THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S MANAGEMENT DUTIES: A CASE OF BOYS-ONLY PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT OF KWAZULU–NATAL

by

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Summary

This study describes the research that was carried out at a boys-only primary school in the Pinetown District of Kwazulu-Natal. The study was conducted with the purpose of investigating the management duties undertaken by the principal regarding time, staff and curriculum.

In order to achieve the aim of this study the main research question was formulated, that is: How does the principal of X primary boys-only school manage the administrative and instructional programme in the process of executing his duties?

Chapter One orientates the reader regarding the purpose, research problem, motivation and design of the study. Chapter Two provides the theoretical framework in terms of the types of school management models with particular focus on the democratic management model and the systems theory. Qualitative research in the form of in-depth interviews and participant observation was undertaken in an attempt to answer the research question. Interviews were conducted with the school principal and four educators.

Chapter Four presents the findings of the study which highlight the role of the principal in managing the aspects of the school while he delegates the various areas of management to the members of staff. The findings further reveal the principal's involvement in all the processes from inception to end.

Chapter Five concludes the study summatively. The chapter includes a brief account of what the study covered, assumptions made in the theoretical framework, and draws important conclusions and makes relevant recommendations about the management duties of the school principal.

KEY TERMS: Educational management, staff appraisal, professional development, principal, educators, staff development, curriculum.

DECLARATION

I declare that "**THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S MANAGEMENT DUTIES: A CASE OF BOYS-ONLY PRIMARY SCHOOL IN THE PINETOWN DISTRICT OF KWAZULU–NATAL**, is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

(Mr L Manickum)

10 April 2011

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Mickey and Agnes for making me the man I am today. I will never forget the sacrifices that you made for me and the love I receive from you everyday; you are my greatest inspiration. I love you.

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CHAPTER ONE
ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to inquire into the management task of the principal at school. According the Botha (2004: 239), a professional school principal is the educational leader and manager of a school, and is therefore responsible for the work performance of all the people in the school (i.e. both staff and learners). The educational leader required only professional training and experience to manage a school. On the contrary, Stephen, Daring-Hammond, LaPointe and Meyerson (2005: 2) point out that principals need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts, disciplinarians, community builders, public relations experts, budget analysts, facility managers, special programs administrators and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. As the managerial demands of the school escalated during the past few decades the task of the now educational manager (i.e. the school principal) has undergone a radical change. As a result of the increasing complexity of the school as an organisation, the educational manager is currently subjected to the changing demands, especially in respect of human resources.

For purposes of this study, the focus on administrative matters within the school and managing the instructional programme at school are the major aspects of the management duties of the school principal. According to Botha (2004: 239), school principals traditionally had more managerial and administrative tasks and less teaching duties. The description of the principal's role includes that of the head educator (as used in England) and instructional leader (as widely used in North America). The complex demands of the managerial tasks of the principal today suggest that principals should be leaders in learning and not merely leaders of learning. Principals should understand contemporary theories of learning. They should have an explicit personal theory of learning and should be able to utilize this knowledge.

It is generally accepted that the effectiveness of the educational management action is a decisive factor in school effectiveness (Botha 2004: 240; Guthrie 1986:

306). It has now become increasingly important to accept some sort of academic (professional) management from a person in a promotional post in education. The attainment of a qualification in educational management does not guarantee that a person possesses managerial abilities, only that he has managerial knowledge. It was important for the researcher to highlight this point, although it is not the focus of this study. This was done to point it out as one of the factors compounding the problem of investigation to be stated later.

It is important that the principal has some management training because he has a number of management functions to perform. The expectations of what the principal is supposed to know and do in school management are high (Wallace & Poulson 2003: 303). The principal is expected to work closely with the school management team (SMT) to effectively manage the school. It is vital that the principal remains answerable and accountable for everything that happens within the school. Principals play a vital and multi-faceted role in setting the direction for schools that are positive and productive workplaces for educators and vibrant learning environments for children, but existing knowledge on the best ways to develop these effective leaders is insufficient (Stephen et al. 2005: 3). In the next section the background to the study is explored.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

This study is immersed within the perspective of education management. Bush (2004: 2) describes educational management as a field of practice aimed at effective and efficient use of resources in order to achieve the best possible educational goals. As indicated above, the focus in this study is the management role of the principal for human resources (educators) and instructional programme.

Educational management deals with technical matters involving planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, controlling and evaluating the activities of the people in educational institutions for the purpose of achieving optimum educational goals. It is mainly concerned with the day-to-day routine maintenance operations and activities of the school, including administration, which Bush (2004: 3) labels as lower order duty. Management is the point at which policies are implemented. Stephen et al. (2005: 4) state that principals play a vital role in setting

the direction for successful schools, but existing knowledge on the best ways to prepare and develop highly qualified principals is sparse.

The task of managing a school falls onto the school principal in his capacity as the educational manager. His task is therefore complex but the main responsibility is to ensure that effective teaching and learning take place. The responsibility of the principal is to enhance the school's teaching and learning activities as broadly identified as his instructional leadership role (Botha 2004: 239). According to Stephen et al. (2005: 4), principals are expected to serve the often conflicting needs and interests of many stakeholders, including students, parents, educators, district office officials, unions, state and federal agencies. As a result, many scholars and practitioners argue that the job requirements far exceed the reasonable capacities of any one person. Consequently there are certain management functions of the principal's management task that have been identified to have a significant effect on teaching and learning results. Two assumptions that underpin his or her task are as follows (Kruger 1999: 12):

- The organisational structure and the organisational culture of the school, and the principal's influence on these, relate directly to the effectiveness of teaching and learning.
- The principal's personal convictions about the nature and purpose of education come to the fore in the educational programme of the school.

The functions implied in these assumptions can be realised by means of the following two generally accepted methods or domains within the school management (Fidler 1997: 33):

- Bureaucratic and structural aspects. These directly influence educators and instruction and may be regarded as the formal tasks such as coordinating the curriculum, framing school aims, supervising and evaluating instruction, providing resources, monitoring learner progress and supporting development sessions.

- Informal aspects. These directly influence educators and instruction, and may include aspects of establishing a favourable and supportive climate for teaching and learning by means of shared decision making, collaboration, etc.

Stephen et al. (2005: 2) are of the opinion that principals need to be educational visionaries, instructional and curriculum leaders, assessment experts and disciplinarians. This happens at X primary school, a private school in the Pinetown District of Kwazulu-Natal. This boys-only primary school is partly similar and partly dissimilar to the traditional primary schools. It is similar in that it consists of all the aspects that make up a primary school, i.e. structures, management, staff and learners. It is dissimilar in that it caters for boys only. It is thus a single-sex school.

The focus of the study falls onto the principal's management of the school's administration with particular reference to effectively managing time within the instructional programme, curriculum and his staff. The study is interested in investigating the principal's management within the jurisdiction of his school. Having explored the background to the study, which points to the research problem, the actual research problem can now be stated.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The main research question resultant from the exploration of the problem in the above background is stated as follows:

How does the principal of X primary boys-only school manage the administrative and instructional programme at school in the process of executing his duties?

The research problem therefore aims to unpack the role of the principal in managing and administering the instructional program at school. In doing so, an investigation into how exactly does the principal manage the school timetable, school calendar, staff appraisal and staff development will be undertaken.

The research problem can therefore be sub-divided into the following sub-problems:

- How does the principal of X primary boys-only school manage the time at school?
- How does the principal of X primary boys-only school manage the curriculum and instruction at school?
- How does the principal of X primary boys-only school supervise the educators at school?

1.4 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to determine how the principal of X primary boys-only school executes his management roles in the areas of time management, curriculum management and the supervision of staff. This aim will be achieved through the following objectives:

- To enquire how the school principal manages time at his school.
- To enquire how the school principal manages the curriculum and instruction at his school.
- To enquire how the principal supervises the staff on duty at his school.

1.5 MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The researcher has chosen the field of educational management because it is an area of study that he is extremely passionate about. The researcher has taught in both state and private schools. The latter has sparked his interest to research the management of a private school. Currently the researcher works at a private boys-only primary school. There are a total of 550 learners and a staff of 60 teachers and support staff. The largest department within the school is the academic department. The researcher's key area of responsibility is the management within Grade 5.

The reason for the investigation is to add to the existing literature and contribute knowledge in the field of educational management regarding the management of private schools. There are numerous functions and roles associated with being the principal at X primary boys-only school that need to be documented as this can

only enrich the field of educational management in terms of the findings from the study.

With this study, the researcher thus plans to investigate the role of a principal at a boys-only primary school, a position that he aspires to hold one day. He would like to investigate the role of the principal in managing his school's human resource, i.e. the educators and unpack the demands placed on him in effectively executing his duties as the educational manager of his school. The focus of his study will revolve around the principal, management and assistance of the teaching staff. In doing so, the researcher aims to add to the literature on preparatory schools.

The following section provides the methodological choices and substantiations as suggested by the research problem.

1.6 METHOD OF THE STUDY

1.6.1 Literature survey

The researcher will consult the relevant literature about the research problem. This will take the route of searching for the relevant literature in the field of education management with specific reference to the role played by the principal in managing his staff. The literature will include sources like books, articles, journals, etc. There is ample literature available to support the study and the researcher will therefore draw on the numerous sources available.

1.6.2 Empirical investigation

This is a qualitative study. Qualitative research is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world in which they live. Researchers use qualitative approaches to study behaviour, perspectives and experiences of the people that they study. The basis of qualitative research lies in the interpretive approach of social reality (Holloway 1997: 1).

Qualitative research is a generic social research approach that prioritizes the insider perspective or EMIC perspective (Babbie & Mouton 2004: 271). The insiders in this case are the school principal and educators. In this study, the

researcher aims to determine how the principal brokers the often-conflicting interests of parents, educators and students (Stephen et al. 2005: 2).

Description and understanding are the ultimate internet of qualitative research. It is characterized by data collection methods that encourage and create rapport, mutual trust and honesty between the researchers and the researched (Denzil & Lincoln 2003: 271).

The researcher will do a purposive sampling of the participants. These are the members of the academic staff within the school. He intends doing purposive sampling of the research population as specific groups of people involved in a specific programme will be selected for data collection (Rallis 2003: 497). Purposive sampling produces rich descriptions of human behaviour, actions, experiences, thoughts, feelings and opinions. The sample size is minimal and is limited to four educators and the school principal to illuminate in depth the issues under investigation.

Collection of data will take the form of semi-structured interviews, participant observation and qualitative questionnaires. These methods of data collection are selected because the researcher is then able to collect data that are from the perspective of the four different educators working in the same environment and working conditions.

An interview schedule is designed with a list of questions and topics that deal with issues that are desired to be explored. The purpose of the interview schedule is to serve as a guideline to ensure that similar issues will be covered in all the forthcoming interviews. According to Patton (2002: 312), the interview guide provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject. Patton (2002: 343) suggests that data will be gathered by using open-ended questions and this will ensure that the participants speak freely.

Anonymity will be an option if the subject does not want to reveal certain aspects, for example, name and school. The transcripts will be made available to

participants to validate the data collected. According to Silverman (2001), respondent validation is when the researcher goes back to the participants of the study with the results to refine any areas of weakness.

Data will ultimately be analysed through an inductive process by placing information into categories. The emphasis of the analysis is based on finding patterns within the data collected.

1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.7.1 Educational management

Education management is the process of planning objectives, organizing human and material resources, coordinating human activities systematically, controlling resources efficiently and effectively for the achievement of optimum educational goals in an educational institution (Van der Westhuizen 2003: 38). Management of education is a process of working and managing people, available resources and co-ordinating various activities performed by the people one is managing while using resources to the optimum to gain successful results.

1.7.2 Staff Appraisal

An appraisal system is an integral employee practice of the human resource framework of an organization. It is a formal and at times informal and documented process of the performance of workers, professionals and other staff members of an organization (Lawrence 2004:1). Teachers gain from professional development through in–service training in that they are more effective in the classroom, school and the overall organisation.

1.7.3 Professional development

Professional development is the ongoing development programme that focuses on a wide variety of knowledge, skills and attitudes required to educate learners more effectively. It is a formal, systematic programme designed to promote personal and professional growth (Steyn & van Niekerk 2002: 250). This term means the participation of teachers or educational leaders in development opportunities for their better equipment.

1.7.4 Communication

Communication is the transmission of ideas, information, opinions, attitudes and feelings through one or more media that produce some response (Scermerhorn 1997: 339). This means that ideas, information and feelings are passed onto various individuals and groups and in doing so, a response is gained.

1.8. CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter one provides an introduction and background to the study. It consists of the problem statement, aim of the study and describes the methods of investigation as well as explanation of concepts.

Chapter two will review relevant literature on the role of the principal in schools and provides a theoretical background for the investigation. It discusses the principal's management roles.

Chapter three discusses the research design, the methods and the ethics that guide the study.

Chapter four discusses the findings of the study.

Finally, Chapter five offers a summary of the study, recommendations and conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the literature review which provides a conceptual and theoretical framework for the study. The main focus of the chapter is the role of the principal in managing the school in three school management areas, namely time, curriculum and staff. The aim of the chapter is to bring to light what the school principal should do to implement and execute the strategies that would allow for efficient teaching and learning. The chapter also covers the theoretical models of educational management that underpin the study. In unpacking these models, the focus will first be on the democratic model of educational management in the context of the school, a critical look into the purpose of the democratic model and the limitations thereof. Secondly, the systems model and its relevance to the study will be outlined. Finally, the chapter discusses the management role of the school principal in discharging his duties in the three management areas given above.

2.2 TYPES OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT MODELS
2.2.1 Introduction

Although there is no single educational management model, school management models relate to the varied nature of the problems encountered in schools. These require different approaches and solutions. The purpose of this section is to describe and explain school management models, their purpose and limitations of the democratic model regarding the school management.

2.2.2 Theoretical background regarding management models

Management is regarded as a practical activity. According to Bush (2004: 13), school staff has a somewhat ambivalent attitude towards theory. He claims that educators themselves commonly regard theory with a varying mixture of respect and suspicion because these theories often present an ideal scenario and this is not necessarily the ideal scenario at the schools in which the educator works. Management and decision making are not a purely subjective activity. When a principal takes a decision, it reflects in part the view of the organisation. Such view

is coloured by the experience and attitudes engendered by the school principal from interacting with the educators and school staff (Bush 2004: 13).

There is no single all-embracing theory of educational management. In part this reflects the astonishing diversity of educational institutions, ranging from small primary schools to huge universities. Denzin and Lincoln (2008: 77) argue that theories or perspectives in education are not the same as specific theories. The latter comprise a set of beliefs, values and techniques that are shared within a particular field of enquiry. The dominant theory eventually comes under challenge by the emergence of new facts which the theory cannot explain.

According to Bolman and Deal (1984: 4) most theories of educational management possess three major characteristics. These are as follows:

- Theories tend to be normative in that they reflect beliefs about the nature of educational institutions and the behaviour of individuals within them.
- Theories tend to be selective in that they emphasize certain aspects of the institution at the expense of other elements. The espousal of one theoretical model leads to the neglect of other approaches.
- Theories of educational management are often based on, or supported by observation of practice in educational institutions.

Educational management theories tend to reveal a set of norms that may be understood as the correct way of interpreting the world in which an educational institution operates. These theories may only highlight a few aspects of the institution and neglect to highlight other aspects of the institution that are as important, if not more important. Finally, theories tend to be supported by facts taken from research done at educational institutions and these results may be subjective in that all institutions differ in various ways, for example, their location, sample size, participants, etc.

A considerable number of theories have been discussed by many different authors on educational management (Bolman & Deal 1997; Morgan & Demchak 1998;

Miller & Seller 1985). Some aggregation of all these theories is needed so that they can be presented in a clear and discrete manner. Doing so provides clarity in the study of management in education. Cuthbert (1994: 39) explains that there is a lack of clarity in the study of management in education. Cuthbert thus opinionated, that the study of management in education is diverse and that there is no one study that is correct or ideal. Models have been borrowed from a wide range of disciplines, and in a few cases developed specially to explain unique features of educational organisations. Several writers have chosen to present models in distinct groups or bundles. They differ in the emphasis given to particular approaches and the terminology used to describe them. Two of the best known models are those by Bolman and Deal (1984) and Morgan and Demchak (1998). To comprehend the variety of models available, we need some labels and categories that can allow us to consider different ideas in a sensible order.

Several writers have chosen to present theories in distinct groups or bundles but they differ both in the emphasis given to particular approaches and in the terminology used to denote them, for example, Bolman and Deal (1984: 210) discuss two common sense perspectives, which are the democratic model and systems theory.

2.2.3 Democratic model

Models of educational management are useful to managers of education as they provide a framework in which managers are able to work in assisting all who are involved in the educational system. Bush (2004: 98) discusses the five major models of educational management, which include formal, democratic, political, subjective and ambiguity.

The analysis of the five models includes considerations of four main elements which are valuable in distinguishing the different emphases of the same. The criteria are as follows:

- The level of agreement within the staff about the goals or objectives of the institution.

- The meaning and validity of organisational structures within educational institutions.
- The relationship between the institution and its environment.
- The most appropriate leadership strategies for educational institutions.

As stated above, for purposes of this study the focus is on Bush's democratic model. Democratic models include all those theories which emphasise that power and decision making are shared among some or all members of the organisation. These approaches range from a restricted democracy where the leader shares power with a limited number of senior colleagues, to a pure democracy where all members have an equal voice. According to Bush (2004: 48-50), democratic models are characterised by certain features. Such features are explained subsequently:

- They are strongly normative in orientation. Their advocates believe that decision making should be based on democratic principles but do not necessarily claim that these principles actually determine the nature of management in action. Democratic models are founded in values and beliefs and may not necessarily be founded in reality.
- Democratic approaches are appropriate for organisations with a significant number of professional staff. Professionals possess authority from their knowledge and skill. Professional authority occurs when decisions are made on an individual basis rather than being standardised. Education does demand a professional approach because pupils and students need personal attention. Educators require a measure of autonomy in the conduct of their professional activities.
- Democratic models assume a common set of values held by members of that organisation. They may stem from the socialisation which occurs during training and their early years of professional training. These common values guide the managerial activities of the organisation. The common background and education of participants form part of the justification for the normative assumption that it is possible to reach agreement about goals and policies.

- Most democratic theories build in the assumption that the staff has formal representation within the various decision making bodies. Significant areas of policy are determined within the official committee system rather than being a prerogative of individual leaders.

- Democratic models assume that decisions are reached by a process of consensus or compromise rather than division or conflict. There is a belief that there are common values and shared objectives and this leads to a positive and desirable resolution of events by agreement. The decision making process may be lengthened by the search for compromise but this is regarded as acceptable.

From the above-mentioned features of the democratic model, it can be deduced that power and decision making are shared among some or all members of staff at school, where decisions are made based on democratic principles. The principal should not determine the nature of the organisation or how management should function unilaterally. The democratic model is appropriate for organisations with a significant number of professional staff who share a common set of values and aim to reach their decisions through consensus or compromise rather than division or conflict.

2.2.4 Democratic models in schools

The induction of democratic models in schools has been slower, less complete and more piecemeal than in higher education (Bush 2004: 68-70). The tradition of all powerful principals, with authority over staff and accountability to external bodies, has stifled several attempts to develop participative modes of management in primary and secondary schools. The formal position is that heads alone are responsible for the organisation and management of schools.

There are three main arguments about the participation of the teaching staff in school decision making. Firstly, there is ample evidence that educators wish to participate fully in the management of schools. Davies and Mosdell (2006: 129) conducted a research among fifty-one heads of departments in schools which show that they desire a higher level of involvement in decision making.

Secondly, it can be postulated that the quality of decision making is better where the teaching staff participate in the process. Principals do not have a monopoly of wisdom or vision and the involvement of other staff increases the fund of experience and expertise brought to bear on problems. Participation tends to increase the job satisfaction of those involved and leads to a greater commitment to the policies of the school. Improvement is possible in the equality of decisions if all those involved have the opportunity to participate in solving the problems. Decision making can thus become positive and dynamic in schools.

Finally, the participation of the teaching staff is important because they usually have the responsibility of implementing changes in policy. Educators enjoy considerable discretion in their classroom activities. Principals are also increasingly involving educators in curriculum coordination at schools. Brown (1983: 24) argues that curriculum change in the primary school requires the active involvement of the staff. The recognition that greater educator involvement may be to the benefit of schools has resulted in the emergence of a wide range of the consultative and participative mechanisms. Democracy implies the involvement of all the teaching staff either through direct involvement in decision making or through the opportunity to elect representatives to the policy making body.

2.2.5 The purpose of democratic models

Democratic models assume that members of an organisation agree on the organisation's goals. There is a belief that the staff has a shared view of the purposes of the institution. Bush (2004: 21) outlines the functions of institutional objectives. Firstly, goals provide a general guide to activity. A member of an organisation who is aware of the organisation's goals is better able to make his activities relevant by achieving it. Secondly, goals serve as a source of legitimacy. Activities can be justified if they are a means of measuring success. Thirdly, they are a means of measuring. There is a clear indication that the agreement of goals, central to the ethos of the democratic models, is likely to be achieved under conditions where all members work together towards achieving an outcome which benefits the organisation.

The acknowledgement of possible conflict over the goals of educational institutions threatens to remove one of the central planks of democratic models. The belief that staff can always reach agreement over institutional purposes and policies lies at the heart of all participative approaches. Any recognition of goal conflict serves to reduce the validity of all democratic perspectives. Democratic models share with formal approaches the view that organisational structure is an objective fact which has a clear meaning for all members of the institution. The major difference concerns the relationships between different elements of the structure. Formal models present structures as vertical or hierarchical with decisions being made by leaders and then passed down the structure. Subordinates are accountable to superiors for the satisfactory performance of their duties (Bush 2004: 52).

According to Bush (2004: 57), democratic models characterise decision making as a participative process with all members of the institution having an equal opportunity to influence policy and action. The ambiguity of the decision making process within the democratic organisation creates a particular problem in terms of accountability to external bodies. Individuals and groups outside the institution often behave as if the principal has total control over the activities of the other members of the organisation and can be held personally responsible for their decisions. Democratic theorists tend to ascribe the following qualities to schools principals:

- Heads and principals acknowledge the expertise and skills of the educators and seek to harness their assets for the benefit of the learners.
- Democratic heads seek to create formal and informal opportunities for the testing and elaboration of policy initiatives.
- Democratic models emphasize the authority of expertise rather than official authority.

Democratic theories and models credit the principal as the person who through experience, commands authority. It further assigns the principal the duty of recognising the skills that the educators possess and harnessing their skills, to

better execute the principal's primary objective of promoting quality teaching and learning. Theorists may also assume that principals seek opportunities for testing and expanding policy. This however, is not often the case. Theory is often based on scenarios that are not always real and are often ideal. Therefore limitations exist which are true of the democratic model.

2.2.6   Limitations of democratic models

Democratic models tend to be highly normative and idealistic. Their advocates believe that they represent the most appropriate means of conducting affairs in educational institutions. Educators exhibit that authority of expertise which justifies their involvement in the decision making processes. In addition, they are able to exercise sufficient desecration in their classroom work to ensure that innovation depends on their cooperation. Bush (2004: 61) outlines nine possible weaknesses to democratic perspectives. These are stated as follows:

- Democratic models are strongly normative that they tend to obscure rather than portray reality;
- Democratic approaches to decision-making tend to be slow and cumbersome;
- Democratic processes can be effective only if participation is maintained at an adequate level;
- Democratic perspectives are the elitist view that decisions may be made by people who lack relevant experience of expertise;
- A fundamental assumption of democratic models is that decisions are reached by consensus;
- Democratic models have to be evaluated in relation to the special features of educational institutions;
- Participative approaches to school and college decision making may be difficult to sustain in view of the requirement principals be accountable;
- When participation is devalued by the emphasis given to accountability and the formal authority of leaders, it may lead to cynicism and apathy among staff; and
- Democratic processes in schools depend on the attitudes of heads.

The two main weaknesses of the democratic model are that they tend to slow decision making and obscure reality. Democratic models contain perspectives that are selective and often are made by people who lack relevant experience and expertise. There is also a misconception that decisions are reached through consensus and this may be untrue. Democratic models further depend on participants and if they devalue formal authority, there may be a lack of interest among the staff. The democratic model largely depends on the attitudes of the principal. Slow decision making and obscuring reality are severe limitations of the democratic model and makes the model unworkable if some or most of these areas show weaknesses.

2.2.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, management is regarded as a practical activity. A decision was taken to focus on the democratic model and not all the models as exposed according to Bush. It can be realised, that Bush's democratic model of school management emphasises the shared power and decision making among some or all staff members. The purpose and limitations of the democratic model were also outlined in this section. In the next section the focus will be on the systems theory.

2.3 SYSTEMS THEORY

2.3.1 Introduction

Systems theory studies the structure and properties of systems in terms of relationships, from which new properties of wholes emerge. Systems theory brings together theoretical principles and concepts from ontology, philosophy of science, physics, biology and engineering. The general system can be defined as any theoretical system of interest to more than one discipline. This new vision of reality is based on awareness of the essential interrelatedness and inter-dependence of all phenomena, that is, physical, biological, psychological, social and cultural. It transcends orthodox disciplinary and conceptual boundaries.

2.3.2 The mechanism of systems theory

The systems theory was first proposed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy. It offers a set of assumptions regarding the maintenance of any organism or entity as a result of the

complex interaction of its elements (Goldenberg & Goldenberg 2004: 70). According to Prochaska and Norcross (2003: 375), a system is defined as a set of units or elements that stand in some relationship with one another. A system comprises separate elements and relationships within itself.

To provide a simple but effective sample of this theory, one can use a biological analogy. The regulation of a body temperature involves the interaction between the sweat glands and perspiration, physical activity, breathing rate and control mechanisms in the brain. These components act together to maintain the temperature of the body (Dallos & Draper 2005: 135). This example can be used to introduce the concept of wholeness in the systems theory which maintains that the elements are combined in a consistent pattern and the entity produced is greater than all of the parts combined (Prochaska & Norcross 2003: 359).

According to Prochaska and Norcross (2003: 359) in order for any system to function effectively, methods of controlling and maintaining the organisation is required and therefore there must be some stability and balance within the system. This is another important concept of the systems theory, which is called homeostasis. It emphasises the need for a balance and stability in living systems. However, this does not necessarily mean that behaviour must be structured or rigid, but that the elements are related to each other because of control mechanisms which allow for dynamic interaction between them.

Boundaries within a system are concepts that highlight the relationships among the various elements. The rules of these relationships create boundaries that can be permeable if rules are unclear, or if boundaries are too rigid there will be inadequate interactions among individuals in a system (Prochaska & Norcross 2003: 357). The concept of wholeness, circularities, homeostasis and boundaries of the systems theory will inform the study by providing a framework for the interactions that occur between the elements at the school, which are the school principal, the educators and the learners.

2.3.3 Purpose of systems theory

Systems theory provides an internally consistent framework for classifying and evaluating the world. There are clearly many useful definitions and concepts in systems theory. In many situations it provides a scholarly method of evaluating a situation. An even more important characteristic, however, is that it provides a universal approach to all sciences. Haines (2010: 1) points out that the systems theory results in systems thinking, which is both an old and new orientation to life. It is the natural way the world works giving simpler, yet holistic views of individuals, teams and organizations as they survive and thrive in a complex and dynamic environment.

Bearing in mind the above analogy, the school as an organization makes extensive use of general systems theory. Originally, organizational theory stressed the technical requirements of the work activities going on in the organizations. Although there is now a consensus on the importance of the environment, there is still much disagreement about which features of the environment are most important.

2.3.4 Limitations of systems theory

The limitations of the systems theory are seen in determining which features of the environment are most important. There are also limitations in the relationship between organisations and the environment.

Meyer (1983: 14) identified three dominant models for analyzing the relationship between organizations and the environment. The organization-set model (often called resource-dependency theory) focuses on the resource needs and dependencies of an organization.

The organizational population model looks at the collection of organizations that make similar demands from the environment and it stresses the competition created by limited environmental resources. The inter-organizational field model looks at the relations of organizations to other organizations, usually within a localized geographic area.

Five major themes of organizational change were examined by Goodman (1986: 23):

- Intervention methods represent alternative approaches to organizational change at the individual, group, and organizational levels. Most studies attempt to ascertain the effectiveness of these approaches by using survey feedback. Some utilize long-term longitudinal approaches to examine the impact of intervention methods. The cataloging of intervention methods is still the dominant way of thinking about planned change.

- Large-scale multiple system intervention methods have been gaining in popularity since the late seventies. The interest in the quality of working life (QWL) is primarily responsible for this popularity. This approach places strong emphasis on designing innovative techniques that serve as a catalyst for change. It's most important application is that it stresses the relationships between the individual, company, community, state, national, and international systems.

- Assessment of change is a major theme that has emerged as a result of the large-scale multiple system intervention methods. These include models of assessment, instruments for measuring organizational change, the development of time-series models, and an overall increase in the use of multivariate analysis for the testing and evaluation of change.

- The examination of failures provides us with valuable information about organizational change. It forces us to focus on the theoretical constructs of change. By comparing successful and unsuccessful attempts at implementing change, we can evaluate the effectiveness of various techniques.

- The level of theorizing about organizational change has seen significant improvements in recent years. Of particular importance is broad-systems orientation. These theories propose a model of organizational change that examines inputs, transformational processes, and outputs. Inputs refer to the environmental resources. Transformation refers to the tasks, and the formal and informal system (organizational) components. Outputs include changes in both the individual and organization. The advantage of this

approach is that it forces us to look at the broad spectrum of variables that need to be incorporated into the model.

Organizational and social systems must change in order to remain healthy (Haines 2010: 3). Both are open systems and are sensitive to environmental changes. A change in the environment can have a profound impact on an open system. The overall health of and organization is strongly linked with its ability to anticipate and adapt to environmental change. Furthermore, the health of the environment is related to the matter-energy transactions taking place in the social and organizational systems (Haines 2010: 13).

A bilateral relationship exists between the environment and the components of all subsystems operating within the environment (Haines 2010: 3). Planned organizational or social change is an attempt to solve a problem or to catalyze a vision. A change is introduced into an organization or social system with the specific intent of affecting other system variables. Knowledge of the non-linear relationships between variables gives planners the potential to effect large changes in a desired variable with relatively small changes in another.

2.3.5 Conclusion

The systems theory is a theoretical framework that entails a highly pragmatic and investigative form of management. The theory suggests an evolutionary explanation for the power of management in societies. It also clarifies the role of organisations in modern society; and the role of management. The systems theory further attempts to provide alternatives to the usual models of organization which define new foundations and developments.

2.4 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING THE SCHOOL

2.4.1 Introduction

The role of the school principal, amongst others involves him being the highest ranking administrator at school. The principal is responsible for the overall operation of the school and takes the lead to set and improve the school curriculum, guides educators in determining the best objectives for the students, chooses high quality learning opportunities for the pupils to attain those objectives

and helps select reliable assessment methods to determine whether or not the aims have been met. The principal also sets the tone for the school and the principal is an important part of staff morale.

2.4.2 Managing the school

According to Sergiovanni (2001: 5), a school principal is the highest-ranking administrator at a school. Some of the functions may be delegated to subordinates, like the deputy principal, heads of department and senior educators. However there are some responsibilities that cannot be delegated, which include the right of decision, planning, work distribution and delegation of duties and organisation and administration of duties.

In providing effective school management, the school principal creates an environment in which a sound culture of teaching and learning will prevail, and the he ensures that the successful execution of the instructional programme occurs within the school. In creating such an environment, he ensures effective teaching and learning and commitment of both educators and learners to the successful execution of the instructional programme (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003: 223).

Musaazi (1992: 167) adds that among the main tasks of the school, the principal manages the staff members as well as promoting effective teaching and learning. Ramsey (1984: 87) also suggests that one of the principal's most important functions is to create a climate for professional growth and development for both the staff and learners within the school. In doing so, the principal creates a culture of teaching and learning.

2.4.3 Managing time

The job of managing time at school often comes with many challenges for the school principal. The challenge lies in the fact that the principal is responsible for the smooth functioning of their school's entire educational process. As such, it can be said that the school principal wears many hats being a manager, administrator, instructional leader and curriculum leader at different points in a day.

In wearing the hat of a manager, the principal may have to delegate some duties and responsibilities to staff members. The principal also must guide the school towards achieving its goals through planning, open communication, and effective decision-making. In fulfilling these commitments, the school principal has to manage time at school. Time is managed through various activities at school. For the purpose of this study, the focus falls onto the principal's role in managing time through planning and constructing schedules as well as the school timetable.

In the first place, managing time happens through the administration activities. The administrative structure or system of a school should form a supportive infrastructure in which educators can perform their tasks with confidence. In effectively managing the school, the principal has to adequately manage time for all persons involved within the school. It is his responsibility to create a structure for administrative work and to determine the procedures and means for efficient functioning. In managing time at school, the principal should ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place. In doing so, the principal effectively manages how the educators and learners utilise the limited time that they spend at school.

According to the Gauteng Department of Education (2000: 3), the school principal should manage key areas within the schools administration, i.e. managing time. Time is the most valuable resource at school. It is the responsibility of the school principal to manage it effectively. The utilisation of time is a significant aspect of teaching. According to the Guidelines of School Management (Gauteng Department of Education 2000: 3), the main responsibilities of the school principal are instructional leadership, teaching duties (if it is needed at school), extra-curricular and co-curricular activities, interaction with stakeholders and communication matters. If school principals are to be effective in all this, they must plan their time effectively.

According to Blasé and Blasé (2000: 44), the principal as an instructional leader has to make adult learning a priority, set high expectations for performance from both staff and learners, create a culture of continuous learning and manage time at school. In managing the time at school, he will be directly involved in aspects like organising the school schedule and the school timetable.

According to Atkinson (1998: 21), the school principal can better manage time in relation to the school schedule and the school timetable through practically following four basic stages in time management:

Stage 1: Recognise the need to get more out of your time;

Stage 2: Collect information on how your time is utilised;

Stage 3: Analyse the use of your time;

Stage 4: Develop an action plan to structure and utilise your time.

The management of time forms an integral part of the current school system. Schools are structured, roles are defined and time is allocated according to the structural dimensions of the school. The primary purpose of time management in schools is to maximise the time devoted to educational activities and scheduling it is done by means of timetables. Although the task of scheduling timetables may be delegated, the principal should manage this aspect.

2.4.3.1. The School schedule

The mechanism by which the school principal manages time at school is the class schedule, which brings together students, educators, space, equipment and materials in a coordinated arrangement that enables teaching and learning to take place (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983: 79). The schedule is a taken-for-granted but vital result of managerial action that facilitates the work of the educators and helps them achieve the school's mission. Learners in grades 1 to 12 spend 5 to 6 hours in school each day (Seyfarth 1999: 308). Although this number varies a little from school to school, there is a considerable difference between schools in the percentage of the school day that children are engaged in academic activities that result in learning. The primary purpose of time management in schools is to maximise the time devoted to academic learning activities and to minimise the amount of time spent on activities that produce no achievement gain (Seyfarth 1999: 328).

2.4.3.2   Constructing schedules

According to Seyfarth (1999: 328) there are four steps that a principal should follow in scheduling classes. They are pre-scheduling, registration, building the master schedule, and scheduling learners.

Pre-scheduling is probably the most important of these steps because of the far-reaching effects of the decisions made during the very pre-scheduling on the final schedule. These decisions include the length of lessons, the number of periods in the school day and the number of days in a scheduling cycle. Registration for classes usually takes place during the summer holidays to give students a chance to confer with parents and counsellors and to complete a tentative schedule for the next school year. The information collected during this period is used to construct the master schedule. In primary schools with self contained classrooms, children are assigned to one educator who teaches all or most of the subjects the learners' study. Within limits the educator is free to decide what is taught and when it is taught. Educators even decide how much time is spent on each subject. Conflicts are encountered only when children are assigned to pull-out (spelling) programmes and leave the classroom for specialised instruction. When this happens, the educator must re-schedule certain subjects so that the children do not miss too many vital subjects (Seyfarth 1999: 329).

2.4.3.3 The school timetable

The school timetable is the key to ensuring the uninterrupted flow of teaching and learning. According to Van Deventer & Kruger (2003: 231) the following need to be considered by the principal when drawing up a timetable:

- The timetable should be learner-centred;
- Educators should be efficiently deployed, and teaching loads should be balanced;
- The timetable should be flexible enough to allow for adjustments with minimum disruptions to the instructional programme, so educators can, for example give attention to individuals or small groups of learners;
- The timetable should allow for non-teaching time e.g. assemblies and tests;

- Educators should be timetabled to teach the learning areas or subjects in which they are trained.

Although the school principal is responsible for the school schedule and the school timetable, there are various other aspects that the school principal is ultimately involved in Van Deventer & Kruger (2003: 232) suggest that the principal should also organize the following timetables:

- Class timetable: A class timetable should be drawn up from the central school timetable for each of the educators. The extra-curricular activities of the educators should also be reflected on this timetable.
- Examination and test timetables: The various examinations that are planned for the year should be placed on the school annual programme.
- Timetable for playground duty: This timetable refers to the supervision of learners during breaks and in the morning before classes start.

The principal plays a vital part in ensuring that his role in managing the administrative aspects at school is adequately executed. In organising the schedules and various timetables, the principal directly influences how time is utilised at the school. The principal is also responsible for managing the curriculum at school as this is a key aspect in creating an environment whereby the culture of effective teaching and learning takes place.

2.4.4 Managing the curriculum

The second major area of focus in this study is the role of the school principal in managing the instructional programme. Within this major area, the researcher will focus on two aspects. Firstly there is the school principal's management of the curriculum and instruction, secondly, the supervision of educators. Christie (1998: 291) is of the opinion that the responsibility of the school principal is to enhance the school's teaching and learning activities. The primary role of a principal as an educational leader may be characterised by the salient features of both managerial and instructional leadership responsibilities.

A unified view of school management and instructional leadership perceives the existence of rational relationship between managerial efficiency and instructionally effective schools (Stronge 2002: 5). The role of the school principal is a multifaceted one and includes the following general dimensions of a principal's behaviour, each of which has a number of functions (Budhal, 2000: 18):

- Dimension 1: Defining the school's mission;
- Dimension 2: Managing the instructional programme, which includes knowing and coordinating the curriculum and instruction, supervising and evaluating instruction and monitoring learner progress;
- Dimension 3: Promoting a positive learning environment by setting standards and expectations, protecting instructional time and promoting involvement.

Krug (1992: 432) regards the following five elements as the task of the school principal:

- Defining the school's mission;
- Managing the curriculum and instruction;
- Supervising teachers;
- Monitoring learner progress; and
- Promoting an instructional climate.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will focus on the school principal managing the curriculum and instruction as well as the school principal supervising teachers at his school. The major task of the school principal is to ensure that the primary task at his school is to offer instruction.

2.4.4.1 The Curriculum

Curriculum questions have to do with decisions about the knowledge and skills that students are expected to learn and how learning experiences will be organised to promote student understanding. Educators implement the curriculum by the choices they make regarding content, instructional materials, student activities,

modes of presentation and evaluation methods. These choices are influenced by the students, by educators, training and personal interests, by state and district policy and by parents and administrators expectations of schools. They are also made within limitations imposed by prescribed curriculum requirements, mandated testing programs and textbook adoptions (Hawthorne 1992: 405). Principals are important players in the curriculum decisions at school, but their role varies depending on matters of the state and strict policies. The school's educational programme, consisting both of curricular and extra curricular activities, may be regarded as the schools broad curriculum (Seyfarth 1999: 340).

2.4.4.2 Perspectives on the curriculum

Decisions about the school curriculum are determined to a large extent by participant views of the purpose of schooling and their beliefs about how humans learn. Commonly held views are summarised as curriculum perspectives. According to Seyfarth (1999: 177), three perspectives found in schools are social behaviourism, developmentalism and traditionalism.

Social behaviourism gained popularity in the early years of the 20th century and was based on the assumption that the techniques of scientific management could be applied to curriculum construction as well as industrial management. Franklin Bobbitt, the name commonly associated with the social behaviourism, developed a list of activities that people perform in their daily lives which he proposed as the basis for developing the school curriculum. The list included actions related to citizenship, religion, socialising, rearing children and maintaining physical and mental health (Miller & Seller 1985). Social behaviourists held that schools should help sort out individuals according to their fitness for particular roles in society and prepare them to fill these roles. The belief provided the justification for the use of scandalised intelligence and achievement tests in schools, a practice that had been widely adopted in schools by the 1920's (Kliebard 1985: 14).

Developmentalism sees a curriculum which requires the need for curriculum makers to be knowledgeable of child development. These curriculum makers should be aware of the interests, abilities, and problems that are common to children. Advocates of the developmental curriculum are not concerned with the

roles an individual might play in society as an adult but rather focus on the process of maturation and seek to incorporate into the curriculum experiences that are compatible with theories of child development (Glatthorn 1987: 53). By organising the curriculum around the developmental tasks of childhood and adolescence, developmentalists attempt to capitalise on the child's interests and eliminate much of the teacher domination. They seek to adapt curriculum content to student's cognitive structures and believe that this is necessary to consider what each child knows before introducing new material (Kliebard 1985: 15).

Traditionalists believe that all students should have access to the best ideas of Western thought. A traditional curriculum emphasises such disciplines as literature, history, geography, science, mathematics, science and art (Brandt 1988: 5). Those who advocate the traditional curriculum argue that it is the foundation of all learning and that, if the foundation is missing, other learning is impeded. They believe that the type of knowledge that constitutes cultural literacy is most easily taught using traditional methods, including memorisation (Beyer & Liston 1996: 19).

2.4.4.3 Content of the curriculum

The content of the curriculum in schools is influenced by subject matter and methodological trends. Despite differences in curriculum perspectives, the experienced curriculum tends to be similar in most schools. More time is devoted to teaching reading rather than to any other subject in primary schools (Seyfarth 1999: 183). It is the school principal who is responsible for ensuring that the curriculum is given adequate emphasis and enough time within the school timetable. It is effectively the school principal who is responsible for managing the curriculum and the content of the curriculum.

2.4.4.4 The Principal as curriculum manager

The school principal plays an important role in organising and structuring the school curriculum through drawing up a timetable for curricular and extra curricular activities (Badenhorst, 1995: 98). Through the school timetable, the school principal is able to ensure that there is a flow of teaching and learning at his school. He should draw up the timetable according to the parameters of departmental guidelines. Bothma (1998: 216) state that a school principal can assist learners

from undesirable forms of entertainment by helping them to participate in a meaningful extra curricular programme. The principal must adhere to the following administrative activities when managing the curriculum and instruction programme:

- The efficient use of teaching time can be ensured by allocating the correct time and periods according to departmental prescriptions, introducing fixed test periods and avoiding unnecessary encroachment upon lesson periods.
- When drawing up the school timetable the principal must ensure that the classes have been composed as efficiently as possible.
- The principal must ensure there is an effective provisioning system to support the teaching programme adequately.
- The principal's distribution of work must be as balanced and fair as possible so that staff can proceed unhindered with their teaching task.

Administering schools involved working with staff members with a broad range of specialisations, and principals cannot be experts in all of these areas. They should, however become familiar with techniques of curriculum planning, and be informed about salient curriculum issues (Griffin 1988: 258). Curriculum questions typically involve a relatively large number of people and are non routine in nature, they are complex decisions. Their complexity is increased by the fact that these issues touch on fundamental values, such as the purpose of schools and the appropriate roles of educators, administrators and parents.

2.4.5 Managing staff

2.4.5.1 The staff appraisal scheme

The principal should ensure that the main aim of staff appraisal is to improve the educators teaching ability with a view to professional development and motivation. Every school should develop itself as a learning organisation, and staff appraisal is a crucial part of this process. The principal should develop staff appraisal systems and strategies on the basis of the unique nature of the school (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003: 250).

Steyn & van Niekerk (2002: 278) agree that putting the appraisal scheme into action is the responsibility of the principal and as such it should be perceived as an integral part of school management practice. It is important for the school principals to ensure that appraisal is conducted as part of managing the individual and school performance and improvement. Middlewood (2003: 131) states that the appraisal should not be feared but should contribute both to individuals and the school. Rebore (1987: 186) helps the school principal understand that appraisal:

- fosters the self-development of each employee;
- helps to identify staff development needs; and
- helps to improve performance.

Evidence of appraisal is crucial if the appraisal process is to be grounded in fact. Otherwise the appraisal becomes an exercise based on impressions, hearsay and prejudice. For the educator, the most important source of evidence is the classroom observation. Observation of the teacher's work in the classroom needs to be handled sensitively. Many educators are unused to being observed in the classroom and this may cause teacher anxiety. It is therefore important that the principal and the educator are clear about the purpose of the observation, what role the principal will play during the lesson and the criteria that will be used during observation (Emerson 2004: 151).

Emerson (2004: 151) further states that producing criteria for classroom practice may be approached in a variety of ways. At one end the sets of criteria from research writings or from the local authority can be used as they stand. At the other end, meetings of staff can be used to draw up criteria from scratch. A middle road may be best, taking the established criteria as a starting point and involving the teaching staff to tailor this to best suit the school's needs.

2.4.5.2 The appraisal discussion

The appraisal discussion is only one part of the appraisal cycle. It will probably last an hour and its success will be vital to the whole appraisal process between the principal and the teacher concerned. A discussion which is positive, well run and

skilfully handled will reinforce the trust and confidence between teacher and principal. Conversely, a discussion that is poorly run, badly managed and negative in tone is likely to bring distrust and frustration, and many do harm to the future professional relationship between principal and educator (Emerson 2004: 153).

The appraisal discussion has two major functions: to provide formal opportunity to discuss performance, aspirations, developments and training needs of the teacher; and to agree targets for future action. The discussion should be positive; it should contain praise for good performance and suggestions for improvement for any areas of poor performance. There should be a focus on behaviour and not on personality. The appraisal discussion should be carried out in a way which reflects the normal management style between the principal and the educator (Emerson 2004: 154).

2.4.5.3 Setting targets, monitoring and review

The appraisal process should be a future process. Its initial focus is current practice observed in the classroom, and review during the appraisal discussion. The purpose of this review should be developmental. The appraisal is a passive process. It identifies strengths and weaknesses. Target setting moves appraisal away from passive into active. It is a process of how to go forward and defines future goals. Targets are the first part of the teacher's personal development plan. This will express the directions in which he or she is heading. It is important that teachers are active in target setting. Targets setting also form part of the school development process. The teacher's targets should be set within the schools policies. Target setting has enormous potential for a teacher's personal action plans within the action plan of the school. According to Emerson & Goddard (2004: 155) there are three main areas that should be considered for target setting:

- The teachers work in the classroom;
- The work or the school, or the department; and
- The educator's personal development.

Emerson (2004: 156), suggest that the appraisal cycle is devoted to following up the targets set in the appraisal discussion and in the review meeting. When targets are set during the appraisal discussion this implies that commitment by both educator and principal is required to achieve these targets. It may be useful to arrange periodic meetings to check on the process of achieving targets and to identify factors which may prevent success. This would include establishing what success and to establish what specific support the principal or others in the school can provide. Also of great importance is the daily support which the principal can provide in giving encouragement, sustaining morale and showing interest.

2.4.5.4 The review meeting and evaluating outcomes of the appraisal
The review meeting is the formal opportunity to exchange information about how the teacher is faring in achieving agreed targets. If regular contact between the principal and the teacher is maintained then this meeting should contain no surprises. The review meeting should consider the following:

- Progress made in achieving each target;
- Whether the targets are still appropriate and whether they need to be modified;
- Evaluation of any training which has been undertaken and the outcomes expected of any future training;
- Any particular issues about the teacher's work; and
- Career developmental needs.

Appraisal can form a beneficial part of the school's self evaluation system and can provide valuable evidence into the policy formation process. The main task of the appraisal is to review the performance of the teachers in light of their specified duties. Educators can also review the whole process. At this point, they can reflect on the suitability of the schools objectives in light of the learners' needs. The appraisal can also include an evaluation form from the educators and this may assist in the whole staff development policy being evaluated from the teacher's viewpoint. The data can be combined across the staff and can give a total picture of the future development support which the staff members as a whole require.

Thus the appraisal has the potential to create the feedback loop which turns a top down managerial model into one which is responsive to and is owned by the staff. The appraisal process can inform management about the effectiveness of the current appraisal system and give valuable input into the future of the school appraisal system (Emerson 2004: 159).

2.4.6 Staff Development and professional growth

The principal should take cognisance of the fact that the educator's initial training is not always adequate for effective instruction. If the quality of teaching and learning and, ultimately, the culture of teaching and learning are improved, the development of educators is necessary as part of in service training. According to Schreuder (1993: 1), staff development may be undertaken for two purposes, to address professional shortcomings and to create opportunities for development. In managing professional development, it may be necessary to consider the different phases of a person's career, e.g. the first year educator's needs are different to a fifth year educator's needs.

Although ongoing professional development is the responsibility of the educator, the principal remains an important partner and participant in implementing staff development programmes. The principal may conduct staff development programmes at school level through a number of activities such as staff meetings, staff development activities, formal and informal observations and consultations, and the coaching of individuals. Staff development can only succeed if it takes place in a climate of encouragement and support (Naidu et al. 2008: 102). The principal should consider the following aims for staff development (Van Staden 1999: 168) when conducting a staff development programme:

- Improve the educators' performance in the present situation;
- Give guidance to the educator so that he/she can develop and grow to the highest possible level of professional expertise;
- Serve the primary aims of the education system;
- Provide acceptable and meaningful programmes which enable the educator to identify their personal aims and those of the system;

- Raise the quality of education and task fulfilment; and
- Lead to greater job satisfaction.

The principal can use an instructional leadership team to assist him in this task. The team should consist of deputy principals, heads of department and educators. According to Van Kradenburg (1987: 135) staff involvement makes provision for all educators and management to be participants in all phases of the development programme.

2.4.6.1. Planning for staff development

According to Emerson (1993: 101-104) planning for staff development can be considered at three levels. These are the production of a staff development policy, the formulation of a staff development plan and, the detailed planning and annual programme.

The need for policies in a wide range of school activities is well established. They are necessary to avoid any misunderstandings and to achieve clarity and purpose in what the school intends to achieve in the particular activity. A policy can be reviewed as a statement of principles, together with the procedures to be followed to put these principles into practice. In schools, policies require the approval of the governing body. The process of developing the policy will often involve the production of a draft statement by the principal and his management team after consulting with the staff. It will then be presented to the governing body for final approval. A policy for staff development needs to have as its central aim the improvement of the school as well as the development of individual's skills and expertise. It must therefore seek a balance between:

- the needs of the individual members of staff for training and development opportunities at each stage of their careers; and
- the school's needs and associate requirements for staff training.

A staff development policy will achieve a number of objectives. It will inform staff and governors about training and development opportunities that are available, and

the procedures to be followed. It will also provide a basis for producing a staff development plan to complement the school development plan.

2.4.6.2. Meeting staff developmental needs

Traditionally, schools have met the professional development: needs of individual teachers by arranging for them to attend specific training events. There are often organised by local education authority's advisory service, universities or other providers. A number of factors now make this approach less automatic. Firstly, changes in funding for in–service training courses. Secondly, most local authorities now delegates to schools a substantial portion of money for in – service training, which was previously held centrally. Instead of having a range of courses which teachers could attend at no cost to the school, funds are provided to the school, and it can use these to pay for courses attended by educators or to spend on other in – service activities. Thirdly, the introduction of staff in–service training days can be considered. Two further factors are concerned with the effect on the school, rather than the availability of courses and funding. The availability of appropriate supply educators to cover educators attending these courses has become very difficult (Emerson 1993:105).

2.4.6.3. Development activities

The following according to Emerson (1993) are some of the practical ways in which the school principal can implement staff development:

- Action research – which is the careful planning and thorough enquiry into a problem or issue that requires action to resolve it. The aim is to improve performance by raising awareness of the particular problem or issue, then planning appropriate action and carrying it out.
- Mentoring – this involves one person acting as consultant and counsellor for another, usually one less experienced. Each member of the staff can benefit from this as a nominated colleague may act as a critical friend, offer advice about staff development needs and opportunities, act as a sounding board for ideas and help broaden perspectives. Mentoring requires listening and questioning on the part of the mentor.

- Staff training days – staff training days are potentially rich in opportunities for staff development. Schools use them for a variety of purposes, including preparation for a new school year, meetings of educators in departments or curriculum teams and looking at school issues. To be effective they need to be well planned. Whatever the issue on which the training day is to focus, and whatever the training approach is intended to use, there are a few general principles which should influence the training day:

  - Purpose: it is important to have a clear idea of the purpose of the day and what you want to achieve. This requires discussion with both staff and the person leading the training to ensure that the needs are identified and intentions understood.

  - Evaluation: for evaluation to be effective it needs planning and it should take place at the same time as the event itself is planned. The success of the day will need to be judged against the outcomes which it is hoped to have achieved. The organiser will need to decide what evaluation methods and procedures will be used, and ensure that these are made clear to trainers and participants. Evaluation of training may be considered at two levels. Firstly, evaluation at the end of the day will permit participants' perception to be recorded, and further training needs to be identified. Evaluation at a later stage will be needed to evaluate any effect on classroom practice.

  - Content: This involves deciding the overall content of the day, planning a detailed programme and then making it available to staff and leaders of the course. It may also be decided who should take the overall responsibility for organising the day.

  - Preparation and follow–up: Members of staff attending the training day need to know what is expected of them in preparation for the day. The information provided may include the programme of the day, domestic arrangements, background readings, activities to be carried out before the day and how the training will be followed up.

  - Resource implications: it is necessary to estimate the cost of the day's training. These may include reprographics, manuals, fees, and venue and travel expenses.

  o The principal should ensure that the staff appraisal should improve the educator's teaching ability. It is important for the school principal to ensure that appraisal is conducted as part of managing the individual and school performance and improvement. Appraisal can form a beneficial part of the school's self evaluation system and can provide valuable evidence into the policy formation process. Professional development is primarily the responsibility of the educator but the principal remains an important partner and participant in implementing staff development programmes.

The principal may conduct staff development programmes at school level through a number of activities such as staff meetings, staff development activities, formal and informal observations and consultations, and the coaching of individuals. The principal can use an instructional leadership team to assist him in this task. In implementing the abovementioned aspects, the principal should effectively manage his staff.

Chapter three discusses the research design, the method and the ethics that guide the study.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The literature study describes the roles and responsibilities of the school principal at school. According to the literature study, the roles and responsibilities within the school are managing school time, managing the school curriculum and managing the staff at school. The principal should manage time by organising the school schedule through careful preparation and planning as well as organise the school timetable. If this is done thoroughly, better time management may be realised. The principal should also manage the school curriculum through ensuring that the curriculum guidelines are adhered to, by making sure that he understands the curriculum and by encouraging his staff to comply with curriculum guidelines and school guidelines. The principal must also manage his staff adequately though proper staff appraisals and ensure that his staff have adequate staff development opportunities. In doing so, he must implement an effective staff appraisal policy that is effective and non -threatening and he must further aim to create opportunities for

sound staff development opportunities which staff members find practical and rewarding.

In addition, the literature unpacked two theories that underpin the study. These are the democratic model and the systems theory. The democratic model aims to ensure that teaching and learning at school is an approach that teachers, learners and principal implement through working together for one common goal. The systems theory provides evidence that although a school has a number of separate parts, all these parts need to work together to ensure that effective teaching and learning takes place at the school.

These findings of the literature study form the foundation of this research and provide a theoretical framework for the research. The findings are compared with the findings of the interviews in chapter four.

CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Two presented the role of the principal from a theoretical school management perspective. This has to do with how he discharges his duties at school. Chapter Three focuses on the research approach and design as well as the procedures followed during the collection of data. It also contains information on the target population and sample of participants, data gathering instrument, validity and reliability. It also explains the data analytical method that was used in analysing data in Chapter Four.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH AND DESIGN

3.2.1 Research approach

Qualitative research was deemed suitable for investigating the research problem of this study as stated in Chapter 1, that is: How does the principal of X primary boys-only school in the Pinetown District of Kwazulu-Natal manage the administrative and instructional programme? This approach was chosen in order to gather in-depth data about the management role of the principal in question – managing time, human resources with regard to staff, and curriculum.

A qualitative research approach was thus chosen to gather data about the school management role of the principal and selected members of the teaching staff and their collective actions, beliefs, thoughts about the management role of their principal. The data collected was interpreted according to the meanings that the selected staff members attached to them. It was hoped that this inductive process would provide descriptive interpretations about a selected situation or case according to McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 12).

3.2.2 Research design

This section details the research design that was chosen. Firstly, qualitative research methods are recommended as they encourage the use of more than one method of data collection (Cresswell 1994: 154). Secondly, qualitative research is used as a research technique to collect and present data in the form of words

rather than numbers (Mothala 2000: 136). Data was collected in the form of words from in-depth small, distinct groups. This is a single-site study where there is a natural socio-cultural boundary and face-to-face interaction encompassing the person or the group. Finally, qualitative research is recommended because it allows the researcher to collect data continuously (Cresswell 1994: 154). In this study, the data would continually be collected without many interruptions through in-depth individual interviews and participant observation until sufficient data were gathered.

In the study, in-depth individual interviews and participant observations were used. The purpose of in-depth interviews is:

- to collect data that has direct bearing on the research question and the findings of the literature study, by sampling the opinions of the participants who may have knowledge of or are affected by the issues addressed by the research;
- to act as an explanatory instrument that may highlight emerging patterns or constituents in the research; and
- to employ in-depth interview methods together with other qualitative research techniques to explore unexpected results.

Another qualitative research technique used was participant observation. According to Bodgen & Bilken (2003: 79), participant observation refers to being in the research subject's world, therefore making observations about the subject in their natural territory, the school in this case. During participant observation the researcher relied on careful observation of areas of interest at the chosen site, looking for patterns of behaviour and relationships that might have bearings on the research topic. The researcher used observation to describe the school, the role of the school principal in executing his management duties as well as the role of the educators in following the principal's instructions.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES

3.3.1 Introduction

Data collection strategies are selected taking into account the focus of the research and the desired time frame for the study. The researcher utilised a case study approach in which in-depth interviews and participant observation were used. According to Hoberg (1999: 77), data collection strategies are interactive research processes that occur in overlapping phases. These phases are planning, beginning data collection, basic data collection, closing data collection and completion. All of these phases were used in this research.

3.3.2 Case Study

In the context of the qualitative research, an imperative case study approach was used to explore the school principal's management role at school. The study provided a detailed case study of the principal and four educators with the focus on how the principal manages the school time, staff and curriculum. A case study approach is a form of qualitative descriptive research which is used to look at a small group of participants. This means that the end product of a case study is a rich 'thick' description of the phenomenon under study. A 'thick' description refers to a complete and literal description of the incident or entity being investigated within a context that is bound by time and place (Creswell 1998: 37).

A case study is regarded as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit within a limited time scale (Merriam 1988: 21). The implication of this is that the researcher is not necessarily looking for findings that are generalised to wider populations although they may be applied usefully to similar contexts. In this study, the researcher was interested in studying the role of the school principal in managing the school's time, staff and curriculum.

With a case study approach a variety of qualitative research methods may be employed such as in-depth individual interviews producing narrative data, participant and non-participant observations, focus group interviews and ethnographic fieldwork (Cresswell 1994: 12). With this case study, the researcher used in-depth individual interviews and participant observation to gather data in

order to answer the research question on the role of the school principal in managing the school's time, staff and curriculum.

3.3.2.1 In-depth individual interviews

Cohen & Manion (1989: 271) define an interview as a "two-person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by the researcher on content specified by the research objectives of systematic descriptions, prediction, or explanation". Radnor (2001: 453) agrees that by asking people we go into a realm of meanings and with interpretive research the meanings that people have in social situations are valuable and fundamental data. Punch (2005: 144) concurs that the interview is a powerful research instrument capable of producing rich and valuable data.

By utilising this kind of interviewing the questions are not pre-formulated or the themes are not rigidly identified before the interview takes place. The researcher limited his contribution to one absolute research question as a starting point and in doing so gained an in-depth understanding of participants' opinions and experiences and the role of the school principal in managing the said three aspects of the school.

From the absolute research question follow-up questions were probed with reference to an interview schedule to ensure that all relevant aspects of the literature review had been addressed. The researcher thus obtained an insider's view of the participants' understanding and interpretation of the investigated phenomenon. One in-depth individual interview with the school principal and four in-depth individual interviews with educators were conducted in order to find answers to the questions on how the principal manages the school in the areas of school time, staff and curriculum. A tape recorder was planned to be used to record data during the interviews.

When setting up interviews it was ensured that the interview would be conducted where there was little disturbance and where participants of personal interviews could be certain of privacy. All interviewees were invited to participate well ahead of time by e-mail or verbally (face-to-face). Availability of participants was

negotiated to ensure non-interference with their duty programme. Thus, the dates and duration of the interviews were negotiated (the interviews took place between 2 to 5 August 2010). When the interviews started the purpose of the research and promise of anonymity were explained first. Participants were also given a choice of being part of the research.

The interviews with the four educators and the school principal were audio-taped. This was done so that the researcher could concentrate fully on the participants and follow up on discussions with minimal distractions. For ethical reasons, the participants' permission was asked for recording the interviews. Anonymity was once again promised. The rapport with the participants was established for the purpose of this investigation, even though they were the researcher's colleagues. This rapport was reinforced when the purpose of the study was explained, mentioning that the research was being conducted to determine the management role of the school principal.

3.3.2.2 Advantages of the interview as a research tool

The interview as a research tool has significant advantages. The interviewer has the opportunity to observe both the subject and the situation (Ary 2006: 418). Also, the flexibility inherent in an interview means that questions can be clarified and additional information can be requested should a response seem incomplete (Ary 2006: 418; Gay 1996: 231). As a result of the rapport established between the interviewer and the interviewee, there should be a thorough and in-depth response that would not be otherwise possible with a survey questionnaire (Best 1986: 186; Gay 1996: 231).

3.3.2.3 Limitations of interviews

According to Cohen and Manion (1996: 281), the most common limitation to interviews is related to bias caused by the interaction between the interviewer and interviewee. This bias involves the possible misconception of the questions by the respondent and misunderstanding of the answers by the interviewee, the characteristics of both the interviewer and the respondent, and the substantive content of the questions (Cohen & Manion 1996: 282). Race, religion, age and

social class can also be a source of bias. Thus the researcher in this case may not claim total interference-free data collection during the process.

Cohen & Manion (1996: 282) suggest that to try and curb these limitations the questions should be made clear, the interviewer should be thoroughly trained so as to be aware of bias and possible problems in an interview, and the interviewer's characteristics should be matched with those of the interviewees. The researcher in this study attempted to remain aware of possible problems with regard to bias within the interview and between the interviewees and himself, as well as allowing them to contribute and comment into the research findings by circulating transcripts of the interviews to them for verification of their responses. The interviewer's training came through his efforts to embark on the relevant literature survey on interviews under the supervisor's guidance.

3.3.2.4 The interview process and schedule

The interview should begin with a brief description of the research aims and purposes and a request that the interview be audio-taped. Then closed questions are asked to set the participants at ease and to create security. The closed questions provided some background to the principal's knowledge of management in the areas of time, curriculum and staff. The rest of the interview involved open-ended questions with probes from the researcher where necessary.

In appendix A, questions 1 and 2 dealt with the principal's management of time as an administrative function. With these questions, the researcher aimed to unravel how the principal managed the school schedule and timetable. Question 3 revolved around the principal's management of the curriculum within the school and question 4 and question 5 focused on the principal's management of the staff specifically on staff appraisal and development.

Appendix B contains the educators' interview questions. In interviewing them, a perspective of the management of the school in the areas under investigation is highlighted. This perspective gives the viewpoints of the staff at the school whose responsibility is to execute the instruction of the school principal. In interviewing them, the researcher was further able to answer the main research question on

how the principal executed his managerial role as this surfaced from the educators' responses.

The interview schedule (included in Appendices A and B) comprises a list of questions and topics that deal with issues that the researcher aimed to explore. The interview schedule sought to combine structured questions with less structured and more open-ended questions to achieve both objectivity and in-depth responses (Gay 1996: 232). The purpose of the interview schedule was to ensure that similar issues were covered in the actual interview. Patton (2002: 343) claims that the interview schedule provides topics of subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject.

3.3.2.5 Participant observation and its procedure

Participant observation was chosen as part of the research methods employed in this study to focus the phenomenon of the study in a naturalistic way (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 2006: 134), that is, to experience real life situations. Cohan and Manion (1996: 107) define participant observation as the observer who engages in the activities that they set out to observe. In this investigation, the researcher, whilst observing, engaged with educators who in turn knew of the research being undertaken and their part in it.

Participant observation was thus seen as a means of getting close to the real life situation of the interviewees and a feeling for what things mean for them (Weiss 1998: 257). The researcher saw observation periods as opportunities to experience first-hand what it was like to be investigated. Observation was used as a research tool to compare what was being investigated. It was further used to triangulate evidence from the in-depth individual interviews. Observation was only used once all interviews were conducted.

The researcher attended a timetabling meeting, appraisal meeting, a staff development exercise as well as two lessons in the classroom to experience the interaction between the principal, educators and other personnel. The researcher spent 1 hour in each of the timetabling meeting, the grade meeting and the

management meeting and further spent one and half hours in each of the lessons in the classroom.

Notes were taken throughout the meetings and classroom observations, as the researcher believed that the subjects under study were evident in both the meetings and classroom observations. During observation and note taking, the focus was specifically on the role of the principal during a timetable meeting as well as his role during an appraisal meeting with an educator. Further observation of the management role of the principal was made during a staff development exercise. Finally, an observation of how teachers implemented the timetable and curriculum in the classroom was also conducted.

During the period of observation, an overview of what was taking place was noted to facilitate data analysis. It was decided that the observation data should be used for triangulation purposes.

3.3.3 Conclusion

Data collection in relation to qualitative techniques is often in the form of words rather than numbers. In this foregoing section an account was given of how data was intended to be gathered. Within the case study context a choice was made of the qualitative research methods, that is, in-depth interviews and participant observation.

3.4 TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLE OF PARTICIPANTS

3.4.1 Target population and description of context

In selecting the participants, purposeful sampling was used. Purposeful sampling is done to increase the utility of information obtained from small samples. Purposeful sampling requires that information be obtained about variations among the sub-units before the sample is chosen. The researcher then searches for information-rich key informants, groups, places or events to study. The power and logic of purposeful sampling is that a few cases studied in-depth may yield insights about the topic (McMillan & Schumacher 2001: 401).

For the purpose of this study, participants were purposively selected to better facilitate the drawing in only of information-rich participants who had reliable information and experience of the school and the school principal. These comprised the school principal and four educators who were at the school for more than six years. It was believed they would share their rich experiences gained from this reasonably long service. A purposive selection of such participants was on the basis of their active involvement in the areas under research which was determined prior to approaching them as participants. This would assist the researcher to collect rich data and useful information (Hollaway 1997: 142).

The logic of the sample size was related to the purpose of the study, the research problem, the major data collection techniques and the availability of the information-rich cases. In choosing a small sample, the researcher is better able to manage the data collected.

3.4.2 Description of the sample

3.4.2.1 Profile of participants according to gender

The sample of the study consisted of three male and two female participants. The total was five educators.

3.4.2.2 Profile of participants according to age

One educator was between the ages of 20 and 29 years, two were between the ages of 30 and 39 years, one was between the ages of 40 and 49 years, and the last one was between the ages of 50 and 59 years.

3.4.2.3 Profile of participants according to years of teaching experience

One educator had 0 - 9 years of teaching experience, another one had 10-19 years of teaching experience, two had 20 – 29 years of teaching experience, and the last one had 30-39 years of teaching experience.

3.4.2.4 Profile of participants according rank at school

Two educators were post-level one educators, while one was a grade leader, another one a Head of Department and only one a principal.

3.4.2.5 Profile of participants according to grade currently teaching

One educator taught in grade four, next one in grade six, another one in grade seven and two in grade five.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

3.5.1 Data analysis tools

The tradition of dealing with interviews is to record and transcribe them verbatim. In qualitative data analysis, the researcher aims to gain new understanding of the situations and processes being investigated (Cresswell 1994: 153). In qualitative research most patterns and categories emerge from the gathered data. McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 462) state that moving forward and backward between data analysis and raw data, and restructuring the analysis at increasingly abstract levels of synthesis helps the researcher to make sense of data.

McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 461) describe qualitative research as primarily an inductive process whereby data is organised into categories and relationships. In qualitative research most categories and patterns emerge from the data rather than from being imposed upon the data prior to data collection.

Data analysis began with constructing the facts found in the recorded data. The researcher used the information from the five separate interviews to generate data. Data analysis explored the facts around the recorded data. The patterns of the study emerged from the responses to the questions in their interviews as well as the researcher's notes from the field observation.

Each interview was dealt with in detail. Emerging patterns were obtained. The researcher interpreted the data during the analysis process. Once emergent patterns had been identified they were reduced to meaningful units relevant to the research problem. Careful analysis and interpretation of the data should provide insight into the problem under investigation; in this case the management roles of a school principal in a boys-only primary school.

The interpretation of the results was presented in a narrative form supported by direct quotations that served as the confirmation of important interpretations. This

is supported by McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 500) in that qualitative data analysis takes the form of written language.

3.6 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

3.6.1 Introduction

Reliability, validity and ethical matters about research are very crucial issues. How they are handled impacts on the quality status that should be accorded the research report. This section is dedicated to the explanation about how reliability, validity and ethics were planned and accounted for.

3.6.2 Reliability and validity of the study

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 181), reliability in qualitative research refers to the consistency of the researcher's interactive style, data recording, data analysis and interpretation of participant meanings from data. In the classic meaning of reliability, according to Denscombe (2003: 273), the criterion of reliability is whether the research instruments are neutral in their effect and would measure the same result when used on other occasions. However with qualitative research the researcher is an integral part of the research instrument. The reliability in this investigation was reinforced by accounting for the research aim, method and the reasoning behind key decisions made in the study.

Shimahara (in Mazibuko 2003: 44) maintains that the validity and reliability of the research are crucial in all social research regardless of the disciplines and methods employed. The collected data must be accurate, authentic and represent reality. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 131), issues of the instrument validity and reliability in qualitative research depend largely on the skills of the researcher.

According to Denscombe (2003: 273) measures to enhance reliability involve a complete description of the research process so that an independent researcher may replicate the same procedures in comparable settings. This includes delineation of the physical, cultural and social contexts of the study, a statement of the researcher's role in the setting, an accurate description of the conceptual

framework of research and a complete description of the methods of data collection and analysis.

Wiersma (1980: 45) maintains that regardless of the form the research takes or the end to which it is directed, researchers want research to be valid. Marshall and Rossman (1995: 143) contend that the strength of a qualitative study that aims to explore a problem or describe a setting, process, social group or pattern of interaction is validity. According to Marshall and Rossman (1995: 99), the use of a combination of data type increases validity as the strengths of one approach compensate for the weaknesses of the other. In this study both interviews and observation were considered for that reason.

3.6.3 Internal validity

Internal validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of phenomena match the reality of the world. McMillan and Schumacher (2006: 324) describe validity of qualitative designs as the degree to which the interpretations of the concepts have mutual meaning for the participants and the researcher. In that way, the researcher and the participants should agree on the descriptions and the meanings of different events. Davies and Mosdell (2006: 27) say that internal validity means making sure that the findings are as reliable as they can be by eliminating all possible sources of error in the way the study is designed. The following strategies were used as an attempt to increase internal validity of the study:

- The language used in the interviews was English and the terminology used was familiar to the participants' to increase common understanding.
- Interviews and observations were conducted at the school as the site of field work reflects reality of life experience accurately.
- The researcher also guarded against his subjectivity by keeping a memo that would alert him during data analysis.

Denscombe (2003: 274) raises the following issues as a way of ensuring validity of the findings:

- Do the conclusions do justice to the complexity of the phenomena being investigated and avoid oversimplification while also offering internal consistency?

- Has the researcher's self been recognised as an influence in the research but not a cause of biased and one-sided reporting?

- Have the instances selected for investigation been chosen on explicit and reasonable grounds as far as the aims of the research are concerned?

- Have alternate possible explanations been explored? The researcher needs to demonstrate that he has not simply plumped for the first explanation that fits, rather than see if rival theories work or whether there are hidden problems with the proposed explanation.

- Have the findings been triangulated with alternative sources as a way of bolstering confidence in their validity?

- How far do the findings and conclusions fit with existing knowledge in the area, and how far do they translate to other comparable situations?

For the purpose of this study, the researcher ensured validity by remaining as neutral and unbiased as he possibly could throughout the interviews and observation process. He further ensured that areas focused on in the study were chosen reasonably as the important aspects of the study. He consulted different theories and various alternate explanations were explored so that he could avoid settling for the first explanation evident from collecting data. Conclusions derived from the data were critically analysed so that the results do justice to the phenomena being investigated and to further ensure that the findings fit existing knowledge in the area of education management.

3.6.4 Ethical considerations

The research design should not only consider the selection of information-rich respondents and effective research strategies but must also be sensitive to the ethical principles and adhere to the research ethics (McMillan & Schumacher 2001: 420). Bogden and Biklen (2003: 49) suggest that two important guidelines of research ethics are the informed consent and the protection of the research

respondents from harm. Qualitative researchers often have to devise roles that will engender trust, co-operation, openness and acceptance in respondents.

The respondents at times have to adjust their priorities and routines to assist researchers or even tolerate the researcher's presence. They are therefore giving of themselves and their time and the researcher is indebted to them as a result (McMillan & Schumacher 2001: 420-421). Ethical measures are principles which the researcher should bind himself with while conducting his research (Schulze 2002: 17). In this study, the researcher followed research ethics by considering certain research techniques.

The first technique entails permission to conduct research. In order to conduct research at an institution such as a school, approval for conducting the research should be obtained before any data are collected (McMillan & Schumacher 1993: 195). In this study, the researcher first sought permission from the principal before collecting data at the school. Appendix C provides proof of a letter to the school governors to acquire permission to conduct this study. This permission was granted (See Appendix D).

The second technique is about informed consent regarding the participants. The participants should be given enough information pertaining to the study before data collection (Schulze 2002: 17). In this study the participants were given enough information on the aims of the research, procedures that were followed, possible advantages and disadvantages for the participants, credibility of the research and the way in which the results were to be used. This enabled participants to make informed decisions about their participation in the investigation.

Confidentiality and anonymity is the third technique considered. A researcher has to be responsible and vigilant at all times, mindful and sensitive to human dignity (Gay 1992: 85). McMillan and Schumacher (1997: 195) agree and state that information on participants should be regarded as confidential unless otherwise agreed on through informed consent. In this study, the confidentiality of each participant was not compromised as their names were not used in the reporting of data. No private or secret information was divulged as the right to confidentiality of

the participants was respected (Huysamen 1994: 134). Only the researcher had access to their names and data to ensure confidentiality. Research findings were therefore presented anonymously.

The fourth and final technique pertains to dissemination of the research findings. As a mark of the researcher's gratitude to the participants, they were promised the findings of the study (Schulze 2002: 19). This was done objectively. Each interviewee was promised a copy of the study.

3.6.5 Conclusion

In qualitative research, data needs to be reliable, valid and ethical. The researcher bears the onus to assess the reliability of the data to determine whether or not the research results are trustworthy. This section has described reliability and validity, as well as accounted for the considerations of ethics. In ensuring that data were both valid and reliable, multiple data collection techniques were used. This is referred to as triangulation. Triangulation enabled the researcher to study the data from more than one perspective.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has dealt with research methodology and provided information about how the empirical investigation was planned and conducted. It covered the use of a qualitative research approach. It described the methods used to obtain data and covered the research design. The research design discussed the sampling procedures, data gathering processes and data analysis methods. The researcher is confident that the validity of the research was guaranteed due to the precautionary measures that were taken. The following chapter presents the results of the data analysis and the interpretation thereof.

CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The primary aim of the study was to investigate the managerial duties of the school principal at a boys-only primary school in the Pinetown District of Kwazulu-Natal. This investigation was undertaken by means of a literature study in Chapter Two and an empirical investigation in Chapter Three. Thus, this chapter reports on the empirical investigation by providing answers to how the principal manages time, curriculum and staff at his school. The information was collected by using qualitative methods which involved in-depth interviews and participant observations.

4.2 DATA GATHERING AND ANALYTICAL METHODS IN BRIEF

4.2.1 Data gathering methods

Five in-depth interviews and two weeks of participant observation were conducted in the selected boys-only primary school in the Pinetown District of Kwazulu-Natal. The five in-depth interviews were conducted with the school principal and four educators from various grades and rank within this school. The aim of the interviews was to investigate the management role of the principal in the said school. By interviewing the principal as well as educators, a more holistic picture of the principal's management role was realised.

During participant observation, the researcher observed the principal as well as educators. In doing so, the researcher experienced first-hand how the principal executed his management duties. The researcher also experienced how the educators responded to these duties/tasks and how the educators transferred them to the learners. In using both in-depth interviews and participant observations, the researcher focused on distinguishing between realities, i.e. what exactly transpires at a specific school as opposed to the ideal situation.

4.2.2 Data analytical method

Analysis of data started by reading the transcripts as well as notes made during the observation. These were read in their entirety several times in order to get a sense

of the interviews and observation as a whole before dividing them into parts to determine the emerging categories and themes. Similar topics were clustered together.

Data was then compared to establish themes and patterns. Emerging themes and patterns were identified and written down. Emerging themes were cross-referenced with the research question to ensure that the investigation remained focused. The themes were categorised into topics as guided by the research questions. The analysis led to the presentation of the findings of the study.

4.3 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.3.1 Introduction

The site of the research is a boys-only primary school. The school is a private school with a learner population of 535 and 55 educators. The school follows the Christian ethos and most of the learners at the school are practicing Christians. Various academic and extra-curricular activities are offered.

The findings of the empirical investigation based on the main categories that emerged from the data, are organised and discussed under the following five main headings:

- Management of the calendar;
- Management of the school timetable;
- Management of the curriculum;
- Management of the appraisal system; and
- Management of the staff development.

4.3.2 Management of the calendar

4.3.2.1 What do you understand by the term calendar?

All participants interviewed had a clear idea of what the term calendar was. The principal said his understanding of the term: "Calendar is a planned document put together by staff and management in preparation for the following term and most of the operational features which need to be planned for or orchestrated and put into

place". The deputy principal on the other hand said: "The term calendar is the communication of events used by boys, parents and staff in an attempt to alleviate clashes".

The educators understood calendar as a document wherein one term and operations flow from one term into the next. For instance, one educator said in this regard: "It helps spread pressure points and is ultimately a guideline of how an eleven or twelve week term will unfold". All respondents considered the term calendar to be everything from sport to parent meetings, to outings, and that all information is put on this document so everyone at school knows what is going on for the term ahead.

4.3.2.2 What are the processes involved in constructing the calendar?
The principal stated that early reminders to the staff and drawing from historical reference were important to construct calendar. He further stated: "It is the management team's document which is responsible for it. The document is fine-tuned by me, deputy head and head of the junior primary section".

The deputy principal confirmed that both he and the head of junior primary are delegated this duty. He said in this regard: "It is my responsibility to draw up the empty draft of the calendar and remind staff of the entries. I put in the core the backbone of the calendar and meet with the head of the primary section to discuss it". He also added that once the school secretary had drawn up the draft, he would check on the content and spelling. But the final copy and decisions were made by the principal.

The educators agreed that the principal oversees the whole process but the task was delegated to the deputy principal and head of the junior primary section. One educator stated: "In drawing up the calendar various heads of departments in charge of school life will make their intentions known through the use of the draft calendar. This draft is managed by the deputy principal who reports all items added to the principal".

4.3.2.3 The various aspects involved in managing the calendar

The principal stated that communication, cooperation, efficient planning and time were very important aspects not to be neglected. He stated: "I work with the deputy principal and the head of junior primary on the drafts that are already compiled by these individuals and I oversee the whole operation. I fine-tune and then send it to my secretary to type it and then it is off to the printers". One of the educators added that the calendar needed to be printed on time, edited and checked for mistakes.

The deputy principal thought that the key aspect was to do it promptly and to encourage people to plan ahead. Also, encouraging people to think outside of their own interests was important. The educators thought that academic, sport and extra-curricular activities were the various aspects added to the calendar.

4.3.3 Management of the school timetable

4.3.3.1 How do you manage the school time?

The principal agreed that the school timetable is a roster of the subjects that they teach daily and the staff and learners knew where they were going because of it. The deputy principal said in this regard: "The timetable is the crux of what we do and I work many nights on it. I discuss all decisions that I take with the principal who rubber-stamps the final copy".

4.3.3.2 How do you manage the school timetable?

According to the principal, this duty was delegated to his management team. He thus stated: "Although I oversee this, I am not too involved. I leave it to my deputy head and head of the junior primary section. I later oversee what they have put together and deliberate on the finer issues. I make the final decisions regarding any proposal that the heads of senior primary and junior primary sections of the school have made".

The deputy principal and head of the junior primary section picked up this duty. They had to make certain that the available teaching time was best utilised and that they did most of the core work. Amongst the finer aspects of this task was the amount of time devoted to each subject. And from the directive of the curriculum they had to allocate time for each subject.

The deputy principal added: "I check as to the availability of staff, number of classes and try to create a program that best suits everyone. I also try and ensure that each educator has at least one hour free per day".

The educators agreed that the planning of the school timetable is very difficult as one educator responded: "One man has to do all of the preparation, planning, time allocations and match educators with subjects they are qualified to teach. It involves time and venue allocations as well as staff to teach subjects. The deputy principal draws up the class timetable and does so in advance, i.e. before the first day of the new school year. The principal oversees the whole operation". Another educator said: "The specialist and core subjects are filled in by the deputy principal but I fill in the necessary subjects that I teach to my grade 5 learners". He also agreed that the principal oversees the whole process of timetabling.

4.3.3.3 How do you manage the school calendar?

The principal prepared for the new year in the second term of the previous year. He said that he had to get all his planning done well in advance and make decisions regarding the timetable before he could communicate them to the staff. He would also have to get the decision he has made approved by the board of governors. He confirmed this by saying: "The heart and soul of this school is the educators and therefore the timetable needs to be carefully managed. Emergency decisions need to be made from time to time but I work with cooperative staff and management team".

The deputy principal is delegated the duty of organising and implementing the timetable. He thus has to ensure that all learners are allocated the correct number of subjects based on the curriculum. He said that he would try to make sure that no one was overly stressed. He also attempted to allow each subject educator an opportunity to see his/her classes at least once a week. He added: "I plan early and by the end of the year. I try to give each educator his/her timetable for the following year. I see it as a puzzle that has a solution".

The educators considered aspects like the allocation of staff, appropriate subjects and time of day scheduled for particular subjects, making sure that there were no clashes and that fair allocation of time for each subject was done.

4.3.4 Management of the curriculum

4.3.4.1 What do you understand by the term curriculum?

According to the principal, the curriculum is seen as everything that is taught in the classroom. This, to him is short-sighted. He believes that curriculum involves the academic and co-curricular, which give an opportunity to learn beyond the classroom. Deeper is the hidden curriculum which is pastoral and sees the educator as a role model. It involves life skills and character development. A lot of it shows values and the sharing of these values.

The deputy principal said: "We would like our learners to cover all aspects of the curriculum as well as areas of the hidden curriculum which may include things like manners and courtesy. We aim to cover this before our learners move on to secondary school". He agreed with the principal in that it includes the hidden curriculum and this includes things like manners and social integration, dealing with success and disappointments.

One educator described the curriculum, saying: "It is the subject-by-subject overview of what is going to be taught, the sequence of aspects being taught, e.g. the coursework taught from one grade to the next." Another educator said: "Everything that takes place in the classroom as well as the hidden curriculum as well as sport is what we define as the hidden curriculum. Everything that takes place in a school day that the children are exposed to is curriculum".

4.3.4.2 What are the processes involved in managing the curriculum?

When asked about the processes of managing the curriculum, the principal commented: "A highly professional team manages and develops the curriculum. At this school, this is done through the CDC (Curriculum Development Committee) and LEC (Learning Experience Committee). These committees have a lot of healthy discussions to add, amend, grow and develop the curriculum. These committees are made up mainly of educators who are seen as the core to

management and development of the curriculum. Ultimately, I oversee any decisions made by these committees".

The deputy principal who manages the curriculum does so with the LEC but mainly focuses on senior primary related aspects. The head of academics is largely responsible for ensuring that educators and parents understand the processes involved in managing the curriculum. The educators agreed that the head of academics has to report back to the deputy principal on all issues, who in turn reports to the principal.

The educators felt strongly that they had a huge say in managing the curriculum. One educator alluded to this claim: "The head of academics works with subject heads that have vital weekly meetings with the subject educators. This is done to check the pace of each class and to assist with learning. It also keeps the curriculum in check and on course. Ultimately the head of academics gives feedback to the deputy principal who in turn gives feedback to the principal who then makes final decisions".

4.3.4.3 How do you managing curriculum change in your school
All respondents indicated that the curriculum was managed through the LEC and the staff. The head of academics managed the curriculum with subject heads and provided feedback to the deputy principal.

The principal stated in this regard: "The experience and knowledge that educators possess influence the planning, implementation and management of the curriculum at this school". One educator stated: "We work in a privileged environment where the staff members go to courses and workshops where they get informed about curriculum. It is therefore easier to plan and manage the curriculum well". Another educator added: "If something needs to be replaced, I will make the subject head aware of this. She will take this matter to the LEC who will discuss the matter there. The subject head will then provide me with feedback from that meeting".

4.3.5 Management of the appraisal system

4.3.5.1 What do you understand about the appraisal system?

The principal responded: "The performance appraisal system is misunderstood and seen as a policing system check. Management is seen as having a narrow and subjective view. However, the performance appraisal aims to develop, build and recognise outstanding work done. The appraisal system is seen as a threat but it is about allowing people to be themselves and it is about sharing".

The principal's view was shared by the deputy principal who said: "I like to believe that we have made the staff understand that this is a personal development opportunity. We try to employ educators that do not need to be checked on and self-motivated educators".

One educator expressed his view of the appraisal system: "Professionals are rewarded for going the extra mile. This takes the form of a point system and it applies to people like the heads of department, heads of subjects and certain sport coaches". He further added: "Excellence is rewarded at this school and there is emotional and financial reward for this". Yet another educator saw the appraisal system as a process whereby educators meet with the principal and the principal goes through the role of that educator at school. This educator viewed this meeting as an opportunity to discuss his objectives and goals with the principal.

4.3.5.2 How do you managing the appraisal system at your school?

The principal managed the process through appraisal documents but admitted that he was unhappy with how this was done. He said that he would like to appraise by removing the threat factor. He added: "I would like to appraise through observation followed by a meeting to share the observation experience. As the principal, I control the appraisal appointments and it must be clearly understood that we do not have all the answers but would like to celebrate excellent teaching at our school".

According to the deputy principal, three people managed the appraisal system. These are the principal, deputy principal and the head of the junior primary section. They divided the workload amongst themselves and they each saw one third of the total staff. He stated in this regard: "We look at the educators' personal leadership

and ask them as to how we can assist them in changing the aspects that they would like to change".

According to the educators, educators have a meeting with one of the three heads and assist in appraising each other's performance over the previous year. One educator said: "The appraisal system is managed by the school principal who will draw the necessary documents with the deputy principal and the head of junior primary section. The principal, deputy principal and head of junior primary section will each go to a different group of educators and have their appraisal with them".

4.3.5.3 What are the challenges of managing the appraisal system?

According to the principal and deputy principal, challenges are sensitivity, the threat factor, management interpreting the right to judge educators and the time factor. Many hours are needed and this is not available in a given term. It takes a lot of hours to manage in that one hour before an observation. The observation should take an hour and one hour post observation. The biggest challenge is the contact time. They also added that at the end of the day, the appraisal could be handled remotely in that educators once told what to do, should get things done without having to be monitored or checked. They seldom ask educators to change what they do.

According to the educators, there were three challenges. These were keeping the appraisal system fresh, getting the staff to buy into it so they do not see it as a threat and the time factor. One educator said: "Recently the principal has been coming into classrooms and observing lessons and this has not gone down well with some educators as they view this as a threat".

4.3.6 Management of staff development

4.3.6.1 What do you understand by staff development?

The principal stated that it was an opportunity for all members of staff to improve and develop themselves in a personal and professional manner to benefit the school. One educator stated that the staff was given the opportunity to grow within the profession, while another educator believed that it was a chance to grow as a person in skills and in knowledge and to feel empowered in a particular area.

4.3.6.2 How do you manage staff development?

The principal stated that he looked at staff and managers to focus on opportunities for staff development. Staff, management and educators did not have enough time to do so by themselves. It is the onus of staff and management to find opportunities for staff development. He added that as the principal, he would oversee the staff development process and finances. He added: "If money was available, I would like to employ a person to look at human development at this school. In doing so, that person would take care of resource development, staff, parents and learners".

The deputy principal was of the opinion that staff development was done so that people do not find themselves in a rut. He added that staff development was ensuring that personal aspects of an educator are taken care of. These could be financial and social skills. On the other hand it was professional development and it was the responsibility of management to find these opportunities. It was also important to improve the skills of the educator to make certain that they taught better. He added that staff development opportunities were based on an individual motivation basis.

The educators believed that there were many in-house workshops that were run on the first day of each term whereby there were different speakers. They were also encouraged to go to other schools to find out about their curriculum and activities. They also agreed that various staff development opportunities were sent through via the Independent Schools Association of South Africa (ISASA) communication network as well as state school bulletins.

4.3.6.3 What are the staff development opportunities available in your school?

Respondents stated that the following opportunities were available throughout the year: conferences, internal workshops on the first day of each term, visits to other schools, computer training, notices put up in the staffroom about available opportunities, sport coaching, academic workshops and the principal approaches individuals from time to time to attend specific workshops.

One educator said that there were many conferences. They were also allowed to attend and as a result he was fortunate to attend the Mathematics and English workshops. He added: "These workshops are well managed in that as soon as the head of department gets a notice, he distributes it to us educators. Finances for these courses are also taken care of by the school".

4.3.7 Conclusion

From the findings it is clear that the role of the principal in executing his management duties at a boys-only primary school is vital to the effective operating of the school. The principal directly manages certain functions at school, i.e. staff development and the staff appraisal whilst he delegates functions to the deputy principal, i.e. calendar and school timetable. During all of these functional areas, he constantly oversees the functional area through clear communication with his management team and staff as well as meeting regularly with the delegated persons. In doing so the functional areas are well managed and the overall school organisation is managed effectively by the principal.

4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

The findings reveal the importance of the school principal in managing the calendar, school timetable, staff appraisal and staff development. From the interviews and participant observation, it can clearly be gathered that the principal has a huge involvement in these management aspects, either directly or indirectly. This came out clear from the interviews not only with the school principal, by those with his senior educators and the educators. They alluded to the fact that the principal's management role actually goes even beyond the management aspects that this study explored. In that sense the principal is perceived as an all-rounder in ensuring processes of management at school. The educators seemed to appreciate the fact that their principal was not selfishly holding the management tasks to himself. He valued delegation, rather. His planning happened through his senior educators down to educators. He was task-orientated but through people-centred approach to management. This means that he was focused on executing his management tasks while he valued doing that by involving his team of educators. This is well in keeping with the democratic model as explained under the theoretical framework in the second chapter (Bush 2004: 48-50).

The principal had a clear and definite idea of what the term calendar is and what needed to be put onto it. He had delegated this task to his management team in which the deputy principal is the leader. The deputy principal saw his role as having to provide feedback on what was done. He seemed to appreciate the freedom with which his team was allowed the space to do planning activities with much trust from the principal and his minimal interference.

During the process of constructing the school calendar the educators seemed to understand their role as it can be gathered from their responses in this regard, and they were able to follow the appropriate chain of command if anything went wrong. This is in keeping with the theoretical framework in this regard (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983: 79). They understood and adhered to the reporting channels, for instance, for any challenge they encountered they would consult the subject head, which would go to the deputy principal who would then go to the principal. The principal realised that the various aspects of communication, cooperation, efficient planning and time were highly important in the success of the school's calendar.

The principal understood that the timetable was the crux of what should be done at school so that activities run uninterrupted (Deventer & Kruger 2003: 231). He delegated this duty to his deputy principal. He did not get overly involved in the process of constructing the timetable when the draft was being put together by his management team. The management team would deliberate on the finer issues with him. He would then make the final decisions regarding any proposal that the heads of senior primary and junior primary sections have suggested.

The principal believed that the curriculum involved the academics as well as co-curricular and the hidden curriculum. He set up two committees for the task of developing and managing the curriculum. This includes both the curriculum and extra-curriculum (Badenhorst, 1996:98).

The principal managed the appraisal process through appraisal documents, observations and interviews. He had the view of observing educators in the classroom (Emerson 2004: 151), followed by a meeting. He controlled the

appraisal appointments and used the deputy principal and the head of the junior primary section in his three-person team. He believed that the challenges of the appraisal system are sensitivity, the threat factor, management interpreting the right to judge teachers and time factor.

The principal sees the staff development as an opportunity for all members of staff to improve and develop themselves in a personal and professional manner to benefit the school. He identified the opportunities (Van Deventer & Kruger 2003: 250), directed as well as supported his educators to attend in-house workshops, conferences, visits to other schools, computer training, sport coaching courses and academic workshops. He shoulders the responsibility of staff development (Steyn & van Niekerk 2002: 278).

In the researcher's view, the principal effectively managed his school through leading initiatives in executing certain managerial roles whilst delegating others. He was willing to involve educators actively in the majority of the decisions made at the school and was able to assist and support his educators. This management approach enabled the school to function harmoniously.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter discussed the outcomes of the interviews and participant observation. In looking at the data, it is evident that this school is operating well in that the principal has a clear idea and vision of what he wants to achieve at school. He is able to work collectively with various staff members at school to plan, prepare and execute numerous functions and in doing so enables the whole school to benefit. He accredits a lot of the school's functionality to his staff and management team. Through heading and even delegating duties, he is able to be involved in the key aspects of managing a boys-only primary school.

It is pleasing to see those educators, subject heads, heads of departments, deputy principal and the principal all work harmoniously and he is well aware of their tasks, duties and responsibilities. They are all aware of the chain of command. Communication between all people who work at this school is outstanding and everyone at school is always aware of what is required of them. They are well

aware of deadlines for tasks assigned to them as well as sudden changes to activities in a given week. The staff and management are very professional in achieving the vision of the principal which is effectively managing the learners at a boys-only primary school. This creates a healthy culture of teaching and learning.

Chapter five concludes the study with an overview of the investigation, synthesis of findings and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 5
REFLECTIONS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to reflect the research process and the results of data analysis and interpretation, while also offering recommendations and comments on the limitations of the research. The main points of the literature review are presented together with a brief comment on how data generated during the interview either corroborated the points made in the literature or diverged from them, therefore integrating the research findings with the literature. The focus is on the main research problem of the study, i.e. the school principal's management duties in a boys-only primary school, as well as the principal's role in managing learners, educators and the school curriculum. The research problem was explored in the first chapter. The aim and motivation of the study were presented. The methods that the researcher considered relevant to address the research problem were also briefly presented and explained.

5.2 MAIN POINTS FROM THE LITERATURE REVIEW
5.2.1 The role of the principal in managing the school

The literature reviewed (see 2.4 in chapter 2) describes the role of the school principal as being the highest ranking manager at school. He takes the lead to set and improve the school curriculum to guide educators and to manage the day-to-day operations at school.

5.2.2.1 The calendar

The literature reviewed (see 2.4.3.1 in chapter 2) describes calendar as being a mechanism by which the principal manages time at school. It brings together students, educators, space, equipment and materials in a coordinated arrangement that enables teaching and learning to take place. One of the principal's key roles is to maximise the time devoted to learning activities.

5.2.2.2 The school timetable

The school timetable (see 2.4.3.2 in chapter 2) is the key to ensuring the uninterrupted flow of teaching and learning. The school principal is responsible for

the class timetable that is drawn up from the central school timetable for each of the educators. The extra-curricular activities of the educators should also be reflected on this timetable as well as the examination and test timetables.

5.2.3 The curriculum

According to the literature (see 2.4.4 in chapter 2), the principal plays a key role in managing the curriculum. Principals are important role players in curriculum decisions at school. These include both the curricular and the extra-curricular activities (see 2.4.4.1 in chapter 2). Decisions about the school curriculum are determined to a large extent by the participants' views of the purpose of schooling and their beliefs about how humans learn. According to the literature (see 2.4.4.4 in chapter 2), the principal plays an important role in organising and structuring the school curriculum through drawing up a timetable for curricular and extra-curricular activities. Through the school timetable, the school principal is able to ensure that there is a flow of teaching and learning at his school. The school principal should draw up the timetable according to the parameters of departmental guidelines.

5.2.4 The staff

According to the literature (see 2.5.4 in chapter 2), the principal should ensure that the main aim of staff appraisal is to improve the educators' teaching ability, with a view to professional development and motivation. It is important that the appraisal is conducted as part of managing the individual; school performance and improvement (see 2.5.4.1 in chapter 2). According to the literature (see 2.5.4) the appraisal should comprise of the appraisal discussion, setting targets, monitoring and review as well as the review meeting. The main task of the appraisal is to review the performance of the educators in light of their specified duties.

5.2.5 Staff Development

According to the literature (see 2.4.5 in chapter 2), the principal should take cognisance of the fact that the educator's initial training is not always adequate for effective instruction. Although ongoing professional development is the responsibility of the educator, the principal remains an important partner and participant in implementing staff development programmes. The principal may conduct staff development programmes at school level through a number of

activities such as staff meetings, staff development activities, formal and informal observations and consultations as well as the coaching of individuals (see 2.4.5.1 and 2.4.5.2 in chapter 2).

5.3 MAIN POINTS FROM THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

5.3.1 The research programme

The research programme was designed as a qualitative research in which information-rich informants would be interviewed to help provide answers to the main research problem, which was to determine the school principal's management duties at a boys-only primary school (see 2.4.4 in chapter 2). A literature review was undertaken to place the research into a wider context as well as to clarify the issues that would be relevant to the data collection process.

The interviews were done on site and in person. The interviews were recorded to ensure accuracy. The interviews consisted of both open-ended and closed questions which gave the respondents an opportunity to discuss their experiences with regard to their role in the management process of the principal. The data collected was then categorised and analysed in an attempt to answer the research question and sub-questions.

5.3.2 The findings

All participants interviewed had a clear idea of what the term calendar was. All respondents of the interviews agree that the principal oversees the whole process of managing the term calendar and that the task was delegated to the deputy principal and head of junior primary. The principal stated that communication, cooperation, efficient planning and time were very important aspects and that these key features should not be neglected.

The principal also manages the school timetable by preparing in advance. In doing so he planned many aspects of the timetable before he could communicate them to the staff. Many of his decisions were also, approved by the board of governors. He believes that the heart and soul of this school is the teachers and therefore the timetable needed to be carefully managed.

When managing the curriculum, the principal delegated this task to a highly professional team to manage and develop. This was done through the CDC (Curriculum Development Committee) and the LEC (Learning Experience Committee). These committees have a lot of healthy discussion to add, amend, grow and develop the curriculum and are made up mainly of educators. The principal does oversee every aspect of curriculum development through regular meetings.

In managing staff development, the principal stated that he looked at staff and managers to focus on opportunities for staff development as no one at school has enough time to do so by themselves. It is the onus of staff and management to find opportunities for staff development. The principal, however, would oversee the staff development process and finances.

Finally, the principal managed the process of appraisal through distributing appraisal documents to staff at school; this is followed by staff observation and culminated with a meeting to share the observation experience. The principal controlled the appraisal appointments and uses appraisal as a mirror celebrating excellent teaching at his school.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.4.1 Recommendations based on the analysed and interpreted data

5.4.1.1 Recommendation about the calendar

In constructing the calendar there needs to be clear communication between staff and management of all amendments made to the draft document. Failure to clearly communicate these changes will result in many educators and learners following the incorrect activity at the incorrect time in the incorrect venue.

5.4.1.2 Recommendation about staff appraisal

When the staff appraisal process in done each year, it must be clearly understood by all educators what the aim of the process is. Many educators feel threatened by the process of observations in the class by members of management and educators view this negatively.

5.4.1.3 Recommendation about staff development

Staff development opportunities must be sourced by the management team and they will need to lead this process. Educators cannot be delegated this task as they are not as able to plan budgets and confirm attendances at certain workshops. This is an area that only senior management, i.e. the principal and deputy principal can manage as they can make the necessary funds available and also make the relevant decisions regarding attendances to workshops and conferences.

5.4.2 Recommendations for further study

The study has achieved its aim, i.e. to investigate the role of the principal in a boys-only primary school in the Pinetown District. The following suggestions are made for further investigation:

- Due to the study's confinement to one boys-only primary school in the Pinetown District, it is suggested that the study be extended to more primary schools in the greater Durban area to assess whether different findings may be reached regarding the role of the principal in managing the various aspects of the school.

- The study could also be extended to girls-only or gender-mixed schools as they may yield different management results.

- Similar study could be considered with much interest in the element of culture as a factor in school management.

- A study should be conducted to include more respondents, i.e. management and staff to assess if the role of the principal is viewed alike by management and educators.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study had the following limitations:

- The small size of the sample which is typical of qualitative research. It cannot support a general theory on the role of the principal in executing his management duties in a boys-only school. The study was designed to be exploratory and descriptive in nature. As a result, no attempt is made to generalise or qualify the findings.

- The culture of the school could influence the results to a larger extent. This was not the focus of the study. However, culture could be a very important factor influencing the management of schools. Studies that also probe the element of culture in school management may shed light in terms of models of management.
- This study focused on single sex school, i.e. boys-only school. Girls-only or mixed-gender schools may yield different results.

5.6 CONCLUSION

The role of the school principal in executing his management duties in a boys-only primary school has been identified and described successfully. The research has identified the key areas which form part of the role of the principal in managing the school. The research reveals that the principal is tasked with the overall management role at school. He manages directly as well as delegates tasks within the school. In doing so he oversees the whole school. He is involved in all aspects of the school being investigated. He is kept informed of all the processes undertaken through his staff and management team. The research managed to identify these roles and found out how these specific roles are executed.

A qualitative approach was followed as the research methodology to gather information from the research participants. This approach enhanced the trustworthiness of the information gathered. Furthermore, the qualitative approach was suitable to meet the aims of the research. The characteristics of the site and the biographical information of the participants were presented to give the background of the site and the participants involved in the research. The presentation of the findings revealed the role of the principal in managing the various aspects of the school. The research succeeded in revealing how the principal executes his duties by working with his management team, heads of departments and staff. Through careful planning, good communication and participation of all staff members at school, the duties of the principal were effectively executed. Therefore, the research has attained its objectives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: The interview schedule for the school principal

Questions to establish how the school principal manages the term calendar:

1. What is your understanding of the term calendar?
2. Explain how you construct and manage the calendar.
3. Explain the processes involved in constructing the calendar.
4. Explain the various aspects involved in managing the calendar.

Questions to establish how the school principal manages the school timetable:

1. What is your understanding of the school timetable?
2. Explain how you construct and manage the school timetable.
3. Explain the processes involved in constructing the school timetable.
4. Explain the various aspects involved in managing the school timetable.

Questions to establish how the school principal manages the curriculum:

1. What does your school curriculum entail?
2. What are the processes involved in managing the curriculum?
3. How do you manage curriculum changes in your school?

Questions to establish how the school principal manages the appraisal system:

1. What is your understanding of the appraisal system?
2. How do you implement and manage the appraisal system in your school?
3. Highlight the challenges of managing the appraisal system?

Questions to establish how the school principal manages the staff development:

1. What is your understanding of staff development?
2. What staff development activities are relevant to your school?
3. How do you manage staff development activities as the principal?

Appendix B: The interview schedule for the educators

The educators' understanding of the term calendar:

1. Share your understanding of the term calendar. Explain how the principal constructs and manages it.
2. Explain the processes involved in constructing the calendar.
3. Take me through the various aspects on how the principal manages the calendar.

The educators' understanding of the school timetable:

1. Share your understanding of the school timetable. Explain how the principal constructs and manages it.
2. Explain the processes involved in constructing the school timetable.
3. Take me through the various aspects on how the principal manages the school timetable.

The educators understanding of the curriculum:

1. Take me through your school's curriculum.
2. Highlight the processes involved in managing the curriculum.
3. How does the principal manage the curriculum change in the school?

The educators understanding of the appraisal system:

1. What is your understanding of the appraisal system?
2. How does the principal manage it at your school?
3. Highlight the challenges of managing the appraisal system?

The educators understanding of staff development:

1. What is your understanding of staff development?
2. What staff development activities are relevant at your school?
3. How does the principal manage staff development activities?

Appendix C: Permission to conduct study

The Board of Governors

Highbury School

Private Bag X7019

Hillcrest

3650

June 2010

The Chairman

Re: Permission to conduct a study

Please, may I acquire permission to conduct a study at your school. I am currently doing a Masters of Education at Unisa in the area of Education Management.

I would need to do five interviews at your school with the principal and four educators as well as two weeks of observations in meetings and lessons.

All research is confidential and no names of individuals or organisation are used in the research or the research findings. I will provide the board a copy of the transcript upon completion of my study.

Yours sincerely

L. Manickum

Mr. Leon Manickum

Appendix D: Letter from the School Principal

July 2010

Dear Mr. Manickum

Re: Research to be undertaken at Highbury Preparatory School

I, Richard Stanley the principal of Highbury Preparatory School, do hereby grant permission for you to utilize this school as a site for research as part of the requirements for your M Ed qualifications in Educational Management.

I further acknowledge that you will be interviewing four educators as well as me and that you will be conducting observation at this school during 1st to 10th August 2010.

Yours Sincerely

R Stanley

Richard Stanley

Headmaster