

**THE IDENTIFICATION OF SHORTCOMINGS IN THE MANAGERIAL SKILLS OF  
PRINCIPALS IN THE LEJWELEPUTSWA EDUCATION DISTRICT: A CRITICAL  
ANALYSIS**

BY

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this research study:

**THE IDENTIFICATION OF SHORTCOMINGS IN THE MANAGERIAL SKILLS  
OF PRINCIPALS IN THE LEJWELEPUTSWA EDUCATION DISTRICT: A  
CRITICAL ANALYSIS**

is my own independent work, that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

.....  
**EBEN ENGELBRECHT**

.....  
**DATE**

## **ABSTRACT**

Education in South Africa has undergone numerous changes in recent years, all of which contributed to an increase in the workload of educators and school leaders. New ideologies that impacted on the education system, concurred with democratisation. The implementation of new curricula which were underpinned by Outcomes Based Education (OBE), led to many changes. The decentralisation of authority to school-based management increased the responsibilities of principals.

Principals are not necessarily professionally equipped to perform their task. The workload of school principals is becoming increasingly unmanageable and many principals, especially those in secondary schools, are constrained by insufficient time as well as a proper understanding of their leadership task. They frequently encounter situations which demand from them new and improved skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to cope with the wide range of demands and changes.

The primary purpose of this study was to determine the level of managerial and leadership skills of principals in selected secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa education district. Fifteen schools were selected as a convenient sample from all secondary schools. Of these, five were classified as dysfunctional (grade 12 pass rate of below 50%), five were "at risk" schools (pass rate between 50 and 60%) and five "passing" schools. From the literature review, nineteen critical management and leadership skills were identified and used as basis for the self-compiled questionnaire. The data collected from the questionnaire was used to determine the management competencies of principals. In turn, this information was analysed to determine the training needs of principals which were subsequently compared to the contents of the new Advanced Certificate in School Management and Leadership (ACE:SML). The aim of this comparison was to determine whether the ACE: SML responded adequately to the identified training needs of principals.

The data revealed the substantial inadequacy of managerial and leadership skills of principals in the Lejweleputswa Education District. It was further found that the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Management and Leadership did not cover all essential skills identified in this study. The recommendation was made that a comprehensive needs analysis which covers the entire country, is done and to subsequently use the results it yields to implement corrective measures. It was also recommended that the ACE: SML be revised to include the development of all identified skills.

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACE: SL	Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership
AIDS	Acquired Immunity Deficiency Syndrome
COLTS	Culture of Learning, Teaching and Services
DOE	Department of Education
ELRC	Education Labour Relations Council
HDE	Higher Diploma in Education
HOD	Head of Department
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
INSET	In Service Training
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LMX	Leader Member Exchange
LOTL	Language of Teaching and Learning
LTSM	Learning and Teaching Support Material
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
PL	Post Level
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers Union
SAOU	Suid-Afrikaanse Onderwys Unie
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SBM	School Based Management
SDT	School Development Team
SGB	School Governing Body
SMGD	School Management and Governance Developer
SMT	School Management Team

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## CHAPTER 1

### PROBLEM STATEMENT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 1.1 INTRODUCTION

Principals need appropriate management skills to manage their schools effectively. In order to accomplish this, they need to be properly trained and skilled in school management Botha (2006:341) believes that the leadership role of the school principal is the main contributing factor to a successful relationship between school-based management and school improvement. It is therefore an essential component of successful school-based management. He found that schools that fared best with the implementation of school based management and school improvement efforts were those with school principals who were not only empowered to make decisions, but were also **trained** for their new roles as well as provided with sufficient information to guide their decision-making, (ibid.:351-2).

The workload of school principals is becoming increasingly unmanageable and many principals, especially those in secondary schools, don't find time to attend to their leadership task nor do they fully comprehend it (Botha, 2004:240). They are faced with situations which require new and improved skills, knowledge and attitudes in order to cope with the wide range of demands and changes. (Mestry & Grobler, 2004:127). In an ever-changing world, it would be unrealistic to expect all principals to be professionally equipped for their management task. It is expected of competent principals to manage increasingly complex and wide ranging tasks.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

At present appointment to the position of school principal requires a three year professional qualification together with some teaching experience (Free State Department of Education, 2009:4). Consequently most educators with some teaching experience qualify. Applicants' management skills and/or potential are underemphasized when appointments are made. It seems that the selection methods employed when principals are appointed are not successful in identifying those competencies crucial to the position (Masitsa, 2005:174).

A close look at the National Department of Education's Strategic plan 2007 – 2011 (South Africa, Department of Education, 2007:42) reveals their acknowledgement of the training needs of principals. According to this plan an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) was proposed as a compulsory qualification for entry level as principal. The field test was implemented in 2007 and ran over a period of two years. According to Mr Lunga Ngqengelele, ministerial spokesperson for the National Department of Education, approximately 600 educators and principals have enrolled for this course at five different universities throughout South Africa (Essop, 2007:4). This entry-level qualification will be declared policy in the year 2011. In addition to this, the Department of Education is negotiating a draft policy on the importance of the development of leadership skills particularly aimed at principals (Essop, 2007:4).

It is clear that the National Ministry recognizes the current and future need for skills development for school leaders. The ACE: SL will become compulsory for both deputy principals and principals as from 2011 (SAOU News Flash, 2007:3). The implication is that only candidates who are qualified in the ACE: SL or an equivalent qualification will be appointed to these management positions.

## **1.3 PURPOSE OF STUDY**

This study endeavours to evaluate the current position of principals with regard to their competencies in comparison with the competencies they should possess according to the current literature in the field of school management. Shortcomings (if any) will be highlighted for inclusion in a potential training programme. These competencies (shortcomings) will subsequently be critically viewed against the learning outcomes of the proposed Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL).

#### **1.4 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Many schools are dysfunctional as a result of poor or ineffective school management (Botha, 2006; Mestry & Grobler, 2004; Niemann, Brazelle, De Wet, Heyns, Niemann, Van Staden: 2002). Ndimande (2006:143) adds that most public schools in the townships of South Africa have remained poorly funded and have become dysfunctional as a result. Having analysed the results of the annual Senior Certificate examination of 2005, Taylor (2006:1) concluded that close to 80% of South African schools are essentially dysfunctional.

It seems that principals are appointed without being properly trained for the roles they should fulfil and the tasks they are expected to perform. It goes without saying that ineffective leadership inevitably leads to the dysfunctionality of schools. Shortcomings in the skills make-up of principals should be identified and addressed.

#### **1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following research questions emanate from the preceding problem statement:

- What are the managerial needs (shortcomings) of school principals in the Free State province?

- To what extent are school principals in the Free State Province professionally equipped for their task as managers and leaders of their schools?
- What are the major challenges for the training of school principals in the Free State Province?
- How effective and relevant is the envisaged ACE: SL in addressing the management needs of principals?

## **1.6 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

The general aim of the study is to establish management capacity of secondary school principals in the Free State Province with the view of reducing the number of dysfunctional schools and empowering principals to perform their tasks efficiently and with confidence.

In order to address the research questions stated above, the following objectives should be realised by this study:

To determine for the Lejweleputswa Education District in the Free State Province<sup>1</sup>:

- the specific management needs of secondary school principals;
- the extent to which school principals are professionally equipped for their management task;
- the major training challenges for principals, and
- the training needs as identified in this study in comparison to the proposed training program (ACE: SL) of the Department of Education.

1. The relevance of the findings goes beyond this district.

## **1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

### **1.7.1 Dysfunctional schools**

Rampa (2005:14) defines dysfunctional schools as schools that have no resilience in the sense that they cannot survive/recover from or recuperate after the extreme adversity caused by the apartheid legacy. Many other factors may also be cause to dysfunctionality of schools. Common features of dysfunctional schools include disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals, educators and learners which are often the result of the absence of governing bodies and school management teams as well as acting principals with no authority - all of which ultimately contribute to the poor functioning of schools and the breakdown of a culture of learning, teaching and services.

### **1.7.2 Leadership**

Mestry and Grobler (2004: 137) define leadership as the ability to get others involved in solving problems; the ability to recognize when a group requires direction and to effectively interact with a group to guide them to accomplish a task. Kouzes and Posner (2001:30) define leadership as the "art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations." They distinguish leadership from authority by explaining that people in positions of authority can get other people to do something because of the power they wield, while leaders mobilise others to want to act because of their credibility.

### **1.7.3 Management**

The literature abounds with definitions of management, for example the definition by Mondy, Sharplin and Flippo (1986:9): "Management is the process of getting things done through the actions of others". For the purpose of this study, however, the following definition is more descriptive: Management is the implementation of school policies and the efficient and effective maintenance of the school's current activities (Bush & Glover, 2003:10).

### **1.7.4 Management training**

Masitsa (2005:177-178) distinguishes between two types of management training:

- Traditional training: Practising principals enrol for management courses at universities or colleges. The content of these training programmes is determined primarily by the training institutions. After completion the trainees receive degrees or certificates.
- Competency-based training: This training focuses on the specific skills essential for effective job performance, i.e. the skills in which managers should develop competence in order to be effective. It is offered at workshops and seminars.

### **1.7.5 Skills**

Masitsa (2005:176) defines the term *skills* as the abilities required to perform a task effectively.

## **1.8 PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF RELEVANT LITERATURE**

In order to train and develop principals effectively, it is essential to determine which competencies are crucial to the management of schools (Mestry & Grobler, 2004:127). Tsoka and Mathibe (2001:327-8) believe that skills can be acquired through the process of learning. According to them a person's education provides him/her with knowledge and skills which in turn build his/her confidence.

The key problem in this research is to identify those management skills essential to the successful management of schools. In a study involving township schools, Masitsa (2005:180-181) identified a range of school management skills and ranked them from most important to least important as follows:

- Financial management skills;
- Personnel evaluation and development skills;
- Conflict- and problem-solving skills;

- Administrative or technical skills;
- Skills in coping with stress;
- Skills in managing change;
- Skills in motivating educators and learners;
- Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues;
- Personnel selection skills;
- Instructional leadership skills;
- Organisational skills;
- Planning skills;
- Effective leadership skills;
- Human relations skills; and
- Skills in the induction of personnel.

An effective leader may possess a large number of these attributes. Squelch and Lemmer (1994:3) identify the following attributes of a good leader: self-confidence, flexibility, consistency, objectivity, a high level of motivation, good communication skills, the ability to make difficult decisions and problem-solving skills. These attributes should, however, be put into practice in the leadership roles and tasks of the principal as a school manager. They distinguish the following roles of the school principal (ibid.:11-13):

- Educator: First and foremost a principal should be an educator so that he/she understands the needs of both the educator and the child, enabling him to manage the instructional programme effectively.
- Manager: The principal should be able to plan, organise and supervise as well as motivate educators to perform their duties.
- Communicator: Good communication skills are essential for effective management.
- Evaluator: The principal should continuously monitor and evaluate school processes.
- Counsellor: A principal should have the ability to counsel staff, learners and parents on a variety of matters.
- Public relations: The principal should be able to communicate the school's policy and educational aims to the school community as a whole.

In addition to the above roles, Mestry and Grobler (2004:130) identify the following crucial competencies without which the principal cannot function:

- Manage and deploy school resources effectively;
- Allocate school accommodation appropriately;
- Ensure satisfactory standards of maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities;
- Organise staff development at school;
- Guide curriculum implementation and change; and
- Manage the development appraisal system, whole school evaluation and the integrated quality management system (IQMS).

These roles and functions of the school manager are undoubtedly very extensive and they pose a huge challenge to the principal.

Squelch and Lemmer (1994:4) further assert that effective leadership is not achieved by chance; it has to be developed. It is a generally accepted principle that an individual's behaviour can be modified. In the classroom setting the educator is assumed to modify learner behaviour whilst in the context of school management, it is assumed that the educational leader is able to influence staff behaviour. The underlying principle is that acceptable behaviour can be strengthened, whilst deviant behaviour can be eliminated. (Boehm cited in Niemann, Brazelle, De Wet, Heyns, & Van Staden, 2002:132). The modification of behaviour has implications for management training and development. If the behaviour of the (educational) leader or potential leader could be modified by training inputs, this might lead to changes in certain behavioural dimensions (Niemann *et al*, 2002:132). In order to develop the educational leader or potential educational leader, it is essential to gauge the current level of skills of the educational leader.

According to Mestry and Grobler (2004:132–133) the following competencies were found to be lacking in principals:

- Chairing of meetings

- Handling of bigger classes
- Controlling discipline
- Interpreting multilingual instructions
- Dealing with higher learner/educator ratios
- Establishment of effective communication
- Conflict management skills
- Resolving dispute resolutions and
- Handling labour issues

Parker and Day (in Steyn, 2005:266) discuss the following functions performed by instructional leaders:

- Defining and communicating a clear mission, goals and objectives: The formulation of a mission, goals and objectives in collaboration with the staff is essential to the realisation of effective teaching and learning. A clear sense of mission is particularly important when schools are undergoing change.
- Managing curriculum and instruction: Managing and coordinating the curriculum should be done in such a way that teaching time could be used optimally.
- Supervising teaching: Educators should receive guidance and support to enable them to teach as effectively as possible.
- Monitoring learner progress: Learners' progress should be monitored and evaluated by means of tests and examinations. The results are then used as feedback to improve on the performance of both learners and educators as well as to guide parents towards a better understanding of the reasons why improvement is needed.
- Promoting instructional climate: Creating a positive school climate in which teaching and learning can take place is a key responsibility of an instructional leader. Learning should ideally be an exciting venture which provides support for both educators and learners and where a shared sense of purpose exists - learning then becomes meaningful.

The effect of management training on the performance of principals is clearly illustrated by Niemann *et al* (2002:135). They used data collected from an

experimental and a control group of school managers so as to test the effectiveness of a management development program. They found meaningful differences in pre- and post-intervention scores for the experimental group while no significant differences were detected between pre- and post intervention test scores of the control group.

The envisaged ACE: SL of the Department of Education is certainly a step in the right direction. The implementation of this qualification created the ideal opportunity for the institutions which offer it to test the management skill levels of the 600 students currently registered before and again after training intervention in order to determine the success of the training.

## **1.9 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.9.1 Research approach**

The research design comprised a blend of quantitative and qualitative inquiry, with a preceding in-depth literature study to inform the nature and extent of the empirical investigation.

### **1.9.2 Research method**

#### **1.9.2.1 Literature study**

A thorough literature study was conducted which enabled the researcher to compile a profile of the essential skills and attributes of a typical successful school manager. Masitsa (2005:180) points out that a literature study is intended to support statements and points of view with research evidence (whilst support for empirical findings is found in other research), as empirical

justification requires reference to other research. The literature study will primarily focus on educational management, but leadership studies from other disciplines will also be consulted. The over-arching aim of the in-depth literature study is to provide a solid theoretical framework against which the findings of the empirical research will be reflected.

#### 1.9.2.2 Questionnaire

- ◆ *Quantitative section*

A structured questionnaire, informed by the literature overview, will be used to obtain educators' and principals' opinions on the management challenges faced by schools and its implications for the development and training needs of efficient principals. Wilson and Cook (1999:158) maintain that the choice of a questionnaire as an appropriate data collection instrument is to eliminate the potential for interview bias. Wolmerans (2001:355) remarks that the use of a questionnaire also enables subjects to complete and return the questionnaire at their convenience.

The questionnaire will be based on the profile of the ideal school manager which was compiled from the literature review. The data gleaned from the questionnaire will be used to develop a training needs analysis for school managers.

- ◆ *Qualitative section*

The questionnaire will also contain a qualitative section aimed at determining the feelings of the respondents with regard to the skills level of the principal. The data obtained from this section will be used to augment the data obtained from the quantitative section.

#### 1.9.2.3 Field notes

The researcher will take field notes at each research site to supplement data obtained from the qualitative and quantitative sections of the questionnaire.

#### 1.9.2.4 Document analysis

A good definition is provided by Neuendorf (2001:20): "Content analysis is an in-depth analysis using quantitative or qualitative techniques of messages using a scientific method (including attention to objectivity-intersubjectivity, a priori design, reliability, validity, generalisability, replicability, and hypothesis testing) and is not limited as to the types of variables that may be measured or the context in which the messages are created or presented."

The purpose of document analysis is to identify appropriate categories and units of analysis, both which will reflect the nature of the document being analysed and the purpose of the research (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000:164).

The complete curriculum of the ACE: SL, as proposed by the Department of Education, will be analysed and subsequently critically evaluated against the compiled needs analysis (see Chapter 5). In the context of this study, document analysis is essential to help achieve the general aim and specific objectives as cited in section 1.6.

### **1.9.3 Population and sampling**

The population of this study will comprise all management and teaching staff at selected secondary schools in the Free State Province, Lejweleputswa Education District. A representative number of schools will be selected by means of purposive sampling to participate in the study. Purposeful sampling enables a researcher to select participants who display typical characteristics or have the required information deemed essential for an investigation (Schloss & Smith, 1999:89). The selection of the research sample will be based on the 2007 matriculation results: five performing/functional secondary schools, five so-called "at risk" schools as well as five poor-

performing/dysfunctional schools. The selection of these schools will furthermore be guided by geographical and socio-economic considerations so as to ensure the inclusion of a sufficient number of affluent, middle-income and lower-income schools respectively from areas geographically accessible to the researcher.

#### **1.9.4 Data collection**

The questionnaires will be distributed among the selected schools and all staff members, including the principal and SMT-members, will be requested to complete the questionnaires.

The curriculum for the ACE: SL will be obtained from the website of the South African Qualifications Authority.

#### **1.9.5 Data analysis**

The closed-response questionnaire items will be tailored for data analysis by computer and will consist of a combination of multiple choice and scaled items. According to Neuman (2003:278) these types of questions offer the respondent the opportunity of selecting (according to instructions) one or more response choices from a number provided.

The content analysis of the curriculum for the ACE: SL will be executed according to appropriate categories of analysis which will reflect the nature of the curriculum and the purpose of the research (Cohen & Morrison, 2000:164).

### **1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Research is a human action governed by certain rules and regulations which regulate ethical considerations. Some actions may be regarded as unethical while others are ethically acceptable. The following ethical measures were considered during the research:

### **1.10.1 Professional ethics**

These refer to the moral commitment that scientists are required to make in the search for truth and knowledge (Mouton, 2003:239):

- The researcher will endeavour to be objective in reviewing literature and obtaining data.
- The researcher will endeavour to refrain from falsification and or fabrication of data.
- The researcher will in all cases endeavour to describe the methodology used to obtain data.

### **1.10.2 Publishing ethics**

One of the key ethical principals of scientific publication is that one must acknowledge sources (Mouton, 2005:241).

In this study:

- Quotes of all authors used in this document will be properly acknowledged in a list of references.
- All other written work will be free of plagiarism.

### **1.10.3 Accountability**

Since research in South Africa is mostly publicly funded, researchers are accountable to society in terms of what they are doing (Mouton, 2005:242). Research and results must be conducted in an open and transparent manner and results must be accessible.

In this study:

- Full permission from the Free State Department of Education was obtained to conduct the research at secondary schools in the province.
- Research results were open and available to all.

#### **1.10.4 Relationship with subjects**

Respondents have the right to privacy and anonymity at all times. Singleton Straits, Straits, and McAllister (1988:454) explain privacy as the individual's right to decide when, where, and to whom and to what extent his or her attitudes, beliefs, and behaviour will be revealed.

This researcher will therefore:

- Respect the anonymity and privacy of respondents at all times. Subjects have the right to have their viewpoints expressed in the questionnaire kept secret in order to protect them.
- An abbreviated rationale of the research project will be communicated to respondents in the cover letter to the questionnaire so that participants are clear on the reasons why they participate in the research.

#### **1.10.5 Publication of results**

The findings of the study must be introduced to the reading public in written form to be of value and to be viewed as research (De Vos, Strydom, Fouche & Delport 2005:65)

- The report written as a result of this investigation will be written in a clear and unambiguous manner to ensure reliability.
- A shortened version of the research will be submitted in article form to an accredited journal.

#### **1.11 DELINEATION OF THE STUDY**

This study will be carried out in a representative number of secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District of the Free State Province. Conclusions may only be applicable to the selected schools. Management courses, seminars and

workshops conducted by the Free State Department of Education may differ from those of other provinces, in which case generalisation of findings to other provinces may not be valid. However, it is asserted that many commonalities exist in the training needs of principals countrywide.

## **1.12 PROGRAMME OF STUDY**

In **Chapter one** the background to the study will be highlighted.

**Chapter two** presents the literature review. It provides general coverage of the key areas of management and leadership with specific reference to secondary schools within the South African context. Based on the review, a list of skills that a principal should possess to empower him/her to successfully lead a secondary school will be compiled.

**Chapter three** outlines the research methodology used in the research process.

In **Chapter four** the data is presented and analysed. Flowing from the analysis, a training needs analysis for principals in the Lejweleputswa Education District is compiled.

In **Chapter five** the needs analysis is critically compared with the outcomes listed for the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership. The rationale is to determine whether this course meets the requirements as identified in the literature study and chapter 4.

**Chapter 6** is devoted to the main research findings, recommendations, conclusions and possible areas for future research.

## **1.13 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter a brief overview of the study was presented which included the background to the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the aim and objectives of the research and the research methodology used. A brief literature review was added, the delineation of the research was discussed and the programme of study was reviewed.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

The legacy of apartheid has left South Africa with a fragmented education system which suffers a crisis of legitimacy. It is furthermore characterised by inequity in provision and a demise of a culture of teaching and learning in many schools as well as a resistance to change (Steyn, 2005:272). Education in South Africa has undergone numerous changes in recent years, all of which increased the workload of educators and school leaders. Democratisation brought new ideologies which impacted on the education system. New curricula underpinned by Outcomes Based Education (OBE), led to more changes. Decentralisation of authority to school-based management brought more responsibilities for the principal (Botha, 2006:341). It is expected of school-based leadership to manage all these changes, respond to challenges and to answer to the demands set by the Department of Education.

The quality of principalship is crucial to the long-term success of a school. Great interest in educational leadership existed in the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which stemmed from the widespread belief that the quality of leadership significantly influences school and learner outcomes (Bush, 2007:391). The workload of school principals is becoming increasingly unmanageable, and many principals (especially in secondary schools) lack the time for and an understanding of their leadership task (Caldwell, 2002:9; Edwards, 2002:4; Budhal, 2000:45). It also seems to be the case for the South African secondary school principal (Van Huysteen, 1999:12; Steyn, 2004:251). New conditions and expectations in education can create new challenges and perspectives on the role of the professional principal.

According to Mdhluli (2005:1) the lack of self-discipline (of principals) at secondary schools is an important issue. Educators often set poor examples to learners on both personal and professional level and as a result learner's lack

self-discipline and a willingness to learn. These factors compound the task of the principal.

Masitsa (2005:189) remarks that the political and social changes which have taken place over the last ten years in South Africa have had a significant impact on schools in particular, and on education in general. The changing education environment may alter a principal's task in many ways, which in turn demands new skills which are needed for the job if principals are to keep pace with ongoing developments. Unless principals are familiar with the dynamics of change, they will not survive for long (Schmieder & Cains 1999: 28). To keep up, principals need skills that will enable them to be flexible and adaptable so that they are able to accommodate legally instituted changes as well as change in general.

Principals functioning in the ever-changing educational dispensation are challenged to redefine the functions of leadership because it is essential to the effecting of change and the building of democratic schools (Gultig & Butler, 1999:119). In the traditional school model the role of the school principal was viewed as that of a manager or administrator (Pretorius, 1998: 105). Traditionally, school principals had more managerial and administrative tasks, and less teaching duties. The description of the principal's role included that of head educator (in accordance with the British model) and instructional leader (as widely used in North America) (ibid). Both roles presumed a person that is knowledgeable in the field of learning and teaching which implied principals as teaching experts (Terry, 1999:28). However, a principal should not only be a learning and teaching expert, but also a leader of people.

Democratisation in South Africa introduced a new dispensation and a new constitution which emphasizes the rights of workers. Trade unions played a huge role in the struggle against apartheid and they gradually developed a grip on the education sector. As a consequence, the authority of school management teams was undermined and subsequently many educators still lack discipline in the workplace after the democratisation process. Principals are often reluctant and in some instances even scared to deal with

undisciplined teachers because they fear the teacher unions (Masitsa, Van Staden, De Wet, Niemann, Heyns, Brazelle & Niemann, 2004:233). These authors (2004:238) also report that some principals had lost the respect of their subordinates because of their poor management of their schools. These circumstances point decisively to the importance of the leadership and management skills of the principal to the success of the school. However, it is extremely difficult to find candidates with people/leadership skills and with a strong personality which are suitable to the position of principal.

Botha (2004:240) remarks that the increasing autonomy of schools necessitates principals who are not only experts in learning and teaching, but who also have the leadership skills to utilise this knowledge to facilitate improved learning. Defining the task of the principal as school leader is not simple. Hoberg (2004:40) illustrates the multiplicity of the task of the principal: it entails leadership, educational management of organisational structures and resources, public relations, financial control together with the responsibilities of general class administrator, planner, initiator, evaluator, assessor, team-builder, problem-solver and decision-maker.

## **2.2 THEORIES AND MODELS UNDERPINNING EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The field of educational leadership and management is pluralist, with many competing perspectives and an inevitable lack of agreement on the exact nature of the discipline (Bush, 2007:391). One key issue being debated is whether *educational* leadership is a distinct field or simply a branch of the wider study of management. Van der Westhuizen and Prew (2007) as quoted by Ribbins (2007:353) emphasize this ambiguity when they call for papers to clear the “confusion and lack of agreement among academics and institutions on the exact nature of educational Leadership and Management as a discipline”. In outlining the problem they (Van Der Westhuizen & Prew, 2007:625) note:

“Whereas some academics view educational leadership and management as the same activity or phenomenon, others separate

the two fields, whilst a third group highlights the interrelationship between the two phenomena”.

The aim of this study is however not to examine the relationship between management and leadership, but to determine the extent to which school leaders are skilled to perform their task of leadership and management. An investigation of the two phenomena is nonetheless essential to the understanding of the task of the successful principal.

All leaders are managers but not all managers are leaders. Ongoing debates within the education management grouping are, according to Ribbins (2007:351), healthy, critical and self-critical examination. It seeks answers to questions such as: What is it that distinguishes some managers as excellent leaders whilst others are simply bureaucrats with little social/people skills? Why do people choose to follow a particular leader and not the other? There seem to be some success recipes which aim to foster healthy relationships between a principal and the educators under his/her authority. Many discourses, theories and models are put forward by authors in an effort to pin down this success recipe.

A review of the relevant management and leadership theories is therefore essential to a better understanding of the skills required to be a school leader.

### **2.2.1 Management and Educational Management**

Many discourses revolve around the issue whether education management should be regarded as a separate field from management. In this regard Bush (2007:177) remarks that the field of educational leadership and management is pluralist, with many competing perspectives and inevitably disagreement on the exact nature of the discipline. Bush (1999:3) also remark that educational management as a field of study and practice was derived from management principles first applied in industry and commerce. Bush (ibid) state that the development of general management principles into principles specific to education has been characterized by lively debate.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:131-132) define **education management development** as a process wherein the achievement of organisational goals and the meeting of individual development, need to become harmonised. In the case of this study, management development is placed within the context of whole-school management and it therefore becomes an integral part of the day-to-day management of schools. This approach is in harmony with general management principles: **Management** in business and human organisation activity, in a nutshell, means the *act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals*. Management comprises [planning](#), [organising](#), [resourcing](#), [leading](#) or *directing*, as well as [controlling](#) an [organisation](#) (a group of one or more people or entities) or *an effort for the purpose of accomplishing a goal*. Resourcing encompasses the deployment and manipulation of [human resources](#), [financial](#) resources, [technological](#) resources, and [natural resources](#), (Wikipedia, 2008:online). The term management, therefore, entails all the activities and resources used to reach a common goal. The term may therefore include the attainment of any goal. Thus, for the purposes of this study, it may be the educational goal(s) of a school.

The words manager and management are derived from the verb “manage”. The term **manager** may refer to anyone who uses management skills or holds the organisational title of “manager” (Wikipedia, 2008:online). From this definition it is evident that the title “manager” is used exclusively for persons with managerial skills or competencies. **Managerial competencies** are sets of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that a person needs to operate effectively over a wide range of managerial jobs and in various types of organisations. Being competent also means to be effective (Hellriegel, Jackson, Slocum, Staude, Amos, Klopper, Louw & Oosthuizen, 2006:5.)

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:6) agree with Wikipedia’s definition of *management* and *manager* and define a manager as “a person who plans, organises, directs, and controls the allocation of human, material, financial, and information resources in pursuit of the organisation’s goals”. In terms of their definition, a successful manager capably performs four basic managerial tasks: planning, organising, leading, and control. The term “management” also implies that the manager

works with people in that managers are evaluated on the performance of people under their control (Hellriegel *et al*, 2006:7). The term “management” usually refers to all the people in managing positions in an organisation.

*Managers* can also be subdivided into functional managers and general managers. A functional manager specialises in one area, e.g. financial management or human resource management. In the context of schools, a Head of Department of one specialist area (a subject/a group of related subject areas) may be viewed as a functional manager. A general manager, in turn, is responsible for managing a larger part of the organisation, including functional managers. The function of this type of manager corresponds with the positions of principal and deputy principal. General managers should possess a broad range of well-developed competencies to perform their duties (Hellriegel *et al*, 2006:8).

In the case of schools the following levels of management may be distinguished: top management (including the principal and deputy principals), middle management (heads of departments) and junior management (subject heads, senior teachers). It is common practice for top management to carry out the bulk of the managing duties in schools leaving very few to junior management. One may therefore assume that top management should be more competent (skilled) in management than their junior counterparts. In practice, therefore, becoming a manager implies a process of growth whereby the educator will over time gain experience and as a result becomes empowered to perform management duties in a school. The assumption is therefore that a teacher, having embarked upon a management career path, will gradually develop competencies and skills enabling him to perform management duties.

In South Africa a classroom teacher could traditionally only get promoted to Head of Department. A new career pathway has been created by the Department of Education which allows a well-qualified, excellent classroom teacher to progress into the pathway of subject specialisation. Such educators can become Teaching and Learning Specialists and Senior Teaching and

Learning Specialists, (ELRC, Collective Agreement 1 of 2008). The final details of this policy are still being negotiated.

The introduction of the Specialist Teacher career pathway will result in fewer effective subject educators applying for promotion in management. Schools sometimes appoint good educators in scarce subjects (e.g. Mathematics and Physical Sciences) in Head of Department posts to retain them. Their management duties take up more of their available time leaving less time to attend to teaching duties. The new dispensation will probably result in fewer educators following the management career path. Hopefully, only those with natural leadership abilities will follow the latter career path. These educators should be empowered with competencies fundamental to the post level. Empowerment should either be through formal training or through in-service development.

The role of a manager cannot be explained in simple terms as it entails a number of tasks which require various skills. These tasks, however, can be organized according to the four basic managerial tasks, namely planning, organising, leading (guidance) and control. These basic tasks are interrelated and can therefore not be seen in isolation.

### ***Planning***

Planning is an action that is aimed at reaching the goals and fulfilling the mission and vision of the organisation. Hellriegel *et al* (2006:8) state that planning involves strategic planning where the overarching goals of the organisation are defined. Planning therefore includes all actions aimed at reaching the overarching goals (vision) of the organisation. Hellriegel *et al* (*ibid*) argue that managers plan for three reasons:

1. To establish an over-all direction for the future of the organisation;
2. To identify and commit the organisational resources towards the achievement of its goals; and
3. To decide which tasks should be done to reach these goals.

According to Hellriegel *et al* two types of planning are distinguished: tactical planning and strategic planning. Strategic planning includes actions aimed at determining the overall strategy an organisation should follow in its endeavours to realise its overarching goals. Tactical planning includes all the detailed planning and involves the application of physical, human and information sources. It therefore involves the what, who, where, how and when questions and it is usually shorter term planning.

The school principal should facilitate a strategic planning session every two or three years when the vision and mission statement of the school is set and revised. During the strategic planning session the internal and external environment of the school should be analysed, overall goals of the school should be determined and the resources needed to realise these goals should be identified. The strengths and weaknesses of the school should be identified: strategies to capitalize upon the strengths and deal with the weaknesses should be developed.

According to Hellriegel *et al* (2006:73) the process of tactical planning generally includes:

1. choosing specific goals and the means of implementing the organisations strategic plan;
2. deciding on courses of action for improving current operations; and
3. developing budgets for each department and project.

At schools, tactical planning will include the year planning done by the principal where:

-  the school budget is prepared;
-  work allocation for educators is done; and
-  physical resources are allocated to staff members.

Tactical planning also includes time-tabling, planning for the maintenance of resources and the terrain, scheduling for all school activities.

During the process of planning the school manager should take the current state of the internal and external environment into account. He/she<sup>1</sup> should be aware of changes in his environment. Any changes in the school environment may have an influence on the efficiency of the school and the planning then need to be adapted to stay in line with the overall goal of the school. He should be able to “forecast” the possibility of changes that may impact on the running of the school. During June 2007 the education sector in South Africa was paralysed by strikes brought about by salary disputes. A visionary principal would have had contingency plans in place since many signs indicating the possibility of a strike were perceptible in the run-up to the strike. Hellriegel *et al* (2006:71) define a “contingency plan” as planning or preparing for unexpected and rapid changes.

### ***Organising***

According to Hellriegel *et al* (2006:8) organising is the process of creating a structure of relationships that will enable employees to carry out managers’ plans and meet organisational goals. By organising effectively, managers can better coordinate human, material and information resources.

Organising involves the creation of a structure in which the tasks of the organisation are divided into departments. The success of organising depends largely on the effective allocation of tasks and resources to different departments within the organisation. When allocation of work is done a manager should devise an organogram which clearly indicates the division of work between different departments. It also sets out how different goals are to be reached and it includes managers responsible for different departments and sections within the organisation.

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<sup>1</sup> Henceforth “he” and “his” will be used to refer to both sexes

An organogram is referred to as an organisational chart (Hellriegel *et al* 2006:197) and it provides four sets of information:

1. It shows the range of different tasks within the organisation;
2. Each box represents a subdivision responsible for a specific task;
3. The chart shows the management hierarchy from the head down to the divisional managers; and
4. Vertical lines connecting the boxes on the chart show which positions have authority over others.

Utilising a functional organogram in schools has advantages in that it clearly indicates the responsibilities of each staff member. It furthermore illustrates which managers are responsible for the different departments/sections in the school and it also indicates the lines of authority. It gives all the employees at school a clear indication of all the activities within the school as well as how each employee fits into the larger picture. A school principal without a functional organogram will be inundated with employees expecting him to respond to all their enquiries.

### ***Leading***

According to Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999:14) managerial leadership assumes that the focus of leaders are on functions, tasks and behaviours and they add that if these functions are carried out competently, the work of others in the organisation will be facilitated. The term “leading” implicates that an organisation needs to have a leader to coordinate all actions specific to that organisation. It involves communicating with, and motivating others to perform tasks indispensable to the achievement of the organisation’s goals within the supporting organisational culture.

Leadership is integrated with all the general managerial tasks. It is based on interpersonal relationships between the leader and the follower. A worker follows a leader by own accord because of the leaders qualities. Leadership essentially revolves around the motivation of people to pursue organisational

goals, and it therefore does not bear much on the administration/management of an organisation.

Lekganyane and Oosthuizen (2006:245) explain that the management task of *leading* means stimulating people to perform well. In the school setting it implies directing, motivating and communicating with employees, individually and in groups. Leading means that the school manager guides planning, organising and controlling within the organisation as a function of the general managerial tasks of a manager. The term “leadership” will be dealt with in section 2.2.2.

### ***Controlling***

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:9) define *controlling* as the process by which a person, group, or organisation consciously monitors performance and takes corrective action. This implies that the standard of work of the employees should be reflected against the goals set for the organisation. Coetzee and Schaap (2005:35) remark that controlling should be done in order to evaluate work performance according to set standards. It is essential in the school set-up that the work of all role players is continuously monitored to ensure that the time constraints dictated by the curriculum are met, that assessment of learners' work is done and that the performance of learners is on standard. Problems should be identified timeously and corrective measures taken. A school is unlike a factory which rejects flawed products. A school aims to educate learners to grow into responsible, skilled adults in the labour market and to maintain the social and moral values which exist to society.

Effective teacher supervision and evaluation enable a principal to act on teachers' performance and to provide appropriate assistance when required, thus facilitating management and minimising problems (Masitsa *et al.*, 2004:232). Over-controlling educators may have adverse effects and create an uninviting climate at the school (Friedland, 1999:15). Hellriegel *et al* (2006:) agree with this viewpoint and state that most people attach negative

connotations to the word “control”, such as restraining, forcing, checking-up, limiting, watching, or manipulating. However, controlling remains essential. The principal should hence ensure that control is done with developmental purposes in mind and not to continuously expose problems and mistakes.

The traditional way of teacher monitoring as a function of bureaucratic accountability, refers to line management supervision (De Clerq, 2008:10). It is therefore the task of the principal to delegate his function of control to line managers (the deputy principal, heads of departments and subject heads). As a delegator, his role becomes that of the “controller of control”. Line managers:

- set standards of performance;
- measure current performance against those standards;
- take action to correct any deviations; and
- adjust the standards where necessary.

In summary it may be said that controlling is essential in schools, but it should be executed with care.

### **2.2.2 Educational leadership**

Leithwood *et al* (1999:35) contend that no single definition of “leadership” which is agreeable to all, exists. Leithwood and Levin (2005:7) confirm that the literature on “leadership” abound with many different definitions of the concept. Latchem and Hanna (2001:54) assert that leadership revolves around the process of getting people excited about moving in a positive direction. However, it goes beyond the propagation of grand plans and empty rhetoric. It (leadership) does not stifle criticism, inquiry and debate and it is transparent. Leadership can be defined as a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to implement strategies so as to achieve the collective goals (Yukl, 2002).

Bush (2003:8) provides the most concise and complete definition of leadership: “it is a process of influence leading to the achievement of desired purposes”. Successful leaders develop a vision for their schools based on their personal and professional values. They articulate this vision at every opportunity and continuously influence their staff and other stakeholders to share the vision. The philosophy, structures and activities of the school all point towards the achievement of the shared vision.

In the context of the school as organisation, Latchem and Hannah’s distinction between three philosophies of leadership is relevant (2001:57):

- The *political leader* who holds a clear vision of the future and by being aware of the inherent inertia and resistance to change within the school, works towards broadly defined goals - incrementally, flexibly and tangentially.
- The *directive leader* objectively assesses the school’s strengths and weaknesses and directs the school towards clear, specific and compelling goals, taking personal responsibility for key decisions, challenging conventional wisdom and relying upon structure and systems to control decision-making and confront internal conflicts.
- The *values-driven leader* provides leadership that serves the purposes and reflects the values with which the followers can identify but energises them towards the overall organisational purposes rather than personal self-interest. The essence of this philosophy is to create trust and a positive shared vision and to “walk the talk”, which means leading by example.

Most conceptions of *school leadership* can also be associated with productive change. At the core of most of these conceptions are two functions generally considered indispensable to its meaning:

- *Direction-setting*: helping staff members to establish a widely agreed upon direction or set of purposes considered valuable to the school; and

- 🎬 *Influence*: encouraging staff members to engage in acts which support the movement toward the agreed on directions or purposes.

*School leadership* therefore encompasses all those actions which lead to the setting of a mission and goals for a school, which set people in motion towards the achievement of the said goals including the processes of overseeing and influencing workers to attain the set goals. This definition differs from the definition of *management* in that leadership involves the emotions of employees: staff members *want* to attain the goals under the leadership of the principal whilst management compels them to attain the goals. Therefore, management and leadership differ in essence because leaders *motivate* followers to work.

Hellriegel *et al* (2006: 263) define *motivation* as any influence that triggers, directs or maintains goal-directed behaviour. The key words of both the concepts of leadership and motivation largely overlap. In the discourse about school leadership, motivation theories need to be considered. Hellriegel *et al* (ibid.:263) categorise *motivational theories* as follows:

- 🎬 Theories about individual differences: individuals are different in what they value. Some may be motivated by money, others by security, etc. Effective managers understand that individuals differ and they use this information to maximise effectiveness.
- 🎬 Theories about the work and school: preference may be given to a specific organisation because its work conditions are perceived to be more favourable than others.
- 🎬 Theories about managerial behaviour: although top management is responsible for the effective functioning of an organisation, line managers (Heads of Departments) can motivate workers through one-on-one communication about the nature of the work and the setting of goals.
- 🎬 An integrative approach to motivation that addresses the entire motivation process.

Insights collected from all of these theories will help the principal in understanding how employees feel about their work plus how effective performance management systems can be developed.

Thus far the focus has been on the principal as leader and manager who should set the goals of his school and who should direct work towards goals, taking cognisance of what motivates employees. But what causes a leader to be followed? A leader uses *power* to lead. Hellriegel *et al* (2006:287) distinguish between five types of power a leader may use to convince workers to perform. All five are relevant in the school setting:

- *Legitimate power*: based on the formal position of the leader within the organisation.
- *Reward power*: based on the ability of the leader to satisfy the worker's needs.
- *Coercive powers*: based on the fear of punishment.
- *Referent power*: based on the individual follower's personal identification with the leader.
- *Expert power*: based on the specialist knowledge of the leader.

Different situations will compel the principal to use different forms of power. The use of coercive power should be minimised because pressurising staff members will cause them to exhibit negative behaviour which is not conducive to organisational culture.

### **2.2.3 Leadership models**

Several models (traits, behavioural, contingency, transactional, transformational and charismatic and invitational) underpin leadership training and these can be regarded as indispensable to any leadership training programme.

#### **2.2.3.1 Traits Models**

Ancient Romans were classified as leaders according to the size of their noses (Wikipedia July 2008). Even though it may seem absurd, people are classified as successful/unsuccessful leaders according to their visible traits. According to Hellriegel *et al* (2006:288), leaders are classified in accordance with the following key traits:

- Physical traits: young to middle-aged, energetic, striking appearance, tall and slender;
- Social background: educated at the “right” schools, socially prominent, or upwardly mobile; and
- Personality: adaptable, aggressive, emotionally stable, dominant, self-confident and sociable.

According to Hellriegel, *et al* (ibid.:268), no research has positively linked physical traits and leadership. However, it does not rule out the possibility that attractive physical traits aid a leader in his task.

#### 2.2.3.2 Behavioural models

Behavioural models focus on the behaviour of successful and unsuccessful leaders and attempt to categorise leaders according to their behaviour. Contrary to the traits models of leadership mentioned above, behaviour can be learnt. Potential leaders can therefore adjust their behaviour according to certain situations. A key feature is therefore that leaders can be trained.

The following models are examined in this category: the Theory X and Theory Y model, the Managerial Grid model, the Servant-leadership models and the Leader-Member Exchange Leadership model.

- ◆ *Theory X and Theory Y*

This theory was first described by Douglas McGregor in 1957. Kessler (2007:82) explains that leaders who regard people as lazy (Theory X) will try to motivate people through extrinsic factors (“carrot and stick”). Theory Y, on the

other hand, assumes that human beings have intrinsic motives to work. Leadership styles of managers are affected by the way they look at their subordinates. The differences between Theory X and Theory Y leaders are summarised in the following table:

Theory X	Theory Y
The average human being has an inherent dislike of work and will avoid it if he can.	The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest. The average human being does not inherently dislike work.
Because of this human characteristic of dislike of work, most people should be coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened with punishment to get them to put forth adequate effort toward the achievement of organizational objectives.	External control and the threat of punishment are not the only means for bringing about effort toward organizational objectives. Man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed.
The average human being prefers to be directed, wishes to avoid responsibility, has relatively little ambition, wants security above all.	Commitment to objectives is a function of the rewards associated with their achievement. The most significant of such rewards, e.g. the

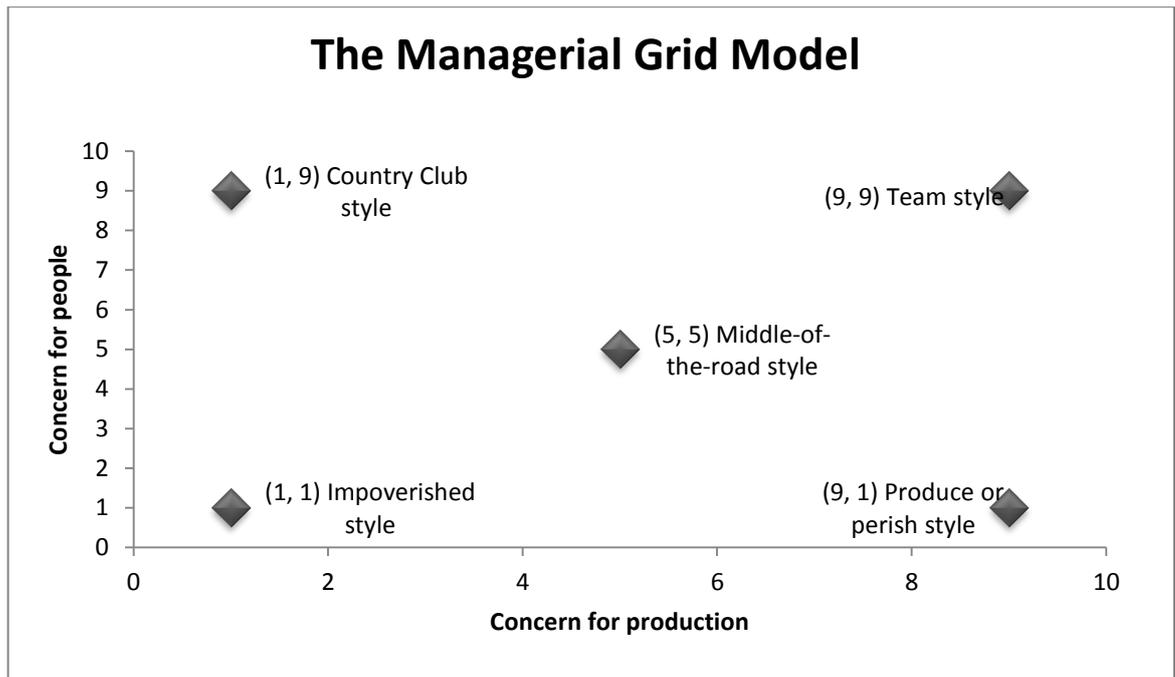
	<p>satisfaction of ego and self actualisation needs, can be direct products of effort directed toward organisational objectives. The average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility. The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of organisational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population.</p>
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*Table 2.1: Theory X and Theory Y (adapted from McGregor 1985:33)*

It is important to understand that workers resort under the Theory X type of worker if the *leader* expects them to be there. If a leader believes that a group of people is of Theory Y type workers, they will act that way. It is clear that McGregor was far ahead of his time when proposing Theory Y. Hellriegel *et al* (2006:289) argue that leaders who believe that their people work hard, cooperate, and have positive attitudes will treat them accordingly. Such leaders use the participative leadership style: they act by consulting their subordinates, seeking their opinions, and encouraging them to take part in planning and decision-making.

- ◆ *Managerial Grid Model*

The Managerial Grid Model was developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton (Hellriegel *et al*, 2006:290). This model identifies five leadership styles that combine different proportions of *concern for production* (similar to the production-centred and initiating-structure styles) and *concern for people* (similar to the consideration and employee-centred styles) (Hellriegel *et al*, 2006:290). These styles are plotted in Figure 1 below:



**Figure 2.1: The managerial Grid Model (Adapted from Hellriegel, *et al*, 2006:290)**

In the context of school organisation, the following styles are identified:

- The *impoverished style* is characterised by a low concern for employees as well as teaching and learning. Principals using this style try to stay in the clear by passing on orders to employees, thereby shifting blame (if any) on them.
- The *country club* style is characterised by high concern for people and low concern for teaching and learning. Principals using this style try to make the working environment as pleasant as possible for employees and they hope that effective teaching and learning will come about with little or no interference from him.
- The *produce or perish* style is characterised by a high concern for teaching and learning and a low concern for people. Principals using this style use coercion to increase productivity with little concern for the well-being of staff members.
- The *middle-of-the-road* style is characterised by a balance between concern for the organisational goals of the school and concern for

employees. Principals using this style exhibit just enough care for employees so that the job gets done.

■ The *team* style is characterised by high levels of productivity and concern for the employees. Principals using this style of leadership seek full devotion of the employees.

◆ *The Servant Leadership Models*

Fisher (2004:15) explains the Servant Leadership Model as follows: leaders should be complete followers. They should have the best interests of those they serve at heart, and know them as well as they know themselves, i.e. how they think, feel, believe and behave; what they value, why they value it, and what their greatest hopes and fears are. If not, their ability to serve would be a charade. The essence of mentoring is to enable and empower others (Poon, 2006:3). Yukl (2002) associates empowerment with the encouragement of followers as well as the facilitation of self-management by them.

The Servant Leadership Model (also known as the Empowerment Model) is fundamentally a close relationship where the leader mentors the worker (mentee) and shares goal-setting and decision-making. This relationship constitutes a mutual process of learning between the mentor and mentee. This process empowers the mentee in that he develops skills in the relationship. The relationship is based on learning and growth. This facilitates the personal and professional development of leaders. Poon (2006:5) suggests that the demonstration of servant leadership in the mentoring process and the subsequent enhancement of the follower's moral love, positively impacts on the mentor and mentee self-efficacy. According to Poon (2006:3), the relationship between the mentor and mentee may have the following traits: moral love, humility, altruism, self-awareness, authenticity, integrity, trust, empowerment and service.

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:291) describe the Empowerment Model as "sharing of influence and control with others". In doing so, the leader involves employees (individually or in teams) in decisions pertaining to the organisation's goals,

thereby giving them a sense of meaning, competence, self-determination and impact.

Empowerment means entrusting power to others, really giving it away (Patterson, 2003:6). It furthermore involves effective listening, making people feel significant, emphasis on teamwork, and the valuing of love and equality (Russell & Stone, 2002:145). In addition, servant leaders also empower by teaching and developing people (ibid).

- ◆ *Leader-Member Exchange Leadership Model*

Contrary to traditional discourses describing the leader, the Leader-Member exchange model of leadership places more emphasis on participative and collaborative structures in order to inspire employee commitment, motivation, satisfaction and empowerment. This rearrangement of traditional relationships has resulted in the recognition of the importance of followers in shaping effective leadership systems (Milner, Katz & Fisher, 2007:317).

The leader-member exchange model (LMX) represents a specific interactive approach to leadership. LMX focuses on the individual dyadic relationship between supervisors/managers and each of their subordinates. The theory assumes that the within-work-unit variability of leader behaviours and subordinate perceptions of these behaviours, is substantial and systematic. In fact, a unique feature of the LMX model is its emphasis on the different ways in which a supervisor behaves towards subordinates, thus stressing the quality of the exchange relationship.

According to Hellriegel *et al* (2006:292) the quality of the relationship between the leader and follower can vary from low to high. In a low-quality (ineffective) relationship the contact between the supervisor and his subordinate relates to their economic contract. Workers tend to give exactly what they are supposed to. Supervisors tend not to delegate responsibilities to subordinates. High-quality relationships tend to be more positive and trusting with more loyalty and

commitment. Such relationship is more empowering as the supervisor tends to hand more demanding tasks to the subordinates.

### 2.2.3.3 Contingency models of leadership

The following models are particularly relevant to school leadership: Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership and the Leader-Participation model.

According to the contingency models of leadership, the situation determines the leadership style that is best. No single contingency model encompasses all the situational factors that determine the actions of the leader.

- ◆ *Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Model*

Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership model suggests that the levels of directive and supportive leader behaviours are based on the level of readiness of the followers (Hellriegel *et al*, 2006:295). They stress flexibility in order to adapt to change. This model sets different combinations of supportive and directive behaviour of the leader.

- *Directive behaviour:* occurs when a leader uses one-way communication to prescribe which methods to be used and the followers then follow directions.

- *Supportive behaviour:* occurs when a leader uses two-way communication which involves followers in decision-making. The leader is therefore receptive to the ideas of the followers.

Both directive and supportive behaviour of the leader depend on the readiness of the subordinate to perform a task. Figure 2 shows the relationship between leadership style and readiness of followers. Johnson (2004:3) argues that people tend to be at different levels of readiness depending on the task they are requested to perform. Readiness is not a personal characteristic; it is not an evaluation of a person's traits, values, age, and so on. Readiness only refers to

how ready a person is to perform a particular task. The concept of readiness pertains to specific situations, not to a total sense of readiness.

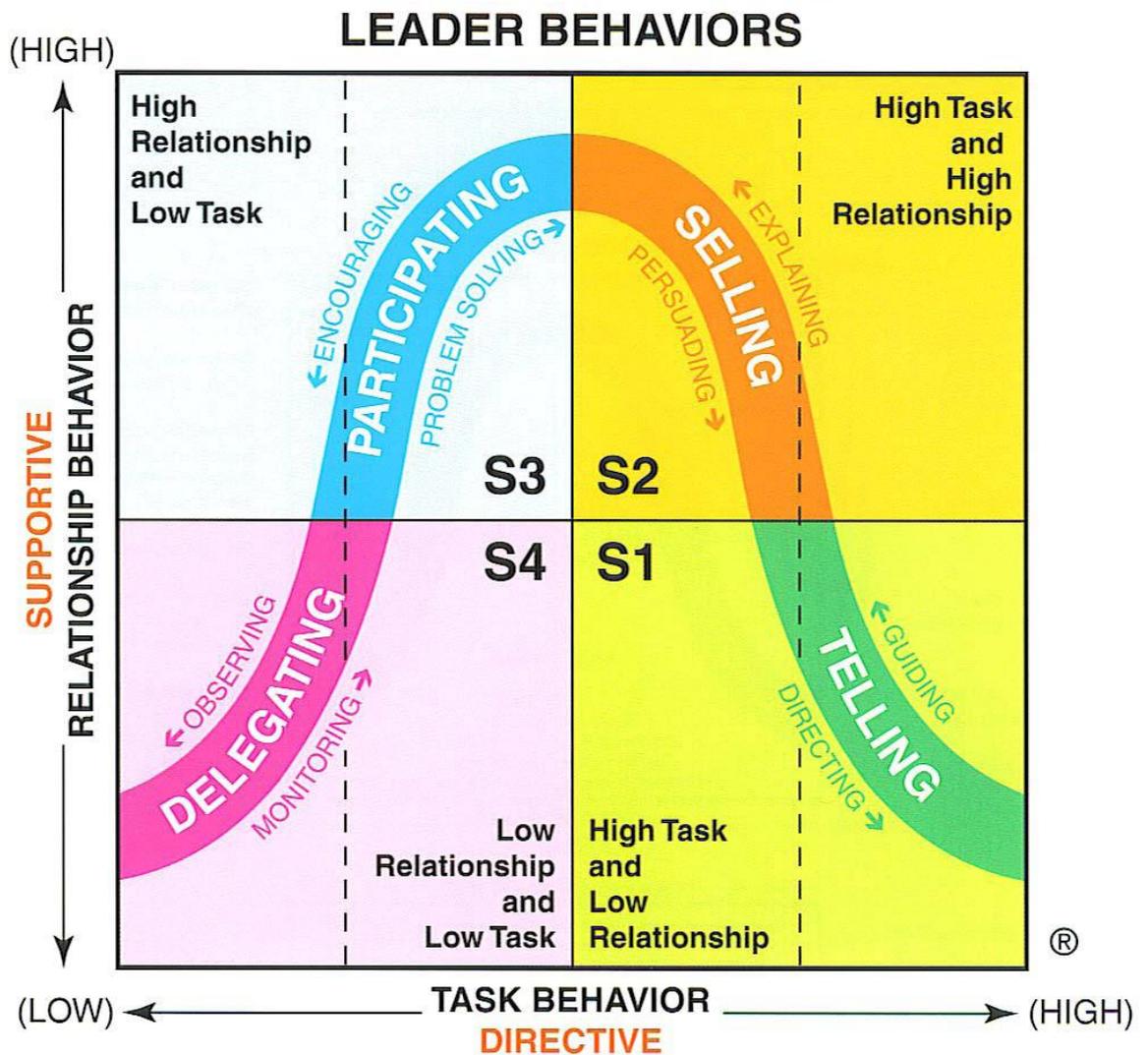


Figure 2.2 Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory linked to Simmons' interrogative criteria for follower readiness (adapted from Hackman & Johnson, 2004:75).

The curve running through the four leadership quadrants (S4 – S1) indicates the level of directive and/or supportive behaviour that characterises each style. The individual or team readiness ranges from high (S4) to low (S1). The readiness of the educator, for example, determines the style the principal as leader will adapt to:

- A new employee at a school will be treated by the principal with a *directive* style when he is told how to perform a task.
- As employees become used to their tasks, the principal's style changes to the *selling* style where two-way communication is opened which helps to build the confidence and motivation of the employees.
- When employees become confident in their tasks, the role of the principal becomes *supportive*. Employees take part in decision making.
- The *delegating* style is used by the principal when the employees are able to perform tasks satisfactorily and are both confident and motivated to take responsibility. Larger projects may now be delegated to them.

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:296) remark that a leader should constantly be aware of the state of readiness of the employees in order to choose the appropriate directive or supportive style of leadership. Being too directive with an experienced worker will not motivate the employee. Likewise, the leader cannot delegate tasks to an employee who is not ready for it.

- ◆ *Leader-Participation Model*

One of the more recent contributions to the contingency approach is the leadership-participation model. The leader-participation model of leadership distinguishes styles according to the extent to which the leader involves his subordinates, ranging from autocratic decision-making (where the leader-manager makes the decision with or without input from subordinates), to consultative decision-making (where subordinates have a say either individually or in a group), to group decision-making (where the subordinates are party to a consensus decision) (Vroom & Jago, 1988). Hellriegel *et al* (2006:298) suggest that the leader's behaviour is adapted to the task's structure. After assessing the task structure the leader should select a leadership style which would solve the problem. He subsequently decides which decision-making style to use to ensure the employees' acceptance of the task:

- The leader takes the decision alone.

- The leader collects information from the team, but makes the decision alone. The team may be informed about the situation.
- The leader meets individually with each team member, asks for information and evaluation and makes the decision alone.
- The leader meets with the team where the situation is discussed, but the leader makes the decision alone.
- The leader meets with the team where the situation is discussed and the team makes the decision.

It is clear from the types of decisions the leader has to take that the locus depends on the task/situation. A routine task will require the leader to make the decision without consultation. When the task becomes non-routine, he needs to gain information from the employees before making his decision. When making decisions which necessitate the support of the employees, the team becomes the decision-making body.

#### 2.2.3.4 Transactional Leadership

Transformational approaches are often contrasted with transactional leadership. Miller and Miller (2001:128) explain these phenomena:

- Transactional leadership (see also contingent reward leadership, next paragraph) entails leadership in which relationships with subordinates are based upon an exchange for some valued resource. To the employee, interaction between administrators and employees is usually episodic, short-lived and limited to the exchange transaction.
- Transformational leadership is more potent and complex and occurs when one or more educators engage with others in such a way that administrators and educators urge each other on to higher levels of commitment, dedication, motivation and morality. During the transformation process the motives of the leader and follower merge.

Contingent reward: leaders stimulate the performance of their subordinates by rewarding them. This reward is in line with the performance level (Steers, Bigley

& Porter, 1996). Leaders first need to fully comprehend what their goals are and then define and communicate to followers the work that should be done in order to achieve them. Followers are afterward rewarded according to the extent to which the work has been completed successfully (Bass, 1985; Kuruppuarachchi, 2001).

Management by Exception: employees are motivated and directed to achieve certain expected standards of performance (Bass, 1985; Kuruppuarachi, 2001). Leaders who look for potential deviations from rules and standards and then take corrective action are depicted as actively managing by exception. Nyberg, Bernin and Theorell, (2005:30) define passive management by exception as the process whereby the leader responds with correction or punishment in reaction to unacceptable performance or deviation from the accepted standards.

A non-transactional or Laissez-faire leader abdicates responsibility and avoids making decisions (Robbins, 1998). Transactional leadership has no effect on job satisfaction, but transformational leadership has a positive effect. Yun, Cox, Sims and Salam (2007:186) show a negative relationship between transactional leadership and job satisfaction.

#### 2.2.3.5 Transformational and charismatic leadership

All leadership models and styles discussed thus far have focused on the personality traits of the leaders and leadership behaviours. Transformational leadership focuses on ways to motivate employees. Motivated employees are more productive which corresponds with the definition of leadership, which is that the leader's task is to influence individuals to achieve collective goals. Transformational leadership therefore seems to be a very acceptable school of thought.

Leithwood *et al* (1999:9) provide a detailed definition of this model. They explain that this form of leadership assumes that the central focus of leadership

ought to be the commitments and capacities of organisational members. It is assumed that higher levels of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for accomplishing those goals result in extra effort and subsequent greater productivity. Transformational leaders work in particular toward the creation of a climate and culture conducive to the achievement of the full potential of each individual in the group (Avolio, 1995:19). Northouse (2004:160) states that transformational leadership refers to the process through which an individual engages with others which effects a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. Yun *et al* (2007:173) add that leaders encourage followers to challenge the status quo in order to pursue their vision.

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:5) detail the advantages of transformational leadership. They explain that such leaders enjoy the trust, admiration and respect of their followers which in turn cause them to achieve beyond their own expectations. Within the school setting a principal who is a transformational leader, will display the following behaviour types:

- 🎬 *Vision*: the principal creates a vision that his followers buy into. He also has a plan that energises employees to reach the goals set by him. When the principal is totally committed to the vision as well as the action plans to realise it, he may be referred to as a charismatic leader.
- 🎬 *Framing*: transformational leaders often “frame” their vision, i.e. to define the team’s purpose in highly significant terms. This framing of the vision often embraces the core values and purpose of the organisation.
- 🎬 *Impression management*: transformational leaders often deliberately work on the impression that they leave on employees. Through their actions and communication transformational leaders wilfully attempt to impress their own commitment to their vision on their subjects.
- 🎬 *Significance of practice*: various studies indicate that transformational leadership has significantly improved employee performance. This model showed a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organisational effectiveness.

#### 2.2.3.6 Invitational leadership style

Stoll and Fink (1996:109) define invitational leadership as follows: “Leadership is about communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact in order to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for pupils”. Kamper (2008:14) argues that the invitational leadership style followed in successful high-poverty schools in South Africa corresponds with the invitational leadership style (with its basic premises of optimism, respect, trust and intentional care). He argues that this leadership style with its attributes of energetic, compassionate, innovative and empowering leadership, may make high-poverty schools successful.

According to Kamper (2008:14) the key ingredients of school success appear to be the principal’s passion for enhancement of the teachers’ commitment and care, the parents’ involvement and the learners’ positive life-view and happiness. Instead of being a vocal and strict disciplinarian, this leader radiates enthusiasm and he displays an unwavering belief in the school’s ability to overcome any problem. He also energetically tackles seemingly insurmountable problems.

With the majority of high poverty schools in South Africa positioned in rural areas and in townships, it only seems logical that principals will taste success in those schools if an invitational approach to leadership is adopted. Kamper (2008:16) makes the contentious statement that the selection of new principals for high-poverty schools, as well as the evaluation (and possible removal) of principals presently serving such schools, should be based on the invitational leadership profile.

### **2.3 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

Every person is a leader waiting to be unleashed (International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA), 2007:3). Some people are born leaders while others have to work hard to master leadership skills. Whichever school of thought one favours, being a leader remains a process of gaining more

skills/behaviours and honing current skills/behaviours. Gomez (2007:281) asserts that the importance of leadership in organisations has increased and leadership training and development are increasingly regarded as instruments of organisational change and a method of linking people's performance with organisational strategy.

Adding to the existing formal leadership education and training at tertiary institutions, other leadership type training programmes have been developed for leaders and managers in both the private and public sectors (IFLA, 2007:3). Hellriegel *et al* (2006:303) state that leadership development may take various appearances: on the job learning, formal assessment and training and coaching and mentoring.

### **2.3.1 Learning on the job**

Learning on the job is important in all spheres of managerial work. Leadership development starts when an employee is requested to perform certain tasks and to manage and supervise other employees in doing so. Unfortunately, many highly skilled workers are thrown in on the deep end when they are promoted to leadership positions. Although skills obtained this way may be valuable, it does not present the ideal situation. Hellriegel *et al* (2006:303) argue that learning on the job is an excellent way to develop leadership capacity. Senge (1996:2) points at mentoring action learning as another concept for meaningful learning on the job. He argues that if leaders are unable to learn on the job, they will not learn anywhere else.

Chapman and Cilliers (2008:67) emphasize that having developed a theory (during formal training), the individual needs to engage the extension dimension and actively experiment within the collective environment. One can therefore not become a leader through formal training in leadership only. In practice, situations unfold that will connect the theory to practice and the leader then starts to gain experience.

### **2.3.2 Formal assessment and training**

Many organisations now recognise the importance of a theoretical foundation for leadership and they either send their employees for formal leadership training or have in-house training programmes. Formal assessment and training programmes normally include assessment of the leader's current approach to leadership which is then augmented with skills to enhance the student's effectiveness as a leader.

### **2.3.3 Coaching and mentoring**

When an individual is placed in a position of authority, a mentor (which is usually a senior) is assigned to guide him. In doing so, the mentor helps the trainee to develop into a better leader. The mentor particularly helps the trainee to understand how other people respond to specific behaviours and he focuses attention on weaknesses and problem areas. Such mentors also serve as role models which the trainee can emulate. Poon (2006:1) states that mentoring is a mechanism to achieve significant leadership development.

Cilliers (2005:23) asserts that coaching techniques include direct behaviourally-based feedback and interpretations about the executive's impact on others, both within and outside of the organisation, thus creating opportunities for change and demanding accountability for the outcome. It is believed that the measurable behavioural change in the individual or team will result in increased performance of the individual, team and organisational levels. The implementation of coaching and mentoring as a leadership development strategy in educational settings needs to be seriously considered.

### **2.3.4 Comprehensive leadership development programmes**

Bush (2003:33) proposes that leadership development programmes include the following guidelines:

- Given the significance of instructional leadership, these programmes should have a **clear focus on learning** - the chief purpose of schools - and on the teaching required to promote effective learning. Training is pivotal to ensure that leaders at all levels are able to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning and are willing and able to implement strategies such as classroom observation as part of the evaluation process.
- The continuing endorsement of transformational leadership in the literature as well as in formal policy statements, suggests a need for programmes aiming at the development of the portfolio of skills required to 'transform' schools. These skills include **developing an explicit vision** for the school which inspires teachers and other stakeholders to work towards a better future.
- To avoid the problems that may be associated with transformational leadership, including the potential for the manipulation of followers, it is important for leaders to develop a **participative or team approach** which involves staff and others in the process of visioning rather than them passively accepting the leader's personal vision.
- Training should include **management as well as leadership** to ensure effective implementation of the vision.
- The contingency model suggests a requirement for leaders to develop a **portfolio of leadership styles**. They need to be able to carry out an effective situational analysis in order to illustrate that they are able to adapt their approaches to the specific context.

In view of the preceding discussion on leadership models it becomes apparent that persons in leadership positions need to apply a wide range of different approaches in managing and leading people. Although leadership styles applied in different scenarios differ, no significant difference exists across different settings in which leadership is required. Leadership thus remains essentially the same in the marketplace, the police and the education sector. There is, however, a need to highlight the specific skills and competencies a school leader should have at his disposal to manage a school successfully.

## **2.4 SKILLS INVOLVED IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

As stated earlier, a leader should be skilled to direct people in such a fashion that they do not feel forced to follow, but rather because they choose to attain the set goals. Leaders perform tasks so as to attain certain shared goals. It is therefore important to understand the relationship between a task and a skill. An individual who wants to perform a specific task needs to be skilled to do that. To be skilled in performing a task implies that one has to possess the abilities, talent, expertise or proficiency needed for the specific task. An educational leader, above all, needs people skills, i.e. skills to work with people. Two people with the exact same skills level may not achieve the same outcome. A leader needs to display a certain “charisma” in his vocation.

It is important to realise that different tasks and skills can never be seen in isolation. It constitutes an integrated unit in the personal make-up of a person. People react differently to different leadership styles in congruence with their own motives. In performing a task, a school leader should therefore not only be multi-skilled, but also well-versed in the application of the required leadership style in a particular situation.

The views of various authors on the skills required for successfully managing a school will be discussed in this section. Masitsa (2005:173) argues that principals who lack managerial skills may encounter management problems which may impede the academic success of the institution. Incumbents involved in school leadership in the twenty-first century would require complex skills vs. skills relating to leading people and the performing of educational management tasks (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003:62). According to Botha (2004:239) the workload of school principals is becoming progressively more unmanageable, and many principals (especially in secondary schools) face time constraints as well as a thorough understanding of their leadership task. Being an effective principal in the ever changing educational dispensation, means facing the challenge to redefine the functions of leadership because it is central to change and the ensuing building of democratic schools (ibid.:237).

Authors list various roles/skills/attributes/abilities/traits managers should possess to perform the varied tasks of managing and leading schools. Different abilities pertain to the different environments in which a school functions. The skills make-up of a principal in a disadvantaged school will, for example, differ notably to that of principals operating in the so-called advantaged areas.

The vital skills of an effective principal need to be categorised and grouped logically to ease the process of comparison between existing and the ideal skills. The assemblage of skills will be moulded to obtain a profile of a typical, successful school principal which, in turn, will be critically compared to the National Department of Education's proposed Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership. The overarching purpose of this qualification is to enhance the knowledge, understanding and skills of managers and leaders in schools through the application of theory and research in an effort to improve educational practice (Government Gazette 27415, 2005:4).

Many principals seem to lack managerial skills. According to the *Lejweleputswa Management and Governance Turn Around Management for 2008 and Beyond* (2008:11), 18 from the 68 schools that entered learners for the grade 12 final examinations achieved a pass rate of below 50%. Nine schools achieved a pass rate of between 50 and 60%. The first group of schools is referred to as "failing schools" while the second group is classified as "under-performing schools". The main reasons put forward for the poor performance are a "lack of instructional leadership and dysfunctional conflict .... in these schools." According to this document, failing schools displayed the following common trends:

-  Poor management and lack of instructional leadership;
-  Ill discipline among educators;
-  Late arrival of educators and learners ;
-  Unaccounted for absenteeism;
-  Poor assessment processes; and
-  Internal conflict and cabals.

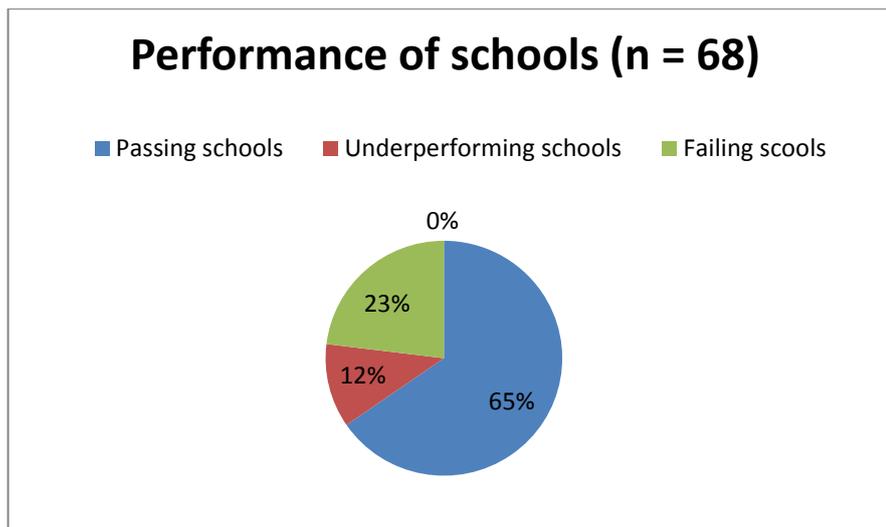


Figure 2.3: Performing, under-performing and failing secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa Education District in 2007.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:132-133) assert that competencies such as the chairing of meetings, the handling of bigger classes, controlling of discipline, the handling of multilingual instructions, dispute resolution and labour issues as well as host of other interrelated tasks are all skills that go hand-in-hand with principalship. These skills appear to be lacking in many principals.

As mentioned earlier, leadership skills are largely interrelated and it is sometimes difficult to view them as separate entities. A host of skills are needed to solve, for example a problem with a staff member. It may, inter alia, demand conflict management skills, problem solving skills, managing of change skills, teamwork skills and communication skills. Leaders and/or managers are not confronted with problems that are independent of each other, but with dynamic situations that consist of complex, interrelated contexts or systems of changing problems that interact with each other. (Berkhout, 2007:409).

Those leadership skills typically found in effective school principals include the following: *financial management skills, personnel evaluation and development skills, conflict solving skills, problem solving skills, administrative or technical skills, skills in coping with stress, skills in managing change, skills in motivating educators and learners, teamwork skills (as part of motivation), skills in dealing with school-related legal issues, personnel selection skills, instructional*

*leadership skills, planning skills, human relations skills, communication skills, skills in the management of facilities, skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning and networking skills.* Together with management and leadership competencies as discussed in 2.2 to 2.4, these skills are all interrelated.

## **2.5 SKILLS INVOLVED IN PRINCIPALSHIP**

### **2.5.1 Financial management skills**

According to the South African School Act 84 of 1996 the School Governing Body (SGB) is responsible for all financial activities of the school. Their function includes the setting of a budget, determination of school fees, receiving of such fees and the expenditure of such monies for educational purposes. The principal of a school is an *ex officio* member of the SGB and is the day-to-day manager of the school finances. Since large amounts of funds are managed within the school's budget, certain skills are required to empower the principal to be the accountable officer of the SGB.

Bisschoff and Sayed (1999: 312) state that since financial management is a relatively new concept in most South African schools, it may be vital to provide principals with training programs and advice. Masitsa (2005:180-181) concluded after a research project amongst 18 township schools, that the training of principals in financial management skills is top priority. He furthermore argues that since the governing bodies of township schools are often made up of uneducated parents, principals are compelled to keep the financial books (Masitsa, 2005:191). Principals are not usually familiar with the accounting procedures needed for the collection and disbursement of funds. They lack knowledge about budgeting, cash-flow management and preparation of a financial report. This state of affairs often leads to questions about the credibility and accountability of the school's financial reports and statements.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:142) acknowledge those principals who are highly skilled and knowledgeable in respect of financial management. However, training of some kind is imperative for those principals who struggle with

financial management. According to Marishane and Botha (2006:96), allowing principals decision-making authority over the management of resources will enable them to match the resources to the goals they set in accordance with the budget.

According to Mestry and Grobler (2004:131) all schools should have a financial policy. Working with public funds presents a huge responsibility which needs to be monitored closely. Financial procedures should be followed to the letter. The mentioned financial policy should include:

- A statement for the need of a policy. When the need is clearly articulated the credibility of the policy and the policy making process will be enhanced.
- A statement of the values and principles that should be brought to bear on that need. Values and principles drive policy. Values such as transparency, democracy and honesty should form the basis of the policy.
- A statement of the "guide for discretionary action". Whichever guide for discretionary action is identified, it should be a guide or a directive that an educator or administrator should merely implement.
- A statement of expected outcomes. Identification of expected outcomes assists in the needed process of policy review or evaluation. It allows the simple question: "Have these outcomes been achieved?"

### **2.5.2 Personnel evaluation and development skills**

The performance of educators needs to be monitored closely in terms of the standard of work, the pace at which work is done and the goal-orientation of their work. If an educator diverges from any of the above, remedial action needs to be taken. Remedial action is the responsibility of in the first line managers, i.e. the subject heads. Any deviation from the set norms and standards should be attended to immediately to keep the work of educators on standard. This skill is closely related to the skill of instructional leadership in that

the “instruction” of the educator needs to be evaluated by school management and rectified when needed.

According to Masitsa (2005:181), principals agree that if teachers are not evaluated and supervised, they are not likely to improve their performance and develop to their full potential. Masitsa (ibid.) states that skills in evaluating and developing educators would enable principals to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their staff and to attend to them, thus empowering staff members to perform optimally. This way staff would be developed and the scholastic performance of learners improved.

Steyn (2005:258) argues that since educators have direct contact with learners and considerable control over what is taught and how it is taught, it is reasonable to expect that enhancement of educators' knowledge, skills and attitudes is a critical step towards improving learner performance. Steyn (ibid.:258) furthermore stresses that the goal of professional development is ultimately increased learner performance. He views professional development of educators as an essential ingredient to the creation of effective schools, the promotion of the delivery of education and development and the improvement of learners' performance. Opportunities for career development will also positively impact on the well-being of staff and staff retention. Xaba (2003:289) suggests opportunities for growth and development as a strategy for staff retention. Steyn (2005:256) agrees with this and states that schools should create processes and structures that develop expertise.

The previous National Minister of Education, Me Naledi Pandor, reiterates the fact that school leaders should be "pursuing" staff development as part of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) which was introduced to improve the quality of teaching at schools (Business Day, 10 September 2004).

Masitsa (2005:186) states that staff development endeavours to broaden teachers' outlooks, heighten their professionalism and enhance their effectiveness. It seems obvious that programmes aimed at the personal development of educators, would increase their proficiency in the classroom

and as a result enhance their learner's performance. The task of the principal is therefore to facilitate professional development of educators either through departmental courses or formal training, or informally on a personal level.

In order for any developmental strategy to be functional, the performance of educators should at the very least be measured. Thereafter, remedial steps may be taken so that the principal can improve the standard of education at his school. To this end, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) has been implemented to measure the quality of an educators work in a standardised way. However, this system seems to demoralise educators. Many educators view the IQMS as an attempt by the principal to expose them, especially if they are deemed incompetent (Masitsa, *et al* (2004:231). The IQMS, however, aims to achieve exactly the opposite: it attempts to identify strengths and areas for development (De Clerq, 2008:7). The IQMS aims to identify the training needs of educators in order to enhance the skills level of educators. Educators, on the other hand, recognise their need for training, but they are unwilling to subject themselves to evaluation by the IQMS. De Clerq (*ibid.*:7) argues that teachers' unions, SADTU in particular, insist that educator support precedes performance appraisal, and that districts and senior management adopt a developmental attitude in providing support to educators, in line with their identified areas of development.

The principal, therefore, needs sufficient knowledge of the IQMS to enable him to give appropriate support and to implement the system in such a way that it is acceptable to the staff of his school. If the IQMS is implemented and managed correctly, the outcomes will be to the advantage of all role-players in education.

### **2.5.3 Conflict solving skills**

In their study that examined the training and development of principals, Mestry and Grobler (2004:133) point out that conflict management skills, dispute resolution skills, the handling of labour issues and a host of other interrelated skills are lacking in many principals. These findings are echoed by Singh, Manser and Mestry (2007:558). Vinger and Cilliers (2006:8) also agree and add

that principals tend to avoid conflict with their followers. Herbst, Maree and Sibanda (2006:595) regard conflict management as an essential social skill in the make-up of a leader. Akintayo (2006:201) recommends that management training programs should be geared, amongst others things, for conflict management.

Masitsa (2005:187) believes that the acquisition of conflict resolution skills will enable principals to handle and resolve conflicts and problems amicably and swiftly, by dealing with them before they develop into crises. Since conflict and problems systematically erode the learning culture, their resolution would create an environment conducive to teaching and learning at school. The handling of conflict in an impartial way is a skill vital to the successful principal.

#### **2.5.4 Problem solving skills**

Problem solving skills is essential to successful principals. As a result of the wide ranging tasks of the school leader he will continuously be confronted with various problems calling for his attention. The way in which he solves problems will also determine the degree of respect he commands from both staff and learners. Many authors (Niemann *et al* (2002:132), Hoberg (2004:40), Steyn & Kamper (2006:176), Masitsa (2005:176), Herbst, Maree & Sibanda (2007:596) and Singh, Manser & Mestry (2007:542)) agree that problem solving skills need to be part of the school leader's make-up; however, they also encourage the use of emotional information/intelligence when solving problems.

Steyn (2001:149) clearly separates problem solving by management and problem solving by self empowerment. Principals should encourage educators to suggest solutions to problems instead of merely presenting their problems. By suggesting their own solutions to problems, they may become empowered to make their own decisions. This is also an important tool that the school leader could use in staff development.

#### **2.5.5 Administrative or technical skills**

Masitsa (2005:175) asserts that a principal should receive training in school management and administration in order to perform his work effectively. Visser, Naudé and Scheepers (2004:17) emphasise that school managers need a thorough knowledge of the principles and elements key to successful administration and management. In the belief that the latter constitutes effective schools, school principals often exclusively concentrate on the administrative aspects of principalship instead of the inherent quality of organisational commitment and trust within schools (Sebring & Bryk 2000:442). Masitsa (2005:196) also suggests that training in administrative or technical skills would give principals a sound knowledge of procedures and of computers, thus enhancing their productivity. Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003:170) maintain that the quality of principalship is crucial to the long-term success of the school. They also believe that successful school management involves setting a good administrative example.

Schools also need computers and printers for record-keeping, the typing of assessments for learners, etc. In addition to these, photocopier machines are needed for copying purposes. Marishane and Botha (2006:106) remark that photocopier machines require equipment such as computers for data capturing, processing, analysis, storage and retrieval. Masitsa (2005:196) has found that principals in township schools also want to be computer-literate in order to keep abreast of new developments as well as to do planning, to draw up time-tables, to make quick changes when necessary, and to do other administrative work. Many township schools may be under-resourced which may add to the problem of effective management.

### **2.5.6 Skills in coping with stress**

Principals are in the line of fire due to their position. When something goes wrong at a school, the principal has to answer. Principals spend so much time on managing discipline, interviewing irate parents, completing excessive paperwork and implementing new policies that very little time is left for proper instructional leadership. Headship is also a highly responsible occupation.

Steyn and Kamper (2006:120) draw attention to the fact that professional demands on the educator (and principal) are some of the main causes of stress. The principal is in control of a centre for learning constituting a large number of learners, educators and resources. This duty may weigh heavily on the shoulders of an unseasoned principal which may lead to stress.

Stress may prevent a person from functioning optimally. Stress may be defined as the “psychological or physiological response of the organism to an external threat” (Buunk, De Jonge, Ybema & De Wolff, 1998:148).

Mestry and Grobler (2004:137) claim that stress tolerance is the ability to perform under pressure and when opposed; the ability to think on one's feet. However, principals suffer from stress for various reasons. According to Masitsa (2005:192), principles are blamed for the failures of both teachers and learners. Daily problems, expectations, and demands, as well as their daily responsibilities, all coalesce to form an intolerable burden which may cause severe stress. It is essential that principals are equipped with the skills to cope with or to prevent stress as these are essential to the make up of an effective principal (Masitsa, 2005:192). Township schools should be provided with sufficient resources. By providing township schools with adequate facilities and resources and maintenance thereof, the Department of Education could go a long way towards alleviating the stress of principals. Akintayo (2006:201) recommends that management training programmes should deal with occupational stress.

### **2.5.7 Skills in managing change**

With the onset of democracy and the introduction of a new constitution, many changes were effected. Major changes in the education sector include Outcomes Based Education (OBE), the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) and School Based Management (SBM). New policies are continuously developed and implemented and principals need to stay abreast. In the process of transforming the education system government has enacted many laws and adopted new policies. Since school principals are leaders, they have to play an

important role in managing and effecting change. Change has an effect on the overall strategic plan of the school and calls for remodelled goals for the school.

Masitsa, Van Staden, De Wet, Niemann, Heyns, Brazelle and Niemann (2004:236) caution that while introducing changes to educators may not pose a serious challenge, handling resistance may however present a major problem. Benaim and Humphreys (1997:87) hold the view that change, if not correctly implemented, often splits the staff into three groups: those genuinely relieved and excited by the change, those who want to wait and see, and those who hold the view that change disregards tradition and the practices previously upheld. As educators are performing the line function at schools, it is their duty to implement changes. The principal, therefore, has to “sell” the new idea to the staff, whether he believes in it or not. More often than not, the principal is crucified for implementing changes even though he is only the messenger. To enable the school principal to “sell” the change that he should implement, he needs to be acquainted with the policy which governs the change. It is a time consuming process which adds to the burden of the principal. Not only should the change be effected, it should be effected correctly. The time spent on convincing educators on the merits of a change can be wasted if the implementation is done hastily and not according to prescribed policy.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:126) identify the management of change as one of the “new” demands of principalship. Steyn (2005:267) strongly agrees and states that principals play an indispensable role in managing change. Steyn adds that principals should take cognisance of the change process. Masitsa (2005:195) emphasizes that training with regard to the management of change would assist principals in managing change and making teachers understand and accept it.

In order for a school principal to effect change, he should be empowered with knowledge about methods to implement change and promote continuity and stability in schools. Consequently, principals should be trained and well-informed about the changes that they have to implement at their schools so that

they can assist teachers to understand the complexity of change and implement it.

### **2.5.8 Skills in motivating educators and learners**

Van der Westhuizen (1991:186) defines motivation as something someone does because of a particular motive which may also include the fulfilment of a personal need. In a study by Masitsa (2005:182) principals claim that a lack of motivation to teach and to study presents a major problem to townships educators and learners alike. Poor matric results demotivate educators because the Department of Education disregards the poor motivation of learners and consequently places the blame on the educators. According to Masitsa (ibid.:182), educators are also unsure about Outcomes Based Education and many do not understand the system. He continues that poor academic performance and a negative attitude towards education are indicators of poor motivation and morale, and it may play a role in learners' absenteeism.

The low level of motivation of learners to achieve academically and bleak prospects for employment or tertiary study, contribute to unmotivated learners and a lack of a culture of learning. Educators become demotivated when learners perform poorly. In an earlier study of underperforming township schools Masitsa *et al* (2004:231) state that low staff morale is associated with low productivity, friction and tension between staff and management, high absenteeism, rejection of the educational philosophy underlying the curriculum, and diminished respect for principals. This does not seem to be the case in performing schools (Masitsa *et al*: ibid.:231). It takes a strong leader to keep staff motivated in the face of negative factors impacting on their morale.

The Department of Education acknowledges the problem and the then Minister of Education, Kader Asmal, responded by launching the COLTS (Culture of Learning, Teaching and Service) campaign on 13 January 2000 (Steyn, 2005:258). One of the aims of the COLTS campaign was to instil dedication

and motivation in educators, learners, principals and other stakeholders. The COLTS project is now known as Tirisano (let's work together).

### 2.5.9 Teamwork skills

Teamwork is described by the Department of Education (2007:9) as the cooperation with one another and with our partners in education in an open and supportive way so as to achieve shared goals. Hoberg (2004:54) concludes that teamwork is vital to the creation of organisational commitment. "Develop an effective team where all the necessary skills are covered. Don't fall for the 'I know everything' syndrome. Ask, 'What are my weaknesses? Where do I need help?' Then go balance your weaknesses," advises Giuliani, as quoted by Anon (2004:7).

The decentralisation of authority from district level to schools to form "school-based management" altered the role of the principal from "instructor" to "leader". Principals therefore rely on their staff to partake in decision making. It follows that school management team members as well as educators became part of a participative management model in the school. The participative leadership model dictates a democratic decision-taking process underpinned by three assumptions:

- Participation will increase school effectiveness;
- Participation is justified by democratic principles; and
- In the context of site-based management, leadership is potentially available to any legitimate stakeholder (Leithwood, Jantzi & Steinbach, 1999:12).

A participative leadership model stretches the responsibility of decision-making to all of its participants, freeing the principal from taking the blame when a decision takes a wrong turn. The shared responsibility enables all participants to develop skills thereby fostering a better *esprit de corps* amongst all that will lead. Botha (2004:241) argues that empowerment should not be

underestimated and defines it as follows: Empowerment is the collective effect of leadership, where people feel valued and part of the action, where they know their ability is important, where sharing is a real underlying value and where choice is a possibility for everyone. Black (1998:32) points to the benefits of better educator morale and satisfaction, commitment to goals, better school decisions and improved learner achievement. As opportunities for self-realisation (e.g. promotion) in education are limited, participative management creates the ideal opportunity for educators to feel good about themselves, simultaneously building team spirit among the staff. Unfortunately, principals who have been subjected to power-centred role expectations in their training often lack the skills and knowledge necessary to practice facilitative leadership (Portin, Shen & Williams, 1998:6).

Lekganyane and Oosthuizen (2006:245) believe that teamwork is required in the modern organisation. A management team that is not able to act sensitively towards their human resources will have limited success in achieving organisational goals. Nolte (2004:134) describes teamwork as follows: "...the pack leader believes that teamwork is everything, allows opposite viewpoints to be heard and encourages strong contenders to emerge from the pack. In an effort to create new perspectives, unusual, counter-trend ideas are pursued. On the other hand, the roles of weaker team members are marginalized and divisive behaviour is not tolerated." Booysen (2001:38) emphasizes that an Ubuntu-oriented leadership style not only includes teamwork down to grassroots level, but also the encouragement of team members or followers to sacrifice their personal gain/goals for the gain/goals of the group. Shared values contribute significantly to work attitudes and performance in that it promotes teamwork and *esprit de corps* (Kouzes & Posner, 2001:213). Steyn (2001:160) further emphasizes that teams need clear, common objectives which have to be communicated to participants. It prevents staff from raising unrealistic expectations and it sensitises them to learning opportunities.

Teamwork is clearly extremely importance in any organisation. It is paramount that the members of an organisation share a common vision and mission and strive towards reaching the same goals. Members of the organisation should

therefore be involved in the setting of goals in order to enhance *esprit de corps*. The school principal should counter his own weaknesses by including members in his team that will make up for his shortcomings. As the leader of the school, the principal plays a vital role in teambuilding as all teambuilding activities are initiated by him.

#### **2.5.10 Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues**

School objectives are heavily influenced by external pressures, especially by expectations of government as expressed in legislation or formal policy statements (Bush 2007:391). This viewpoint is echoed by Lam and Pang (2003:92). They argue that schools are strongly influenced by changing control patterns, enrolment fluctuations and policy directives from the education department. Principals need a well-developed ability to read, interpret and implement policies prescribed by the Department of Education. Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008:235) argue that the ability to interpret policy (as well as contextual factors such as organisational culture) requires intelligence; recent studies have shown that intelligence is fundamentally related to effective leadership.

The school principal needs sound and up-to-date knowledge on all policies governing educational activities at the school. The objective of the South African School Act 84 of 1996 is to make provision for a uniform system for the organisation, management and financing of schools. All South African schools are subject to this law. Being the school leader, the principal needs to be informed about the law so that he is able to manage the school in terms of it. Masitsa (2005:187) mentions that the law is difficult to interpret and suggests that principals should receive training in the legislation and the legal issues that have a bearing on the school.

Principals are often reluctant to implement disciplinary procedures because they lack adequate knowledge of the relevant policies and procedures dealing with staff. Masitsa *et al* (2004:233) remark that dealing with incompetence (of educators) involves legal issues which few principals are familiar with.

### **2.5.11 Personnel selection skills**

It is important to understand that appointments in the South African Public schools are only made by the various Provincial Departments of Education on recommendation of the School Governing Bodies of schools. The principal is not responsible for the appointment of teaching staff. He nevertheless plays an important role in the planning of the staff component of the school. He initiates the process by which a vacancy is advertised and plays an important role in communicating recommendations to the Department of Education. The principal plays an *ex officio* role in selection committees (Employment of Educators Act No. 76 of 1998). If a sound and trusting relationship exists between the principal and the School Governing Body, they would value his recommendations (as the expert of teaching) in the selection process.

The first step of staffing is to forecast the organisation's future needs. In most cases it is easy for a principal to plan ahead. He knows, for example, when an employee is going on maternity leave or has resigned. Sometimes it is less predictable, for example when a staff member suddenly dies - a scenario not unfamiliar in South Africa with its AIDS pandemic.

The personnel selection skill as an educational management skill, has not been investigated by researchers. Masitsa *et al* (2004:228) remark that poor teacher selection results in schools not appointing appropriately qualified teachers who can teach effectively. Masitsa *et al* (*ibid.*:228) remark that the recruitment of competent educators starts with proper selection procedures and is then continued with ongoing evaluation and development of their skills. When correct and proper procedures are not followed during the process of filling vacancies, incompetent educators may be appointed which will only compound the principal's problems.

### **2.5.12 Instructional leadership skills**

Instructional leadership focuses on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers when engaging with students. The emphasis is on the direction and the impact of influence rather than the influence process itself (Bush 2003:12). Black (1998:34) describes instructional leadership as follows: instructional leadership expects from educational leaders to set clear expectations, maintain discipline and implement high standards with the aim of improving teaching and learning at a school.

Portin *et al* (1998:5) remark that the principal's role in the new educational dispensation essentially represents a balance between instructional leadership and management. According to Hoberg (2005:46) successful school management involves, inter alia, the provision of effective instructional leadership conducive to an environment which enables teachers to function effectively. Kruger (2003:206) emphasizes that instructional leadership occurs when the principal provides direction, resources and support to both educators and learners with the aim of improving teaching and learning at a school. Good instructional leadership is the way to good teaching and learning and instructional leaders bring about a sound culture of learning and teaching in their schools at all times. He quotes a principal: "... the principal's responsibilities have shifted from that which he is actually trained for, from being an instructional leader to much more business principles". Kruger (2003:207) and Parker and Day (1997:87) discern the following areas of the instructional leader's task:

- 🎬 Define a vision and mission for effective teaching in collaboration with the staff
- 🎬 Manage the curriculum and instruction
- 🎬 Supervise teaching
- 🎬 Monitor learner progress
- 🎬 Promote an instructional climate.

These functions require dedicated work which can be successfully delegated to the school's management team and subject heads. Since teaching (instruction) is the core business of any school, the principal needs to split his attention

between general management duties and being an instructional leader. Once the management of instruction is regulated by a proper functioning system, the principal can pay more attention to his other management duties.

Botha (2004:240) says that effective instructional leadership takes place when educational leaders set clear expectations, maintain discipline and implement high standards, with the aim of improving teaching and learning at school. In this role the principal may be seen as a visionary who leads the school community in its efforts to develop more effective teaching and curricular strategies, and who supports educators' efforts to implement new programmes and processes.

### **2.5.13 Strategic planning skills**

Planning is a future-orientated action according to Booysen (2001:49-50). She elaborates that at the organisational level, future orientation manifests in long-term forecasting and planning, goal setting, investment in research and development, and allocation of resources to professional development of employees and managers. Planning is therefore an action aimed at the reaching of goals, and is therefore also aimed at the fulfilling of the mission and vision of the organisation. Steyn (2005:268) defines a vision and mission as follows:

- A vision is a mental image of the future. It is the deepest expression of what a school desires. The vision statement, with its accompanying guiding principles, says: "this is where we want to be in years to come, and this is how we will conduct business in order to get there." (Steyn, 2005:268).
- Mission: From the vision statement a mission statement is developed. A mission statement is simply a statement of the organisation's vision of itself which serves to guide planning, development and evaluation. Terry (1999:30) agrees and states that beliefs and values should be the point of departure of strategic planning. Effective schools require leaders who

are willing to express their values so that they may ultimately become goals shared by the entire community.

A vision and a mission statement cannot merely be a document that is kept at a school. It should be recent, shared between all the stakeholders and used as focal point in the planning and execution of all activities at the school.

#### **2.5.14 Human relations skills/social skills**

Singh *et al* (2007:547) argue that social skills are fundamental to emotional intelligence. They include the ability to induce desirable responses in others by means of the following strategies: the use of effective diplomacy to persuade (influence); to listen openly and send convincing messages (communicate); to inspire and guide groups and individuals (leadership); to nurture instrumental relationships (building bonds); to work with others toward a shared goal (collaboration, cooperation); and to create group synergy in pursuing collective goals.

#### **2.5.15 Communication skills**

Most authors (see passage) agree that effective communication is indispensable to the success of a principal. School policy, decisions, problems and the flow of information between the different levels of staff demand effective communication skills. According to Marishane and Botha (2006:110) communication between various structures enable staff at the school and at the district office to make informed decisions that facilitate planning.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:137) identify two types of communication skills principals should possess: oral communication, which entails the ability to make clear oral presentations of facts and ideas and written communication, which involves the abilities to express ideas clearly in writing and to write appropriately for different audiences, e.g. educators, learners, parents and others. Interpersonal communication creates an atmosphere of trust in which

people share information and work together to promote organisational effectiveness (Drejer, 2002: 209).

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:12) define communication competency as the effective transfer and exchange of information that facilitates understanding between the leader and others. This competency includes informal and formal communication as well as negotiation skills.

As management is broadly aimed at getting people to get work done, communicating effectively is the most important managerial competency. Unless the manager expresses himself clearly and understand all forms of communication, he will not be able to put his other managerial competencies to good use. The principal should not only be able to transfer information accurately, but also receive it effectively. A principal should therefore possess the ability to listen to subordinates and moreover interpret non-verbal language like body-language and facial expressions.

#### **2.5.16 Skills in the management of facilities**

Well-cared for school facilities, furniture and equipment as well as clean toilets can lead to a healthy teaching and learning environment (Department of Education, 1998:6). Schools have non-teaching staff that includes administrative staff and general workers. General workers are responsible for cleaning and maintaining the state of good repair of school grounds and facilities. The control of this staff resorts under the school principal. To ensure a healthy, clean and functional environment, the principal should optimally utilise available resources. The management of the physical resources of a school may seem simple, but it also demands careful planning, budgeting and normal day-to-day management.

Adequate facilities at a school comprise all those facilities used in a holistic approach to the education of our youth. A school should have well-equipped classrooms for all learning areas taught at a particular school. Cultural and

sporting facilities should also be available. As the extra-curricular activities of the school are determined by the School Governing Body, the learners, teachers and parents should take ownership of the school property and ensure it remains in a good state of repair. Some schools unfortunately have to endure a culture of vandalism. De Wet (2004:206) defines school vandalism as the purposeful damaging, violation, defacement, or destruction of school property by, amongst others, vindictive, bored, malevolent, frustrated or ideology-driven learners. De Wet (ibid.) lists the following reasons for vandalism:

- Vindictive children who harbour revenge against an educator or other member of staff of the school
- Malevolent children who enjoy causing problems
- Learners driven by ideologies who wish to draw attention to a specific problem or issue
- Bored children who commit vandalism in search of excitement
- Frustrated children filled with anger - they feel that the school and community are hostile to them.

Mestry and Grobler (2004:130) remark that a competent principal should at least be able to manage and deploy school resources efficiently; allocate school accommodation appropriately and ensure satisfactory standards of maintenance and cleanliness of school facilities. Steyn (2002:253) and Kruger (2003:207) agree that one of the features of a poor culture of learning and teaching is poorly maintained buildings, facilities and resources. School principals not only have to attend to the core business of the school (teaching and learning) and the administration of the school, but also make certain that the school facilities are properly maintained.

Financial resources to maintain facilities are limited which requires the principal to raise funds from elsewhere. Masitsa (2005:192) claims that inadequate facilities and resources are sources of stress to school principals. Many schools with a poor culture of learning and teaching are situated in poor areas where schools are subjected to break-ins and vandalism. These schools are not

fenced properly and most do not have alarm systems which renders it defenceless against crime. Schools desperately need adequate fencing and security to keep bad elements out. Principals also need to have access to funds to do proper maintenance at their schools. A principal has to be skilled to effectively manage and distribute limited funds for the up-keeping of facilities.

If a sense of pride and ownership among, educators, learners, parents and the school community at large is created and nurtured, school facilities will be looked after and cared for. Many newly appointed principals unfortunately assume duty at already dilapidated schools.

### **2.5.17 Skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning**

McEvoy and Welker (2000:130) state that school climate refers to the attitudes, beliefs, values and norms that underlie the instructional practices and the operation of a school. Some of the features of a poor culture of learning and teaching at schools are poor school attendance, educators who do not have the desire to teach, tensions between various elements of the school community, vandalism, gangsterism, rape, alcohol and drug abuse, high dropout rate, poor school results, weak leadership, management and administration, general feelings of hopelessness, demotivation and low morale, disrupted authority, and the poor state of buildings, facilities and resources (Chisholm & Vally 1996:1). To cultivate a positive school climate conducive to teaching and learning, principals should create a climate and culture for success in schools by ensuring that there is room for self-expression, creativity, communication and motivation in all structures (Mathibe, 2007:532).

It is imperative that all stakeholders in the school community take pride in and ownership of the school. Once ownership of the school is established and stakeholders call the school “our/my” school, they will start to look after it. A school should also have a proper set of goals, a purpose that drives the school into a certain direction. According to Steyn (2005:259) a lack of purpose and discipline in schools amounts to a lack of a culture of teaching and learning. In this instance, the principal should involve all stakeholders (teachers, parents

and learners) in the school to formulate a common vision/mission for the school. Once a school has set objectives, the work at the school becomes focussed and purposeful.

Steyn (2005:266) states that a good instructional culture is promoted when a principal creates a positive school climate conducive to teaching and learning. Learning becomes exciting and easy when teachers and learners are supported and when they share a sense of purpose. Disciplinary problems should be dealt with promptly and decisively.

The child is ultimately the main (and only) customer of the school. Once a child has a purpose and direction, he becomes motivated to work. The principal should therefore guide learners and make them aware of opportunities that exist when they leave school. Secondly, it is the task of the principal to make certain that the educators play their role in realizing the potential of the learners through their instruction. Masitsa (2005:196) found that teachers' motivation and morale are low, resulting in a lack of motivation to teach effectively. The principal is consequently challenged to break the culture of ineffective teaching by motivating educators. Educators should share the common vision of the school and strive towards it in all their actions. Only a strong and skillful educational leader will be able to effect a mind-shift of this magnitude in their schools.

The disciplinary climate at a school is also a determinant of the culture of teaching and learning which exists in that school. Teachers are not equipped with skills to cope with disciplinary problems in class. According to Masitsa *et al* (2004:234) disciplinary problems in class may include truancy, absenteeism, late-coming, dodging, insubordination, failure to complete assignments, vandalism, and disruption of learning. Some learners are uncontrollable in class, deliberately ignore instructions, leave class during the lesson, come to school late, and disappear before noon. In schools where proper disciplinary procedures are in place, role players know exactly what to expect.

Parents, teachers and students are involved in resolving serious disciplinary problems. The establishment of a climate conducive to learning, similar to that which exists in achieving schools, could markedly limit their disciplinary problems. The establishment of such a climate requires co-operation and commitment. It is therefore vital that learners at a school know that action is equal to reaction, and that all transgressions will be dealt with. The principal, being the highest authority in the school, should take charge of the implementation and management of disciplinary procedure in a school. Badenhorst, Steyn and Beukes (2007:306) remark that the inability of educators to manage learner behaviour is a cause for concern. All stakeholders agree that since the abolishment of corporal punishment and the emancipation of the child under our new constitution, discipline in the classroom has deteriorated. Principals and educators are not empowered by the Department of Education with alternative methods to manage discipline which leaves many educators feeling helpless in class. This state of affairs leads to stress and a decline in the quality of education.

Legotlo, Maaga and Sebogo as well as Van der Westhuizen, Mosoge, Nieuwoudt and Steyn, (2002:117) remark that the establishment of a good school community relationship is key to success in securing mutual participation of parents in decision-making, school activities, problem-solving, provision of assistance and offering services to a school. Badenhorst *et al* (2007:309) also emphasise the positive relationship between parental involvement in the school and school discipline.

Niemann and Kotzé (2006:622) recommend that principals should have the following skills in order to enhance organizational climate:

- Knowing when to reward staff members for initiatives and work well done, and providing them with the necessary authority and confidence to execute their tasks effectively.
- Leading by example by acting in accordance with the values, traditions and beliefs of the school, and by planning small wins that will promote consistent progress and build commitment; and

- Providing the necessary support to the staff. The school should become a learning organisation in which staff is assisted to persevere and eventually succeed.

A school needs the full cooperation of the parent community to attain its full potential. To involve parents is difficult because many are indifferent towards the schooling of their children. Masitsa *et al* (2004:237) state that parental apathy is one of the major hindrances in school-parent relations. All schools should have a policy to enhance parental involvement to maximize the role of parents in schools.

### **2.5.18 Skills in improving and maintaining high standards of education**

When a culture of learning and teaching already exists within a school, the high standards should be nurtured and maintained. Mestry and Grobler (2004:126) remark that one of the duties of a school principal is to improve and maintain high standards of education. Schools with poor matric results are continually under fire. Based on their Grade 12 results, schools are ranked and categorized, for example, as excellent or poor-performing schools, (Le Grange, 2007:425). At the end of each year when the results of the examinations are published, schools are evaluated not only by their pass rates, but also by the number of distinctions and the number of candidates that have obtained matriculation exemption. 'Matric results' has become a significant indicator of the success of the education system in South Africa (Berkhout 2007:407). Principals are under pressure to "perform" because parents of prospective grade 8 learners would opt for a school with good matric results. Parents living in townships do likewise and either enrol their children at the best performing township schools or at the town school. The consequence is that poor performing schools run empty and good performing ones become overcrowded.

According to Steyn (2005:260) one way to overcome this problem is to set high standards and expectations for learners and educators. Black (1998:34), Botha (2004:240) and Mestry and Grobler (2004:126) agree and state that educational leaders should set clear expectations, maintain discipline and

implement high standards (to teachers and learners) with the aim of improving teaching and learning at a school. Kruger (2003:206) remarks that principals should become leaders of instruction who should focus on raising the teaching and learning practices in schools. The principal's responsibility to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place in the school thus becomes one of the pivotal issues in the effort to improve the culture of teaching and learning at schools.

### **2.5.19 Networking skills**

Hellriegel *et al* (2006:321) stress the importance of external networking. Managers attend meetings and other gatherings where professionals interact, sometimes resulting in professional relationships being formed. These professionals may then assist each other and share their experience.

Masitsa (2005:177) defines networking as follows: networking involves linking individuals or managers in various schools or districts so that they may share concerns, ideas and effective practices on a continuous basis. When interacting, the majority of the topics discussed relate to their work. One only has to attend meetings of school leaders to see networking in action. Principals share experiences with each other and explain where they have made mistakes and which corrective steps they took. Newly appointed principals should definitely ask peers for advice when they are confronted with difficult situations. Botha (2004:242) agrees and states that principals seldom know who to turn to for advice. Louw, Bosch and Venter (2002:160) classify networking as qualitatively orientated and a "soft" skill.

Mentoring can also be seen as a way in which a manager makes contact with another with the aim of gaining information. Malderez (2001:57) defines mentoring as support given by one (usually more experienced) person for the growth and learning of another, and for his integration into and acceptance by a specific community. Mentoring may take place informally between colleagues

who provide advice, opinions or support. Poon (2006:1) distills a number of key facets of mentoring from a variety of definitions:

- Mentoring involves a relationship
- Mentoring entails learning
- Mentoring is a mechanism to achieve significant leadership development.

Networking is not restricted to principals who make contact with each other, but it includes contact with their external environment where they have to build relations with external role players. Botha (2004:241) agrees and adds that principals are most appropriate persons at schools to network with the wider community to ensure that schools keep abreast of current initiatives and anticipate future trends.

It is important for the school principal to be a member of a professional body. At meetings principals are in contact with each other and active exchange of ideas can take place. Membership of a professional association provides a platform to engage professional structures and network; develop new skills; develop a profile within the profession; keep abreast with trends and developments; etc. It should be kept in mind that this type of involvement is most often voluntary and will sometimes require institutional support (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2007:2).

## **2.6 CONCLUSION**

Management and leadership skills are essential to school principals in order to successfully manage their schools. Many principals unwittingly lack the full compliment of skills needed to perform all the tasks in their responsibility field. They compensate for this deficiency by delegating some of their tasks while trying to execute others to the best of their ability. If principals have a sound theoretical foundation and practical experience of different management skills and leadership styles, they should be much more effective.

South Africa, being a developing country, needs strong and determined leadership in schools. A climate of pursuing excellence, perseverance and achievement lacks in most South African schools. This culture of mediocrity spills over to the adult population where unemployment and hopelessness is rife. Strong leadership in learning institutions may start this process of change for the better.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a description of the research methodology employed in the empirical study. It outlines the procedure used by the researcher to collect, process and analyse data regarding the managerial skills of principals in the Lejweleputswa Educational District. Section 3.2 highlights the main objectives of the empirical study. Section 3.3 discusses the research design and methodology that was employed and motivates the use of a quantitative method of collecting data on the skills levels of principals. It will also validate the addition of a qualitative section to the questionnaire. Section 3.4 deals with procedures utilised to obtain data. It also elaborates on the field notes taken at schools where questionnaires were distributed and collected. Section 3.5 describes how the collected data was checked, coded and analysed. Ethical issues, as highlighted in chapter 1 (1.10), will be discussed in 3.6. Section 3.7 presents a summary of the chapter.

#### **3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY**

The purpose of the empirical study was to determine the management and leadership skills of secondary school principals in the Lejweleputswa Educational District. The study explored the extent to which principals are equipped to perform their functions both as school leaders and managers. This approach would enable the researcher to conduct a needs analysis dedicated to leadership and management training. The current SAQA accredited Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership was then critically analysed to establish whether this qualification actually addresses the identified skills. The following objectives were identified:

- To determine the current management and leadership skills levels of the principals in the Lejweleputswa Educational District;

- To compile a needs analysis meant to determine the leadership and management training needs of principals in the Lejweleputswa Educational District;
- To critically analyse the current SAQA registered Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership to ascertain to what extent it caters for the leadership and management needs of principals and school leaders (See Chapter 5).

### **3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology followed in this study reveals a dual approach: first a quantitative approach, aided by a questionnaire to determine the degree to which school principals are skilled to lead and manage their schools, was followed. The information was obtained by soliciting the perspective of teachers and SMT members at the respective schools included in the sample. The quantitative approach was thereafter complemented by a qualitative section consisting of open questions which were put to the respondents. The qualitative approach was additionally supplemented with field notes that were taken at the visited sites (see 3.3.4), as well as document analysis.

The methodology used to analyse the leadership and managerial skills in target schools was based on the research questions derived from the problem statement (see 1.4). The need for effective leadership and management in schools prompted the research project. From the literature study, 19 appropriate leadership and management skills were extracted and described. These 19 skills formed the basis of the quantitative section of the questionnaire.

Information with regard to the skills levels of principals as well as the grade 12 performance (after the 2007 final examinations) was obtained from senior officials at the Lejweleputswa District Office (see chapter 2). The limitations of principals deduced from the questionnaire responses, were then compared with the curriculum of the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (see chapter 5). Macmillan and Schumacher (1997:43) depict this method as one that investigates “historical, legal and policy concepts and events through

an analysis of documents”. Analysis and comparison of the curriculum with data deduced from a need analysis resemble their description closely.

The questionnaire also included two open-ended questions prompting respondents to reveal their personal opinions on the skills levels of principals. Participants were also requested to make recommendations aimed at the improvement of the management and leadership skills of their principals.

Finally, the researcher took field notes at each visited site which presents an unobtrusive method of data collection (see 3.3.4). This method was used to determine the general state of affairs at each school; it was based on conspicuous characteristics of the visited schools such as the orderliness of the school, the organisation of the school and the perceived administrative disposition of the principal. The data obtained from the field notes was subsequently compared with the skills analysis and previous Grade 12 results.

### **3.3.1 Population and research sample**

Based on information obtained from senior departmental officials, all secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District were categorised as either (a) malfunctioning schools with known management and leadership problems, (b) schools well-known for effective management practices and (c) schools that were neither classified as problematic nor very efficient in terms of management practices. From this list, five schools from each category were purposefully selected (for logistical reasons) to constitute the sample. The questionnaire was distributed to all staff members at each school, including the SMT members and principals.

### **3.3.2 Data collecting instruments**

Based on the literature findings with respect to the desired management and leadership skills of principals, a questionnaire with three different sections was compiled:

- Section A elicited biographic information from the respondents. Information regarding the age, gender, qualifications, post level and experience of educators were required, as the assumption was that each of these variables possibly have an influence on educators' disposition towards their principal.
- Section B comprised a list (with a basic description) of 19 statements to which participants had to respond. These statements were based on the 19 skills a principal should demonstrate, as extracted from in the literature overview. A 5-point Likert scale was used. 1 on the scale represented **very weak** abilities/skills levels of the principal, 2 represented **improvement needed**, 3 meant that the principal showed **adequate** abilities/skills, 4 indicated that the principal showed **good** abilities/skills while 5 represented **very good** abilities/ skills.
- Section C contained two open-ended questions to which participants had to respond. Question 1 requested participants to highlight the positive characteristics (not included in the list of skills in Section B) of their principals which they thought needed development. Question 2 requested participants to make recommendations (if any) which could be used to improve the skills levels of their principals. These questions were qualitative in nature as it sought to elicit the opinions of the participants. The data was verified by means of triangulation (see 3.3.7). If a particular participant was biased against his principal, his responses would be neutralised by the responses of other respondents from the same school. These questions were included to ensure that the researcher gleaned as much information as possible.

The triangulation approach was concluded with the use of the field notes to verify the collected data. Even though field notes are regarded as a subjective means of gaining data from schools, it nevertheless served to verify results to a certain extent.

### **3.3.3 Layout and rationale of the questionnaire**

The items used in the questionnaire are explained and the rationale for each question/variable is supplied in this section.

### 3.3.3.1 Section A: (biographical information)

It is assumed that individuals have different perceptions of the performance of their school principal. These differences may be attributed to the position, status, age, qualifications, culture and experience of respondents. The variables perhaps relevant to the differing opinions individuals may have of their principals are as follows:

- **Gender:** Females and males may view authority differently. If the gender of the principal is the same as the respondent, he may be viewed in a more positive light. The opposite may also be true.
- **Age:** Younger people may be less inclined to accept authority than older people. Older people, on the other hand, may have ambitions to be promoted and may also be critical towards school management.
- **Qualifications:** Staff members with lower qualifications may exhibit more respect for a principal with higher qualifications. Staff with higher qualifications, on the other hand, may disrespect the principal for having lower qualifications. It may, however, also be possible that they have a better understanding of the task of the principal.
- **Current rank:** It can be assumed that members of the School Management Team (SMT) may understand the rationale behind decisions taken by the principal better as they may be better informed. As a result, they may score the principal higher than other staff. If, on the other hand, they have their own aspirations to be promoted, they may be more critical of the principal. The SMT will most likely provide the most balanced and objective view of the principal because their relationship revolves around school management matters. As SMT members are leaders in their own right, they often use the principal as a role model for desired behaviour.
- **Years' experience:** The more experienced an educator becomes, the higher the inclination to accept authority. It is, however, also possible

that they may become increasingly sensitised to the skills required to lead people effectively, which may make them even more fault-finding.

■ **Home language:** For ethical reasons the race of participants were not elicited as it may bias the findings. Home language was however used as an indicator of differences in culture. The researcher tried to establish whether members of different cultural groupings viewed leadership issues differently. Respondents from a different cultural, racial or ethnic group to that of the principal may view him/her differently.

### 3.3.3.2 Section B (List of skills)

This section of the questionnaire supplied a list of 19 skills a principal should possess in order to be a successful manager and leader. Respondents needed to rate the degree to which their principal meets these requirements. This was done according to a Likert scale with the following grading:

The principal shows very weak ability/skills	1
The principal's ability/skills need improvement	2
The principal shows adequate ability/skills	3
The principal shows good ability/skills	4
The principal shows very good ability/skills	5

**Skill 1: Financial management skills:** *The way in which all financial matters in the school are dealt with, including budgeting, determination of school fees (if any) with the SGB, the way in which monies are received and spent within the set budget.* This skill sought to elicit a response, from the viewpoint of the respondent, regarding the overall financial control of the principal.

**Skill 2: Personnel evaluation and development skills:** *The correctness and fairness in which the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is implemented, the effecting of corrective measures, and the development of skills of staff as outcomes of the IQMS.* Although the implementation

and management of the IQMS as a task is delegated to the School Development Team (SDT), the principal remains the accountable official. If the IQMS is implemented and managed according to the set standards of the system, the principal will be regarded as well skilled in performing this task.

**Skill 3: Conflict solving skills:** *The way the principal resolves conflict between role-players at school (parents, educators and learners) with emphasis on fairness and desirable outcomes.* Principals need, at all times, to be impartial and fair in each situation where conflict between parties arises. As the school manager he should resolve all conflict situations that may potentially have a negative effect on the efficient operation of the school. The principal should ideally have measures in place that prevent conflict from arising, but if conflict nonetheless arises, there should be a mechanism in place to solve it.

**Skill 4: Problem solving skills:** *The extent to which the principal attends to major problems at school and uses available resources to solve such problems.* Principals who plan effectively will include contingency measures in his planning to address “worst case scenarios”. Proper planning presents nevertheless no guarantee for finding solutions to all problems.

**Skill 5: Administrative or technical skills:** *The extent to which the principal manages the administration of the school and uses information technology to run the administration of the school.* This item aimed to establish the view of the respondents regarding the principal’s skills in running the administration of the school. The management of the administrative staff, receiving of school fees, payments made, time-tabling, record-keeping of stock and learner administration are included, also the extent to which all of these functions are managed by the utilization of information technology.

**Skill 6: Skills in coping with stress:** *The extent to which the principal is able to deal with his own stress, the way in which he is able to cope in stressful situations and the extent to which he is able to manage the stress of his staff.* For various reasons principals are continuously under internal as well as external pressure. Being at the helm of the school can be quite stressful. For many reasons his staff may also be exposed to stress. The principal should be sensitive to situations that may cause stress and he should have mechanisms in place to deal with stressful situations.

**Skill 7: Skills in managing change:** *The extent to which the principal stays abreast with changes in education, his implementation of such changes and the successful outcomes of the changes.* The South African educational dispensation is characterized by continuous change. These changes affect schools primarily in the way they are managed as well as in the classroom where educators perform their line functions. Change should be managed properly and the principal should be well-informed and conversant with all changes.

**Skill 8: Skills in motivating educators and learners:** *The extent to which the principal is able to keep educators and learners motivated and united in the face of difficult circumstances (e.g. lack of resources, poor results, etc.).* Amidst continuous change, poor resources and poor results, educators and learners must somehow see light at the end of the tunnel. The principal's task in keeping role players motivated is complicated. Some people believe motivation comes from within. If a person is by nature demotivated, it is improbable that he would score the principal high in this regard. This item nonetheless sought the respondents' view on the principal's proficiency in keeping educators and learners motivated.

**Skill 9: Teamwork skills:** *The extent to which the principal gains cooperation of staff, parents and learners and with other partners in education in an open and supportive way to achieve shared goals.* This item wanted

information from respondents concerning the principal's ability to keep all role players at school united and focussed on the main goals of the school.

**Skill 10: Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues:** *The extent to which the principal correctly interprets and implements educational policies, acts, laws and other legal issues in the school context. All activities at a school are governed by law and policy. The degree of accuracy to which the principal implements all policies in the continuously changing environment can play a significant role in the success of the school.*

**Skill 11: Personnel selection skills:** *The success with which the principal is able to identify staff shortage, the way in which appropriately qualified staff is appointed in conjunction with the SGB. Although the appointment of staff is ultimately a function of the Head of the Department of Education in a particular province, the principal, together with the School Governing Body, play an essential role in this regard. The principal should identify a staff shortage in a particular learning area, have the post advertised in the vacancy list and then follow procedure in sifting, short-listing and interviewing in a fair and transparent manner. Staff will be well aware if procedure is not followed to the letter.*

**Skill 12: Instructional leadership skills:** *The ability of the principal to set clear expectations and give instructions regarding teaching and learning, maintaining and implementing discipline and implementing high standards by monitoring the education process. The primary role of a principal is to promote effective learning and teaching. He should steer all school activities to this end. Structures that constantly monitor teaching and learning should exist. Authority is thus delegated to lower levels of management which control the work of educators and scrutinize the level of achievement of learners.*

**Skill 13: Strategic planning skills:** *The way in which the vision and mission of the school (in conjunction with all role players) are designed, refined into specific goals, the communication of these goals and the way in which these are communicated to the staff.* A principal should provide direction with regard to all school activities. He is also responsible for setting a vision and mission for the school. In striving to realize this vision, certain goals are set. The extent to which the principal is able to involve all stakeholders, plays a considerable role in his vision for the school.

**Skill 14: Human relations skills:** *The extent to which the principal is able to build good relations with parents, teachers, learners and other role players in the educational setting.* The principal of a school is, apart from his work as school manager and leader, also a leader in the community. He has a role to fulfil in building and maintaining relationships with all role players in the community. He is also responsible for building relationships with other entities within the educational setting of the school. Sound internal relationships ensure the smooth functioning of the school.

**Skill 15: Communication skills:** *The extent to which the principal is able to successfully communicate face to face and in writing with all role players in the educational setting making use of all available resources in doing so.* In leading the school, communication plays a vital role in the dissemination of information. The principal needs to be understood and he should also be able to understand others. He should be able to interpret a given situation and communicate according to the needs of the situation. Principals should be able to communicate sensibly internally as well as externally using all appropriate channels of communication. This includes the use of information and computer technology.

**Skill 16: Skills in the management of facilities:** *The extent to which the principal is able to supervise maintenance of school facilities, furniture and equipment, including the provision of clean toilets and the prevention*

*of vandalism.* The general appearance of a school above all dictates what is happening on the inside. Resources are made available and these should be utilized efficiently. School facilities should also be maintained to ensure functionality.

**Skill 17: Skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning:** *The extent to which the principal is able to create a healthy climate for teaching and learning for success in schools by ensuring that there is room for self-expression, creativity, communication and motivation in all structures.* The principal sets the pace, also with regard to the achievements of his learners. His leadership and his ability to set realistic expectations largely determine the degree to which such expectations are met. This item required the respondents' to give their view on the ability of the principal to establish and maintain a culture of learning and teaching.

**Skill 18: Skills in improving and maintaining high standards of education:** *The extent to which the principal sets clear academic expectations and implements a high standard of ethical conduct for both teachers and learners.* Not accepting the mediocre, but endlessly striving towards higher standards of education is characteristic of a visionary principal. Without losing sight of reality, a principal should be able to encourage learners and educators to always strive towards excellence.

**Skill 19: Networking skills:** *The extent to which the principal builds relationships with other principals and educational stakeholders in order to share common problems and learn from one another.* The newly appointed school principal cannot be expected to be adequately prepared for all management areas. In the process of becoming an expert, he draws on the experience of others (seniors or peers). Respondents' opinions on their principal's ability to utilize the expertise of others to augment his own deficiencies/inexperience, were required.

### 3.3.3.3Section C (Open-ended questions)

This section required thoughtful consideration of principals' general management skills and ways of improving it. The open-ended questions complemented the statistical information in addition to the quantitative data that was collected. These questions were based on the personal experiences of the respondents and might offer valuable insights.

Question 1: *What is your overall impression of the management skills of the principal at your school?* The aim of this question was to gather information which respondents might not have revealed directly in response to the quantitative section of the questionnaire. Valuable information about the extent of or the lack of specific skills of the principal, was gained.

Question 2: *In your opinion, how can the current skills level of your principal be improved?* This was a direct and self-explanatory question.

### **3.3.4 The use of field notes**

Field notes were taken during each visit to the sample schools. Data was gained as discreetly as possible. The degree to which cooperation was given in obtaining responses from questionnaires was also noted.

The following questions were considered in the field notes:

- 🎬 *Is the front gate open or locked?* Under normal circumstances, an open front gate may signify a lack of control over the movement of learners or strangers in and out of the school premises.
- 🎬 *Are any learners not in class?* If learners are observed outside a class, teaching and learning is evidently not taking place. It is reasonable to find a few learners out of class, but when larger groups roam around the premises it raises suspicion.
- 🎬 *Is there any sign of unattended classes?* If a number of teachers are loitering outside their classes, clearly little instruction is taking place.
- 🎬 *What is the condition of the terrain/gardens?* A neatly maintained terrain with adequate dustbins is usually an indication of proper facilities

management. A littered terrain with leaking taps and a shortage of dustbins amount to negligence.

- *What is the general condition of the school?* Broken windows and dilapidated buildings indication wide-ranging neglect and probably vandalism.
- *Was I received in an appropriate manner?* First impressions are lasting, and the lasting image of a school mostly depends on a friendly and professional reception.
- *Was my reception by the principal conducted in a friendly manner?*
- Was he still friendly after the rationale of the research had been explained? Many principals may feel threatened when their abilities are questioned.
- *What is the state of the principal's office?*
  - Neat, well organised, conducive to work? If a principal's office appears disorganised, it may indicate poor control of his own administration.
  - Is there a computer which is clearly in use? This item was included solely to determine if the principal is able to utilise information and computer technology. The absence thereof, however, is not an indication of incompetence.
  - Is other communication technology present, such as an intercom system, a telephone and fax machine?

The number of times a school had to be visited to obtain questionnaires was finally also noted. The assumption was that it might indicate a spirit of goodwill (or the absence thereof!) and how reliable the staff members are.

Care was taken to fairly judge the context of each situation in which data was considered. This was to ensure that information would not be reported out of context. For example, it may have been break time or a teacher may have been absent. The field notes were jotted down immediately after the researcher had left a particular site to prevent the possibility of confusion of information from different schools. Information/data gained from the field notes was subsequently compared with the results of section B.

### **3.3.5 Document analysis**

The current SAQA registered Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership was critically analysed to determine its devotion to the leadership and management needs of principals and school leaders (See Chapter 5). Document or textual analysis is valuable in an empirical study of this nature because it provides a clear understanding of the current practices employed vis-à-vis the phenomenon under investigation and it moreover presents a comprehensible and tangible record of the topic being investigated (Grabin, 2007:10).

### **3.3.6 Validity and reliability of research instruments**

Any investigation that has to design its own instrument of research runs the risk of poor reliability and validity (Mestry & Grobler, 2004:129). Macmillan and Schumacher (1997:238) remark that validity is not a case of all-or-nothing, but rather a matter of differences in degree. Investigators (the researcher) should indicate the validity of the specific inferences and conclusions made in their study.

The questionnaire was sent to the Head: Information Management Unit at the Central University of Technology for scrutiny and critique. The suggestions made by this unit were used to improve the standard of the instrument. It was also scrutinised by the Senior Director (Internal Research) which resulted in further improvements.

According to Macmillan and Schumacher (1997:239), reliability refers to the extent to which results remain similar when using different forms of the same instrument. It is also concerned with consistency which refers to the coding of raw data in such a way that others would arrive at the same conclusions (Jaeger, 1990:129).

### **3.3.7 Triangulation**

Macmillan and Schumacher (1997:493) describe triangulation as the cross-validation of different sources of data. In this study, data was triangulated in the following way:

- The qualitative responses in section C were coded and categorized according to schools. Once analysed, it was compared with the outcomes in section B.
- The results from the field notes were compared with the outcomes in sections B and C to establish possible trends or consistencies between responses.

### **3.3.8 Pilot testing**

Pilot testing presents an important way of testing the validity of an instrument (Macmillan and Schumacher, 1997:239). The content reliability and validity of the questionnaire was verified by doing a pilot study using 18 respondents not involved in the final study. The information gleaned this way was used to improve the clarity of the items. In the pilot testing participants were asked to make recommendations on the length of the questionnaire and the time taken to complete it. This gave the researcher a clear indication of the estimated time needed for completion of the questionnaire. Only minor adjustments were effected after the pilot test.

## **3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE**

The process of data collection at the sample schools included a site visit. The rationale of the research was explained to the principal or his delegate. Field notes were taken concurrently to form an impression of the general conditions which prevail at each school. The principal was informed that the completed questionnaire would be collected at his convenience. The researcher trusted that this would ensure a higher return rate.

## **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

### **3.5.1 Quantitative data analysis**

The SPSS 13.0 for Windows Integrated Student Version as well as Microsoft Excel (2007 version) were used to analyse data, to find correlations, present descriptive data and to determine the reliability of the research instrument (Cronbach Alpha Coefficient).

### **3.5.2 Qualitative data analysis**

The qualitative data analysis contributed notably to the quantitative data. Critical summaries of feedback were prepared and produced and they were subjected to a thematic analysis. The responses were then grouped according to the main themes, after which it was analysed.

## **3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The following ethical measures were considered (see chapter 1, 1.10):

### **3.6.1 Professional ethics**

- The researcher endeavoured to be objective in reviewing literature and obtaining data.
- The researcher refrained from falsification and/or fabrication of data.
- The researcher described the methodology used to obtain data.

### **3.6.2 Publishing ethics**

- Contributions/quotes of all authors used in the study were duly acknowledged in the text as well as in the list of references.
- All other written work is free of plagiarism and flowed from the researcher's pen.

### **3.6.3 Accountability**

- Full permission was obtained from the Free State Department of Education to conduct the research at secondary schools in the Lejweleputswa District.

- Research results will be open and available to all.

#### **3.6.4 Relationship with subjects**

- Anonymity and privacy of respondents were respected at all times.
- A summary of the rationale of the research project was explained to respondents in the cover letter to the questionnaire.

#### **3.6.5 Publication of results**

- The report was written in a clear and unambiguous manner to ensure clarity.
- A shortened version of this research will be submitted for publication in an accredited journal.

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

This chapter explicated the objectives of the empirical study, the research design and methodology, field notes, procedures used in data collection, methods and programs used in data analysis, ethical considerations as well as limitations of the research design and methods. In the following chapter the findings will be presented and discussed.

## CHAPTER 4

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The results of the data analysis are presented in this chapter. The data was collected and then processed in line with the objectives stated in chapter 1. These were:

- To determine the specific management needs of school principals in the Free State Province;
- To determine the extent to which school principals in the Free State Province are professionally equipped for their task;
- To determine the major training challenges of principals in the Free State Province; and
- To critically compare the training needs as identified in this study with the proposed training program (ACE: SL) of the Department of Education (to be discussed in Chapter 5)

These objectives were accomplished. The findings presented in this chapter demonstrate the potential of merging theory and practice.

#### 4.2 THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOLS

The sample for the study was drawn from the Lejweleputswa Education District. The district has a population of 65 ordinary secondary, combined and comprehensive schools in addition to three technical secondary schools. Based on their matric examination results in 2007, the schools were labelled by the Lejweleputswa District Management as either functional (44 schools), “at risk” (8 schools) or failing schools (16 schools).

Functional schools had a pass rate of above 60%, “at risk” schools achieved between 50% and 60% and failing (dysfunctional) schools scored below 50%. The final choice of secondary schools was informed by two considerations:

firstly, matric examination results and secondly, accessibility. Five schools from each category were selected and they displayed the following characteristics:

Functional schools	Medium of instruction	Characteristics
School A1	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School A2	Afrikaans/ English	Town school, advantaged, multicultural
School A3	English	Town school, advantaged, multicultural
School A4	English	Town school, advantaged, multicultural
School A5	Afrikaans/ English	Town school, advantaged, multicultural

*Table 4.1: Characteristics of functional schools*

"at risk" schools	Medium of instruction	Characteristics
School B1	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School B2	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School B3	English	Mine school, advantaged
School B4	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School B5	English	Township school, disadvantaged

*Table 4.2: Characteristics of "at risk" schools*

Failing schools	Medium of instruction	Characteristics
School C1	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School C2	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School C3	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School C4	English	Township school, disadvantaged
School C5	English	Township school, disadvantaged

*Table 4.3: Characteristics of dysfunctional schools*

### **4.3 RESPONSE RATES**

The response rate was relatively low:

Schools	Questionnaires out	Questionnaires back	Response rate (%)
A	187	99	52.94
B	177	82	46.33
C	202	74	36.63
Total	566	255	45.05

*Table 4.4: Return rates of questionnaires*

*Discussion:*

The low response rates could not be ascribed to any other factor except apathy on the part of respondents. The rationale of the questionnaire and the research was thoroughly explained to the principal when it was delivered. It is not known whether the rationale was explained to the staff when the questionnaires were handed to them. Some schools were only visited once to collect the completed questionnaires. Some other schools, however, had to be visited up to six times. It is interesting to note that the return rates corresponded with the level of functionality of the schools: functional (A) schools at almost 53%, “at risk” schools at 46.3% and failing schools at 36.6%.

Dysfunctional (C-schools) had to be visited on average four times per school to collect questionnaires, while “at risk” (B schools) and functional schools (A-schools) had to be visited on average between two and three times.

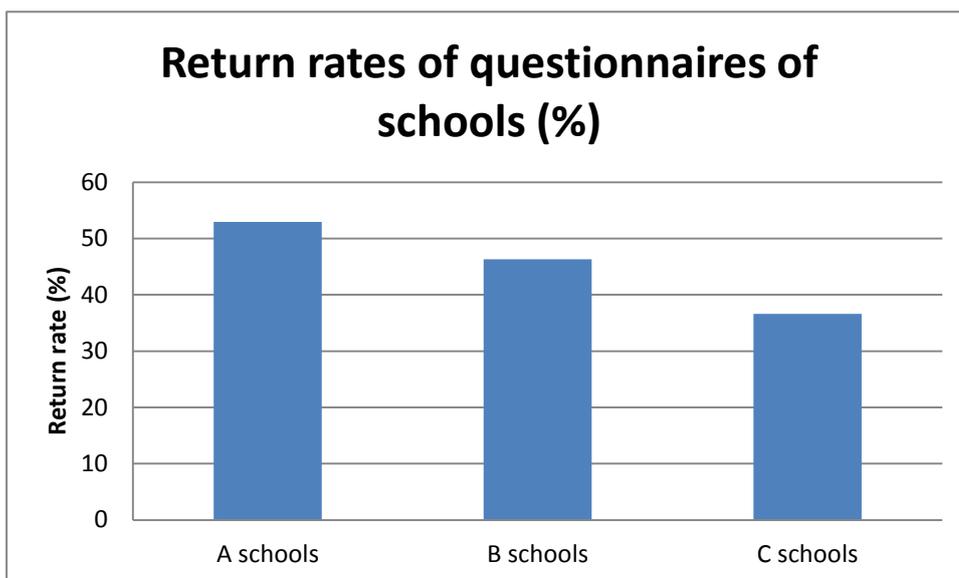


Figure 4.1: The return rates of questionnaires for the different schools.

#### 4.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

The respondents displayed the following characteristics:

##### 4.4.1 Gender

School	Male	Female	Not stated	Total
A	34	65	0	99
B	46	36	0	82
C	38	33	3	74
Total	119	133	3	255

Table 4.5: Gender distribution of respondents

##### Discussion

Males represented about 45% of the population and females 53% (2% not stated). It is noteworthy that males were predominant in “at risk” and dysfunctional schools (53.8%) while they represented the minority in functional schools (34.3%).

#### 4.4.2 The rank distribution of respondents

School based educators were ranked according to post levels ranging from 1 to 4. Post level (PL)1 educators were in the majority, the PL2 represented the heads of department, PL3 the deputy principles and PL4 the principals. All schools had a PL4 principal with the exception of school B3 (PL3). For the sake of determining the level of staff development at schools, subject heads (PL1.5) were also included.

Rank	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools	Total
PL 1	59	64	52	175
PL 1.5	14	5	5	24
PL 2	17	9	10	36
PL 3	6	5	4	15
PL 4	3	1	3	7
Total	99	82	74	255

*Table 4.6: Rank distribution of respondents*

#### *Discussion:*

The response rate of school management teams (SMT's) at functional schools equated to 26.3%, whereas the SMT's of "at risk" and dysfunctional schools only had a 20.5% response rate. This may be interpreted as a culture of carelessness which prevailed at dysfunctional and "at risk" schools.

Also noteworthy was the fact that functional schools appointed more subject heads than "at risk" and dysfunctional schools. Fourteen subject heads of functional schools responded, while only 10 responses were received from "at risk" and dysfunctional schools.

The appointment of educators as subject heads is an empowering process since the educator learns to take charge of a learning area. The literature overview indicated that the delegation of responsibilities to subordinates gives them a sense of empowerment and keeps them motivated.

#### 4.4.3 The age distribution of respondents

Age	A-schools		B-schools		C-schools		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
No response	0	0	2	2.4	0	0	2	0.8
22-25	6	6	4	4.9	3	4.1	13	5.1
26-30	12	12	5	6.1	1	1.4	18	7.1
31-35	26	26	12	14.6	16	21.6	54	21.2
36-40	12	12	21	25.6	20	27	53	20.8
41-45	12	12	23	28	22	29.7	57	22.4
46-50	12	12	10	12.2	10	13.5	32	12.5
51-55	11	11	5	6.1	1	1.4	17	6.7
56-60	6	6	0	0	1	1.4	7	2.7
61-65	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	0.8
Total	99		82		74		255	

*Table 4.7: Age distribution of respondents*

*Discussion:*

Although the average age of educators at all three schools was the same (A = 39.77, B = 39.5 and C = 39.49), distinct differences in the distribution of age groups could be detected. In the A-schools most respondents belonged to the age group 31-35 while the majority in the B and C-schools could be found in the age group 41-45. There was only one respondent over 55 years of age in the B and C-schools whilst 8 were older than 55 in the A-schools. The majority (91.9%) of educators in C-schools were between 31 and 50 years old while 42,6% (A-schools) and 78,5% (B-schools) were between those ages.

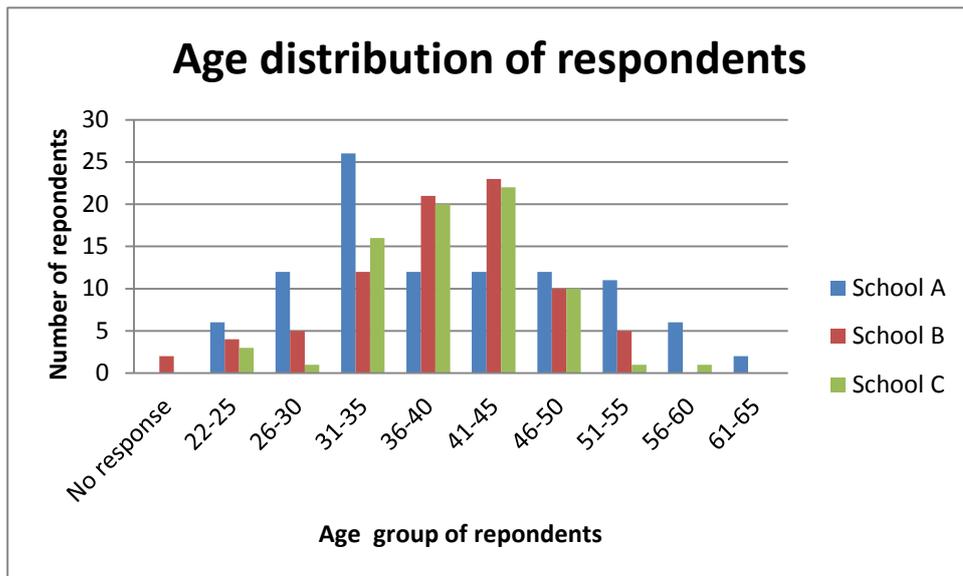


Figure 4.2: Age distribution of respondents

#### 4.4.4 Qualifications of respondents:

The NQF levels of educators may be summarised as follows:

NQF 5 = 3 year diploma or degree

NQF 6 = 4 year diploma or degree with Higher Diploma in Education or Post Graduate Diploma in Education

NQF 7 = Plus Advanced Certificate in Education or Honours' degree

NQF 8 = Masters' degree

The NQF levels of the educators are summarised in *table 4.5*

NQF level	A- schools	B- school	C- school	Total
No response	0	1	2	3
5	22	33	30	85
6	49	26	21	96
7	25	21	17	63
8	3	1	4	8
Average	6.091	5.735	5.93	5.976
Total	99	82	74	255

Table 4.8: NQF distribution of respondents

*Discussion:*

The qualifications of educators in “at risk” schools were on average lower compared to dysfunctional schools. Functional schools, however, had staff with the highest qualifications. It is difficult to deduce which role the qualifications of staff play with regard to the functionality of schools.

It is moreover noteworthy that only 22.2% of the staff at A-schools, 40.7% at B-schools and 41.6% at C-schools had a 3 year qualification. With the introduction of the new education dispensation (post-1994), bursaries were made available to under-qualified educators. In spite of this, 37.7% of the educators in this sample may still be classified as under-qualified. It is also worth mentioning that 27.8% of respondents had qualifications equal to honours’ degrees and 3.1% masters’ degrees.

#### **4.4.5 Teaching experience of respondents**

The experience of educators is as follows:

Years experience	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools	Total
No response	0	0	0	0
0-5	27	19	16	62
6-10	29	17	11	57
11-15	10	14	21	45
16-20	10	19	17	46
21-25	9	10	7	26
26-30	7	3	1	11
31-35	5	0	1	6
36-40	2	0	0	2
Total	99	82	74	255

*Table 4.9: Experience distribution of educators*

### Discussion:

As a rule of thumb, the more experienced an educator becomes the better he performs. Almost half (46.67%) of the sample had less than 10 years experience. At A-schools more than half (56.6%) had less than 10 years experience. The experience of educators could therefore be ruled out as a main contributor to failing schools. Another noteworthy finding was that very few educators (3.1%) had more than 30 years experience.

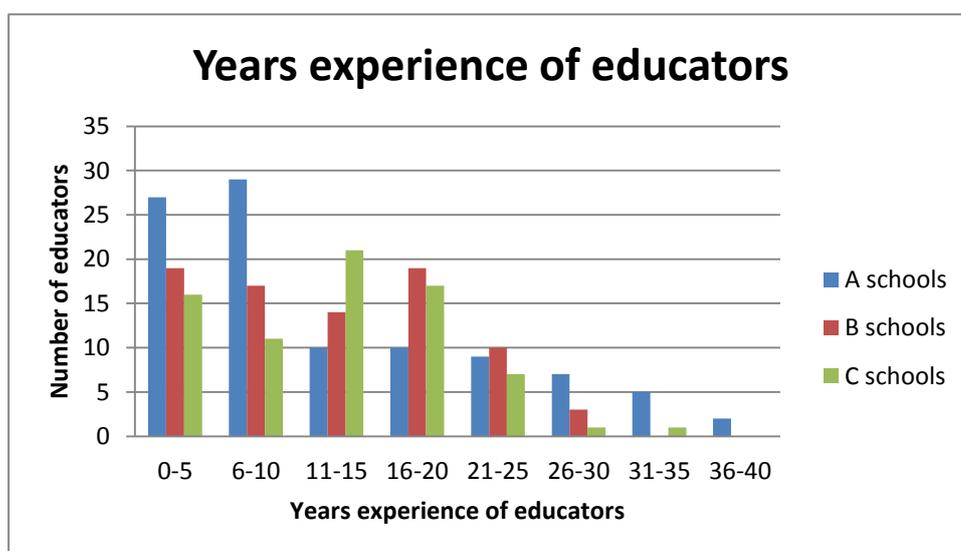


Figure 4.3: Experience distribution of respondents

#### 4.4.6 Experience of educators in their current rank

	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools	Total
No response	0	0	0	0
0-5	43	25	25	93
6-10	31	27	17	75
11-15	8	8	14	30
16-20	9	16	12	37
21-25	5	5	4	14
26-30	1	1	1	3
31-35	2	0	0	2
Total	99	82	74	255

Table 4.10: Experience in current rank distribution of educators

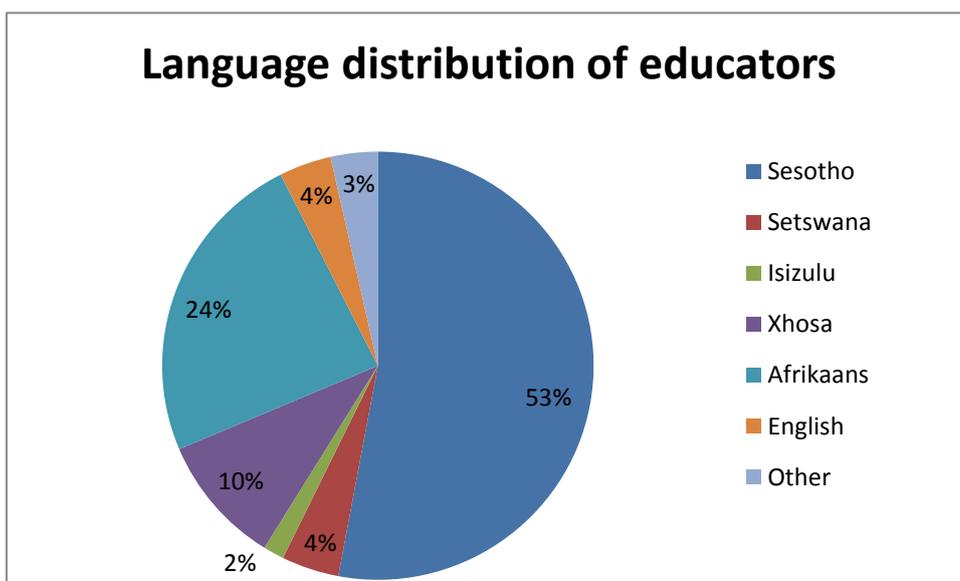
*Discussion:*

Nearly 66% of the educators had less than 10 years experience in their current positions while 36.5% had less than 5 years experience. Of note was the fact that 74.7% of educators in A-schools had less than 10 years experience in their current rank. That might indicate that the more experienced educators left the profession as a result of discontentment.

#### 4.4.7 Home language of respondents

Language	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools	Total
Sesotho	22	58	55	135
Setswana	3	3	5	11
Isizulu	0	3	1	4
Xhosa	5	10	10	25
Afrikaans	60	1	0	61
English	7	3	0	10
Other	2	4	3	9
Total	99	82	74	255

*Table 4.11: Language distribution of educators*



*Figure 4.4: Language distribution of educators*

### *Discussion:*

Only two schools in the sample did not use English as the language of teaching and learning (LOTL). Schools A2 and A5 were both parallel medium schools (Afrikaans and English). The other schools used English as the LOTL even though only 10 respondents listed English as their home language. In schools where English was the LOTL, 72.2% of the educators consequently taught in a language other than their home language. It might impede ability to convey knowledge/skills/attitudes to learners significantly. However, the LOTL-controversy is beyond the scope of this study.

## **4.5 QUANTITATIVE RESULTS**

The methods used to deduce the results from the data collected were as follows:

### **4.5.1 Methodology**

The averages of the scores of respondents were calculated. These calculations were done as follows: per school, per group of a school, for variables per group of a school and per group for all schools in total. Microsoft Excel (Office 2007 version) was used and conditionally formatted by colour coding to show variances per group and per group of schools. Where significant variances were found, these variances are discussed within the context of the variable. Where the variance was found to be significant for one type of school only, it was compared to other types of schools so as to emphasise that particular variance. Feasible reasons for difference in variances were also discussed. Each skill was discussed individually and principals were classified according to their scores within each skill range. At the end of each discussion of results a summary of training needs was presented.

### **4.5.2 Reliability of instrument**

To verify the consistency of the inter-item reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficients were calculated by using the statistical package SPSS 13.0 (student version). The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of the 19 items was 0.974. The reliability of the research instrument could therefore be regarded as very high.

#### 4.5.3 Summary of average scores for all schools

Respondents had to react to a statement by selecting an option from a Likert scale, ranking the principal as 1 (very weak skills), 2 (improvement needed), 3 (adequate skills), 4 (good skills) or 5 (very good skills). The average score was obtained by adding up all the scores (per item) and dividing them by the number of respondents. Thereafter all the skill averages were added up and divided by the number of items. Principals of A-schools were ranked the highest by the respondents, followed by C-schools and B-schools.

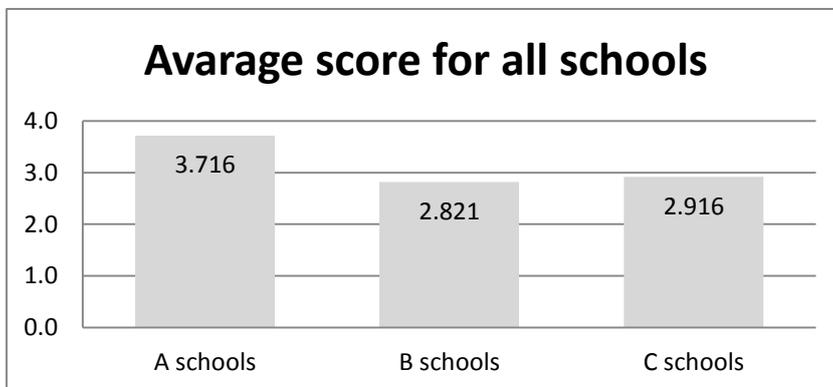


Figure 4.5: Average scores for all items

Surprisingly so C-school respondents scored their principals higher than B-schools. A probable explanation might be that C-schools educators scored their principals higher in an effort to hide their own inadequacies in the classroom. One would have expected them to shift the blame for being depicted as dysfunctional to the principal by scoring him lower. Was it perhaps possible that they tried to hide the principal's inadequacies as the questionnaire provided the

opportunity to do so? The school B educators were not under “dysfunctional pressure” and seemed to put the blame on the principal by scoring him lower.

It may, however, also be statistically possible that the higher return rate at B-schools led to a lower average score. The opposite may also be true for C-schools where the return rates were lower. The principal might have weaker control over the staff which might have resulted in his fiercest rivals not completing the questionnaire. This might explain the discrepancy between the return rates of questionnaires at C-schools (36.63%) and B-schools (46.33%).

A-school educators were not under “dysfunctional pressure” which might have caused them to score their principals more freely. A-schools averaged a score of 16 – 18% higher than the B- and C-schools.

#### 4.5.4 Summary of scores per skill (out of 5)

Average scores per skill were obtained by adding all the scores and dividing it by the number of respondents.

	Financial Management	Personnel development	Conflict solving	Problem solving	Administrative + tech skills	Stress management	Management of change	Motivation of all	Teamwork skills	Legal issues	Personnel selection	Instructional leadership	Strategic planning	Human relation skills	Communication skills	Management of facilities	Culture of teaching and learning	Setting of high standards	Networking skills	Average for group	Number of respondents
A-schools	3.9	3.6	3.5	3.6	4.1	3.4	3.8	3.5	3.3	4.0	3.6	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.7	4.0	4.1	3.716	99
B-schools	2.9	2.7	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.7	3.0	3.0	2.7	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.821	82
C-schools	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.7	2.9	3	3	2.8	3.1	2.9	3.1	2.7	3.1	3	2.5	2.9	3.1	3.1	2.916	74
All schools	3.2	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.0	3.2	3.1	3.0	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.4	3.19	255

*Table 4.12: All school average responses*

#### *Discussion:*

- With regard to legal issues and networking, all schools ranked the skills level of their principal high.

- All schools ranked their principals low on teamwork, stress management, problem solving and personnel development skills.
- A-schools respondents ranked their principals' ability to set high standards and their administrative and technical skills high, while B- and C- schools ranked it from average to low.
- A-schools respondents ranked their principals' human relations, communication and motivation skills low, while their B and C counterparts ranked it from average to high.
- A-schools principals' ability to plan strategically was ranked high, while it was ranked low for B and C schools.
- C-schools respondents ranked their principals' instructional leadership skills high, while A- and B-schools ranked it much lower.
- B-schools ranked their principals' ability to solve conflict and human relation skills high, while A and C-schools ranked it much lower.

Item	Average score	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools
Teamwork skills	2.96	19	12	16
Stress management	2.99	18	19	11
Management of facilities	3.04	10	14	9

Conflict solving	3.10	16	2	10
Problem solving	3.10	15	15	13
Personnel development	3.12	12	15	14
Motivation of all	3.13	18	9	6
Strategic planning	3.13	6	17	18
Culture of teaching and learning	3.17	9	12	11
Personnel selection	3.19	11	4	9
Communication skills	3.21	13	3	7
Instructional leadership	3.22	8	17	3
Financial Management	3.24	5	8	15
Management of change	3.24	7	11	7
Human relation skills	3.25	13	1	5
Administrative and technical skills	3.28	2	15	13
Setting of high standards	3.39	3	10	17
Legal issues	3.40	4	4	1
Networking skills	3.42	1	6	2

*Table 4.13: Ranked skills for all schools*

#### 4.5.4.1 Skill 1: Financial management skills

*The way in which all financial matters in the school are dealt with, including budgeting, determination of school fees (if any) with the SGB, the way in which monies are received and spent within the set budget.*

##### *Discussion:*

The average score for A-schools was clearly much higher than for the B- and C-type schools. All A-schools were Section 21 schools which allowed the School Governing Body full control over the management of the schools' finances. These were also fee charging schools. Funding, therefore, was not a limiting factor. There were, however, significant differences in the scores of the various A-schools. School A2 scored 3.2 and A4 scored 4.3, which indicated that not all principals had the same ability to manage the finances of their schools.

The average score for B-schools was 2.9 and for C-schools 2.8. Only one of the B-schools was a Section 21 school (B3 – 3.4). The score also varied quite significantly between the highest (4.1 – B2) to the lowest (1.8 – B1). The scores

for the C-schools varied between 3.1 (C1 and C3) and 2.4 (C2 and C4). C4 was the only Section 21 school.

Worth mentioning is that 27.5% of respondents of all schools believed that their principal showed very weak financial management skills or that their skills needed improvement. It is, on the other hand, encouraging that 44.7% of respondents indicated that their principal displayed “good” or “very good” financial management skills.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	19	7.5	7.5	7.5
2	51	20.0	20.0	27.5
3	71	27.8	27.8	55.3
4	77	30.2	30.2	85.5
5	37	14.5	14.5	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.14 Distribution of financial management skills*

#### 4.5.4.2 **Skill 2:** Personnel evaluation and development skills

*The correctness and fairness in which the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) is implemented, the effecting of corrective measures, and the development of skills of staff as outcomes of IQMS.*

##### *Discussion:*

From the averages it became evident that A-schools principals scored much better than their counterparts in B- and C-schools. Most respondents at A-schools ranked their principal high. It is remarkable that the SMT’s and educators with more than 30 years experience thought the principal had “good” or “very good” abilities in personnel evaluation and development skills. It was to be expected that SMT members would rank this item high as this function was generally delegated to them. Groups that ranked the principals lowest included beginner educators (age group 22 – 25) and educators with the lower qualifications. B and C-schools ranked their principals on average below “adequate”.

Differences were also apparent between the scoring of individual schools. When considering the A-schools, the principal of School A4 scored 4.2 while the principal at school A2 scored 3.1. In the B-schools group the principal of school B2 scored 4.1, while three schools (B1, 4 and 5) scored their principal in the range between 2.1 to 2.6. In the C-schools group two principals were scored 2.4 and 2.5; the others around 3. According to the respondents, 5 principals needed to improve their skills regarding personnel evaluation and development.

It is noteworthy that in total 35.5% of the respondents ranked their principals below “adequate” and 39.9% ranked them as “good” or “very good” in relation to this skill.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	5.5	5.5	5.5
	2	62	24.3	24.5	30.0
	3	76	29.8	30.0	60.1
	4	82	32.2	32.4	92.5
	5	19	7.5	7.5	100.0
	Total	253	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.8		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.15: Distribution of personnel evaluation and development skills*

#### 4.5.4.3 Skill 3: Conflict solving skills

*The way the principal resolves conflict between role-players at school (parents, educators and learners) with emphasis on fairness and desirable outcomes.*

*Discussion:*

Many anomalies were found in the scoring of principals' conflict resolution skills which consequently warrants a more detailed report.

A-schools scored their principals between “adequate” and “good” (3.5) while B and C-schools thought they needed improvement or were “adequate” (2.9 – 3.0). The average for all schools was however above “adequate” (3.1). Groups that were more critical of their principals’ skills in solving conflict included Zulu-speaking educators who scored their principals 2.25 (n = 4 only), educators in the age group 21-25 (all schools 2.77, n = 13) and educators in the age group 34 – 40 (B-schools, 2.4, n = 20). In A-schools the most critical educators were from the age group 22 – 25 (2.5, n = 6).

There were also significant discrepancies between different language groups. Sesotho educators in A-schools viewed their principals as “good” (4.1, n = 22), but in C-schools Sesotho educators labelled their principals as “need improvement” (2.7, n = 55). In C-schools Tswana (3.6, n = 50) and Xhosa speakers (3.7, n = 10) rated their principals between “adequate” and “good”. The data clearly indicated that minority groups in schools valued their principals’ skills at solving conflict much higher than the majority groups. This was also the case for Tswana speakers (all schools, 3.82, n = 11), “other” languages (all schools, 3.44, n = 9) and Xhosa (C-schools, 3.7, n = 10). No explanation could however be forwarded for the fact that Zulu speakers rated their principals low (2.5, n = 13).

School Management Team members scored their principals higher (3.38, n = 58) than post level 1 educators (3.07, n = 197). This might be so because conflict resolution was either delegated to them, or they were (as management) closer to the principal and therefore better informed about the principals’ attempts at solving conflict. SMT’s at C-schools scored their principals surprisingly high (3.4, n = 17) in comparison with PL1 educators (2.8, n = 57).

Big differences in the viewpoints of educators holding NQF level 7 qualifications were prevalent between B and C-schools. NQF 7 educators in B-schools scored their principals at only 2.6 (n = 21) while C-schools principals got 3.3 (n = 17). NQF level 5 educators in C-schools rated their principals at only 2.7 (n = 30).

Interesting to note is that A-schools ranked conflict solving in their schools as the 16<sup>th</sup> best skill as opposed to B-schools where it was ranked as the 2<sup>nd</sup> best skill.

Two principals in A-schools (A1 and A4) were “very good” at conflict resolution while one needed improvement (A2). In the B-schools one principal was labelled “very good” (B2) and two principals needed improvement (B1 and B5). In the C-schools two principals needed improvement (C2 and C4) while the others were “adequately” skilled. The data indicated that six principals needed to improve their skills in conflict resolution.

33.5% of all respondents felt that their principals’ conflict resolution skills were poor or needed improvement while 44.5% felt that their principals showed “good” or “very good” skills.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	30	11.8	11.8	11.8
	2	55	21.6	21.7	33.5
	3	56	22.0	22.0	55.5
	4	75	29.4	29.5	85.0
	5	38	14.9	15.0	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
	Total	255	100.0		

*Table 4.16: Distribution of conflict resolution skills*

#### 4.5.4.4 Skill 4: Problem solving skills

*The extent to which the principal attends to major problems at school and uses available resources to solve such problems.*

*Discussion:*

Many differences could be found between the different variables which, once again, warrants a more detailed discussion.

A-schools rated their principals highest (3.6), B-schools lower at 2.7 and C-schools at 2.9. Significant differences existed in the groupings determined by age, post levels, language groups and NQF level of educators.

Inexperienced educators (age group 21 – 25) seemed to be dissatisfied about the way the principal resolved problems. A-schools scored their principals at 2.5 (n = 6) and C-schools at 2.7 (n = 3). Even though this constituted only a small group of respondents, management should pay attention to this skill. In A-schools educators from the age group 36 – 40 were happiest (4.1), while the older groups were most dissatisfied (2.0, n = only 2). This was not the case in B-schools. On average, educators in age group 22 – 35 ranked their principals above “adequate” (3.1, n = 24) as opposed to educators in the age group 36-55 who rated them at only 2.5 (n = 59). From the viewpoint of younger educators, it seemed that principals of B-schools tended to solve problems better.

School Management Teams scored their principals’ abilities to solve problems overall higher (3.4) than PL 1 educators (3.0). SMT’s of A- and C-schools scored their principals much higher than the PL 1 educators. However, the opposite applied to B-schools (see *table 4.15*). The SMT’s of B-schools scored the skills of their principals significantly lower (2.3) than the PL 1’s (2.8). This might indicate that problems in B-schools were solved in a more autocratic manner in an attempt to get rid of the “at risk” school label. In C-schools it might be indicative of a laissez-faire style of leadership followed by the principals.

Post level	A-schools	B-schools	C-schools	All schools
SMT	4.0 (n = 26)	2.3 (n = 16)	3.4 (n = 17)	3.4
PL 1	3.4 (n = 73)	2.8 (n = 66)	2.7 (n = 57)	3.0

*Table 4.17: Average scores for SMT and PL1 educators regarding problem solving skills*

The same trend which was identified in relation to the skill of conflict resolution, was also prevalent with regard to the skill of problem solving: minority groups tended to score their principal higher than the rest. Sesotho and other language speakers rated their principals much higher (A-schools, 4.2 and 4.5) than other

groups. This trend was also detectable in B and C-schools with the exception of Zulu speakers (2.0).

Qualifications in C-schools also seemed to have an influence on how respondents viewed their principals' ability to solve problems. NQF 5 qualified educators scored their principals at 2.6 (n = 21) and NQF 8 educators at 2.5 (n = 4).

In A-schools two principals displayed "very good" skills in problem solving (A1 and A4) while one needed improvement (A2). In B-schools one principal was deemed "very good" (B2) while three others needed improvement (B1, B4 and B 5). In C-schools three principals had to improve (C2, C3 and C4) while the others were rated as "adequate". Seven principals therefore needed to be skilled in their ability to solve problems.

34.8% of respondents indicated that their principals showed weak skills or were "in need of improvement", while 44.9% felt that they had "good" or "very good" skills.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	30	11.8	11.9	11.9
	2	58	22.7	22.9	34.8
	3	59	23.1	23.3	58.1
	4	68	26.7	26.9	85.0
	5	38	14.9	15.0	100.0
	Total	253	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.8		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.18: Distribution of problem solving skills*

#### 4.5.4.5 **Skill 5:** Administrative or technical skills

*The extent to which the principal manages the administration of the school and uses information technology to run the administration of the school.*

*Discussion:*

On the whole, the management and administration of a school did not seem to be problematic at schools (3.28). It was on average placed 4<sup>th</sup> highest. However, closer scrutiny revealed a lack of this skill in B and C-school principals (2.8 and 2.7). A-schools respondents scored their principals very high at 4.1. Afrikaans educators (n = 61) who predominantly taught at A-schools, scored their principals on average at 4.11. African educators (n = 175) scored their principals on average at 2.7. African educators in A-schools scored their principals at 4.0.

Three principals in the A-schools showed “very good” administrative and technical skills (A3, A4 and A5), with the remaining two having “adequate” to “good” skills. In B-schools, however, three principals needed improvement (B1, B4 and B5). In C-schools four principals had to improve - only the principal of school C5 had “adequate” skills. Seven principals in total therefore needed to improve their administrative and technical skills. As A-school principals all show relatively on standard skills and the B and C-schools not, one can assume that the smooth running of a school’s administration will render “good” results.

Relating to administrative skills, only 28.3% of the respondents rated their principals low or as in need of improvement. 44.5% stated that their principals had “good” or “very good” skills in managing the schools administration.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	5.1	5.1	5.1
	2	59	23.1	23.2	28.3
	3	69	27.1	27.2	55.5
	4	69	27.1	27.2	82.7
	5	44	17.3	17.3	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
	Total	255	100.0		

*Table 4.19: Distribution of administrative and technical skills*

**4.5.4.6 Skill 6: Skills in coping with stress**

*The extent to which the principal is able to deal with his own stress, the way in which he is able to cope in stressful situations and the extent to which he is able to manage the stress of his staff.*

### *Discussion*

In general, coping with stress seemed to be a problem as it was subsequently ranked the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest by all the respondents. A-Schools respondents scored their principals at 3.4, B-schools at 2.6 and C-schools at 2.9. The only inconsistent variable was detected in the way which the School Management Team and the PL 1 educators viewed their principal: SMT's scored them at 3.24 and PL 1 educators at 2.91. It proved that the PL 1 educators were of the opinion that their principals did not to cope well with stress, while the SMT's believed the opposite. Once again, it might be attributed to the closer working relationship that existed between principals and SMT members which possible enabled the latter to judge the principals' stress coping mechanisms better. On the other hand, B-school SMT's scored their principals lower than the PL 1 educators (2.3 and 2.7 respectively). Again, B-schools principals might be experiencing external pressure because of their "at risk" school classification.

According to the respondents, five principals were "in need of improvement" (A2, B4, B5, C4 and C5) while only one principal was deemed to be well-skilled in this area (B2).

The percentage of respondents who scored their principals as having poor skills or in need of improvement (35.4%) was akin to that who believed them to be "good" or "very good" in coping with their stress (34.9%).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	24	9.4	9.4	9.4
	2	66	25.9	26.0	35.4
	3	75	29.4	29.5	65.0
	4	67	26.3	26.4	91.3
	5	22	8.6	8.7	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	

Missing System	1	.4	
Total	255	100.0	

Table 4.20: Distribution of coping with stress

#### 4.5.4.7 Skill 7: Skills in managing change

*The extent to which the principal stays abreast with changes in education, his implementation of such changes and the successful outcomes of the changes.*

#### *Discussion:*

A-schools rated their principals at 3.8 as opposed to the B- and C-schools who scored them much lower at 2.8 and 3.0 respectively. Managing change was ranked the 6<sup>th</sup> lowest score. The only variable that showed differences was the post level of the respondents. SMT's thought their principals worth 3.6 while PL 1 educators rated them at 3.12. B-schools' SMT's as well as PL 1 educators awarded them 2.8. As SMT's were responsible for implementing change as a line function, they seemed to be less critical of the principal.

Three principals in A-schools had "very good" scores (A1, A4 and A5) while the others seemed to display "adequate" skills. In the B-schools only one principal was perceived to have "very good" skills (B2) while 3 of the principals needed improvement (B1, B4 and B5). In the C-schools three principals had "adequate" skills while two were "in need of improvement" (C2 and C4).

All in all, 30.3% of the respondents thought their principals had poor skills or needed improvement while 42.4% believed they were well-skilled.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	17	6.7	6.8	6.8
	2	59	23.1	23.5	30.3
	3	67	26.3	26.7	57.0
	4	64	25.1	25.5	82.5
	5	44	17.3	17.5	100.0
	Total	251	98.4	100.0	
Missing	System	4	1.6		

Total	255	100.0	
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Table 4.21: Distribution of skills in managing change

#### 4.5.4.8 Skill 8: Skills in motivating educators and learners

*The extent to which the principal is able to keep educators and learners motivated and united in the face of difficult circumstances (e.g. lack of resources, poor results, etc.).*

##### *Discussion:*

On the whole, the principals' skills in keeping role players at school motivated were ranked the 7<sup>th</sup> lowest of all skills, whilst A-schools (average 3.5) in particular ranked these skills 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest. B-schools awarded their principals 2.8 and C-schools 3.0. Once more, the A and the C-schools SMT's scored the principals higher than the PI 1 educators. B-schools SMT's were again different by scoring principals lower (2.7, n = 16) than the PL 1 educators (2.9, n = 66).

In the A-schools respondents from the age group 22 – 25 rated their principals poorly (2.7, n = 6). It is noteworthy that Sesotho speakers regarded their principals as highly skilled (4.1, n = 22).

NQF 7 qualified educators at B-schools valued their principals at 2.2 ( n = 21) while their counterparts at C-schools afforded them 3.4 (n = 17). The very same explanation forwarded in par. 4.5.4.3 may once again apply in this case.

Three A-school principals were "adequate" in the skill of motivating learners and staff, one had "good" skills (A4) while one needed improvement (A2). In B-schools, three principals were in need of improvement (B1, B4 and B5) while the principal of school B2 received an almost perfect score. In C-schools two principals needed improvement (C2 and C3) while the others had "adequate" skills. Six principals needed to polish their abilities to keep learners and staff motivated.

33.4% of the respondents believed that their principals had very weak skills or that their skills needed improvement. 42.2% was of the opinion that their principals' skills are "good" or "very good".

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	28	11.0	11.0	11.0
	2	57	22.4	22.4	33.5
	3	62	24.3	24.4	57.9
	4	68	26.7	26.8	84.6
	5	39	15.3	15.4	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.22: Distribution of skills in motivation of learners and educators*

#### 4.5.4.9 Skill 9: Teamwork skills

*The extent to which the principal gains cooperation of staff, parents and learners and with other partners in education in an open and supportive way to achieve shared goals.*

#### *Discussion:*

Teamwork is vital to the success of any organisation (see 2.5.9). The results pertaining to this skill will therefore be discussed in more detail.

The principals' skills in creating strong teams ranked lowest of all skills with an average score of 2.96 amongst all schools. It was also listed as the weakest skill of principals at A-schools, at B-schools 7<sup>th</sup> weakest and at C-schools 4<sup>th</sup> weakest. Variables that revealed inconsistencies included post level, language groups and qualifications of respondents.

Once again, the SMT's of A- and C-schools valued their principals higher than the PL 1 educators. Conversely, SMT's of B-schools gave their principals a score of only 2.2 (n = 16) while the PL 1 afforded them slightly higher (2.9). As the SMT members formed part of school management, they were probably

better positioned to judge the skills of their principals. As stated in par. 4.5.4.4, 6, and 8 above, it appeared that principals in B-schools worked under considerable external pressure. Perhaps they transferred this pressure onto their SMT's.

Once again, minority language groups scored their principals markedly different to majority groups. In A-schools Sesotho speakers awarded their principals 3.9 (n = 22), Tswana speakers 3.7 (n = 3) and "other" languages 4.5 (n = 2). Zulu speakers (all schools) scored their principals at only 1.75 (n = 4).

The qualification level of educators in A- and C-schools did not seem to have an influence on their scoring of their principals. In B-schools, however, NQF 7 and NQF 8 respondents rated their principals very low (NQF 7, 2.1, n = 21; NQF 8, 2.0, n = 1).

On the whole, seven principals needed to improve their team building skills. Only one principal was perceived to have "good" skills (B2).

Finally, 34.5% of the respondents felt that their principals had weak skills or that they needed to improve their skills. On the other hand, 34.5% of the respondents believed their principals had "good" or "very good" skills in building strong teams.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	32	12.5	12.5	12.5
2	56	22.0	22.0	34.5
3	79	31.0	31.0	65.5
4	66	25.9	25.9	91.4
5	22	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.23: Distribution of teamwork skills*

#### 4.5.4.10 Skill 10: Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues

*The extent to which the principal correctly interprets and implements educational policies, acts, laws and other legal issues in the school context.*

*Discussion:*

The skill of interpreting and implementing legal issues at school was rated high across the board (average 3.4). It was also ranked the 2<sup>nd</sup> best skill of principals. No big variances between the different groups of respondents were noticeable. In spite of these results, five principals were “in need of improvement” (B3, B4, C1 and C2), while four principals were well-skilled (A1, A4, A5 and B2).

Overall then, 25.5% of the respondents gave their principals a low score, while 51.8% reckoned they were “good” or “very good”.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	16	6.3	6.3	6.3
2	49	19.2	19.2	25.5
3	58	22.7	22.7	48.2
4	81	31.8	31.8	80.0
5	51	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.24: Distribution of skills in legal issues.*

**4.5.4.11 Skill 11: Personnel selection skills**

*The success with which the principal is able to identify staff shortages, the way in which appropriately qualified staff is appointed in conjunction with the SGB.*

*Discussion:*

A-schools scored their principals at 3.6, while B and C-schools granted them less (2.9). No significant variances from the mean could be detected.

In B-schools NQF 5 qualified respondents rated their principals higher (3.3, n = 33) than the mean. At the same time, NQF 7 qualified respondents in B-schools rated them low (2.2, n = 21). In C-schools, however, NQF 7 qualified respondents scored them higher than the mean at 3.3 (n = 17). It is possible that NQF 7 qualified educators are held in higher esteem and are consequently more positively inclined towards the principal. This assumption is supported by

the fact that 10 of the 17 SMT members held qualifications on NQF levels 7 or 8, while 6 from 16 with similar qualifications were SMT members at B-schools. In B-schools 6 from 16 SMT members had a NQF level 5 qualification while 3 from 17 had the same in C-schools.

Again, SMT's at B-schools scored the principals lower than the PL 1 educators while SMT's at C-schools rated them higher than the PL 1 educators.

In the A-schools group two principals (A1 and A4) were placed in the "very good" category with the rest only "adequate". In the B-schools two principals (B1 and B4) needed improvement and one (B2) was "very good". In the C-schools two principals (C2 and C4) needed improvement while the rest were regarded as "adequate". Four principals had to improve their skills in the process of personnel selection.

27.2% of respondents reported that their principals had poor skills or needed improvement while 43.0% thought they had "good" or "very good" skills.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	22	8.6	8.7	8.7
	2	47	18.4	18.5	27.2
	3	81	31.8	31.9	59.1
	4	68	26.7	26.8	85.8
	5	36	14.1	14.2	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.25: Distribution of personnel selection skills*

#### 4.5.4.12 Skill 12: Instructional leadership skills

*The ability of the principal to set clear expectations and give instructions regarding teaching and learning, maintaining and implementing discipline and implementing high standards by monitoring the education process.*

*Discussion:*

Since all B and C-schools were either “at risk” or failing schools, one would expect these schools’ respondents to echo the problems at their schools by giving a low score. This was however not the case, with B-schools who scored their principals at 2.7 and C-schools who gave them on average 3.1. A-schools principals were rated at 3.8.

In A-schools the age group 22-25 rated the principals lowest (2.8, n = 6) while Sesotho speakers allocated the highest score (4.1, n = 22). In B-schools the age groups 22-25 and 26-30 scored their principals highest (3.2, n = 9 and 3.4, n = 6). In C-schools NQF 5 qualified educators rated them lowest (2.8, n = 30), while minority groups scored them highest (Xhosa: 3.8, n = 10; Other: 3.7, n = 3).

School C5 which had a pass rate of 32.2% in 2007, deemed their principal “adequate” (3.0). It appeared that educators at failing/dysfunctional schools were either oblivious of the serious management problems at their schools, or they tried to hide the facts. Of course, external factors (such as socio-economic circumstances) might also have had a significant influence on the achievement of the learners. The same trend, i.e. the skill of instructional leadership being rated unexpectedly high, was visible at schools C1 and C3 where both awarded their principals 3.1. Respondents in schools C2 and C4 seemed to be aware of their management problems and thus scored their principals between “need improvement” and “adequate”. On average, C-schools rated the instructional leadership skills of their principals third highest of all skills.

In total, six principals were labelled “poor” or “in need of improvement”, while four principals (three in A-schools) fared significantly better (“good” or “very good”).

In total, 27.2% of the respondents judged their principals’ skills between “poor” and “in need of improvement”. 41.0% of the respondents held positive views of their skills of instructional leadership (“good” or “very good”).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	19	7.5	7.5	7.5
	2	52	20.4	20.6	28.2
	3	66	25.9	26.2	54.4
	4	84	32.9	33.3	87.7
	5	31	12.2	12.3	100.0
	Total	252	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	3	1.2		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.26: Distribution of instructional leadership skills*

#### 4.5.4.13 Skill 13: Strategic planning skills

*The way in which the vision and mission of the school (in conjunction with all role players) are designed, refined into specific goals, the communication of these goals and the way in which these are communicated to the staff.*

*Discussion:*

Respondents in A-schools awarded their principals on average 3.8, while both B and C-school principals got 2.7. Respondents ranked their principals' skills also quite low on the list of 19 skills (17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>). Both the low scoring and rating probably indicated that respondents recognised the need for a comprehensive plan to provide training and direction.

In A- and C-schools all the variables were close to the mean. As had been the case repeatedly, SMT's at B-schools scored their principals lower than the PL 1 educators (2.4, n = 16; 2.7, n = 66), while A and C-schools SMT's rated them higher than the PL 1 educators. It is worth to note that the NQF 7 and NQF 8 qualified respondents in B-schools awarded their principals low scores (NQF 7, 2.1, n = 21; NQF 8, 2.0, n = 1) whereas the same at A- and C-schools scored their principals on or very close to the mean.

In A-schools two principals (A4 and A5) were placed in the “very good” category, with the rest regarded as “good”. In B-schools three principals needed improvement, while the rest were thought to have “adequate” ability. In C-schools four principals were believed to be “in need of improvement” while the rest were seen as “adequate”. In total, seven principals had to improve their skills.

Altogether 31.4% of the respondents felt their principals needed improvement, while 42.0% regarded their skills as “good” or “very good”.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	23	9.0	9.0	9.0
2	57	22.4	22.4	31.4
3	68	26.7	26.7	58.0
4	78	30.6	30.6	88.6
5	29	11.4	11.4	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.27: Distribution of strategic planning skills*

#### 4.5.4.14 **Skill 14:** Human relations skills

*The extent to which the principal is able to build good relations with parents, teachers, learners and other role players in the educational setting.*

#### *Discussion:*

Respondents in A-schools awarded their principals a score of 3.6, B-schools 3.0 and C-schools 3.1. A-schools ranked their human relation skills 13<sup>th</sup> best of all skills, while B-schools ranked them 1<sup>st</sup> and C-schools 5<sup>th</sup>.

The age group 22-25 gave their principals the lowest score (2.5, n = 6). Minority language groups at A-schools scored their principals high (consistently above 4.0, n = 32). At B-schools SMT’s and PL 1 educators were, for the first time, on par, while NQF 7 qualified educators still felt disgruntled, scoring their principals at 2.3 (n = 21). Zulu speakers in the B-schools returned their highest score of

3.0. The SMT's of C-schools valued their principals much higher than the PL 1 educators (SMT: 3.5, n = 17; PL 1: 2.9, n = 57). Minority language groups also rated their principals higher than the mean.

Three principals of A-schools (A1, A3 and A4) were placed between “good” and “very good” while one (A2) needed improvement. In B-schools group two principals needed improvement (B1 and B5), while one principal was labelled between “good” and “very good”. In the C-schools two principals were “in need of improvement” while the rest were “adequate”. Five principals, therefore, needed to improve their human relation skills.

Overall, 28.9% of the respondents judged their principals to have weak skills or to be in need of improvement, while 46.3% afforded them a “good” or “very good” score.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	24	9.4	9.5	9.5
	2	49	19.2	19.4	28.9
	3	63	24.7	24.9	53.8
	4	73	28.6	28.9	82.6
	5	44	17.3	17.4	100.0
	Total	253	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.8		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.28: Distribution of human relation skills*

#### 4.5.4.15 Skill 15: Communication skills

*The extent to which the principal is able to successfully communicate face to face and in writing with all role players in the educational setting using all available resources in doing so.*

#### *Discussion:*

A-school respondents scored their principals at 3.6 while B- and C-schools gave them 3.0. In A-schools, respondents with a NQF 8 qualification scored the

principal at 4.0 (n = 3). It might be attributed to the fact that they might have had a better understanding of the principals' task and reasons for making a particular decision. Minority language groups also scored their principals high: Sesotho, 4.0 (n = 22), Tswana, 4.3 (n = 3) and other languages, 5.0 (n = 2).

In the case of B- and C-schools, all groups of respondents scored their principals close to the mean. In school B1 respondents with less than five years experience, ranked their principals at 2.8 (n = 6), while at the same school educators with more than 6 years experience scored them at only 1.7 (n = 11). There seemed to be a discrepancy between the ranking of inexperienced and experienced educators.

In A-schools one principal (A2) was placed in the "needing improvement" category with two principals (A1 and A4) in the "good" to "very good" category. Two principals in B-schools (B1 and B 4) were "in need of improvement", while one was thought to be between "good" and "very good". In C-schools two principals (C2 and C4) were believed to be "in need of improvement", while all other principals were viewed as "adequate". Five principals thus needed improvement.

In total, 31.3% of the respondents believed that their principals had weak skills or were at least "in need of improvement", while 45.1% of the respondents ranked their principals as "good" or "very good".

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	21	8.2	8.2	8.2
2	59	23.1	23.1	31.4
3	60	23.5	23.5	54.9
4	75	29.4	29.4	84.3
5	40	15.7	15.7	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.29: Distribution of communication skills*

#### 4.5.4.16 Skill 16: Skills in the management of facilities

*The extent to which the principal is able to supervise maintenance of school facilities, furniture and equipment as well as ensuring clean toilets and preventing vandalism.*

#### *Discussion:*

All schools scored their principals close to the mean with very little variance. The fact that all, but one, of the A-schools were situated in advantaged areas, should be considered. The single A-school not situated in an advantaged area, was only recently built. All B- and C-schools were in disadvantaged areas (townships), barring school B3 (which occupied an old mining training and administration centre). The assumption can therefore be made that the A-schools were better equipped than the B- and C-schools.

Another fact which had to be borne in mind was that township schools were overcrowded, preventing educators from each having his own classroom. It was therefore unsurprising that respondents scored their principals low regarding the management of facilities. Gangsterism and vandalism also contributed significantly towards the dilapidated state of the facilities.

A-school respondents ranked their principals at 3.7, with B-schools at 2.7 and C-schools at 2.5. One principal attained between “good” and “very good” (A4), while the rest were placed between “adequate” and “good”. In the B- and C-schools 8 principals were “in need of improvement”, whereas only two achieved a score of “adequate” to “good”. As reflected by the scoring of the respondents, eight principals needed to improve their skills in managing the facilities at their schools. In all, 33.8% of all respondents considered their principals’ skills to be poor or “in need of improvement”, while 37.4% judged them to have “good” or “very good” skills.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	29	11.4	11.4

	2	57	22.4	22.4	33.9
	3	73	28.6	28.7	62.6
	4	66	25.9	26.0	88.6
	5	29	11.4	11.4	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.30: Distribution of skills in managing facilities*

#### 4.5.4.17 **Skill 17:** Skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning

*The extent to which the principal is able to create a healthy climate for teaching and learning and moreover create a climate and culture for success in schools by ensuring that there is room for self-expression, creativity, communication and motivation in all structures.*

#### *Discussion:*

A-schools scored their principals at 3.7, B-schools at 2.8 and at C-schools at 2.9. While B-schools were “at risk” schools and C-schools “failing” schools, these scores were expected. In A-schools the age group 22-25 awarded 2.7 (n = 6) and in B-schools NQF 7 qualified educators 2.1 (n = 21). The rest of the respondents scored their principals close to the mean.

Of concern is the fact that respondents from four schools in the B and C categories thought their principals were “adequate” to “good”. Staff members at these schools were definitely aware of their classification because of the intervention programmes at their schools. Despite this, many educators still believed that a culture of learning and teaching prevailed at their schools. In the A-schools two principals were categorised as being “in need of improvement”.

Two A-school principals (A2 and A3) were “in need of improvement”, while the others were estimated to be either “good” or “very good”. In B-schools three principals (B1, B4 and B5) needed improvement, the others were “adequate”; in C-schools three (C2, C4 and C5) needed improvement with the rest judged to be “adequate”. Overall then, eight principals needed to work on their skills.

32.9% of all respondents felt that their principals' skills in managing the culture of learning and teaching were inadequate, while 40.4% thought they were "good" or "very good".

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1	18	7.1	7.1	7.1
2	66	25.9	25.9	32.9
3	68	26.7	26.7	59.6
4	61	23.9	23.9	83.5
5	42	16.5	16.5	100.0
Total	255	100.0	100.0	

*Table 4.31: Distribution of fostering a culture of learning and teaching*

#### 4.5.4.18 **Skill 18:** Skills in improving and maintaining high standards of education

*The extent to which the principal sets clear academic expectations and implements a high standard of ethical conduct for both teachers and learners.*

##### *Discussion:*

This skill was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> highest by all schools with A-schools affording their principals 4.0, B-schools 2.9 and C-schools 3.1. All respondents scored their principals close to the mean.

The setting of academic prospects was crucial in B- and C-schools. Five from 10 schools in the B and C category scored their principals between "adequate" and "good" (B3, C1, C2, C3 and C5), while four believed they needed improvement or were "adequate". With regard to this skill, the high rating of the principals at schools which were depicted as "at risk" or "failing", seemed incongruous. The first step in addressing a problem should be to admit that a problem existed.

Three principals (A1, A4 and A5) were rated between "good" and "very good". The rest of the principals were regarded as "adequate" or "good".

All told, four principals needed to polish this skill. In this regard, 24.4% of the respondents judged their principals to be poor or “in need of improvement”, while 46.1% viewed them as “good” or “very good”.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	10	3.9	3.9	3.9
	2	52	20.4	20.5	24.4
	3	75	29.4	29.5	53.9
	4	63	24.7	24.8	78.7
	5	54	21.2	21.3	100.0
	Total	254	99.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	.4		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.32: Distribution of setting clear academic standards and high ethical standards*

#### 4.5.4.19 Skill 19: Networking skills

*The extent to which the principal builds relationship with other principals and educational stakeholders in order to share common problems and learn from one another.*

#### *Discussion:*

Respondents in A-schools awarded their principals a score of 4.1, B-schools 2.9 and C-schools 3.1. These skills were ranked top with an average score of 3.42. All principals had a score close to the mean. The principals were therefore as a rule well-skilled in networking and in finding alternative solutions to common problems.

Four principals, however, still needed improvement. Three A-school principals scored in the “good” to “very good” range. The rest of them were placed between “adequate” and “good”. 23.7% of the respondents believed their principals were poorly skilled or “in need of improvement”, while 51.7% regarded them as “good” or “very good” at networking.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	20	7.8	7.9	7.9
	2	40	15.7	15.8	23.7
	3	62	24.3	24.5	48.2
	4	75	29.4	29.6	77.9
	5	56	22.0	22.1	100.0
	Total	253	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	2	.8		
Total		255	100.0		

*Table 4.33: Distribution of networking skills*

#### 4.5.5 Summary of scores for all principals

In *Table 4.34* a summary of all scores is presented per school. Two principals needed to work on one skill only, another had three skills to attend to and two principals needed to improve on four skills. One of the principals lacked competency in nine skills, while five principals needed to improve on sixteen or more skills. Only four principals were given a “clean bill of health”. In keeping with the average score per principal, six were “in need of improvement” or were seen as “adequately” skilled, while one A-school (performing or functional schools) was also scored in this category.

The table may also be read according to the training need per skill, as illustrated in *figure 4.5*.

- Eight principals needed improvement (training) in the management of facilities as well as skills in establishing a culture of learning and teaching.
- Seven principals needed to work on strategic planning skills, teamwork skills and the management of administration and technical skills.
- Six principals had to improve on their motivating skills and instructional leadership skills.
- Five principals had imperfect skills in personnel development, conflict resolution, problem solving, stress management, management of change, legal issues, human relation skills and communication skills.

Four principals had to polish their skills in financial management, personnel selection, setting of high standards in education and networking.

	Financial Management	Personnel development	Conflict solving	Problem solving	Administrative + tech skills	Stress management	Management of change	Motivation of all	Teamwork skills	Legal issues	Personnel selection	Instructional leadership	Strategic planning	Human relation skills	Communication skills	Management of facilities	Culture of teaching and learning	Setting of high standards	Networking skills
A1	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.2	3.7	3.6	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.1	4.1	4.1	3.8	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.1	4.6	4.2
A2	3.2	3.1	2.3	2.3	3.5	2.6	3	2.4	2.7	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.3	2.7	2.8	3.3	2.7	3.2	3.8
A3	3.3	3.3	3.5	3.1	4.1	3	3.2	3.5	3.1	3.3	3.2	3.2	3.5	4	3.5	3	2.9	3.4	3.2
A4	4.3	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.4	3.9	4.3	4.1	3.9	4.5	4.1	4.4	4.2	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.3	4.6	4.6
A5	4.1	3.6	3.2	3.6	4.3	3.4	4	3.4	3	4.3	3.4	4	4	3.1	3.3	3.7	4	4.1	4.2
B1	1.8	2.1	2.1	2	2.2	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2	2.1	2.5	2.5
B2	4.1	4.1	4.2	4.1	3.8	4	4.3	4.6	4.1	4.1	4.3	4.1	3.9	4.6	4.2	3.8	4.1	4.1	3.9
B3	3.4	3.3	3	3.1	3.6	3.3	3.3	3	3.1	2.7	3.4	3.3	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.1	3	3.4
B4	3.1	2.6	3.2	2.6	2.9	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.5	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.7
B5	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.1	2.5	2.6	2.8	3	3.1	2.4	2.6	2.8	3	2.7	2.7	2.8	2.8
C1	3.1	3.1	3.4	3.2	2.7	3.1	3.3	3.4	3.1	2.9	3	3.4	2.7	3.6	3.1	2.8	3.3	3.3	3.2
C2	2.4	2.6	2.7	2.8	2.7	3	2.7	2.6	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	3	3
C3	3.1	3	3	2.9	2.7	3.1	3.2	3.3	3	3.3	3.2	3.2	2.7	3.3	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.3	3.3
C4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.2	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.2	2.2	3.1	2.6	2.7	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.1	2.7	2.7	2.4
C5	3.0	3	3	3.1	3.1	2.9	3.2	3.4	2.8	3.5	3	3.1	3	3.2	3.2	2.2	2.7	3.1	3.5

Table 4.34: Summary of scores for all skills and all schools



Training needs

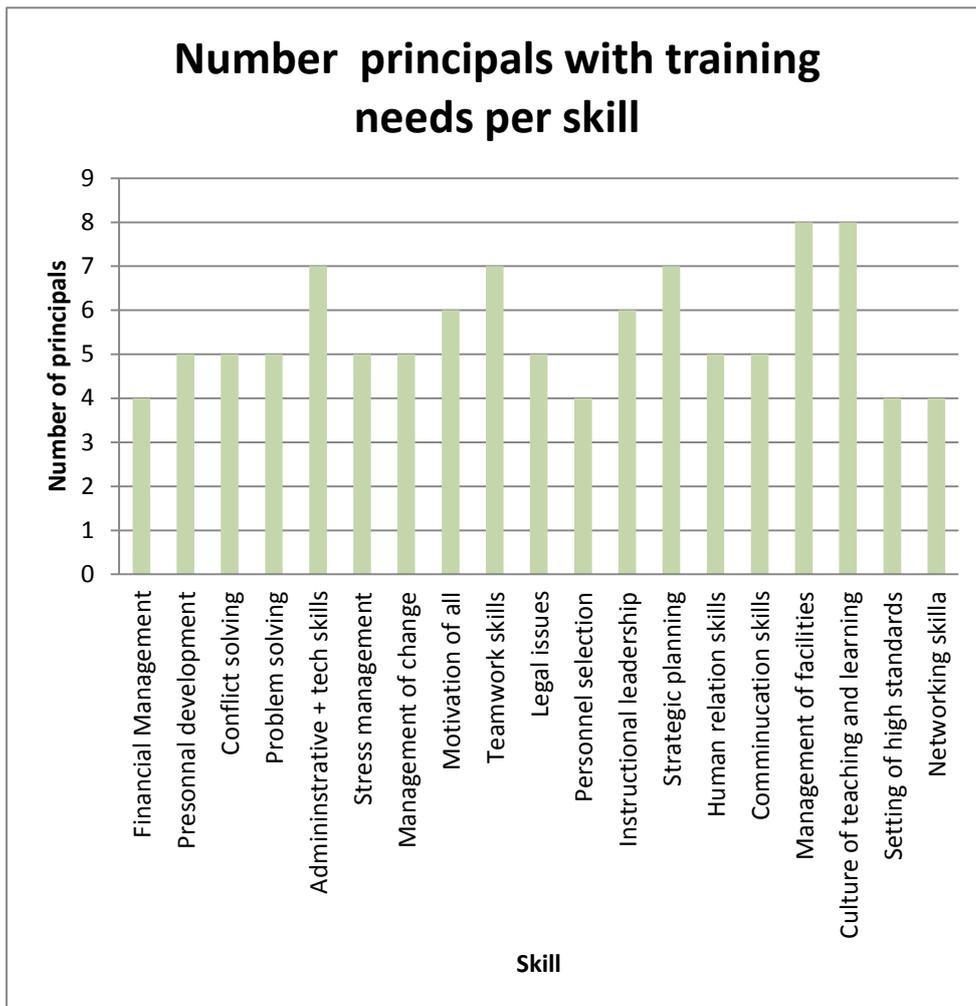


Figure 4.35: Training needs of principals per skill

#### 4.5.6 Summary of score distributions

In *table 4.35* a ranked summary of all respondents' views is given per skill.

Skill	Very weak Skills Needs improvement (%)	“Good” or “very good” skills (%)
Stress management	35.4	35.9
Problem solving	34.8	44.9
Teamwork skills	34.5	34.5
Management of facilities	33.9	37.3
Personnel development	33.5	39.9
Conflict solving	33.5	44.5
Motivation of all	33.4	42.0
Culture of teaching and learning	32.9	40.4
Strategic planning	31.4	42.0
Communication skills	31.4	45.1
Management of change	30.3	42.4
Human relation skills	28.9	46.3
Administrative and technical skills	28.3	44.5
Instructional leadership	28.2	45.6
Financial Management	27.5	44.7
Personnel selection	27.2	41.0
Legal issues	25.5	51.8
Setting of high standards	24.4	46.1
Networking skills	23.7	51.7

*Table 4.35: Ranked summary of all respondents' views given per skill*

#### 4.6 QUALITATIVE RESULTS

All questionnaires were scrutinised and responses to the questions were recorded verbatim. Responses were arranged in line with respondents' school/principal. Basic information gained from the field notes, as well as quantitative results are presented to enable the reader to review the data without cross-referencing. In the qualitative section, 188 questionnaires had legible responses and one had to be excluded because it was indecipherable.

The following questions were posed to respondents in this section of the questionnaire:

- What are your overall impressions about the management skills of the principal at your school?
- In your opinion, how can the current skills level of your principal be improved?

#### 4.6.1 School A1

School A1 was the only township school in a disadvantaged area. This school was classified as a functional school as a result of its 2007 matric results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was immediately helped by a friendly secretary. The school building was new and considerable effort was put into the gardens of the school. No signs of vandalism were visible. The principal's office was well organised and neat with a computer, telephone and fax machine visible. The researcher's reception at the office was friendly and he was attended to immediately. Learners were all in classes although there were some late-comers. The return rate of the questionnaires was 25%.

##### *Discussion:*

The principal received an overall average quantitative score of 4.02 and was ranked third best of all principals.

In spite of his high ranking, some respondents levelled the following points of criticism:

##### Conflict resolution:

“He needs to improve his conflict resolution skills”

“...needs some kind (sic) training in dealing with conflicts...” and

“Let other principals (deputies) handle conflict situations.”

It is therefore clear that some respondents felt that principal A1 needed to hone his skills in handling conflict in an impartial way.

##### Delegation:

“He does not trust educators...”

“Delegate duties as the school is now bigger.”

“He cannot delegate, he does not trust educators.”

Principal A1 seemed to be a hands-on leader who wanted to do everything himself.

 Communication:

“He does not respect our opinions...”

“He is too autocratic...”

It seemed that some respondents believed that their inputs were not valued.

 Stress:

“...and some counselling on dealing with stress”.

One respondent felt that principal A1 stressed easily and needed training on how to deal with this skill.

 Financial management:

“He needs to address financial execution and spending patterns.”

He received some positive criticism as well:

 Culture of learning and teaching:

“He creates a positive learning environment.”

This respondent agreed with the classification of the school and attributed it to the principal creating a positive environment.

 Motivation:

“Very impressive and motivates.”

According to this evaluation, the principal of school A1 needed improvement in his skills of conflict resolution, communication, stress management and financial management. This finding was in conflict with the quantitative data as reported in 4.5.4.

#### 4.6.2 School A2

This school was a multicultural, double medium school situated in town. It was classified as a functional school by virtue of the 2007 matric results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was immediately helped by the secretary. The principal was available and attended to the researcher without delay. The school building was in an excellent condition with good facilities. No signs of vandalism were visible. The principal's office was well organised and neat with a laptop computer and telephone. The principal requested feedback on the findings once it was published. All learners were in class.

##### *Discussion:*

The principal of school A2 received the lowest score of the A-schools and was ranked tenth amongst all schools. The respondents levelled some harsh criticism against the principal:

##### Leadership style, decision taking and problem solving:

“Autocratic – poor listener. Ignores problems in the hope that it will go away. Shift problems of staff back. Too fast with decisions – without taking staff or other role players into account.”

“Some decisions are taken autocratically. Listen poorly, sometimes not listening to the staff's problems/solutions.”

Principal A2 needed to listen attentively to problems and possible solutions to them before taking decisions. Taking one-sided, instant decisions without considering the opinion of other role players, had a demotivating effect on staff.

📌 Management of discipline:

“I think he does not have control over the school. He isn’t strict with the children. He doesn’t really care what the children do in the school. If the children disobey the teachers, he doesn’t do anything.”

“Discipline is a challenge and he tries everything to manage it.”

“Be strict, get control over the school.”

“He focuses on external discipline instead of internal discipline with the learners.”

The way in which discipline was exercised and managed should be attended to in school A2. The staff were prepared to offer solutions. The principal should seriously consider regular strategic planning sessions with his staff to work on solutions.

📌 Conflict resolution:

“He follows a strategy of the least resistance and when in conflict he ends up with an outcome of a win-lose situation.”

“Does not like conflict.”

Principal A2 very clearly needed to be coached about the advantages of positive conflict resolution. When in conflict, parties may accomplish a win-win scenario which may only ease the management of the school.

Positive comments include:

- “Good under difficult circumstances” and “the only area for improvement is the educators. At this stage it feels as if we can simply act the way we want to.”
  
- “Our principal tries his utmost best to manage the school, teaching and learning, the learners. Our principal utilizes every opportunity to improve his skills.”

It seemed that conditions at school A2 were not easy to manage. Discipline seemed to be a problem and the principal reacted in the only way familiar to him, i.e. by being autocratic. In spite of the troubled relations between him and the staff, the school still performed well. Principal A2 should realize that the educators are his greatest allies in managing disciplinary problems and they deserve better treatment. It was suggested that the principal underwent training focussed on the way he interacts with his staff, particularly training in problem solving, conflict resolution, communication, human relations and teamwork.

#### 4.6.3 School A3

School A3 was a multicultural English medium town school. The school was classified as a functional school in keeping with the 2007 matric results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher enjoyed a friendly reception. The school buildings were old but well maintained, the terrain was established and well-cared for. No sign of vandalism was visible. Learners were in classes. The principal received the researcher politely, but he grew a little apprehensive when the rationale of the research was explained to him. The researcher had to return to the school

another four times to obtain the questionnaires. On the fourth visit a large number of questionnaires were collected, but on opening the envelopes it was found that 90% of the questionnaires were never completed. The return rate of the questionnaires was very low at only 30%.

*Discussion:*

The principal received an average score of 3.32 from the respondents in his school and he was rated 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest of the functional schools, but fifth overall. As the principal had only been recently appointed, many of the comments were based on his conduct, rather than his leadership skills. The following critiques were noted:

🎬 Teamwork:

“The SMT does not support the principal fully, they want him to fail.”

“Assistance from his deputies.”

According to some respondents, the principal still struggled to gain the co-operation of the SMT in running the school. It was possible that both deputy principals applied for the principal’s post and were still upset that they were overlooked.

🎬 Verbal communication:

“He does not look people in the eye.”

“...speak better i.e. better voice projection – the learners always laugh when he speaks. He is too nervous ... WHY??”

“To face/challenge other educators that are too vocal ... they are not faced.”

It seemed that whenever principal A3 felt insecure, he struggled to communicate properly. It seemed that some educators were very vocal and

challenged the principal. He would then be unresponsive for fear of revealing his weaknesses. Whenever someone becomes nervous his language usage and body language projects it, invariably causing listeners to lose confidence in him. The principal should build his self-esteem by tackling problems head-on. He should be more assertive in trying circumstances.

📌 Problem solving:

“Dealing with the school problems more seriously...”

“Pay more attention to the educators’ and learners’ problems with the attention (sic) of solving the problem.”

“Management usually instead of facing the fact and reality, generalise because of inferiority complex”.

Due to the fact that principal A3 was inexperienced, educators were inclined to challenge him. His inability to solve problems prevented him facing them head-on. He definitely needs training in this regard. His staff will probably keep on taking advantage as long as he reacts in this fashion. His insecurity probably aggravates the situation. He also needs training on assertiveness.

📌 Other negative remarks:

“... inefficient for complex school.”

“Sometimes management become biased and is not fair.”

“Consistency is a problem.”

“... not using brains.”

“Spend more time at school.”

“... comes from a rural school.”

Most of the staff of school A3 had little or no respect for their principal due to his inability to face and solve problems together with his lack of assertiveness. It may bear fruit if his supervisor (School Management and Governance Developer) assisted him in dealing with his problems. The deputies of the school should also be more supportive. Management and leadership training would without doubt greatly improve his skills.

Principal A3 also received positive comments:

- 🎬 Good in building human relations with all stakeholders.”
  
- 🎬 “He can manage, capable of doing his work, can control staff well.”
  
- 🎬 “SMT very strong unit and support staff.”

In conclusion, it appeared that principal A3 had all the skills required for the management of the school, but he failed as a result of his uneasiness and resultant confrontations with his staff. The quantitative scoring of the principal (see section 4.5) pointed to only one skill which needed improvement, i.e. the fostering of a culture of learning and teaching. The other skills were all rated between “adequate” and “very good”.

#### 4.6.4 School A4

School A4 was a well-established multicultural English medium school.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was amicably received and immediately directed to the principal’s office. The principal’s office was neat and well organised with a computer, telephone and intercom. The principal was not available immediately. When he turned up, the researcher was received politely and professionally. Even though the school was old, it was excellently maintained with neat gardens and sports fields. No sign of vandalism was visible. Learners

were all occupied in class and no loitering was witnessed. The return rate of the questionnaires was high at over 73%. The researcher had to visit the school only once to collect the questionnaires.

*Discussion:*

The principal of school A4 received the highest ranking of all schools (4.27). As a result of this, very little criticism was levelled:

🎬 Leadership style

“Good” leader but dominating.”

“Change autocratic to democratic management style, he is the only one that sets goal (sic), the pace to attain goals and the vision for the school”

🎬 Decision making:

“He sometimes takes decisions on his own and later they backfire.”

“Try to consult with people before making decision.”

“Inclusivity regarding decision making.”

It seemed that not all respondents were satisfied with the principal’s tendency to take decisions unilaterally. He might consider using a more participative style when taking decisions.

🎬 Other negative remarks:

“Not strict enough with educators not doing their job.”

“Can be more decisive and less influenced by individuals.”

“Needs to empower SMT, takes on roles that can be delegated, SMT therefore not strong, sitting back/relax.”

“Work on people and personal skills.”

“Slow down!”

This principal was undoubtedly a conscientious worker, but he tended to disregard the feelings of his staff. He also took decisions hastily without being well-informed. He needed to delegate more to his SMT and also adopt a slower pace.

Positive remarks far exceeded negative remarks. Only a few are mentioned:

- 🎬 “Values and supports education/learners, support (sic) staff emotionally and professionally.”
- 🎬 “Brilliant strategist, runs school like well-oiled machine.”
- 🎬 “Management skills good, school well resourced, all role players know what to do, management decisions taken in consultation with SGB and SMT, carry school policy out to letter.”

It seemed that the school was at logger heads with the Department of Education concerning the discipline of learners:

- 🎬 “Not always supported by DoE regarding discipline.”
- 🎬 “Needs support from DoE with problematic learners.”
- 🎬 “Dept does not allow him to do what he should - fighting a losing battle.”

The Department of Education might perhaps have rejected the school’s recommendation about problem learners. Principal A4 should attempt to find alternative methods of punishing ill-disciplined learners.

All in all, principal A4 seemed to be an excellent leader and manager. He should delegate more of his workload to his deputies and be utilized in a mentoring capacity at dysfunctional and “at risk” schools.

#### 4.6.5 School A5

School A5 was a well-established, double medium advantaged school situated in town. The school was functional with a history of excellent results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary. The principal was not available immediately. The principal’s office was neat and well-organised, although there was no computer or intercom in the office. The school was in an excellent condition with huge, well-maintained sports grounds. All learners were in class. No sign of vandalism was visible. The return rate of the questionnaires was an incredible 100% and the researcher had to visit the school once only to collect them.

##### *Discussion:*

The principal of school A5 scored on average 3.72 for all skills. This rating placed him fourth overall. The following negative comments were noted:

##### Human relation skills:

“I feel he needs some improvement and training in human relationships. The staff feels scared to communicate with him because he can’t be human.”

“Pay attention to human relations skills.”

“Diplomacy, be more sensitive about problems amongst staff members.”

“His people skills are not always up to a respectful standard.”

At times, the principal seemed to be rude to some of the staff members. He also needed to be more approachable. He should be mindful of the fact that educators are the main assets of a school and that they should be continuously motivated to keep them productive.

 Communication:

“Possible courses could be taken where he learns to be more encouraging and the whole management team could start to communicate with staff. No clear communication at school.”

“I think he needs to learn how to work with his teachers in addressing them when there are problems.”

 Conflict resolution:

“Bad management of conflict at school.”

It seemed as if there was conflict at school A5. It may probably be attributed to the principal’s poor human relations skills and the impolite manner in which he supposedly communicates with his staff.

 Stress management:

“Needs to address his own stress levels, supports everybody else. (Gee hom ‘n lekker lang vakansie en meer geld!).”

The principal seemed to manage everyone’s stress, except his own.

 Delegation:

“Should delegate more to staff.”

One respondent mentioned that he/she had more to contribute and should therefore be given more responsibilities. The principal should pay attention to staff development.

Positive comments were also made:

- 🎬 “He is a very good leader and a good example to the teachers, learners and all parties involved in the school. He is capable and experienced.”
- 🎬 “He is doing good work and is of great value to our school.”
- 🎬 “Good manager, delegates according to needs, knows the SA Schools Acts and Laws very well.”

The principal of A5 needs to brush up his interpersonal relations with his staff. He most likely possesses all the skills of a good manager, but appropriate management training would improve his interpersonal relations.

#### 4.6.6 School B1

School B1 is an English medium township school classified as an “at risk” school as a consequence of their 2007 results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary. The condition of the school was good although many broken windows were visible. Learners were not in class. The condition of the gardens was fair as some visible efforts were made to beautify the terrain. The principal was not at school and the researcher was hence attended to by one of the deputies, who was very cooperative. The return rate of the questionnaires was 32.69% and the school had to be visited three times to collect the questionnaires.

##### *Discussion:*

The principal of B1 scored an average of only 2.16 which placed him in last place on the list of fifteen schools investigated in this study. Only negative responses were given:

🎬 Teamwork:

“... he only needs the support from his school management team.”

“The management team need some training. Important areas that need attention is teamwork, discipline and commitment.”

“To organise training to (sic) all stakeholders in order to improve skills and build a strong team.

There appeared to be no cohesion between the staff, SMT and the principal as they did not function as a team. The skill of building strong teams was clearly absent.

🎬 Human relation skills:

“Towards his colleagues, his conduct is not acceptable at all; he undermines the status and authority of his colleagues.”

“The management skills of the principal need to be improved on aspects (sic) such as ... human relation skills especially to build good relations between the school and parents.”

“The principal needs thorough training in management in as far as human relations is concerned.”

“Should attend INSET in order to be able to build good human relations.”

The impression was created that principal B1 had strained relationships with his staff and parents. Parents and educators are two strong pillars of education and healthy relations with them are essential.

🎬 Problem solving:

“The management skills of the principal need to be improved on aspects such as problem solving...”

“He is getting too personal when dealing with problem solving.”

The principal of B1 needed to hone his skills in solving problems to the satisfaction of all.

🎬 Delegation:

“The principal needs to understand the skills of delegation of tasks.”

“To trust the staff by delegating to people who have the potential.”

There was room for improvement with regard to the delegation skills of the principal.

🎬 Other negative remarks:

“He is always not (sic) at school. As I am filling in (sic) this questionnaire, he is not at school.”

“He is incompetent as far as the managing of the school is concerned.”

“Has professional obligation towards education and induction of new staff, stay abreast of new trends and developments.”

“He needs to be aware of his responsibility and be held accountable.”

“He should exercise authority...he should not abuse his position he holds for financial, political or personal gain”

It appeared that the principal of school B1 had other interests and did not really care about his school. His professional make-up was also suspect because his staff throughout rated his skills as “poor” and “in need of improvement”. Eleven

of the fifteen respondents from this school recommended that he followed a re-skilling programme to address his poorly developed skills. This principal should ideally be removed from his position and be intensively trained in leadership and management skills.

#### 4.6.7 School B2

School B2 was a disadvantaged English medium school situated in a township. The school was rated as “at risk” based on their 2007 matric results. The principal was rated second best of all principals in this investigation.

#### *Field notes:*

The researcher was not attended to immediately since the secretary had to first finish her cup of tea. The principal was not available and the deputy offered her assistance. Although the researcher was not escorted to her office, she was very helpful and assisted him promptly. The terrain was dilapidated and obviously not well cared for. The grass was very long at places and the terrain was littered. The school building, while old, was in a fair condition with no signs of vandalism. Groups of learners were hanging around; they were not attending classes. The school had to be visited three times to collect the questionnaires. The return rate was regrettably low at 18.57% with only 9 from 46 staff members responding.

#### *Discussion:*

In spite of the negative remarks made in the field notes, very few negative comments were made by respondents. The comments were by and large positive and encouraging. Negative remarks included:

#### Conflict resolution:

“There are some hiccups with regard to dealing with conflict especially in the school management team.”

It will become evident later on in this subsection that the staff members and the SMT did not function as a team. The previous comment made above might already have pointed to that.

🎬 Teamwork:

The comment below suggests that the SMT does not perform its functions as required.

“The principal should improve by checking the administrative work of the HOD’s. The principal must charge HOD’s that are not checking their blocks especially where teachers are bunking their classes.”

“The SMT should be trained ... in order for them to be on par with the principal regarding management of the school.”

“If she is supported by the relevant stakeholders.”

“Teamwork should improve more.”

It appeared that despite the principal’s efforts, the educators and SMT did not function as a unit. SMT members’ management tasks were evidently not executed properly and educators seemed to miss classes. The skill of controlling the work of sub-ordinates left much to be desired for. She should have first won the support of the SMT before attempting to run the school effectively. Without their support, she would not succeed.

As stated earlier, the positive comments far outstripped the negative ones:

🎬 “She is going to bring a huge change at our school.”

🎬 “The principal has very good management skills. The way she communicates with educators, SMT members and learners is very professional.”

- “She is one of the best principals in the province. Every effort and endeavour she pursues has got that impeccable taste for best academic results and management skills.”
- “Her duties are well executed. She has been consistent in ensuring that teaching and learning takes place.”

One of the comments (“she is going to...”) suggested that the principal was new to the school although it could not be verified. The positive comments were in sharp contrast with the field notes of the researcher. The extremely low return rate of the questionnaires suggested the possibility that only selected questionnaires were returned. Despite this, only four skills were regarded as good.

In spite of her high rating (2<sup>nd</sup> best overall), she needed to work on her team building skills, delegation and control of work.

#### 4.6.8 School B3

School B3 was a mine school situated in an old mine training centre. Even though it was a section 21 school, it mainly catered for disadvantaged learners. The school was a small English medium school classified as “at risk” in line with its 2007 matric results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was initially received by an educator. He was greeted at the administration building by a friendly secretary who assisted immediately. The principal was friendly; his office was neat and organised and it had a computer and notice boards for planning purposes. The terrain was neat although it did not look like an ordinary school terrain. All learners were in classes and were actively taught. No sign of vandalism was detected. The return rate was 77.8% and the school had to be visited only once to collect the questionnaires.

##### *Discussion:*

Comments on the management and leadership skills of the principal of school B3 were few due to its size and low staff complement of only nine:

🎬 Teamwork:

“Engage management team more in decision making.”

“By sharing some responsibilities with the School Management team and not overloading himself with work.”

“By removing principal from doing actual teaching.”

It seemed that principal B3 had to teach in addition to his duties as principal. It appeared that he did not have enough time to perform his management functions properly. The respondents felt that he should share responsibilities with the SMT more often or be relieved from his teaching duties.

🎬 Legal issues:

“He needs to improve on interpretation of school policies, acts and laws and other legal issues of the school.”

“Fix policies at school, ASAP.”

“Legal training with regards to Education and Labour laws.”

It seemed that the principal interpreted legal and policy documents inaccurately and should be trained to improve on that.

🎬 Problem solving:

“When it comes to dealing with serious problems, we have no support. It is a long process to actually sort the child out.”

Principal B3 should implement policies to assist him with problem solving and school discipline. He scored 6<sup>th</sup> overall. Problems with legal issues were also raised in the quantitative section. The principal was rated between “adequate”

and “good” regarding all skills except for his skill of handling legal issues (2.7) which needed improvement.

#### 4.6.9 School B4

School B5 was an English medium school situated in a disadvantaged area. The school was classified as “at risk” as a consequence of its 2007 matric results.

#### *Field notes:*

The researcher was received by the deputy principal since the principal was not available. The deputy’s office was cluttered and obviously also used as a storeroom. There was a computer. The school building was old and the condition of the terrain fair. Classes were in progress; no learners were loitering outside. The return rate of the questionnaires was very good (85.29%), while the school had to be visited once only to obtain the questionnaires.

#### *Discussion:*

The respondents reacted freely and contributed a considerable number of comments. Negative comments included:

#### 🗨️ Leadership style:

“He is a dictator who does not want any suggestions from the teachers, no matter how important a suggestion.”

“His leadership style is autocratic. Other people’s opinions don’t matter to him (he doesn’t even listen to them).”

“He is autocratic because he doesn’t change, he imposes what must be done, you cannot challenge him, he is very firm, you like it or not, you must go his way. He gets upset easily.”

“He does not listen to advice. Only his ideas are correct.”

It seemed that he did not consider the views of others when taking decisions, and when he was challenged, he reacted angrily. Principal B4 is clearly unaware of the advantages of a participative leadership style.

🎬 Teamwork skills:

“The school is too big for the principal. SMT cannot manage the school. He must use the deputies.”

“There is now (sic) teamwork at school and no team effort.”

“Improve teamwork among staff.”

“... this has also had more to do with the management team he surrounds himself with. I even suspect it is a deliberate mission to put him down.”

“He usually tries to solve problems on his own...”

Principal B4 clearly negated the importance of teamwork. His tendency to take decisions unilaterally without being open to suggestions, compounded his problems.

🎬 Communication:

“A principal must be able to communicate with the educators.”

“He does not listen...”

“He must listen to suggestions.”

“He must communicate clearly.”

 Planning:

“He needs enough time to plan properly, year plan.”

“Get SMT involved in the implementation of plans.”

Some of the respondents felt that he does not have adequate planning skills.

 Change:

“He is very slow to bring about change at school.”

“Learn to change.”

 Networking:

“He can improve by getting help from other principals.”

“Working and sharing ideas with other principals can help a lot.”

“Let principals from other schools give him advice.”

“Needs intervention from other principals.”

Three respondents were of the opinion that the principal should network with other principals for advice.

 Other negative remarks:

“The previous principal was a very autocratic leader, but he managed to bring discipline among learners, present principal is also autocratic, but fails in disciplining learners. School B4 should be saved from this man.”

“Substitute him immediately with someone with management skills.”

“He is not capable of managing a big school like this.”

“The school is dropping drastically in terms of behaviour and discipline.”

There is an immediate need for intervention before the ship sinks further.”

“A very office-based leader.”

The SMGD (School Management and Governance Developer) must try to assist him and visit the school regularly.”

The Department of Education should intervene immediately. The principal should be sent on a training course to improve his skills. As mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, he should adopt a more participative leadership style; he needs to work on his communication and teamwork skills and he should concurrently be equipped with basic management skills such as planning and change.

Principal B4 was rated 11<sup>th</sup> overall and the quantitative data suggested an improvement of all his skills, barring human relations, conflict management and financial management skills.

#### 4.6.10 School B5

School B5 was an English medium school situated in a township. It was branded “at risk” according to the 2007 matric results.

#### *Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary and immediately referred to a deputy as the principal was not available. The deputy was very cooperative. The deputy’s office was neat and organised with a computer and monitors for a closed circuit television system. Both the school terrain and

building were in a fair condition with no visible signs of vandalism. Learners were all occupied in class rooms. The return rate of the questionnaires was satisfactory (55.56%). The school had to be visited once only to collect the questionnaires.

*Discussion:*

Comments were by and large negative, yet the only skill highlighted for improvement was planning:

🎬 Planning:

“The strategic plan is there but not implemented.”

“The principal is very good in planning but weak when it comes to implementation.”

“My principal plans things correctly but his problem is implementation. He can sit with the staff and talk about the plan but when coming to the doing of it he can't.”

“Good in administration but very poor in implementation and control.”

Principal B5 seemed to be able to plan, but he lacks the ability to implement plans correctly.

Some other negative remarks were:

🎬 “His (sic) not present at school”

“Not to be absent every time, he must have the intention of working while at school.”

“Be always available at school.”

“By coming to school everyday and by attending school meetings and parents’ meetings.”

The principal needs to be at school more often. His inability to implement plans may, to a degree, be attributed to his regular absence from school.

🎬 General management skills:

Eleven of the nineteen respondents felt that there is a need for the principal to improve his management skills.

🎬 Instructional leadership skills:

“He should acquaint himself with the latest developments and policies regarding curricula.”

Principals generally spend less time in class and more time on managing their schools. This principal is no exception. According to this respondent, he does not fully grasp the policies underlying the new NCS curricula.

Positive comments were also voiced:

🎬 Good in administration.”

🎬 “The principal is doing good work.”

The principal of school B4 scored on average 2.68 and was placed 13<sup>th</sup> among all principals. Only his communication and personnel selection skills were regarded as satisfactory. Some responses pointed at a need for basic management skills which suggests that he is a candidate for comprehensive training in school management and leadership.

4.6.11 School C1:

School C1 was an English medium school located in a disadvantaged township area. It was classified as a “failing” or dysfunctional school by the Department of Education.

*Field notes:*

The researcher struggled to get the attention of the secretary. An HOD came to the rescue and he was referred to a deputy principal. (The principal had to take an injured learner to hospital). The researcher consulted the deputy in the principal's office. The office was neat and organised with a computer and telephone. The school building and terrain were in fair condition. There were, however, signs of vandalism and graffiti which was not surprising given its location in a high crime area. Learners were in class but upon subsequent visits they were loitering around. The school had to be revisited six times to obtain questionnaires. Despite the effort, the return rate remained very low at only 32.56%.

*Discussion:*

The principal of School C1 was fairly new to the school. The comments made by his staff suggested that he exerted much effort in improving the school and getting proper management systems established. Comments were therefore mainly encouraging and positive. Negative comments included the following:

■ Administrative and technical skills:

“There is a lack of management information system (sic) and also poor management of stock and resources.”

“He has improved systems...”

■ Communication:

“There is a lack of management skills and proper communication.”

“Does not always include whole staff when decisions are taken. Decisions mostly taken by him and SMT. Lack of communication from top down.”

“The principal must make (sic) decisions with the educators first before he can talk with the learners”.

Positive and encouraging comments:

🎬 Communication. Contrary to some negative comments, some very positive remarks were forwarded in this regard:

“He consults with every stakeholder before making decisions.”

“He listens to his staff’s views; he always gives people a chance to give their views or concerns.”

“The principal is an effective spokesperson. He listens and evaluates alternative points of view. He is also able to analyse and critique ideas in a constructive manner.”

These comments nullified other negative comments made in earlier paragraphs. Unlike some other principals, principal C1 consulted with all stakeholders before a decision was taken. His involvement of all stakeholders’ viewpoints might signify the use of a participative management style.

🎬 Other positive comments:

“Real manager, not (sic) boss, listens to staff's views, guider, father, advisor to educators and learners, humble, striving for the best, some educators take advantage of this.”

“Comprehensive Financial policy in place adhered to and reviewed. Strategic plans developed in consultation with all stakeholders, he is an

effective spokesperson, listens evaluates, totally transparent, analyse, high productivity, systems in place to track progress/corrective measures”.

“Well organised, control projects with success, improved systems, able to delegate, willing to test new ways to improve success, driven by need for success.”

The principal of school C1 took control of a “failing” school and he seemed to address its problems. Both the quantitative and qualitative data suggested that he was successfully reviving the school, but he needed a little more time to do so. His average score for all skills was 3.14 and he was ranked 7<sup>th</sup> best principal overall. Skills that needed some polishing included administrative and technical skills, skills in legal issues as well as the skills of strategic planning and management of facilities.

#### 4.6.12 School C2

School C2 was an English medium disadvantaged school located in a township. It was classified as a “failing” school due to its 2007 matric results.

#### *Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary and referred to a deputy principal (the principal was not at school). He was met in the principal’s office. The organisation of the office was fair and a computer (unplugged) was present. The school was, generally speaking, not in a good condition; no signs of vandalism were visible, however. The terrain was in a fair condition and it was adorned with some flowers. Learners were for the most part loitering outside classes.

The school had to be re-visited four times to collect the questionnaires. The researcher initially delivered the questionnaires in unsealed envelopes so that the respondents could seal it themselves after completion of the

questionnaires. This way their anonymity could be guaranteed. However, all questionnaires were removed from the envelopes when the questionnaires were finally received from the principal. Anonymity had therefore been breached. The initial return rate was 51.1%. On closer inspection it became clear to the researcher that a number of questionnaires had been completed by the same person. As a result, thirteen questionnaires had to be discarded. The return rate for this school was therefore only 22.2%.

*Discussion:*

Only 5 from the 10 respondents completed the qualitative section of the questionnaire. It was difficult to make any valid conclusions from so few responses. In any event, the following comments were made:

🗨️ Communication:

“The management skills need improvement by ensuring that the SMT (especially the deputies) are informed well about the issues affecting the running of the school.”

“Communication skills need to be improved so that all educators can know what is happening at school.”

Seemingly a communication gap existed between the principal and his SMT.

🗨️ Other negative comments:

“It is hard to really have an impression of someone who is hardly there in terms of his duties.”

“SMT involvement needs to be improved.”

“The principal has good management skills but the problem is the implementation of those skills.”

“For one he should be start doing his work.”

From the responses it became evident that the SMT was not pulling its weight. This principal was rated 13<sup>th</sup> overall and received an average score of 2.76. The only skills supposedly not in need of improvement were skills in stress management, the setting of high standards and networking.

#### 4.6.13 School C3

School C3 was an English medium school situated in a disadvantaged area. The school was rated as “failing” following its 2007 matric results.

##### *Field notes:*

The researcher was met by a secretary outside the office and referred to the principal. The principal was welcoming and assisted the researcher immediately. His office was fairly well-organised with no computer or telephone in the office. The school terrain and buildings were dilapidated. The school building was new and had a number of broken windows. Learners were not in class. The return rate of the questionnaires was fair (45.16%). The researcher was made aware of the incidence of gangsterism and crime in and around the school. The school was visited twice to collect the questionnaires.

##### *Discussion:*

No particular management and leadership skill was singled out by the respondents. Negative comments included:

- 🎬 “Needs assertiveness in dealing with educator component that always derail the objectives set.”
- 🎬 “Management skills need improvement with regard to leadership styles, too democratic, needs to vary management style.”
- 🎬 “Change his personality; he is too lenient with some people.”

🎬 “Needs to be more assertive in implementation of policies.”

The principal seemed to employ a democratic leadership style. He tended to be too lenient and he trusted staff members readily. One respondent stated that he needed to adapt his leadership to the circumstance and be more insistent on the meeting of objectives.

Other comments and recommendations included:

🎬 “He needs to interact with experienced members in education.”

🎬 “Generally informed about education law and policies”.

🎬 “Certain aspects are beyond his control, for instance vandalism, lack of security at school and support from local police”.

🎬 “He needs support from the District Office where necessary especially when coming (sic) to issues like maintenance and provision of LTSM’s.”

🎬 “He needs support from other stakeholders, e.g. Department, parents, the community at large and educators.”

🎬 “Training in staff recruitment”.

No telling negative comments were made. However, it looked as if the principal of school C3 did not enjoy “adequate” support to perform his duties effectively. The area in which the school was located, impeded satisfactory performance. These negative factors combined with his leniency probably contributed to the school’s failing status. The quantitative results ranked him 8<sup>th</sup> overall with an average of 3.10 for all skills. Skills that were noted as inadequate included problem solving, administrative and technical skills, strategic planning and the management of facilities. The principal mentioned that he needed training in staff recruitment.

#### 4.6.14 School C4

School C4 was an English medium technical school in a disadvantaged township area. The surrounding area was bustling with activity with many shoppers and others moving around. The school was classified as “failing” as a result of its 2007 matric results.

*Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary, although not immediately. The principal was not at school and the researcher was referred to a deputy. The deputy’s office was small but neat, with no signs of technology. She was friendly and delegated the task of distributing the questionnaires to one of the HOD’s. Although much of the school building and terrain was not visible from the entrance of the school and the office block, that which was in view seemed to be in fair condition. Many learners were loitering around. A return rate of 44.12% was obtained and the school was visited four times to collect the questionnaires.

*Discussion:*

There appeared to be major problems in school C4 as one of the respondents claimed that “management in this school is in a crisis”. Almost no positive remarks were made – in fact, most comments were quite damning. Comments included:

🗨️ Leadership style:

“He always instructs instead of asking, he always generalise (sic), he cannot approach a specific person who has made a mistake.”

“He is very democratic. He is more people orientated than task orientated.”

“He is more a supervisor than a leader.”

“He must know that he is a leader not the owner of the school.”

The impression was created that the principal was an ineffective leader. Intervention from the Department of Education seems vital.

🎬 Teamwork:

“The principal needs support based on building teams, needs to refrain from forming cliques.”

“Staff selection should be appropriate to work as a team.”

“Changing those in the SMT would do him good.”

Principal C4 needed to improve on his ability to motivate his staff. It would ensure that they function as a team.

🎬 Teamwork with the technical department:

“He concentrates more on commercial department than technical/engineering department. He does not show interest for technical/engineering area.”

“He concentrates more on commercial subjects than technical.”

“He should receive guidance related to engineering areas for him to understand whatever is done in the engineering department.”

It was evident that the technical department felt neglected. Being the principal of a technical school, it was surprising that he neglected his duty in this regard.

🎬 Problem solving:

“His management skills need a lot of improvement, especially when dealing with the staff members, he is biased when taking decisions and solving problems.”

“He does not listen to any opinion from the educators. If you come up with a suggestion, it seems as if you want that thing to happen whereas it's just an opinion and not a request.”

Apparently principal C4 did not tolerate other opinions - he probably felt challenged:

🗨️ Conflict resolution and human relations:

“He is the source of conflict/misunderstandings most of the times.”

“Staff members (most) do not even talk in meetings because they are (most of the time) intimidated or crushed in the meetings.”

“Human relations are worst and the issue of relations is not or seem not to be on the principal's priority list.”

The way in which principal C4 interacted with his staff, needed serious improvement. Their suggestions were not taken into account and they felt intimidated whenever they voiced their opinions.

🗨️ Relationship with staff member:

“It is very difficult for him to run the school properly or discipline educators because he is having an affair with one of the lady educators at school. His girlfriend is a habitual latecomer, not teaching/attending classes properly, irresponsible, etc.”

“He is morally bankrupt, i.e. involved in extramarital affair with a subordinate.”

Another response implied the same:

“He is not professional... He must distance himself from staff.”

Needless to say, it is unacceptable for a principal to have an affair with a staff member. This relationship obviously jeopardised his management skills.

■ Other negative responses:

“Immediate (long-overdue) intervention is needed by anybody who cares. His supervisors seem not to hear our cry for help.”

“He needs intensive intervention regarding improvement of interpersonal relationships.”

“The principal must be involved in all activities.”

“People that know how to manage must come assist him.”

“It must be a requirement to all principals to have a management and leadership skills qualification.”

This principal, like principal B1, should be removed and/or trained comprehensively. The quantitative data (section 4.5) revealed that he needed improvement on all but one of his management and leadership skills. The only skill that was deemed “adequate” was his ability to deal with legal issues.

#### 4.6.15 School C5

School C5 was an English medium school located in a disadvantaged area. The school was rated as a “failing” school as a consequence of its poor 2007 matric results.

*Field notes:*

The researcher was received by a friendly secretary and referred to the principal. The schools SMGD was present. The principal was friendly and attended to the researcher immediately. The principal's office was fairly well-organised with no computer or telephone in sight. The desk was ridiculously small in comparison to the size of the office. The gardens and terrain were in fair shape and no sign of vandalism was visible. Learners were not in classes. The return rate of the questionnaire was poor (42.86%). The school had to be re-visited four times to collect the questionnaires.

*Discussion:*

The comments forwarded by the staff were predominantly positive and encouraging. Some skills, however, needed attention:

📌 Decision making:

“The principal makes unilateral decisions. He does not want to listen to other people's opinions.”

“He takes unilateral decisions. His word is final. He handles the school alone.”

Some respondents felt that the principal should employ a more participative management style.

📌 Teamwork:

“Our school needs teamwork.”

“He is managing the school well but needs the support from SMT which tend to be not in agreement (sic) with him at times.”

“The guy is not getting enough support from his peers (i.e. deputies and HOD's). They seem to be dragging their feet every time they have to show their leadership qualities.”

“... if he can be part of the team at school.”

The principal needs to crack the whip among his SMT members because they do not fully support him. He therefore needs training in team building.

🎬 Communication and human relations:

“The principal does not have a close relationship with his colleagues, he is always alone. As a result our school usually gets information very late. Circulars are always outdated most of the time (sic).”

“He must learn to listen to other people’s ideas.”

“He should create “good” relations with different committees.”

The principal did not disseminate information timeously, he apparently did not have good relations with all stakeholders and would not always entertain other ideas.

The majority of comments were positive and encouraging:

🎬 “The principal always strives to engage his management personnel.”

🎬 “I am highly impressed by the management skills of my principal. I honestly do not doubt him. He approaches academic matters and conflict among educators fairly and just.”

🎬 He is a well-organised person and manages his staff very well. He is also very professional and attends to all matters concerning school work in a professional manner.”

🎬 “The principal gives everyone a chance to work according to his/her level of education. He puts emphasis on his subordinates and expects work to be done accordingly.”

🎬 “I rate my principal very high. He is competent and knowledgeable.”

Most of the educators respected their principal and held him in high esteem. This seemed to contradict the “failing” status of the school. This principal

needed to obtain the cooperation of all stakeholders to improve the school's rating. In the qualitative section, he was scored 3.05 and rated 9<sup>th</sup> of all principals. The skills that needed improvement were stress management, teamwork skills, management of facilities and bringing about a culture of learning and teaching.

#### **4.7 CONCLUSION**

Most of the principals studied in this survey were to some degree in need of training. Some of them only needed to apply themselves more while others were in dire need of comprehensive training in school management and leadership. The training needs identified in the quantitative section were, for the most part, confirmed by the results obtained from the qualitative enquiry.

As a rule, laymen hold the view that school management in functional schools is sound and that the opposite is true at dysfunctional schools. However, this assumption proved to be inconsistent.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ADVANCED CERTIFICATE: EDUCATION (SCHOOL LEADERSHIP)**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the curricular content of the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership will be analysed and compared with the identified training needs for principals in the Lejweleputswa Education District.

#### **5.2 LIST OF SKILLS AS IDENTIFIED IN THIS RESEARCH**

The list of skills according to the quantitative questionnaire, is as follows:

1. Financial management skills
2. Personnel Evaluation and Development skills
3. Conflict solving skills
4. Problem solving skills
5. Administrative or technical skills
6. Skills in coping with stress
7. Skills in managing change
8. Skills in motivating educators and learners
9. Teamwork skills
10. Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues
11. Personnel selection skills
12. Instructional leadership skills
13. Strategic planning skills
14. Human relations skills/social skills
15. Communication skills
16. Skills in the management of facilities
17. Skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning
18. Skills in improving and maintaining high standards of education
19. Networking skills

### 5.3 THE CURRICULUM OF THE ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

According to SAQA (<http://qspe.saqa.org.za>: 8 April 2009) the curriculum of the Advanced Certificate: Education (School and Leadership) exhibits the following exit level outcomes:

***Exit level outcomes:***

*Fundamental learning*

*Communication and literacy*

*Computer literacy*

***Core learning:***

*Understand school management and leadership*

*Develop a portfolio*

*Manage teaching and learning*

*Manage policy, planning and school development*

*Lead and manage people*

*Manage organisational systems, physical and financial resources*

Since the exact content of the qualification is not reflected by the exit level outcomes, the associated outcomes had to be utilized. The associated assessment outcomes were derived from the exit level outcomes. Outcomes that cover identified skills needs have been superscripted in the text for reference purposes.

*Associated assessment outcomes:*

- 1.1 *Demonstrate competence in the reading, writing, listening, speaking and communication skills necessary for effective management in schools<sup>15</sup>.*
- 2.1 *Use information and communication technology to improve professional and administrative efficiency<sup>5</sup>.*
- 3.1 *Apply a basic understanding of school management and leadership in South Africa to an evaluation of own management and leadership practices.*

- 4.1 *Develop a reflective portfolio to present evidence of school management and leadership competence in the South African context.*
5. *Demonstrate the following personal qualities:*
- *A passionate interest in teaching and learning and an ability to encourage this in both staff and learners<sup>17</sup>.*
  - *An ability to model good teaching and learning and lead by example<sup>17</sup>.*
  - *High expectations for achievement and the ability to set stretching targets for the whole school community<sup>18</sup>.*
  - *A commitment to enabling all learners to reach their full potential<sup>8+17+18</sup>.*
- 5.2 *Manage the planning, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of teaching and learning to ensure quality learning for all in the context of national, provincial and school policy<sup>12</sup>.*
- 5.3 *Create, manage and sustain a safe, caring and disciplined environment and show commitment to following this through in the way in which teaching and learning is organized<sup>12</sup>.*
- 5.4 *Understand and be able to apply relevant content knowledge reflectively in the design, implementation and evaluation of teaching and learning and the organization of the school environment<sup>12</sup>.*
- 6.1 *Demonstrate the following personal qualities/abilities:*
- *Ability to lead by example, and be a model of the values and vision of the school<sup>13</sup>*
  - *An ability to think strategically<sup>13</sup>.*
  - *A commitment to following through the vision and mission in detailed planning for the day to day life of the school and its future direction<sup>13</sup>.*
  - *An ability to motivate and empower others to participate in the development of vision, school (or subject / learning area / phase) policies and plans, and carry these forward<sup>8</sup>.*
  - *Commitment to cooperative governance of the school and involvement of parents, learners and the community.*

- 6.2 *Develop and communicate school (or subject / learning area / phase) values, vision, mission, policies and plans in a collaborative way and secure commitment to these<sup>13</sup>.*
- 6.3 *Develop and maintain sound working relationships with the SGB, as well as parents, learners, the community and the department<sup>14</sup>. (This does not apply to Heads of Department or subject / learning area / phase leaders.)*
- 6.4 *Understand and be able to apply reflectively relevant content knowledge in policy, planning, school (subject / learning area / phase) development and governance.*
- 7.1 *Demonstrate the following personal qualities:*
- *Treats people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive school culture<sup>17</sup>.*
  - *Ability to challenge, influence and motivate others to achieve high goals<sup>8+18+2</sup>.*
  - *Commitment to democratic leadership and effective teamwork<sup>9</sup>.*
  - *Commitment to continuous professional development for self and all others within the school<sup>2</sup>.*
- 7.2 *Plan, allocate, support and evaluate work undertaken by groups, teams and individuals ensuring clear delegation of tasks and devolution of responsibilities<sup>13</sup>.*
- 7.3 *Develop the professional skills of groups and individuals to enhance their performance and that of the school<sup>2</sup>.*
- 7.4 *Create an environment conducive to collective bargaining, collaboration, negotiation and conflict resolution<sup>3+4</sup>.*
- 7.5 *Understand and be able to apply reflectively relevant content knowledge in leading and managing people.*
- 8.1 *Demonstrate the following personal qualities/abilities:*
- *Ability to seek and use information to guide judgment and decision-making<sup>4</sup>.*
  - *Integrity and fairness in managing resources<sup>16</sup>.*
  - *A systematic yet flexible approach to managing an organization.*
  - *Ability to think creatively to anticipate and solve problems<sup>4</sup>.*

■ *Awareness of the critical importance of informal and formal means of communication in the running of an organization<sup>15</sup>.*

8.2 *Set up, implement, maintain and evaluate organizational systems for the management of the school (subject / learning area / phase), where possible making use of appropriate information and communication technology<sup>5+12</sup>.*

8.3 *Manage the financial resources of the school (subject / learning area / phase) in a transparent and accountable way<sup>1</sup>.*

8.4 *Understand and be able to apply reflectively relevant content knowledge and skills in the management of organizational systems, and physical and financial resources<sup>5+16+1</sup>.*

#### **5.4 TRAINING NEEDS NOT COVERED BY THE ACE: SL**

Most identified skills are covered by the ACE: SL to some extent. The skills not covered by the ACE: SL include the following:

- Skills in coping with stress: The principal's skills in managing stressors at school.
- Skills in managing change: The principal's skills in managing change at school.
- Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues: The extent to which the principal correctly interprets and implements educational policies, acts, laws and other legal issues at school.
- Personnel selection skills: The success with which the principal is able to manage staff appointments.
- Networking skills: The extent to which the principal builds relationships with other principals and educational stakeholders in order to share common problems and learn from one another.

## 5.5 THE CONTENT OF THE ACE: SL NOT APPLICABLE TO THE IDENTIFIED SKILLS:

- *Apply a basic understanding of school management and leadership in South Africa to an evaluation of own management and leadership practices.* This outcome is registered as a unit standard at SAQA. It deals with the basic principles of school management and leadership, in general terms and specifically within the South African context, and moreover with the assessment of the student's own management and leadership abilities. It provides essentially a theoretical foundation in school management and leadership.
  
- *Develop a reflective portfolio to present evidence of school management and leadership competence in the South African context.* This outcome is registered as a unit standard at SAQA. It requires from students the compilation of a portfolio which provides evidence of applied competence in terms of the core exit level outcomes of the ACE in School Leadership.
  
- *Commitment to cooperative governance of the school and involvement of parents, learners and the community.* This outcome constitutes a subsection under the heading "demonstrates the following personal qualities/abilities". It requires the student to show commitment towards the participation of all stakeholders in the governance of his/her school.
  
- *Understand and be able to apply reflectively relevant content knowledge in policy, planning, school (subject/learning area/phase) development and governance.* This outcome is a subsection of the unit standard "manage policy, planning, school development and governance". It clearly indicates that the student should be able to put theory into practice with regard to policy, planning, school development and governance.

- *Understand and be able to apply reflectively relevant content knowledge in leading and managing people.* This outcome flows from the unit standard “develop a portfolio to demonstrate school management and leadership competence”. It therefore deals with putting theoretical knowledge pertaining to school management and leadership into practice.
  
- *A systematic yet flexible approach to managing an organization.* This outcome forms a subsection of the unit standard “develop a portfolio to demonstrate school management and leadership competence”. Once again, the student must put management theory into practice systematically and flexibly to manage a school.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION**

The analysis in this chapter revealed that the ACE: SL covers the majority of the identified skills needed by a principal to be successful. However, some of the identified skills are not dealt with, i.e. skills in managing stress, managing change, legal issues, personnel selection and networking. On the other hand, the ACE: SL covers theoretical knowledge on management, leadership and governance and endeavours to put the theory into practice.

## CHAPTER 6

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 6 provides a summative overview of the investigation. The most important findings of the study are highlighted and recommendations for further investigations are made.

The objectives of the investigation were to determine the extent to which principals are professionally equipped to perform their task and to determine their subsequent specific training needs (see section 1.7). The prescribed ACE: SL was also analysed to establish whether it meets the requirements as highlighted by the literature study.

#### 6.2 SUMMARY

In **Chapter 1** the rationale of the study was explained. It covered aspects such as the background to the importance of the study, a statement of the research problem, the research questions and the main aims and objectives.

In **Chapter 2** a broad overview of important literature on management and leadership was given and the need for specific school management and leadership skills for principals was discussed. The literature research indicated that quite a number of skills are required from an effective manager. The literature review formed the backdrop against which a comprehensive list of these skills was compiled.

**Chapter 3** focussed on the design and methodology of an empirical investigation into the current skills levels of principals in the Lejweleputswa Education District. Both a quantitative (rated questions in a questionnaire) and qualitative approach (open-ended questions, field notes and document analysis) were followed. The rationale for the approaches was discussed

followed by an explanation of the procedures which were followed to collect, analyse and present the data.

**Chapter 4** presented the findings of the empirical study. A detailed discussion of the characteristics of the respondents was presented, followed by the results of the quantitative data of each of the identified skills. Findings on the qualitative data (field notes and responses to open-ended questions) were offered per school. Data obtained in this way was used to augment results from the quantitative section. Each of the 15 principals investigated were rated and ranked in accordance with the ratings obtained from the respondents. From these findings it was determined that principals are generally NOT professionally equipped for their task.

The identified skills were compared to the ACE: SL in **Chapter 5** to ascertain whether the curriculum content addressed the training needs of principals. It became evident that not all identified skills were dealt with. On the other hand, the ACE: SL included theoretical content which was not covered by the skills profile of principals in Chapter 2.

## **6.3 SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS**

### **6.3.1 Findings from the literature review**

#### **6.3.1.1 Leadership models**

Various leadership models were described (see 2.2.3). Principals should take cognisance of different leadership styles to implement important aspects which may be lacking in their own management style.

#### *Traits Models*

In traits models leaders are classified according to their visible traits: physical, social background and personality traits. Possessing certain traits provides no guarantee for the success of a leader.

### *Behavioural Models*

Behavioural Models attempt to categorise leaders according to characteristic behaviour they display. A leader may focus on the task and be directive in his behaviour, or he may focus on the individual and adapt his behaviour accordingly. A key feature of behaviour models is that leaders can be trained to display desired behaviour patterns.

### *Contingency Models of Leadership*

According to the contingency models of leadership, the **situation** determines the leadership style that is best. The type of style adopted depends on the readiness of the followers to accept the leader's style.

### *Transactional Leadership*

Transactional leadership implies leadership relationships with subordinates which are based on an exchange for some valued resource. Subordinates are motivated to perform, not by intrinsic values but by extrinsic factors, knowing that they will gain something in performing a task.

### *Transformational and Charismatic Leadership*

Transformational leadership steers away from personality traits and leadership behaviour. It focuses on ways in which to motivate employees. Motivated employees are more productive which is in tune with the definition of leadership, i.e. the leader's task is to influence individuals to achieve collective goals. The main focus of leadership ought to be on the commitments and capacities of organisational members.

### *Invitational leadership style*

The emphasis of this leadership style is on communicating invitational messages to individuals and groups with whom leaders interact. It aims to build and act on a shared and evolving vision of enhanced educational experiences for learners. This style is characterised by the principal's passion for upliftment, the teachers' commitment and care, the parents' involvement and the learners' positive life-view and happiness.

#### 6.3.1.2 Leadership skills

Nineteen skills essential to principals were identified from the literature (2.5; 3.3; 4.5). The identification of these skills was used as basis for the design of the questionnaire from which the empirical data was obtained.

### **6.3.2 Empirical findings**

#### 6.3.2.1 Addressing the purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the current competency levels of principals in comparison with the competencies they should ideally possess (see section 1.3). The current school leadership competency levels of selected schools in the Lejweleputswa Education District were evaluated in the empirical study. The detailed results will be discussed in

#### 6.3.2.2 Addressing the objectives of the study

The objectives of the study, as set out in chapter 1 (see 1.6), were as follows:

To determine (with regard to the Free State Province, Lejweleputswa Education District):

- the specific management needs of secondary school principals (see 4.5 and 4.6);

- the extent to which school principals are professionally equipped for their management task (see 4.5 and 4.6);
- the major training challenges for principals (see 4.5 and 4.6); and
- to critically compare the training needs, as identified in this study, with the proposed training programme (ACE: SL) of the Department of Education (Chapter 5).

These objectives have been met.

### 6.3.2.3 Important empirical findings

A summary of the training needs, per principal and per skill, in the Lejweleputswa Education District is given in Figure 6.1 below. A summary of the scores per type of school (A = Functional, B = At risk and C = Dysfunctional) is supplied in table 6.1. These summaries clearly indicate that not all principals are professionally equipped for their task.

#### *Training needs per skill and per school*

Figure 6.1 reveals that some skills need more attention than others:

- The skills of fostering a culture of learning and teaching as well as the management of facilities, were scored low in general and were particularly inadequate in eight of the fifteen principals.
- Skills in administration, motivation of stakeholders as well as instructional leadership were also identified as important shortcomings.
- Six principals needed to improve on personnel development, conflict management, problem solving, stress management, management of change, legal issues, human relations and communication skills.
- Four principals needed to work on their financial management, personnel selection, setting high standards and networking skills.
- Two principals had to polish one skill only.
- One principal had three skills to improve on.
- Two principals had to perk up four skills.

- One of the principals needed to develop nine skills.
- Five principals needed to improve on sixteen or more skills.
- Only four principals received a clean sheet with no need for improvement (training needs).

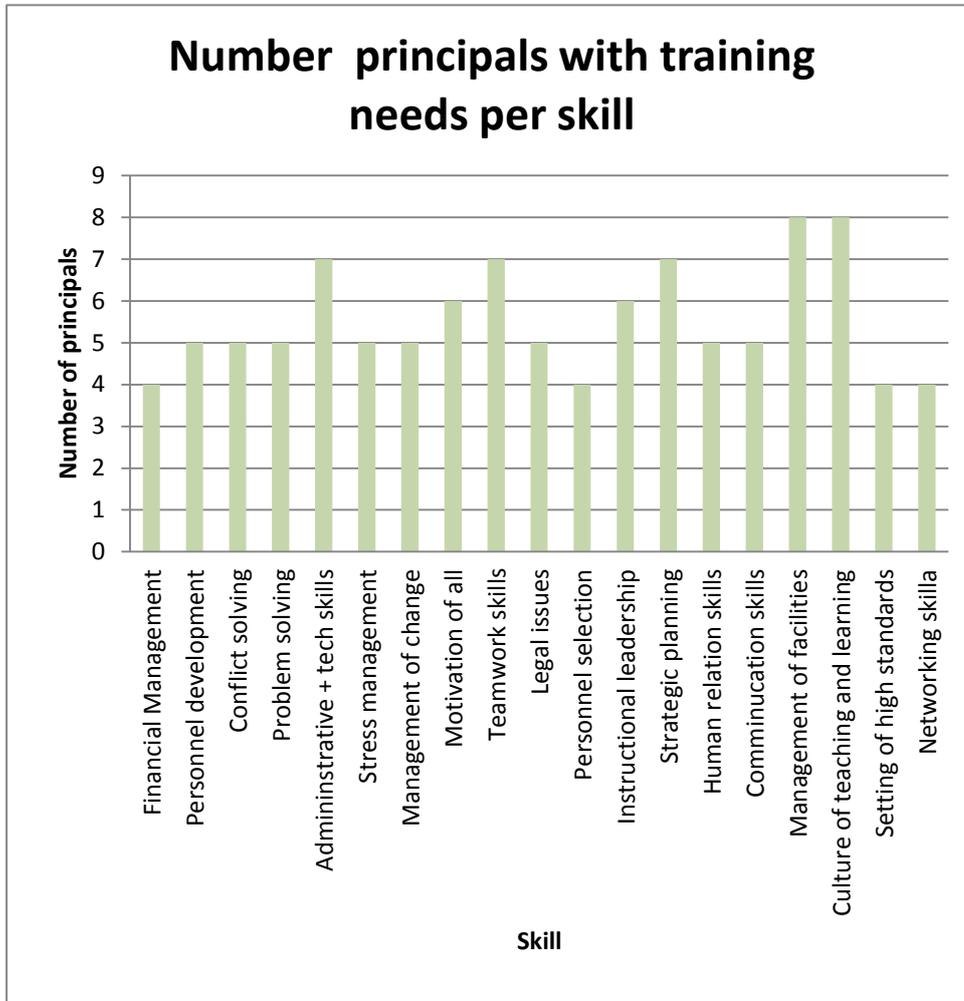


Figure 6.1: Number of principals with training needs per skill

### Scores per group of schools

One of the main findings of the empirical investigation (see table 6.1) was that A school principals were much better equipped for their task than B- and C-schools principals. On average, higher ratings were recorded for skills in networking, setting of high standards and legal issues. The lowest scores were recorded for skills in stress management, teamwork as well as management of facilities. The rest of the data from table 6.1 is self-explanatory:

	A Schools	B Schools	C Schools	Average
Financial Management	3.9	2.9	2.8	<b>3.2</b>
Personnel development	3.6	2.7	2.9	<b>3.1</b>
Conflict solving	3.5	3.0	2.9	<b>3.1</b>
Problem solving	3.6	2.7	2.9	<b>3.1</b>
Administrative + tech skills	4.1	2.8	2.7	<b>3.2</b>
Stress management	3.4	2.6	2.9	<b>3.0</b>
Management of change	3.8	2.8	3.0	<b>3.2</b>
Motivation of all	3.5	2.8	3.0	<b>3.1</b>
Teamwork skills	3.3	2.8	2.8	<b>3.0</b>
Legal issues	4.0	2.9	3.1	<b>3.3</b>
Personnel selection	3.6	2.9	2.9	<b>3.1</b>
Instructional leadership	3.8	2.7	3.1	<b>3.2</b>
Strategic planning	3.8	2.7	2.7	<b>3.1</b>
Human relation skills	3.6	3.0	3.1	<b>3.2</b>
Communication skills	3.6	3.0	3.0	<b>3.2</b>
Management of facilities	3.7	2.7	2.5	<b>3.0</b>
Culture of teaching and learning	3.7	2.8	2.9	<b>3.1</b>
Setting of high standards	4.0	2.9	3.1	<b>3.3</b>
Networking skills	4.1	2.9	3.1	<b>3.4</b>
<b>Average for group</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>2.82</b>	<b>2.92</b>	<b>3.15</b>

*Table 6.1: Summary of all scores for A, B and C schools*

## 6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made based on the findings of the study.

### *Recommendation 1*

Serious consideration should be given to the training of principals and school management teams to prepare them for the task that awaits them as leaders of schools. Pandor (as quoted by Fredericks, 2007:3) states that the Department of Education has initiated and is driving the development of professional requirements for school principals, which includes an Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership (ACE: SL) programme. This programme should be made compulsory for incumbent and aspiring school leaders.

### *Recommendation 2*

The curriculum of the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership should be revised so as to include the development of all skills as identified in this dissertation.

### *Recommendation 3*

Principals with proven management and leadership skills should be used to facilitate in-service training initiatives and to mentor current and aspiring school leaders.

## **6.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

- A complete needs analysis could be carried out at all schools (primary and secondary) to determine whether the findings of this research can be generalised to all schools in South Africa.
- Research should be undertaken to determine which factors enable some schools to remain functional despite severe socio-economic problems and other obstacles. Such information will be invaluable to the design (or improvement) of training initiatives. The reasons for the dysfunctionality of certain schools should also be investigated.
- A skills analysis of principals enrolled for the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership should be conducted before, and after completion of the course to determine whether the curriculum fulfils the requirements of professional principalship.

## **6.6 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Although this study does not claim to provide a complete list of the skills that a principal needs to be effective, it endeavours to highlight the essential competencies a principal should possess in order to be a successful leader and manager. It is also not claimed that principals possessing such skills will necessarily be rated as good managers. This investigation was essentially an

attempt to uncover reasons why some schools are successful, while others seem to fail in their task.

## **6.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS**

It is the wish of many young and dynamic educators to make a contribution to the South African educational system. Several attempt to do so by applying for promotional posts at schools or within the Department of Education. However, it often seems that once they are appointed, they struggle and success eludes them. These educators should be equipped with knowledge and skills in school management and leadership. Hands-on training is of the utmost importance when holding a management position.

The position of principal is demanding and complex. It should be filled by a competently trained manager and not by someone who hopes to develop the requisite skills through a process of trial and error. Unfortunately, qualifications do not play a major role currently since appointment to the position of principal requires only a three year qualification and some experience. As a consequence, selection for the position during interviews is more often than not based on face value or some other irrelevant consideration. The prerequisites set by the Department of Education should include a relevant post-graduate qualification to give candidates a sound theoretical foundation as to what is expected of them once appointed.

*Who will appoint a pilot without a pilot's licence?*

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Central University of  
Technology, Free State

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, FREE STATE  
SENTRALE UNIVERSITEIT VIR TEGNOLOGIE, VRYSTAAT  
YUNIVESITHI E BOHARENG YA THEKENOLOJI, FOREISTATA

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**School of Teacher Education**  
Welkom Campus

Dear Respondent

**Research project: School Management and Leadership**

Included please find a questionnaire for you to complete. The focus of this research project is to determine the level of leadership and managerial skills of secondary school principals in the Lejweleputswa Educational District. It is NOT the intention of the questionnaire to incriminate principals in any way, but to determine the specific management training needs of school principals in general. Results obtained will be used to critically analyse the structure and appropriateness of the new Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership which is currently being offered at universities.

You will note that the questionnaire does not identify you in any way, thereby ensuring anonymity. All information gained from your questionnaire will remain anonymous and confidential.

I would like to thank you in advance for taking time in completing the attached questionnaire to the best of your ability.

If you have any queries, please feel free to contact me at the under-mentioned cell number or my supervisor at the School for Teaching at Central University of Technology.

Thank you for your valued contribution.

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Eben Engelbrecht  
082-7727434

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Dr Jo Badenhorst  
Department of Teacher Education  
CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY  
Welkom Campus  
Tel: (057) 910-3649  
Cell: 0822024626

## Instructions to respondents:

- There are no *correct* or *incorrect* answers to the items in this questionnaire.
- Complete the questionnaire as *honestly* as possible. The first response that comes to mind is usually the most valid response.
- Only *one* response per item is permitted.
- Note that your responses will make a valuable contribution to our understanding of the current management training needs of principals in the Lejweleputswa District.
- **Please answer all the questions!**

### Information regarding this questionnaire:

The questionnaire consists of three (3) sections.

- Section A** requires some information about yourself.  
**Section B** consists of a number of statements to which you should respond to.  
**Section C** seeks your impressions/thoughts as you worked through Section B.

### Section A

Please furnish the following biographic information by marking your choice with an "X"

1	Gender:	Male		Female	
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2	Age:	22 - 25 yrs		(1)
		26 - 30 yrs		(2)
		31 - 35 yrs		(3)
		36 - 40 yrs		(4)
		41 - 45 yrs		(5)
		46 - 50 yrs		(6)
		51 - 55 yrs		(7)
		56 - 60 yrs		(8)
		61 - 65 yrs		(9)

3	Highest qualification:	NQF 5 (M + 3 or 3 year diploma/degree)		
		NQF 6 (M + 4 or 4 year diploma/degree and HDE)		
		NQF 7 (M + 4 year diploma/degree and Advanced Certificate in education/honours degree)		
		NQF 8 (Masters degree)		
		NQF 8.5 (Doctorate/PhD)		
		4	Years teaching experience:	0 - 5 yrs
6 - 10 yrs				(2)
11 - 15 yrs				(3)
16 - 20 yrs				(4)
21 - 25 yrs				(5)
26 - 30 yrs				(6)
31 - 35 yrs				(7)
36 - 40 yrs				(8)

5	Current rank:	Post level 1	
		Post level 1 (and subject head)	
		Post level 2	
		Post level 3	
		Post level 4	

6	Years experience in current rank:	(1)	0 - 5 yrs		(1)
		(2)	6 - 10 yrs		(2)
		(3)	11 - 15 yrs		(3)
		(4)	16 - 20 yrs		(4)
		(5)	21 - 25 yrs		(5)
		(6)	26 - 30 yrs		(6)
		(7)	31 - 35 yrs		(7)
		(8)	36 - 40 yrs		(8)

7	Home language:	English		(1)
		Sesotho		(2)
		Setswana		(3)
		Afrikaans		(4)
		Other		(5)
If other, specify:(.....)				(5)

What follows is a list of management skills together with a brief description of each. Please rate your principal's level of efficiency according to the following grid:

Grid for allocating choices:

- The principal shows very weak ability/skills. 1
- The principal's ability/skills need improvement. 2
- The principal shows adequate ability/skills. 3
- The principal shows good ability/skills 4
- The principal shows very good ability/skills 5

8.	<u>Financial management skills:</u> Your principal's skills in dealing with all financial matters at school.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	<u>Personnel evaluation and development skills:</u> Your principal's skills in staff evaluation and development.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	<u>Conflict solving skills</u> The way the principal resolves conflict between role-players (parents, educators and learners) at school with emphasis on fairness and desirable outcomes.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	<u>Problem solving skills:</u> The extent to which the principal attends to major problems at school and uses available resources to solve such problems.	1	2	3	4	5

12.	<u>Administrative or technical skills:</u> The extent to which the administration of the school is managed and supported with the use of information technology.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	<u>Skills in coping with stress:</u> Your principal's skills in managing stressors at school.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	<u>Skills in managing change:</u> Your principal's skills in managing change at school.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	<u>Skills in motivating educators and learners:</u> The extent to which the principal is able to keep educators and learners motivated and united in the face of difficult circumstances.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	<u>Teamwork skills:</u> The extent to which the principal gains cooperation of all role players at school in an open and supportive way in order to achieve shared goals.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	<u>Skills in dealing with school-related legal issues:</u> The extent to which the principal correctly interprets and implements educational policies, acts, laws and other legal issues in the school.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	<u>Personnel selection skills:</u> The success with which the principal is able to manage staff appointments.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	<u>Instructional leadership skills:</u> The ability of the principal to manage teaching and learning at your school.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	<u>Strategic planning skills:</u> The way in which the vision and mission of the school (in conjunction with all role players) are designed, refined into specific goals.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	<u>Human relations skills:</u> The extent to which the principal is able to build good relations with parents, teachers, learners and other role players in the educational setting.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	<u>Communication skills:</u> The extent to which the principal is able to successfully communicate with all role players in the in the educational setting.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	<u>Skills in the management of facilities:</u> The extent to which the principal is able to supervise maintenance of school facilities, furniture and equipment as well as ensuring clean toilets and preventing vandalism.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	<u>Skills in establishing a culture of teaching and learning:</u> The extent to which the principal is able to create a healthy climate for teaching and learning at school.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	<u>Skills in improving and maintaining high standards of education:</u> The extent to which the principal sets clear academic expectations and high standards for both teachers and learners	1	2	3	4	5
26.	<u>Networking skills:</u> The extent to which the principal builds relationship with other principals and educational stakeholders in order to share common problems and learn from one another	1	2	3	4	5

## Section C

1. What are your overall impressions about the management skills of the principal at your school?

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