have your management and leadership practices been challenged to change, as a result of the transformations in the education system? What are doing now that is different?

Can you give examples?

How have these changes affected the realities of the primary stakeholders in the education system? (School management, teachers, communities and students)

Have these changes had a positive or negative effect on the stakeholders at this level?

How does this effect the way you manage and lead in the new system? eg. decision-making processes at different levels in the system; enhancing a shared vision and participation of stakeholders?

Has the daily language that you use as a manager/leader changed over the years?

Ideally, Who do you think should have a role in the system?

What role do you think they should play?

Where in the system do you see their rôle?

How do the changes of management and leadership policies affect the governance running of the school? (e.g. Performance of teachers and learners, Participation of parents and stakeholders).

What is your personal vision in terms of management and leadership within the education system in Namibia?

Do you need any strong leadership and expertise to implement the education policies?

Is there any support provided in terms of training, workshops and seminar to become conversant with the leadership and management policies promoted by *Towards Education for All*? Examples?

Teachers and Learners

How long have you been a teachers/learner in general at this school?

What is your position at the school now?

Can you describe the education system before independence with regard to participation and involvement during policy formulation and its implementation?

Do you think that teachers/learners or parents were involved?

If not do you think that they could have been involved or not? (Why)

Does the principal/government involve you or not for any decisions by then?

How do you feel?

Do the parents have more decision making power than before?

Can you narrate the impact of the changes of management policies in the education system?

How do you perceive the changes in the education system today? Good or Bad? Was it better or bad? Give Examples

Do you think you are more involved now during the policy formulation and its implementation

Do you have a mission statement at your school?

How did you arrive at your mission statement?

Who was involved and why? Do all stakeholders share and understand it?

How do you arrive at the school and hostel rules?

Do you think the Ministry is providing enough support to the school management with regard to the implementation of *Towards Education for All*?

What do you understand from the *Towards Education for All* with regard to the involvement, participation and accountability as concepts of democratic education?

Is it reflected on the ground by principals, teachers and learners?

Do you think the management is applying these concepts correctly?

Does the Ministry consult you during policy formulation? How do you feel because you?

The Director

What was your position before independence?

How was the education system before independence in terms of leadership and management practices?

Can you give examples?

In your position, can you describe the planning, consultation and decision-making processes that you were involved in from the top structures?

How did you feel about your involvement or lack of it of this process?

Were there any constraints (political, financial, Human Resources) in this system? If so, what were they?

Did you involve others in the processes at your level?

What was the reaction from other stakeholders in the process? (eg. was there resistance, acceptance, rejection....)

How did the realities of these processes and reactions shape your management/leadership practices?

Can you give some examples?

How did you regard your management styles by then?

How did you see your role in '*the whole system*'?

Did you feel your role was a valuable one?

Did you feel you were valued?

Was there a role for parents, students, community members and other stakeholders in the system? If so:

What role did they play?

Where in the system were they?

In your opinion, was it effective?

What has been or is your position(s) since Independence?

With Independence comes policy change. In your position do you have a *sense of real change* in terms of leadership and management practices as a result of these policy changes?

Can you give examples?

Which policies promote participatory leadership and inclusion of stakeholders?

How well are they received and understood by all stakeholders? Examples?

To what extent have your management and leadership practices been challenged to change, as a result of the transformations in the education system?

Can you give examples?

How have these changes affected the realities of the primary stakeholders in the education system? (School management, teachers, communities and students)

Have these changes had a positive or negative effect on the stakeholders at this level?

How does this effect the way you manage and lead in the new system? eg. decision-making processes at different levels in the system; enhancing a shared vision and participation of stakeholders?

Has the daily language that you use as a manager/leader changed over the years?

Ideally, Who do you think should have a role in the system?

What role do you think they should play?

Where in the system do you see their role?

How do the changes of management and leadership policies affect the governance running of Ministry? (e.g.)

Performance of teachers and learners.

Participation of parents and stakeholders.

What is your personal vision in terms of management and leadership within the education system in Namibia?

Do you need any strong leadership and expertise to implement the education policies?

Is there any support provided in terms of training, workshops and seminar to become conversant with the leadership and management policies promoted by *Towards Education for All* and the new education act? (e.g.)

Board Members

How long have you been a school board?

How did you see the role of school board in the management of the school before independence?

Do you think School Board were involved in the decision making process about their role in the school governance than now? Why? Give examples.

How do you see and understand your role now after independence? Give some of the roles. Do you exercise these power invested in you?

Do you think the role of School Board has changed with the change of the education system? How has it changed? (Give examples)

Do you think the changes that have been taking place since independence have been well implemented?

How do you deal with matters at the school? For example staff employment, school discipline,

How do you find the involvement of parents and children during the decision making process in the past and now?

Is there any support in terms of training, workshops and seminars to help you understand the leadership and management policies in the new education system?

Do you think the school is being run more participative and inclusive?

What do you recommend in general?

