

*PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR
CONTEMPORARY ROLES OF HIGH
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS BY AN
EDUCATION MANAGEMENT AND
DEVELOPMENT CENTRE IN THE
WESTERN CAPE*



BY

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A mini-thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of M. Ed. in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape.

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November 2003

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give all honour to the **Lord Jesus Christ** for His grace and mercy in allowing me the strength and wisdom to complete this study.

I am blessed to have had the support of my wonderful family. I want to express my sincere gratitude to my husband, **Breyton**, and my daughter, **Lorene**, and parents, **Josephine** and **Frederick Damons**, for their love and support. I owe them the greatest debt as they provided me the privilege of studying full time.

I owe exceptional gratitude to my supervisor, **Prof. Harold Herman** of the University of the Western Cape. His interest and confidence in this study never diminished from inception to completion. His professional guidance, which assisted my academic growth, is appreciated. I further wish to thank him for creating a supportive climate conducive to me embarking on this important venture. His final proofreading and editing of my work made writing an enriching and inspirational experience.

I would also like to thank especially **Mr Pietersen** and all the **respondents** at schools and EMDCs who assiduously participated in my research study. Their contributions were invaluable.

While many contributed towards the production of this report, the contents are exclusively my own and I bear sole responsibility for any errors of fact and interpretation.

ABSTRACT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTEMPORARY ROLES OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS BY AN EMDC IN THE WESTERN CAPE

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This study seeks to present a case study of professional development for contemporary roles of high school principals of an EMDC in the Western Cape. The advent of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994 inevitably resulted in initiatives for transformation in education. School principals are under enormous pressure to transform their schools from the traditionally rigid, bureaucratically administered schools to institutions that have democratic, decentralised school administration. Against this background, this study attempts to determine the contemporary leadership roles of principals in their various contexts and explore their 'real' needs for effective school leadership development, also to make recommendations for empowering school leaders in an EMDC region.

Local and international literature on school leadership and management was reviewed. An investigation was done of the perceptions of six high school principals, their contemporary roles and identification of common challenges facing them to lead effectively. The researcher also explored an Educational Management and Development Centre's (EMDC) Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) component's perceptions of challenges associated with the school leadership of principals within educational and training institutions within their region, and ascertained the relationship between EMDCs' training and the needs of the principals.

The findings reveal that despite slight differences, there was general agreement on issues of the role, development and support of the school principal between the principals and the circuit managers of the EMDC. The case study has identified the need for the contemporary role of the principal to be more extensive in the context of current reforms. The principals interviewed all aspired to leading their schools in the direction of the new reforms, however challenging. The study has also established that there are good professional relationships between the principals and their circuit managers. There is mutual acceptance that many of the challenges that principals face are not dealt with by the EMDC. However, as the circuit managers endeavour to move towards a developmental approach rather than merely administrative support for principals, there is evidence to support the notion that they are making significant progress.

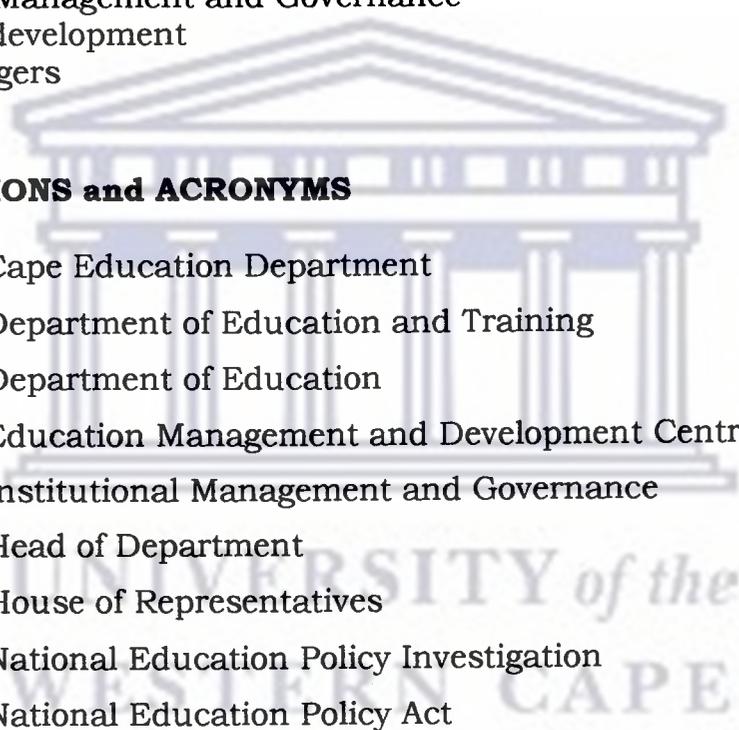
Finally, a number of key recommendations are made for efficient and effective preparation, development and support for school leadership.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR CONTEMPORARY ROLES OF HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS BY AN EMDC IN THE WESTERN CAPE

KEY WORDS

Western Cape
High School Principal
Contemporary roles
School leadership
School management
Challenges
Education Management and Development Centre
Institutional Management and Governance
Professional development
Circuit managers

ABBREVIATIONS and ACRONYMS



CED	-	Cape Education Department
DET	-	Department of Education and Training
DoE	-	Department of Education
EMDC	-	Education Management and Development Centre
IMG	-	Institutional Management and Governance
HOD	-	Head of Department
HOR	-	House of Representatives
NEPI	-	National Education Policy Investigation
NEPA	-	National Education Policy Act
NQF	-	National Qualifications Framework
SAQA	-	South African Qualifications Authority Act
SASA	-	South African Schools Act
SBM	-	School Based-Management
SGB	-	School Governing Body

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The 21st century has heralded new global, mega-trends for leaders in schools. Naisbitt (1984) coined the term 'mega-trends' to describe broad social, economic, political and technological changes which influence in very potent ways the course of change in different domains of endeavour (Caldwell and Spinks, 1993: 5).

Educational planners and administrators are increasingly being asked to address many factors that are shaping society as a whole. In most countries one of the most important of these factors has been the re-positioning of certain powers and responsibilities away from central governments towards local communities. Fullan (1996: 702) asserts that there is a worldwide trend toward self-managing schools. The central authority, retains a powerful but more focused role, determining broad goals, setting priorities and building frameworks for accountability. Caldwell and Spinks (1993: vii) maintain that major responsibilities are being shifted to the school level, and there is simultaneous centralisation and decentralisation.

School leaders need to understand the changing natures of the wider society in which schools are set, the complexities of self-managing schools and the nature and extent of their own leadership circumstances (Davies, 1999:11).

In the present period of radical political and educational change in South Africa, institutional leadership in education is a subject both of wide public concern and of lively academic interest. Many issues and challenges of school leaders compete for attention and the case for well-directed, high quality research is insistent and strong.

1.2 Aims and objectives of this study

This study is concerned with the changes and development taking place in education, particularly the challenges of educational leadership and management. More specifically, this study aims to determine the contemporary leadership roles of principals in high schools under the jurisdiction of an Education Management and Development Centre (EMDC), Western Cape region, and to explore their development for effective school leadership. The objectives of this study will be to:

- Review local and international literature on school leadership and training.
- Investigate school principals' perceptions of their contemporary roles and identify common challenges facing principals in their task to lead effectively.
- Explore an Educational Management and Development Centre's (EMDC) Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) component's perceptions of challenges associated with school leadership of principals within institutions for education and training in their regions.

- Ascertain the relationship between EMDCs' training and the needs of the principals.
- Make recommendations to improve effective leadership of school principals based on a review of local and international school leadership literature, professional development programmes and the investigation involving the IMG and principals.

1.3 Rationale and background of the study

The previous apartheid education system in South Africa was characterised by authoritarian top-down management by its officials (Makhoba, 1998:7). Principals were ultimately responsible for decision-making in schools. This was done without support, encouragement and even without leadership training, and since 1994 schools need principals who can lead transformation in education aimed at empowering all stakeholders (Davidoff *et al*, 1995 cited in Makhoba, 1998: 8). This study therefore, seeks to identify challenges principals face in dealing with the transformations and offer recommendations for empowering principals to lead democratic transformation at their schools.

Globally leaders and managers of schools are faced with the challenge of effectively functioning in dynamically changing and increasingly complex education systems (Davies and Ellison, 1999:11). Political democratisation in South Africa has led to the democratisation of its education system (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: vii).

Many educational reforms and policies in South Africa follow the global decentralisation trend. This puts the principal in a precarious position, because the principal has to effectively lead the school community in line with this new trend.

All principals according to Dunford *et al* (2000: ix) suffer from exposure because within each school the buck stops with them. Girvin (1995:3) maintains that the policies on the future of education and training made no specific mention of the need for the management and leadership training of school principals. The initial impetus for this research was the researcher's conviction that principals need to be empowered for their precarious positions, as they have to effectively lead their school communities in line with this new global trend.

Due to political restructuring and educational transformation in South Africa, principals are exposed to 'policy overload' (Williams, 2001: 92). At the same time, the education system has come under escalating pressure to raise standards of achievement. Even more problematic are schools that normally enrol many difficult learners. As schooling is a high profile political policy issue, this study contends that the principals are forced into a wider public arena and are directly under pressure to deliver not only educationally but also 'politically'.

The principals' pressure and exposure come from both within and without the school institution (Sterling and Davidoff, 2000:5). The principal is the key link between national, provincial, and district education policy and implementation at institutional and community level.

According to Girvin (1995: 1)

The principal will be the fulcrum around which change takes place, receiving policy directions from above and being responsible for the propagation and implementation below.

Education reform and restructuring have necessitated the implementation of drastic organisational changes. These major changes require major paradigm shifts (Van der Linde, 2002:513) and transformational leadership (Leithwood *et al*, 1996:786). The principals have to cope with these major challenges while simultaneously transforming, building and maintaining effective schools. The traditionally rigid, bureaucratically administered school has given way to a democratic, decentralised school administration.

Principals are also expected to be instructional leaders (Williams, 1995:8) who enhance teaching, and learning. As effective instructional leaders they have to lead collegiality among educators, professionally develop and empower teachers, do purposeful inquiry and encourage reflection and experimentation. This study intends to determine how democratic school governance has changed the role of the principal.

Training for school principals in the Western Cape appears to be neglected. Similar responses relating to training of principals in the United Kingdom were expressed by Girvin (1995:1). The purpose of the EMDCs in the Western Cape is to offer the School-Based Management model for supporting school development. The new EMDC structures replace the former area offices, and are intended to facilitate communication and consistency amongst school support services (Robinson *et al*, 2002:3).

In addition, promotion of many inexperienced principals (Williams, 2001: 92) warrants specific preparation for aspiring and practising principals to lead School-Based Managed schools. What is of major concern has been that: "Rarely have adequate time and resources been set aside prior to, or during, change for the necessary professional development of staff" (Girvin, 1995:1).

It is envisaged that through their reconstructed organisation, EMDCs will offer more systematic, co-ordinated and holistic support services to schools, thereby breaking through what has often been a fragmented approach to supporting school development. In this regard, it is hoped that the EMDCs will contribute to schools developing the capacity to manage their own developmental needs.

The professional relationship between the Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) component of the EMDC and their principals will be established in this study. The IMG is a component of the EMDC that focuses on management and governance co-ordination, support and empowerment, with a view to support the development of effective, self-sustaining learning sites that provide quality education within the framework of national and provincial education goals (WCED, 2000:30).

Regarding these education management development activities, the Department of Education (1996b: 34) suggests that less emphasis should be placed on off-site, menu-driven knowledge and skill-focused formal courses of training and development, and more attention should be given to the development of programmes and materials which are related to performance enhancement in the school context. These should reflect 'real' needs, and be sufficiently flexible for use in a variety of contexts, individually or collectively.

This study is therefore an attempt to determine the contemporary leadership roles of principals in their various contexts and explore their 'real' needs for effective school leadership and provide recommendations for empowering school leaders in an EMDC region.

1.4 Transformational leadership

This study will focus on the transformational leadership roles of principals construed to be more consistent with school restructuring in South Africa. "Prominent notions of the principal's role have evolved from manager, to street-level bureaucrat, to change agent, to instructional leader, to transformational leader" (Leithwood *et al*, 1996: 743). Transformational leaders according to Day *et al* (2000:14) 'not only manage structure, they purposefully influence the culture in order to change it. The principal's role results from external pressures and reflects the reform of the educational system (Leithwood *et al*, 1996: 744). Transformation has been the outcome of individual, hierarchical and patriarchal forms of school leadership for the greater part of educational history (Grace, 1995: 54).

The South African education system is moving from centralised authoritative hierarchy to decentralised school-based management. This has implications for increased participatory leadership and decentralised decision-making that is beneficial to all. Transformational leadership that is fundamentally moral emerges from the needs, aspirations and values of followers and results in mutuality of purposes between leaders and followers. Moreover, followers can make choices among real alternatives. "Such leadership occurs when ... persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise each other to higher levels of motivation and morality" (Burns, 1978:20).

The power bases of both interact to create mutual support and common purpose. Sergiovanni (1995) cited in Day *et al* (2000:119), agrees that when “... transformational leadership is practised successfully, purposes which may have initially seemed to be separate, become fused”.

Transformational leadership entails not only a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship but an elevation of both – a change “... for the better” (Leithwood *et al*, 1996: 786). In transformational relationships, leaders and followers together define both the means and ends of human action:

The essence of leadership ... is the recognition of real need, the uncovering and exploiting of contradictions among values and between values and practice, and the realigning of values, ... and conscious-raising on a wide plane.

(Burns, 1978:43-44)

Burns (1978:4) contends “... transformational leadership is ultimately a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders...” This study concurs that this is fundamental to leading the decentralised trend of school-based management in school communities. This study will be located within the following categories of transformational leadership (Leithwood, 1999:39 cited in Day *et al*, 2000:15):

- *setting directions ;*
- *developing people;*
- *organising; and*
- *building relationships.*

Principals are faced with situations in which effective and efficient school managements requires new and improved skills, knowledge and attitudes to cope with a wide range of new demands and challenges. From this perspective Grace (1995:54) argues, "... transformational leadership involves considerable social skills of advocacy, inter-group relations, team building and inspiration without domination".

This study recognises the need and will explore preparation and professional development of transformational leaders to be a credible alternative to traditional leadership (Grace, 1995: 54; Jirasinghe and Lyons, 1996: 7; Bush and Jackson, 2002: 418).

1.5 Research paradigm/design/methodology

The recent trend from apartheid centralisation towards democratic decentralisation in South Africa has drastically changed school leadership. It is therefore necessary to gain conceptual clarity of changes in the way principals lead and manage schools. Consequently, a documentary analysis of principal leadership in this study is vital.

This study is located predominantly within a qualitative paradigm. The research will elicit comprehensive data pertaining to the role and support of principals. A case study will thus be designed to acquire accurate descriptions of the contemporary roles and professional development of the principals by their EMDC. The qualitative research methods chosen will delve deeper into these issues.

The research techniques will consist of a documentary analysis of all available and relevant documents on school leadership and development, and semi-structured interviews with principals and circuit managers. The purpose of the documentary analysis is to orientate the researcher with the content of the study and the interview is to elicit participants' thoughts and experiences, which is vital to this study (Cohen and Manion, 1980:243).

Pilot interviews will be conducted with circuit managers and principals from a different EMDC region to the one used in the study, to assess whether interview guides elicit appropriate information to answer the research questions.

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted to explore the nature and range of preparation, development and support offered to principals by the EMDC. In addition, the researcher will investigate challenges they face and their recommendations with regard to professional development for principals. The interviews will be semi-structured to allow interviewees to raise and discuss issues pertinent to school leadership not raised by the interviewer.

Purposive sampling will be used, as it is the intention of the researcher to get as many different viewpoints as possible that are representative and typical in the EMDC region. Principals and circuit managers will be approached to voluntarily participate in the research.

Six school principals within the jurisdiction of an EMDC in the Western Cape will be selected for this study. In addition, the six circuit managers who provide direct service and have direct links with principals of schools in their circuits will be selected.

All interviews will be audio-recorded, with permission of participants. Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews will be done and the resulting text analysed.

A thematic analysis will begin at the research design stage and informally continue during and after interviews (Arsky & Knight, 1999:161). Themes relating to the common aspects under the headings of the principals roles, challenges, preparation and professional development that emerge, will be noted. Data collected from each school principal will be compared to identify common factors in their roles, preparation, professional development, support received and the challenges they face.

Data collected from circuit managers will be compared to data collected from principals. This is to ascertain whether there is congruence in their perceptions regarding the leadership and professional development of principals.

Triangulation will be done with data emerging from principals, circuit managers and the documentary analysis as they converge to form a "... triangle of error" (Berg, 2001:5).

Finally, recommendations will be made that can contribute to effective school leadership.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The intention of this study as stated in chapter one is to determine the relationship between the challenges principals face in their contemporary roles in high schools under the jurisdiction of an Education Management and Development Centre (EMDC), in the Western Cape region, and their professional development and support for effective school leadership provided by the EMDC. The new school governance policies that require principals to be able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery, will be reviewed. The principal's contemporary roles will then be investigated, including the challenges faced. Finally, the professional development of principals will be explored.

2.2 South African education policy context

In 1994, political democratisation of South Africa inevitably resulted in initiatives for transformation in education. No discussion of context in South Africa can ignore the overriding context of transformation, both in society generally and education in particular (Smith *et al*, 2001: 4).

The importance of good management in the transformation of both government and civil society is entrenched in South Africa's Constitution.

Section 195 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, 1996 deals with basic values and principles governing public administration and provides, *inter alia*, (195:1) that Public Administration must be governed by the democratic principles and values enshrined in the Constitution, including the following principles:

- a) *A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained;*
- b) *Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted;*
- c) *Public administration must be development orientated;*
- d) *Good human-resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated; and*
- e) *Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation.*

This broad context of public service management intersects with the education policy context. The education policy context in South Africa is a system undergoing immense transformation from one grounded in the apartheid paradigm of racial segregation and inequality to a new paradigm grounded in equality of opportunity for all learners, regardless of race, socio-economic status, gender, ability, or other personal characteristics (Smith, 1997: 26).

The Constitution establishes a democratic national, provincial and local government order and binds all public schools to observe fundamental rights and protect fundamental freedoms, many of which have direct implications for decisions made by school governors and managers (DoE, 1996a:16).

In the Education White Paper (1995), the Ministry of Education announced that the decision-making authority of schools in the public sector would be shared among parents, teachers, learners and the community. The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996c) requires the promotion of access, equality and democratic governance in the schooling system. The SASA provides for democratic school governance through school governing bodies (SGBs), which is in place in public schools. This warrants co-operative governance and participatory management in schools, which is very different from the principal previously being solely responsible. The principals now have to lead the implementation of these new democratic directives.

The challenges of implementing democratic governance and participatory management in schools remain, as mandatory policies by themselves do not lead to institutional change. According to Van der Linde (2002: 513), the mandatory policies lead the way to, *inter alia*:

- * *the move from 19 different education systems to one education system;*
- * *a move from monocultural to multicultural schools;*
- * *the move from a focus on educator input, content-driven education to learner outcomes, outcomes-based education with intended results and outputs as indicated in a more streamlined version of Curriculum 2005; and*
- * *quality education for all.*

Implementing these new systems of educational administration and governance inevitably affects the role of the principal.

2.3 Reconstructing school leadership

The principles of democracy in education reform necessitate principals transforming exclusive and authoritarian structures and establishing procedures, which provide for representative participation in school governance.

The sphere of governing bodies is governance, by which is meant policy determination, in which the democratic participation of the schools' stakeholders is essential. The primary sphere of the school leadership is management, by which is meant the day-to-day organisation of teaching and learning, and the activities which support teaching and learning, for which teachers and the school principal are responsible.

These spheres overlap, and the distinction in roles between principals and their staff, district education authorities, and SGBs, need to be agreed with the provincial education departments. This would permit considerable diversity in governance and management roles, depending on the circumstances of each school, with national and provincial policies. (DoE, 1996a: 17)

Due to the overlap and distinctions in roles of school governance, an implication of the policy context for school leaders is to see "... the big picture" (DoE, 1999). School leaders need a comprehensive view of how school governance and leadership is changing. Shaeffer (1997: 223) states that, in country after country, at least in the developing world, top-down, system-wide reforms in areas such as curriculum development and teacher training continue to leave the actual nature of teaching and learning in individual schools virtually untouched. He is insistent that evidence shows that the innovation processes must begin at school level, where real change can take place. Thus he maintains that management of schools is becoming a more important variable in the ongoing attempt to increase access to, and improve the quality of, basic education.

Shaeffer (1997: 223) further maintains that the development of a system to nurture good education management at the school level is therefore becoming an ever-higher priority for education ministries around the world. The following issues need to be dealt with when recognising the critical role of education management in guiding the South African transformation process:

Participation of stakeholders and the broader community. In general, the various systems have been managed in ways that exclude major stakeholders. This problem was one of the root causes of the education crisis. Developing the appropriate practices, norms, procedures and language to mediate participation will take time and careful planning.

Equity. The ideology of apartheid education which asserted that different racial and ethnic groups should be educated separately, has resulted in an unequal distribution of institutional power, management capacity, education and training along gender, race and ethnic lines. In general, the management orientation within these systems has focused on distribution within each group, rather than equity, in terms of equal distribution and social relations. This will be an entirely new orientation for many people within the system.

Effectiveness and efficiency. The various systems have been managed neither effectively, in the sense of ensuring delivery of services, nor efficiently, in the sense of saving resources. In the new system, there will be a need to find a balance between effectiveness in terms of the basic objectives to be achieved, and efficiency, in terms of the most rational use of resources. Civil servants managing the system will have to develop a new set of standards for managing and allocating resources and educational services.

Accountability. The various systems lack both financial and management accountability due to problems of over-centralisation and the limited legitimacy of the political authorities. Corruption needs to be limited and clear procedures established for ensuring that decisions and consultations are transparent.

Sharing of responsibility. This clearly has not been a major feature of the old system and establishing partnerships and joint responsibility implies a different means of governing at the institutional level. It also implies the development of new skills and capacities for managing this process in both the public service and civil society, at schools, in training institutions, at the provincial level and in the national ministry.

Democratic process. The past system was characterised by the non-participative, secretive ethos that was neither accountable nor democratic. Establishing democratic processes will require challenging existing political and institutional arrangements. (Coombe and Godden, 1996: 7-34)

These insights are helpful basis from which to begin to consider the context within which school leaders' function in the education sector. Arguably, the most important contextual elements for a consideration of the question of educational management revolve around the school itself. Motala (1995: 169, 177) "cited in Smith *et al* (2001:8)" states the importance of the school context in South Africa in the following terms:

While poor survival (staying in school) can be attributed to a number of discrete in-school and out-of-school factors, the overwhelming impression from the research was that education exists within a socio-economic, political, cultural reality, and these forces continually impact on the school, particularly on the education of younger children

What was starkly portrayed in the survey was the extreme deprivation of the context in which schooling is occurring - from high unemployment and poor housing to violence and poverty 'Surviving' the system is a major challenge for all township children, and basic education in all its aspects deserves urgent policy attention.

This context highlights certain realities and challenges facing most principals serving communities in lower socio-economic areas.

In Donahue's (1997:213) overview of schools in South Africa, she noted that:

there is much discussion in South Africa about the need to restore a 'culture of teaching and learning' in schools, as there is abundant evidence that in many schools such a culture has broken down. There is no one single cause for this collapse, but a consequence of an interrelated series of problems, which is the legacy of the past.

Principals therefore require different roles for different times and circumstances, which will vary with the school context, including the type of school, staff and learners, but especially the state of the school in terms of effectiveness and improvement. The following suggestions are examples of the types of roles required of principals in these different types of schools:

- * In *moving schools*, the principal is mainly concerned with facilitating the leadership of others and concentrates on maintaining a proper direction for the school;
- * In *cruising schools*, the principal needs to sound a 'wake-up call' and demonstrate that things are not as well as they seem; he or she will have to be a risk taker to recapture a culture of continuous improvement;
- * In *strolling schools*, the principal must demonstrate vision that will enable the school to move forward from this *neutral* position; or he or she must be able to accelerate both the pace and focus of change;
- * In *struggling schools*, the principal typically needs to build on the will to change while recognising the problems that are keeping the school down; he or she must know how to build on strengths and begin an incremental process of improvement; and
- * In *sinking schools*, the principal faces the greatest challenge of all and must be able to enlist the requisite support to effect change and be prepared to tackle major obstacles, usually on several fronts at once, including the ability to stimulate the will to change – *against all odds*.

(Stoll and Fink, 1996: 115-117)

In order to lead these schools successfully it is clear that principals should be aware of their unique school contexts and what is necessary to lead them effectively. Good school leadership in extensively changing times in South Africa is encapsulated in the following words of Fullan (1993: viii):

Change forces are a deliberate double entendre. Change is ubiquitous and relentless, forcing itself on us at every turn. At the same time, the sector of growth and development is learning how to contend with the forces of change - turning positive forces to our advantage, while blunting negative ones. The future of the world is a learning future.

Principals need to be skilled to deal with the extensive changes for growth and development to achieve a learning future. The correlation between the quality of leadership and school effectiveness is established by research in many parts of the world by Dalin (1998) and Mortimore *et al* (2000) "cited in Bush & Jackson (2001:417)". Squelch & Lemmer (1994: viii) concur that effective leaders manage effective schools. They argue that good leadership does not happen by chance. Principals in leadership positions require leadership skills. They need to continually reflect, improve and develop leadership skills essential for good leadership and management.

2.4 Transformational leadership

The researcher maintains that transformational leadership by principals is appropriate for leading democratic governance and participatory management, underpinning the global mega-trend of decentralisation of education in South African schools.

Addressing transformational leadership in his renowned work on the topic, Burns (1978:1) argues that the underlying nature of the crisis of leadership is intellectual, and most understanding of leadership not only over-emphasises the role of power but holds a faulty view of power as well. Burns maintains that the essence of leadership is found in relationships. "...the most powerful influences consist of deeply human relationships in which two or more persons engage with one another." These relationships are set in a context of human motives and physical constraints. Allix (2000: 9) concurs that transformational leadership's main concern is for a relationship between leaders and followers that has an enduring moral purpose and which is grounded in the fundamental wants, needs, aspirations and values of followers. This is in line with school leadership in South Africa being in the interest of the community it serves.

Burns (1978:3) asserts, "... leadership is nothing if not linked to collective purpose". This, according to Burns (1978:20), is a process in which "... leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" This process not only entails a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship but an elevation of both, a change for the better. In particular, Burns emphasises the educative nature of the relationship between leaders and followers, which he believes is also consistent with contemporary democratic norms.

This is reflected in the new South African education policies requiring school leaders to work in democratic and participatory ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery.

South African school leaders can also gain insight from Leithwood, one of the world's leading researchers on school leadership. In authoritative and scholarly work on leadership for changing times, Leithwood and his co-authors present evidence of the enduring power of this concept for schools in times of change. Padsakoff *et al* (1990) cited in Leithwood *et al* (1996: 786), offered arguably the most comprehensive set of transformational leadership dimensions based on a combination of seven prior perspectives on transformational leadership that are significant to the South African school context. The seven dimensions are: identifying and articulating a vision; fostering the acceptance of group goals; providing an appropriate model; high performance expectations; providing individual support; providing intellectual stimulation; contingent reward; and management-by-exception. Leithwood (1999:39) cited in Leithwood *et al* (1996: 786), proposed different categories of transformational leadership in schools from those seven dimensions, which are:

- *setting directions (includes vision building, goal consensus and the development of high-performance expectations);*
- *developing people (includes the provision of individualised support, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of values and practices important to the mission of the school);*
- *organizing (culture building in which colleagues are motivated by moral imperatives and structuring, fostering shared decision-making processes and problem-solving capacities);and*
- *building relationships with the school community.*

The addition of the school community aspect moves this work beyond the previous notions of transformational leadership. Building relationships with the school community forms a vital component of effective contemporary school leadership in South Africa.

2.5 Leadership and management

Examining the major concepts of leadership and management and becoming familiar with the current research on leadership in schools can provide useful insights for contemporary leadership and management in South African schools. The difference between leadership and management will be examined to develop an understanding of the complex nature of the principal's role. Because of the impact of reform on the management of schools, it is necessary to define leadership and management more clearly as two essential and complementary functions of the principals.

According to Day *et al* (2000: 17), it has been argued by some that "... good management controls complexity; effective leadership produces useful change ..." and state that others have summarised the key orientations of the former, which is control, and the latter which is about "liberation". Nathan (2000: 13) is convinced that the difference between leadership and management can be better summarised as follows:

The major difference between managing and leading is the leaders' capacity to lift people up, to articulate purpose, to give reality to higher values, to resolve conflicting aims as a means to the fulfilment of the followers.

The following is a synopsis of the differences between leading and managing:

<u>LEADING</u>	<u>MANAGING</u>
<p>Is concerned with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * innovation * development * challenging status quo * originating * horizons * inspiring trust * asking what and why * being his/her own person * vision * strategic issues * transformation * ends * people * doing the right things 	<p>is concerned with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * administration * maintenance * accepting status quo * initiating * bottom line * relying on control * asking how and when * being classic good worker * implementation * operational issues * transaction * means * systems * doing things right

Adapted from Bennis (1989) and West-Burnham (1995)

One can find many definitions of what managers do; however, it is much harder to find convincing explanations of the differences between management and leadership. This table is therefore useful to distinguish between the two. Leadership and management are not necessarily the same but Squelch & Lemmer (1994:10) argue they are not mutually exclusive.

Dunford *et al* (2000: 2) argue that both leadership and management are necessary for a school to be effective. They maintain that leadership is the ability to move the school forward, whilst management is concerned with the procedures necessary to keep the school running. They further maintain that leadership is concerned with the long term and the strategic, while management is concerned with the immediate and the short term. Vision is articulated and set by the leader, whilst the manager is required to design and implement procedures which enable the vision to be achieved.

South African principals find themselves in the precarious position where they have to be competent to lead and manage their schools differently in a new democracy. Insecurity and pressure arising from such turbulent policy environments create problems, dilemmas and challenges for principals. Change in traditional practices, roles and relationships within schools and between schools and their environments are prompted by policies aimed at restructuring school systems not only in South Africa but globally (Day *et al*, 2000: 8; Davies and Ellison, 1999: 2; Dunford *et al*, 2000:1-3).

This is particularly so for established principals, many of who were selected for, and gained experience in administrative positions in school contexts markedly different from those being forged by restructuring (Hallinger & Murphy, 1991 cited in Dimmock, 1996:135).

Therefore, principals are now required to move beyond administrative management and lead their schools. This change is not easy as many principals are faced with many challenges like disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals, educators and poor school results, violence in and out of schools and poor attendance by educators and learners.

Van der Linde (2002: 519) maintains that two facets of the management of change as a reaction to the current problems in South African schools are the following:

- * *The learning organisation philosophy which enables the creation of learning cultures and an environment for lifelong learning through a culture of collaboration and commitment; and*
- * *Professional staff development as institutional development.*

Principals can transform dilemmas into resolvable courses of action, to convert seemingly irresolute situations into challenges and opportunities.

2.6 Professional development and support for principals

In order to transform these dilemmas, preparation, professional development and support becomes crucial for principals to effectively execute their extensive and comprehensive contemporary roles.

South Africa, however, lacks a national strategy for dealing with management and development requirements. McLennan (1996:44) maintains, very little organised thinking has been done in developing a South African understanding of education management or a systematic comprehension of education management development strategies. McLennan further argues that in the absence of a coherent policy for management development, the provision is inadequate in terms of content and coverage.

In response the Department of Education is proposing a multi-faceted strategy for education management development in South Africa, but recognises that its strategy will be coherent only if it is designed and implemented within the context of a renewable and agreed policy framework for improving management in the education service (DoE 2000:4). The perspective of the Department of Education is that the primary focus for any new approach to management development must be the school and its community.

In recognition of a need to build management capacity appropriate to education transformation, the Minister of Education appointed a Task Team on Education Management Development, early in 1996, to make proposals for a national strategy for education management development in South Africa. The Task Team reported to the Minister of Education, in November 1996, through a report entitled *Changing Management to Manage Change in Education* (DoE, 1996b), was based on extensive consultation with government departments at all levels, non-governmental organisations and private sector authorities, university faculties of education and education policy units, colleges of education, professional associations and union representatives. It also drew advice in research papers during international colloquia, from international experts from developing and developed countries. The report of the Task Team has formed the basis for subsequent policy development and programmatic initiatives in the area of education management development.

McLennan (1996:45) argues, if the key challenge for education management relates to the inappropriate nature of many of the existing management systems, processes and structures, a further challenge is to devise creative strategies for translating the new vision for education management development into effective action.

It is the view of the Department of Education that such strategies are likely to have the greatest impact if they are devised and implemented within a coherent framework for systematic capacity building. A holistic framework for education management development was adopted based upon recommendations by the Minister's Task Team on education management (DoE, 1996b: 6). Capacity building, or developing the ability of individuals and organisations to perform effectively and consistently, is fundamental to the framework. The framework comprises five key components (DoE, 2000:9):

- 1. Strategic direction: building the capacity to set the course for schools, institutions, and various levels of the education service, within the context of agreed values and principles which will guide them;*
- 2. Organisational – structures and systems: building the capacity to develop and deliver quality education services through effective structures and procedures;*
- 3. Human resources: developing people at all levels of the education service, whether they are managerial, technical, professional or support staff;*
- 4. Infrastructural and other resources: developing the basic infrastructure for decision-making, and providing appropriate technical, financial and material back-up; and*
- 5. Networking, partnerships and communication: linking institutions, people, resources and interest groups inside and outside South Africa in a variety of practical, focused ways, and improving levels of communication.*

Taken together, the Department of Education is convinced these components constitute a holistic framework for changing developing education management practices in South Africa, and ultimately for improving the quality of teaching and learning in South African schools (DoE, 2000:10). It is a dynamic framework, which may evolve and be adapted for use in a variety of ways, according to changing needs.

Due to inadequate national strategies to deal with management and its development, principals rely on education districts for management support and development.

2.7 Education Districts

A district is understood internationally as a subsystem made up of a number of schools in a particular region, the centre of which is a district office (DoE, 1999:10). The South African Department of Education is confident that:

Education districts have been targeted as leverage to systemic education change because they are geographically and organisationally closer to schools and can therefore have potential to serve as important nodes of systemic change, delivery and support on an ongoing basis

(DoE, 1999:23)

According to the Department of Education (1999:11) its districts appear to be an undefined mixture of bureaucracy, markets and community, and differentiate between them as follows:

For the *bureaucracy*, the major roles of the district are administrative and controlling – passing down policies and notices from head office, distributing resources, conducting inspections and audits.

The district also provides services to support schools in policy implementation. Here the district is in hierarchical relationship with schools, with schools accountable to districts, and districts accountable to the central office.

In the *market forces* approach, the district has a quite limited role. Schools make their own decisions about what they want and purchase support services and resources from private suppliers. Independent authorities too conduct accountability and school review processes. The district office in this case plays a coordinating role. It may also provide services (for example, management support, professional development, services for learners with special needs and the collection and processing of information).

As 'self-managed schools' become better skilled, the roles of the districts diminish. The district office is not really in hierarchical relationship with schools.

In the *community* approach, the schools in a district and the district office itself are in organic relationship. They share expertise and resources, plan together so that schools complement each other in their provision and emphases, work together in professional development and organisational development. The district office and the schools are integral parts of educational management in the district.

The district's responsibilities for co-ordination, information flow, support and accountability extend to leadership and management, district planning and allocation of resources.

This study will deliberate on one such district within the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) in the Western Cape Province of South Africa.

2.8 Education Management Development Centre

A profile of a Western Cape district office an Education Management Development Centre (EMDC) will be described with the intention of developing and understanding the context in which it operates and its potential to serve as a node of systemic change and delivery for school leaders. The Department of Education was of the opinion that, in order to bring about the necessary changes to effect a better and qualitatively enhanced service delivery, the Department should propose to the broader constituency within the education sector that the WCED:

- * *adopt the School-Based Management Model; and*
- * *that it re-organises itself in order to support this model.*

(WCED, 1998:2)

The School-Based Model proposes that the WCED shift from a large unwieldy bureaucracy with the focus on control, to a more fluid and flexible, innovative organisation, which will ensure that each and every school is developed into a learning institution capable of largely independent and responsible action in pursuit of the nation's educational goals. Apart from the functions attributed to schools by SASA, schools will also have more control over their own budgetary, personnel, administration, provisioning, and curriculum matters.

Essentially this means that every school which has the capacity to take over all of the functions associated with managing itself should be allowed to exercise those powers and functions. Schools which do not have this capacity will be supported by the WCED in order to develop the capacity to do so (WCED, 1998:4).

In January 2000, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) adopted the Systemic Transformation for Education Development and Support (STEDS) programme. The STEDS programme was designed to aid the WCED in the process of transforming itself into a system more proficient to support schools within the context of its new reform policies. The objectives of STEDSs were:

- * *School transformation through organisational development strategies;*
- * *Quality improvement of area offices to enable circuit and area managers to function effectively in their relationships to each other and to schools;*
- * *Capacity building of all circuit and area managers and subject advisors;*
- * *Organisational Development processes to enable the department to effectively translate and implement new policies; and*
- * *Training educators as education Organisational Development consultants in order to increase capacity for supporting school development in South Africa.*

(Teacher Inservice Project, 2002:3)

The purpose of the EMDCs “according to Robinson *et al* (2002:1)” is:

To offer a new organisational model for supporting school development. Co-ordinated by EMDC Directors, EMDC's contain or coordinate multi-disciplinary teams, consisting of departmental personnel such as area managers, circuit managers, subject advisors, learning support personnel, school clinic personnel, and administrators, together with other appropriate governmental and community service providers and non-governmental organisations.

The new EMDC structures replace the former area offices, and are intended to facilitate communication and coherence amongst school support services.

It was envisaged that through their restructured organisations, EMDCs will render more systematic, coordinated and holistic support services to schools, thereby breaking through what has often been a fragmented approach to supporting school development. In this regard, it is hoped that the EMDCs will contribute to schools by developing the capacity to manage their own development needs.

In 2000, a research team co-ordinated by Prof. Maureen Robinson, at the request of the WCED, had conducted an investigation. The aim of this research was to explore and investigate the establishment, implementation and impact of the EMDCs in the Western Cape, and to provide data as a basis for ongoing reflection and evaluation. The researchers concluded:

The overriding impression from this study is that, at the time of the establishment of the EMDCs, providers and schools had a very similar experience of support provision. There were some differences in perceptions and experience, but there were also many similarities.

What was most encouraging was the fact that although coordination and collaboration were still fairly weak, a healthy base seemed to exist for this to improve. Providers mentioned that there had been an improvement in their relationship with schools over the last few years, and schools indicated that they were currently engaged in a wealth of activities aimed at the development of the learner and the school. It would seem, therefore, that EMDCs are in a strong position to make the kinds of interventions they were set up to do.

(Robinson et al, 2002:121)

Against this background, the National Centre for Curriculum Research and Development (NCCRD, 1999a cited in Robinson *et al*, 2002: 27) highlighted the following priorities for professional development initiatives at district levels in South Africa:

- * *the importance of needs assessments which identify the in-service training needs of administrative circuit officers;*
- * *establishing the required in-service opportunities for the agreed training;*
- * *change management skills and strategies;*
- * *training for Curriculum 2005;*
- * *management capacity development;*
- * *empowering of principals;*
- * *financial management training for district officials;*
- * *training in project management for district managers and circuit managers;*
- * *training for school management teams; and*
- * *teacher development and education.*

In response to their findings, these researchers also made the following recommendations, which will have to be prioritised within the individual action plans of the EMDCs:

- * *Ensuring financial and human resources are used optimally and to greatest effect. This includes paying attention to training and capacity building of all role players;*
- * *Ensuring transparent and efficient communication, particularly between providers and schools;*
- * *Managing the coordination of services at all levels of the system;*
- * *Addressing the psychosocial needs of learners; and*
- * *Providing support for teachers, particularly in relation to motivation and dealing with challenges of change.*

Key to the process of prioritisation will be a discussion around whether the EMDCs should look to providing support in depth or breadth, as these imply different strategies. Both require attention to maintenance as well as development, as the EMDCs work towards performing their day-to-day functions effectively, and to building the longer-term vision of school-based management.

(Robinson *et al*, 2002:121)

This research suggests the process of the EMDCs supporting transformation in the WCED require new structures, with new focuses, new conceptions of management and new competencies (DoE, 1999:27).

Support and empowering school management is the function of the Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) component of the EMDC. The IMG focuses on management and governance co-ordination, support and empowerment, with a view to support the development of effective, self-sustaining learning sites that provide quality education within the framework of national and provincial education goals (WCED, 2000:30).

The IMG component consists of six circuit managers who were previously known as school inspectors. South Africa is moving toward a democratic education system, calling for more participatory and collaborative leadership and less control. Pressure and tension has therefore been exerted on circuit managers in order to redefine their inspection roles and contribute effectively to the education system. The circuit managers in the IMG are responsible for managing smaller circuits within the EMDC region. The number of schools is indicated in Table 2. The circuit managers in the IMG component work closely with principals to deal with challenges they face at school.

The South African Development Community (SADC) (1998:16) maintains that the success or failure of circuit managers, among other things, depends on their qualities and the relationship they develop with all people in their operations. A good professional alliance between the circuit managers of the IMG and the principals is therefore imperative for effective leading and managing school-based communities.

There is a considerable body of literature (Sayer, 1993:86 and Buachalla, 1986: 386) which points to the fact that the task of the circuit managers is, or should be, to monitor, evaluate and report on the provision of quality education. Among the multifaceted duties of the circuit manager is the responsibility for appraisal, professional development, and support to school principals (SADC, 1998: 12)

Recommendations by Carron (1994: 84) at the South African Conference on School Management, Teacher Development and Support also supported the importance of the democratic practice and gave proposals for the future practice. As far as educational leadership based on democratic principles is concerned, a few studies have been undertaken by scholars such as Shen and Hsieh (1998: 107) and Van der Westhuizen and Harrison (1989: 196). All these studies urge that democratic participatory leadership is more about the creation and development of healthy relationships. Therefore, this principle seems to be the most suitable on which the circuit management in the new order should be built.

The role and duties of circuit managers should be clearly understood if they are to yield the best results. Therefore, principals served by the circuit managers must be aware of the role and responsibilities of the circuit managers in the IMG so that its impact can be easily felt. Circuit managers should also be aware of the principal's roles and responsibilities to inform the preparation of professional development strategies.

Kabajani (2000: 50) maintains that, owing to inadequate professional preparation and a serious lack of field support, many countries still use conventional methods of school inspection. This study will therefore seek to determine whether this is still the case in this EMDC region.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The methodological paradigm, research design, research methodology and associated techniques and tools used in this study will be presented in this chapter. These explain how the researcher attempted to find answers to the following research questions.

3.2 The main research question

What is the relationship between leadership challenges facing school principals and the professional development they receive from their EMDC in the Western Cape?

The sub research questions

1. What does the literature say about the role and leadership development of the school principal?
2. What is the contemporary role of school principals in the Western Cape?
3. How are principals dealing with current reforms?
4. Are there common challenges facing principals in the Western Cape?
5. What are principals' perceptions of leadership training needs?
6. How are principals empowered by the EMDC?
7. What is the relationship between the training received and challenges facing school leadership?

8. What recommendations can be made to improve leadership in the Western Cape?

Having specified the research questions, this chapter presents the way in which the researcher sought to answer them. In order to answer these research questions, the researcher has to find the best way to collect information and what to do once the information is collected (Bell 1993: 63). This chapter also presents the way in which the researcher gained knowledge of educational leadership and development, the relationships that are held to exist between theory and research, and the place of values and ethics in research practice. May (2001:1) maintain, "... while these issues are complicated, they are fundamental to an understanding of research methods." These links between theory and practice, and techniques in answering the research questions will give the researcher clarity in undertaking this research.

3.3 The qualitative paradigm

The key purpose of this study is to develop new knowledge about an educational phenomenon, the contemporary roles and professional development of school principals, located within the framework of a predominantly qualitative research paradigm. Myers (2001: 2) maintains that the qualitative research paradigm is appropriate for the study of social and cultural phenomena. It is vital that the researcher is clear about the meaning of the term 'methodological paradigms' as it is used interchangeably with 'methodological approaches'.

Methodological paradigms are more than a collection of research methods and techniques. Babbie & Mouton (2001:49) explain why:

Scientists use a wide variety of methods and techniques in empirical research. Methods used vary according to tasks they perform: from methods and techniques of sampling, to data-collection methods, to methods of data-analysis. However, the selection of methods, and their application, is always dependent on the aims and objectives of the study, the nature of the phenomenon being investigated and the underlying theory and expectations of the investigator. So the application of methods and techniques in research involves a variety of assumptions. They also include certain assumptions and values regarding their use under specific circumstances.

The researcher therefore, uses the term 'methodological paradigm' to include both the actual methods and techniques that social researchers use, as well as the underlying principles and assumptions regarding their use.

The qualitative paradigm will be used in this study to refer to that generic research approach in social research according to which this study takes its departure point as the 'insider perspective'. The 'insider perspective' of this study is thus the school principals' and the circuit managers' perspectives of their management and leadership roles and professional relationships. According to Tuckman (1994:381) and Babbie & Mouton (2001: 53), qualitative researchers always attempt to study human action from the 'insider's perspective'. The researcher will receive information first-hand from real life situations experienced by the school principals and circuit managers.

3.4 Qualitative research design

The research design of this study concentrates on the overall qualitative design of the study's inquiry. As research design and methodology are closely associated, Babbie & Mouton (2001: 74) state that researchers often confuse 'research design' and 'research methodology', but these are two very different dimensions of research. They claim that research design, is a "... plan or blue print ..." of how the researcher intends to conduct the research and they maintain that:

Although the special details vary according to what you wish to study, there are two major aspects of research design. Firstly, you must specify as clearly as possible what you want to find out. Secondly, you must determine the best way to do it.

Therefore, this qualitative case study is designed to acquire accurate descriptions of the contemporary roles of the school principals. In addition, the realities of the common challenges they face and whether the professional development they receive from their EMDC region address these challenges. Secondly, the researcher is convinced that the best way to achieve this is through analysing relevant documents and personal interviews with school principals and circuit managers in the same specific region. Principals will be interviewed to accurately determine the everyday realities of their contemporary roles, the challenges they face, and the professional development they receive. Circuit managers will also be interviewed to explore their everyday experiences in their professional relationships with principals and professional development they offer principals in their EMDC. Their perspectives will be compared, and related to the literature, to understand the relationship between the leadership development and leadership problems principals' face.

3.5 Research methodology

Methodology refers to the total set of means that the researcher employs in answering the research questions of this study. According to Mouton (1996:35) methodology is the "... knowledge of how' or 'know-how' to do things, and according to Tuckman (1994:385):

Research questions studied quantitatively typically focus on culture, experience, symbols, understandings, systems, underlying order, meaning, and ideological perspective. Problems of study include plans, intentions, roles, behaviours, and relationships of participants. Qualitative methodology involves a set of research questions, a natural setting, and people behaving in their setting.

3.5.1 Qualitative case study

The researcher will therefore utilise a qualitative case study of high school principals in a Western Cape EMDC region. This predominantly qualitative method will be used to investigate the extent of the relationship between the EMDC's leadership development for principals and the realities of principals' professional development needs in their region. Yin (1994:3) indicates:

A case study allows an investigator to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events such as organisation and managerial processes.

This makes the case study useful for this study because it could generate holistic and meaningful characteristics of school leadership and professional development as managerial processes in the school and EMDCs as organisations.

The case study “like other research strategies” is a way of exploring an empirical topic by following a set of precise procedures. The researcher used the case study to deliberately cover contextual conditions of an EMDC region believing that they are highly pertinent to the principals’ professional development and leadership.

3.5.2 Documentary analysis

Initially the researcher obtained available official education policy documents and other relevant documents describing school leadership and studied them carefully in preparation for this qualitative case study. Most educational research projects require the analysis of documentary evidence according to Bell (1993:106) and Coleman & Biggs (2000:106). This is the best and most objective way to orientate the researcher to the situation to be studied (Tuckman, 1994:378). The researcher studied the following documents:

- Section 195 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa* (1996);
- Education White Paper (1995/1996);
- The South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996);
- Employment of Educators Act No. 76 (1998);
- Changing Management to Manage Change in Education. Report of Task Team on Education Management Development (1996);
- First Draft of New National Education Management Development (2000);
- Districts and the Management of Educational Change. A review of the international literature. District Development. (Part 1 & 2) (1999);
- The Origins and Early Development of the Education Management and Development Centres in the Western Cape (2002); and
- EMDC - Education Management and Leadership Development (EMLD) (2003-2004).

In reading the documents, the researcher paid particular attention to (1) school management and governance, (2) the principals and changes in their respective roles since 1994, (3) the various school settings of the principals, (4) the various challenges principals face, (5) professional development offered by the EMDCs and (6) the recommendations for effective and efficient school leadership.

The information gathered from these documents will prepare the researcher for direct information gathering as part of this case study. The most significant use of the documents is to reinforce and amplify evidence from other sources.

3.5.3 Pilot interviews

The researcher initially conducted pilot interviews with principals and circuit managers in another EMDC region in the Western Cape to become acquainted with the interview process. The researcher did what McHugh (1994:58) refers to as *proximate* preparation by conducting pilot interviews to rehearse the interviews, and *remote* preparation that included background information and interview questions. The researcher used the pilot interviews to determine whether the interviews adequately elicited useful responses to answer the research questions. Interviews were therefore designed to meet the objectives of this study. Before conducting interviews, the researcher took cognisance of May's (2001:128) three suggestions of necessary conditions for the successful completion of interviews, namely:

1. *Accessibility* – the interviewee has access to information the interviewer seeks;
2. *Cognition* - an understanding by interviewees of their role in the interview; and
3. *Motivation* - interviewees must feel their contribution is valued.

3.5.4 Procedures

Once the necessary permission had been obtained from the Western Cape Education Department, principals and circuit managers were approached to voluntarily participate in the research. The interviews were scheduled at the participants' convenience to avoid disruptions of their daily duties. Furthermore, the researcher, as Fitz & Halpin cited in Walford (1994:37) deem it useful, provided interviewees with a copy of the schedule (see Appendix A), in order to indicate the areas to be explored in the course of the interview. Interviewees were assured that adequate opportunity existed for them to comment on issues pertinent to the study.

3.5.5 Semi-structured interviews

Interviews were aimed at delving into the principals' and circuit managers' perceptions of their own professional roles and professional development. The semi-structured interviews were aimed at eliciting information about:

- 1) The way principals proceeded to occupy their positions – for example as senior teachers who became deputy principals and when the previous incumbent left, they merely took over as principal;
- 2) The preparation and professional training experience of principals in order to assess the extent to which principals in the study area are prepared for their positions;
- 3) The perceptions of principals and circuit managers about professional development in relation to the current education reforms affecting school leadership and management; and

- 4) Specific recommendations from principals and circuit managers for leading school effectively and efficiently.

The semi-structured interview technique can elicit a large amount of rich data and yield rich insights, and be particularly pertinent in obtaining knowledge of job facets (Jirasinghe & Lyons, 1996:15; May, 2001:120). The quickest way to learn about any of these perspectives was to question interviewees about their day-to-day tasks (Travers 1999:3). As with all other interviewing methods, the interviewer was not only aware of the content of the interview, but also the nature of the interview.

The interviewer had an interview guide (see Appendix B). The interview guide served as a framework for the main body of a semi-structured interview, and is based on the key questions that the study is addressing.

The interview guide was logical and proceeded in an orderly sequence. The interviewer started with questions that put the interviewee at ease to alleviate tension. Then the interviewer progressed to the main research questions. Questions in the semi-structured interviews are specified, but the interviewer was free to probe beyond the answers.

The interviewer could seek clarification and elaboration on the answers given. May (2001: 129) define probing as "... encouraging the respondent to give an answer, or to clarify or amplify an answer"

Interviewees could respond to questions in terms of what they saw as significant, there was scope for them to decide what to say about the topic and how much (Arskey & Knight, 1999: 7). The open-ended questions allowed interviewees to raise issues pertinent to school leadership not raised by the interviewer.

All interviews were audio-recorded, with the permission of participants. The various advantages according to Arskey & Knight (1999:105) are:

The interviewer can concentrate on what is said. There is a permanent record that captures the whole of the conversation verbatim, as well as tone of voice, emphases, pauses and the like (but note that when agreeing to the study taking place, ethics committees sometimes make it a condition that the tapes be destroyed afterwards). Using a tape recorder demonstrates to informants that their responses are being treated seriously.

Verbatim transcriptions of the twelve one-hour interviews were done. Arskey & Knight (1999: 105) warns that, "... transcribing the tapes can be a lengthy process, a one-hour tape can take up to ten hours to transcribe fully."

3.6 Sampling

Purposive sampling was used, as the researcher's intention was to get as many different viewpoints as possible that is typical and representative of the EMDC region. The researcher wanted to include principals of schools that reflected different geographic conditions, cultures, socio-economic backgrounds, which are characteristic or distinctive of the EMDC region. This sampling strategy is deemed suitable by Mouly (1970: 190), and according to Coleman and Biggs (2002:101) purposive sampling allows the researcher to apply his/her experience and judgement to select cases, which are representative or typical.

There is no hard and fast rule for how many people you need to interview, since it will partly depend on the time available to collect, transcribe and analyse data (Travers, 2001:3). Therefore, the researcher deemed twelve interviewees as adequately representative for reliable data appropriate to the requirements of a case study for a mini-thesis.

Six high school principals from an EMDC district in the Western Cape were selected for this case study. To eliminate factors relating to the demands of different types of schools, the researcher decided only to include public high schools.

Principals were selected from each of the categories created by the former apartheid education departments i.e. Cape Department of Education (White), Department of Education and Training (African) and House of Representatives (Coloured). The researcher did not include the House of Delegates because there is only one high school in the EMDC region from the former department and it was not accessible at the time. One of the criteria used to select the school principals was accessibility for lengthy interviews.

Male and female principals were selected. As the position of principal is male-dominated, this study will ascertain whether gender is an issue in school leadership. Although female teachers are in the majority in this region, the majority of the principals are male. As Ozga (1993:4) argued, although women form the majority of the workforce in education, they are under-represented in its management have largely ignored gender issues. Gupton & Slick (1996: xiii) assert that the education management field continues to be male-orientated and male-dominated.

The Institutional Management and Governance (IMG) component of the EMDC was chosen for this investigation as their focus is on management and governance co-ordination, support and enablement. The six circuit managers provide services and have direct links with principals of schools in their circuits.

3.7 Triangulation

Methodological triangulation will be done using documentary analysis and interviews (Kane & O'Reilly-de Brun, 2001:110). Walford (1994:10) is adamant about the importance of triangulation of data sources and in particular, argues that documentary evidence must not just be acknowledged as reality. Triangulation is described by Berg (2001: 4) as follows:

Each method reveals slightly different facets of the same symbolic reality. Every method is a different line of sight directed towards the same point, observing social and symbolic reality. By combining several lines of sight, researchers obtain a better, substantive picture of reality; a richer, more complete array of symbols and theoretical concepts; and a means of verifying many of these elements. The use of multiple lines of sight is frequently called triangulation.

Therefore, the multiple lines of sight in this study will come from three sources: 1) the documentary/literature analysis, 2) the principals' perceptions, and 3) their circuit managers' perceptions. These three sighting lines will intersect, forming a small triangle called the *triangle of error* (Berg, 2001:5). The triangle of error permits a more accurate estimate of the contemporary roles of the principals, the common challenges they face and the professional development they receive and need.

All the principals and circuit managers will be interviewed on the same questions respectively, referred to as *respondent* triangulation, suggested by Kane & O'Reilly-de Brun (2001:110). The views of circuit managers who work in close association with principals will provide another perspective on the key research questions. The significance that academics give to triangulation of evidence is one of the elements that distinguish the best academic research from journalism (Walford, 1994:7).

This study seeks to identify commonalities of the data in the EMDC region. The responses of all or most of the respondents are utilised to confirm commonalities regarding the role of the principals, the challenges they face and their professional development. Therefore, triangulation in this study is done with particular emphasis on the functions of confirmation and completeness (Arksey & Knight, 1999: 21).

3.8 Data Analysis

The data collected in this study will be analysed by the researcher in a process of data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing.

Due to the large amount of data collected from the documents, literature and interviews it will be condensed. The transcriptions and field notes will be reduced by selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994:10). The data reduction will involve writing summaries, coding, testing out themes and making partitions. The researcher will decide, "... which data chunks to code and which to pull out, which patterns best summarise the number of chunks, which evolving story to tell ..." (Miles & Huberman, 1994:11).

The researcher will present the data by initially indicating the question asked and below each question record all or most of the responses and note the patterns. By doing this the researcher is identifying what Miles and Huberman (1994:69) refer to as "... repeatable regularities ..." which, in relation to this study requires looking for commonalities with regard to the contemporary roles, school leadership challenges and professional development of principals in the specific EMDC region. The researcher will initially group the most common responses and develop categories to classify all or most of the responses of the principals' contemporary roles. The researcher will use subheadings to guide both data and theoretical reflection.

The researcher will then determine and specify the common challenges experienced by the principals. Next, the researcher will make connections between the challenges revealed, the support and development principals receive and circuit managers offer, to determine the relationship.

Having identified the patterns and commonalities, the researcher will compare similar ones with a view to drawing conclusions. The researcher will sort, eliminate and organise the data so that conclusions can be drawn and verified.

Finally, the researcher will establish common recommendations made by principals, circuit managers and in the literature that can be utilised for effective school leadership development, for transformation in the education system. Although generalisations cannot be drawn from a single case study, it is the researcher's intention that the range of recommendations could be useful for principals and circuit managers in other EMDC regions in similar contexts.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the interview data gathered. The interview guides for principals and circuit managers are included in Appendix A and B. The data from these interviews are analysed taking into account the main purpose of the study and answering the research questions. The intention of this study is to determine the relationship between the challenges of the contemporary roles of principals in schools under the jurisdiction of an Education Management and Development Centre (EMDC), Western Cape region, and the support and professional development for effective school leadership provided by the EMDC.

4.2 Data gathering

Pilot interviews were initially conducted with a principal and two circuit managers from a different EMDC within the Western Cape. The researcher used this opportunity to assess the interview guide to determine whether it elicited the appropriate responses to answer the research questions. This opportunity was also used to gauge the interview process and technicalities involved.

The researcher was encouraged by the collaboration of the principal and circuit managers and their openness with regard to their professional roles.

Information gathered during the case study will be presented in a narrative account and in certain cases, tables are used to summarise information. Nomenclatures used for interviewees are explained in Chapter 3.

The researcher subsequently interviewed six principals for this study, chosen according to the following criteria:

- * willingness to participate in the study;
- * easy accessibility to the researcher;
- * location within the same EMDC region as the circuit managers;
- * representative of the former education departments explained in Chapter Three; and
- * a balanced gender representation.

The duration of each interview was approximately one hour. The same interview guide was used for each principal. Principals were all very comfortable about being interviewed. Since the interviews were semi-structured, each principal could feel free to illuminate, clarify or question anything pertaining to the topic of the study.

The following table gives a synopsis of the schools of principals interviewed.

Table 1- Synopsis of principals' schools

Principal	Ex-education department	Learners	Teachers
P1	HOR	1077	32
P2	CED	440	13
P3	HOR	860	29
P4	DET	1813	55
P5	DET	1350	45
P6	CED	730	22+ 12 GBP

GBP- Governing body posts

The schools of the principals P1, P4 & P5 schools serve families located in low socio-economic township areas. Although P3's school is located in a more affluent area, the learners come from working and lower middle-class socio-economic areas. P2 and P6's schools serve families from more affluent upper middle-class areas.

In addition, the six circuit managers from the IMG component of the same EMDC region as the principals were interviewed. All the principals are located within the circuits of these circuit managers. Circuit managers are not aware of which principals were interviewed.

The following table gives an outline of the number of school circuit managers and their years of experience in managing schools.

Table 2- Circuit managers' experience in managing schools.

Circuit manager	No. of Public Schools in circuit	Years of managerial experience
C1	30	6
C2	30	25
C3	27	1
C4	28	7
C5	28	7
C6	36	8

All circuit managers indicated that before being appointed to the post they were experienced school principals, except C5 who was an experienced deputy principal. Thus, they have a great wealth of school management experience.

4.3 The interviews

This section draws on the experiences of the interviewees in their respective contemporary professional capacities. The information drawn from the literature and observation are used to point to areas of contradiction or support the interview findings. The discussion is divided into responses according to the contemporary role of the principals since 1994, the leadership challenges of principals and support and development of principals.

The researcher's impression was that despite slight differences, there was general agreement on issues of the role, development and support of the school principal between the principals and the circuit managers.

The following captures the responses of all or most of the interviewees to the research questions, most referring to more than four when referring to principals or circuit managers, and more than eight when referring to both principals and circuit managers. Selected quotes are used where interviewees expressed an issue that encapsulates all or most of the responses of the interviewees.

4.3.1 Preparation for contemporary principalship

Principals were required to respond to the question about how they proceeded to becoming a principal during their teaching career and what formal training they had for the position of principal.

All the principals revealed that they relied on their personal and professional development as senior teachers as the main preparation for the position of principal. They also indicated that this is insufficient for effective execution of their contemporary roles. There is still an assumption that good teachers can become successful managers and leaders without specific preparation. Therefore, in many countries specific training is not a pre-requisite of appointment as a principal (Bush & Jackson, 2001:418). All the interviewees confirmed this.

Five of the six principals indicated that they were formally trained to teach, apart from P6 who completed a degree in commerce. All principals said that they 'came through the ranks'.

This meant that they initially became senior teachers, then Head of Department (HOD), then became deputy principals and were eventually permanently appointed as principals.

Principals found the following management training useful:

- P4 completed a Head of Department certificated course offered by the DET and indicated that there was no training for DET principals when he became principal.
- P2 completed a compulsory course at Stellenbosch University for the Cape Education Department, which lasted for about five days. According to P2, this course was "... to inform principals how to do administration, and what not to do, which is now irrelevant because schools are changing so rapidly." P2 also had in-house training from her principal when appointed as deputy.
- P6 received some formal training as deputy principal, through the CED, for four days with department officials in Wellington. P6 found his B. Comm. degree and corporate experience vital for his financial and managerial responsibilities as principal. In addition, P6 found being exposed to, and working with, three different principals with different leadership styles crucial for his preparation and confidence for his principalship.
- The other principals indicated that their post graduate B. Ed. degree modules on administration, leadership and management were useful when they took over as principal.

All principals indicated that although they had some form of formal training it was inadequate for their new roles since 1994. It is evident that principals in the former CED received more preparation for the position of principal than principals in the other former HOR and DET departments.

4.3.2 Professional experience of principals

Principals were asked to indicate how many years they were in the permanent position as principal and how significant they thought their roles were.

In the initial chapters, it was noted that the principal had a very significant role to play in effective schooling and this was confirmed by all the principals. The formidable body of research confirms the importance of principals in the achievement of school effectiveness, school improvement and restructuring (Dunford *et al*, 2000:1); (Hallinger and Heck, 1996; Smylie and Hart 1999) cited in Youngs and King (2002: 643); (Fullan, 1991; Mortimore, Sammons, Stoll, Lewis and Ecob, 1988) cited in Dimmock (1996:135).

Table 3 indicates the principals' years of experience in the positions of principal.

Table 3 – Principals' experience in years

Principal	Years of experience as principal
P1	15
P2	12
P3	5
P4	13
P5	5
P6	5

The results in table 3 show the six principals have 55 years of professional experience between them in the permanent position of principal, which is a significant amount for this study. Although P3, P5 and P6 only have five years' experience each, they indicated that they were previously in deputy principal positions and had acted in a principal position by 1994. They are also able to reflect on the changes in the role of principal since 1994.

4.3.3 Changes in the principal's role

When asked how their roles as principal changed since 1994, the principals and circuit managers responded in the following way:

All interviewees indicated that the role of the principal has changed significantly. The literature indicates the 21st century has heralded new global mega-trends for leaders in schools (Caldwell and Spinks, 1993, 8; Dunford *et al*, 2000: 7; Watson, 1994: 1).

All principals and circuit managers indicated the principals' roles are now determined by the new political democratisation and decentralised educational system. This is in line with the South African School's Act (SASA) (1996) which legislates promotion of access, quality and democratic governance in the schooling system for all learners. This is also consistent with changes in traditional practices, roles and relationships within schools and between schools and their environments and are prompted by policies aimed at restructuring school systems globally, (Day *et al*, 2000: 8; Davies and Ellison, 1999: 2; Dunford *et al*, 2000:1-3).

There was also concurrence by all interviewees that the role of principal is more extensive and diverse. All circuit managers indicated empathy for the principal's new comprehensive role. C4 stated:

I see the principal as an 'all rounder'. The principal has many different roles to play that are managed by different people at head office. Each directorate lands their own expectations on the principal's desk and the principals are expected to deliver in all these areas. It is a daunting task to be a principal.

C5 is adamant that:

... this role is a 'daunting' one. I think there is unfairness about demands placed on principals, by the department, community and state, who expect principals to perform all these roles.

The circuit managers' responses concur with Murphy & Louis (1994: 4-5) view that sees the following forces as having considerable influence on conceptions of who principals are, what they do and what they should do:

(a) demands for accountability coming from a variety of sectors; (b) crises in the economy and the expectation that schools play a role in improving this situation; (c) the changing nature of the social fabric in a nation, communities and schools; and (d) the evolution towards a post industrial world.

The principals' responses confirmed the responses of the circuit managers with regard to their changed roles. This indicated the circuit managers understanding and insight into the role of the principals. C6 stated that the principal has a staff of teachers and the circuit managers' have a staff of principals therefore they need to know and understand their staff.

4.3.4 The contemporary role of the principal

When asked for a description of the contemporary roles of principals since 1994, all the interviewees indicated that an accurate description of the contemporary roles of principals was undoubtedly difficult as the roles are very complex.

Circuit managers' and principals' perceptions of the different components of the principal's role were acknowledged as varied in leading, managing and supporting a school community. All interviewees agreed that it was difficult to distinguish between the various components as they are often interlinked. This is consistent with the Education Department's difficulty in providing precise working definitions of the concepts of governance and management in schools. According to the Education Department, the roles of governance and management overlap and are diverse depending on the circumstances of each school (DoE, 1996a: 17).

Experienced principals P1 and P4 stated that, even though they have many years' experience, they find their contemporary roles very challenging. Insecurity and pressure arising from turbulent policy environments create problems, dilemmas and challenges for those involved. This is particularly so for established principals, many of whom were selected for, and gained experience in, administrative positions in school contexts which were markedly different from those being forged by restructuring (Hallinger and Murphy, 1991 cited in Dimmock, 1996:135).

All principals indicated an increase in their responsibilities. P2 asserts, "... responsibilities have grown tremendously" and P4 "my role has broadened." C1 confirms, "... the principal has an extensive role which is broader than previously."

C5 warns:

The role of the principal is overwhelming. As a society, we are going to pay the price for being inconsiderate about unrealistic demands placed on principals.

What has been the customary role of the principal appears to be changing relative to the substantial changes and worldwide reforms taking place in schools (Christensen, 1992:6; Bradley, 1992:19; Earley *et al*, 1990:10; Chapman, 1990:227 cited in Murphy and Louis, 1994:25).

The principals “according to C2”

need a wide variety of skills and attributes for their contemporary roles, it's unreal what we expect of principals today. They have enormous leading, managing and support responsibilities.

Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 10) concur that principals should have the ability to plan, organise, supervise, motivate and support people, if schools are to be managed effectively.

All interviewees indicated the principals' roles were previously predominantly that of management, but their contemporary roles included leadership, two vital interlinking aspects of their roles. Leadership and management are not necessarily the same, but Squelch and Lemmer (1994:10) argue they are not mutually exclusive. Dunford *et al* (2000:2) argue that both leadership and management are necessary for a school to be effective. This is consistent with all the interviewees' responses.

4.3.4.1 Leadership component

All principals stated their acceptance of the principle of democratic leadership. P1 maintains that there is a strong shift from the autocratic, dictatorial and authoritarian paradigm of headmasters in the apartheid education system to a more democratic, egalitarian and participatory role. This is in accordance with governance policy for public schools, which is based on core values of democracy (DoE, 1996a:16). Most principals indicated that their schools expected them to be strong leaders and take the initiative. P1 maintains, "... I need to be a strong leader and a role model for the school community." C6 agrees "...due to social disintegration it is vital but also challenging for the principals to be role models." C1 warns,

... if principals are in denial and fake this democratic leadership and cannot make the paradigm shift to be collaborative, transparent, to build culture and trust within their school, they will suffer.

All principals acknowledged that they needed to be aware of all aspects of the school and have a vision for their schools and it had to be shared with the school community. According to Leithwood *et al* (1996: 39), setting directions that include, vision building, goal consensus and the development of high-performance expectations were vital for transformational leadership in schools. P4 indicated that "... principals no longer drive everything from the top down. They have to have to draw from people to drive a common vision" P6 agrees,

I see my role as a 'chief facilitator' in our organisation. The principal should be left to do the leadership and not be hindered by administrative tasks. It is not by chance that the school goes in a particular direction. This all starts with a common vision.

P3 concurs, "...the principal must see the broader picture for her school".

All principals indicated that they were predominantly responsible for decision-making but now had to include all stakeholders when making decisions that involved them. This is what is required in the Education White Paper, where the Ministry of Education announced that the decision-making authority of schools in the public sector would be shared among parents, teachers, the learners and the community (DoE, 1996a:16). P3 maintains it is the principal's role "... to get all role players on board". Burns (1978:3) asserts, "... leadership is nothing if not linked to collective purpose...." P5 argues that:

... this should be done through the principal being transparent and consultative. The principal needs leadership qualities to lead and handle the many inputs and challenges coming from the teachers and the community

Most principals also find that they have to see that all stakeholders are empowered to function effectively within the school community. According to Burns (1978:20) transformational leadership is a process which '... leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation'. This process not only entails a change in the purposes and resources of those involved in the leader-follower relationship but an elevation of both, a change for the better. In particular, Burns emphasised the educative nature of the relationship between leaders and followers, which he believed was also consistent with contemporary democratic norms.

P4 agrees that the principal works according to:

... a mandate of the people, and consults with all the stakeholders. The principal no longer enforces but leads implementation and empowers all stakeholders.

All principals find it is their duty to initiate and establish significant relationships and a culture within their school's communities.

Burn's (1978: 1) maintains that the essence of leadership is found in relationships. "...the most powerful influences consist of deeply human relationships in which two or more persons engage with one another". These relationships are set in a context of human motives and physical constraints. Allix (2000: 9) concurs that transformational leadership's main concern is for a relationship between leaders and followers that has an enduring moral purpose, and which is grounded in the fundamental wants, needs, aspirations and values of followers.

P1 is convinced that

In order to involve all stakeholders significantly principals have to build relationships in order to inspire and encourage others to lead – tap into their potential and talents and create opportunities for them.

According to Leithwood (1997: 39) organising and culture building are essential elements principals should lead in transformational leadership in which colleagues are motivated by moral imperatives and structuring, fostering shared decision-making processes and problem-solving capacities.

C6 believes, "... the principal has to be transformative...." P2 is in agreement and refers to her role as:

I see myself as a 'change agent', as I always have to be aware of directives and anticipate change. I constantly find myself having to 'wait-think-act'...

The various components of the leadership role highlighted in responses of the principals and circuit managers seem to be in line with different categories of transformational leadership in schools proposed by Leithwood *et al* (1996: 786) which are: setting directions, developing people, and building relationships and culture with the school community.

4.3.4.2 Management component

When reflecting on the management component of the principals' role, the principals and circuit managers indicated that the management component was also varied.

All interviewees indicated that the principal's management function is the day-to-day running of the schools. This is confirmed by Dunford *et al* (2000: 2) that management is concerned with the procedures necessary to keep the school running.

All principals indicated that they are constantly managing change. They also indicated that previously, they had been at the receiving end of top-down management structures. They maintain that since 1994, strong emphasis is placed on managing issues related to redress governance and reconstruction at school management level.

Van der Linde (2002: 519) maintains that facets of the management of change are reactions to the current problems and policy in South Africa schools.

Managing change is a vital component for all the principals and they maintain it involves a paradigm shift that is not easy for anyone in management.

According to C6, "... the principal no longer works on his/her own, he/she is a team manager" P2 concurs, "...the manager's role is delegating responsibilities." C1 maintains that the principal is responsible for:

... putting transformation into practice, dealing with multiculturalism and multilingualism; also to find balance and effectively handle policies; adjusting to effectively implement policies. Managing schools on a daily basis can be a 'nightmare', it is a major challenge. To keep up with all the policies and circulars is challenging. Principals need the mental capacity to make paradigm shifts to manage change and transformation.

All principals and circuit managers indicated that school-based management has dramatically increased the administration and business management role of the principal, as schools have to be run on business principles with larger budgets to manage. The Education Department confirms that democratic institutional management makes considerable demands on school principals (DoE, 1996a). Shaeffer (1999:223) maintains that management of schools is becoming a more important variable in the ongoing attempt to increase access to, and improve the quality of basic education. According to C6 the principal is:

Firstly, an administrator, as it is the bulk of the job. Principals need to have an understanding of the Education White Papers and the South African Schools Act and what legislation says.

C2 agrees that the principal "... should have an understanding of all laws and policies..." and concedes "...it's unreal what we expect from the principal today". P3 agrees that she has the daunting task of "...having to be up to date with all policies relevant to our school". P5 maintains, "...the principal plays a vital role in communication between the department and the school..." - therefore being up to date is crucial.

According to P2,

... schools are beginning to function as separate entities. The department no longer runs the school. Many responsibilities are devolved to school level, and the principal's responsibilities have grown tremendously. Now it is like running a business.

The fact that P2 is also a superintendent of a hostel increases her responsibilities even more. P6 found his degree and experience in the commercial sector a great benefit to effectively execute his business management role. P3 claims, "...as bookkeeping has increased it adds to the principal's responsibilities..." C6 maintains,

The principal now has the role of a business manager as more responsibilities for larger budgets have been devolved to school level. Even though principals have financial committees, the principal has to take ultimately responsibility.

Most principals and circuit managers also indicated one of the school's responsibilities was staff development; therefore the principal has to be the human resource manager. It is stipulated by the Education Department (1996a:25) that the re-organisation of the school system, and the establishment of democratic school governing bodies throughout the country, require comprehensive capacity-building for management and governance especially at school level. C2 affirms,

... the principal is a resource manager. The principal must work effectively with the staff to develop, motivate, understand, discipline, facilitate and manage conflict. They have to know everything about their staff and be patient.

P6 concurs:

... the principal is responsible for human resource management and has to budget for training and empowering others to keep them up to date and attend to individual needs...

Not only is the professional development of staff the principal's responsibility, but also the training of the school governing body. P5 confirms this, "...the training and development of the school governing bodies are also the ultimate responsibility of the principal". C6 is adamant that the principal is ultimately responsible for development of everyone officially affiliated at the school level.

All circuit managers and principals indicated that there have been advances in the development of educational management and leadership to improve the quality of teaching and learning. They maintain that skills related to educational values, curriculum development, teaching styles, assessment and evaluation are vital.

This is in agreement with Latchem and Hanna (2001:53) who stated, "... Professionals working in education and training face a head-spinning rate of change in customer demands, methodologies and technology." According to P6,

The principal must drive a curriculum that is relevant – teaching and learning is fundamental. The school should not be bound by 'results only'. You need to look at the whole child. When achieving a 100% pass rate, one has to question the sacrifice to the community. For instance how many learners were registered as separate private candidates so that their results do not influence the rest of the school? Outcomes Based Education (OBE) should be focused on developing critical thinking learners equipped for life. This should be part of the principal's vision.

C3 argues that the principal does not only manage, but also leads the curriculum at school. C6 feels that with all the uncertainties surrounding OBE this task is daunting.

According to principals in former HOR and former DET schools, there is an increasing need at their schools for increasing maintenance and security management. This is in line with the view of Motala (1995:169, 177) “cited in Smith *et al* (2001:8)”, who highlights the school context in poor areas in South Africa referred to on page 17.

Amongst the many extra responsibilities devolved to school level, P4 feels maintenance is an enormous task to manage,

I have to be the maintenance manager and always be aware of everything that has to be maintained at school. Because of all the vandalism, managing maintenance at my school is an immense task.

Linked to the maintenance management is the management of security and control at schools. P1, P3, P4 & P5 are adamant that having to provide security for every one at school is an overwhelming task for a principal. When they close their school for school holidays, they become apprehensive about the destruction awaiting them on their return.

They concur that the environment surrounding their schools is deteriorating and they have to continually keep abreast and manage the security and risk factors at their schools.

4.3.4.3 The support component

Most interviewees highlighted the support component of the role of the principal.

The Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998: c64-65) describes the principal's job as:

...providing professional leadership, guidance, supervision and offering professional advice on work related matters; responsible for development of staff training; participating in appraisal processes; serving on the governing body and participating in the community, when referring to personnel and other stakeholders.

P5 maintains, "...most principals have an 'open door' policy, to be accessible to the school community needing support." C6 maintains that the school community includes non-teaching and teaching staff, as well as the learners and their parents, who view the principal as someone in a position to help and support them when they have problems.

P1 claims:

... as principal I not only lead and manage; I also play a substantial supportive role, especially now with all the drastic changes and uncertainties within education and my school community...

C3 refers to this supportive role as, "...a pastoral role principals perform." Providing individual support is one of the vital dimensions of a principal's role, according to Leithwood *et al* (1996: 789).

These responses from principals and circuit managers with regard to the contemporary roles of principals are consistent with the following transformational leadership categories for leading educational reforms in South African schools:

- *setting direction (includes vision building, goal consensus and the development of high-performance expectations);*
- *developing people (includes the provision of individualised support, intellectual stimulation and the modelling of values and practices important to the mission of the school);*
- *organising (culture building in which colleagues are motivated by moral imperatives and structuring, fostering shared decision-making processes and problem-solving capacities); and*
- *building relationships with the school community.*

(Leithwood *et al*, 1996: 785)

4.3.5 Common challenges facing principals

Principals were asked to indicate the challenges they faced as the leaders of their schools. The circuit managers were asked to identify leadership challenges of the principals in their circuit to see whether there was concurrence with regard to common challenges within the same region.

All the interviewees deem the principal's role to be generally demanding and challenging. According to them, this role has however, become even more challenging after the 1994 reforms with the dramatic changes and uncertainties in education. C6 adds that the social degeneration is another reason for the principal's role being more challenging. C1 goes as far as to say "managing schools on a daily basis can be a 'nightmare'."

4.3.5.1 Bombardment of policies and circulars

What all principals found most challenging was being overwhelmed by the bombardment of policies and directives to which they have to respond in their professional capacity. According to P1,

It is difficult to plan ahead and stick to those plans when you are continually being bombarded with policies and directives. In addition, many due dates are unrealistic and impractical sometimes.

P3 feels

The principal's load is too much, for example, there are many duties you cannot delegate = and also continuously familiarising yourself with numerous policies and changes.

P5 refers to these changes as "...drastic..." making it more difficult and complex to respond to.

All principals find having to keep up to date and getting a good perspective on new reforms is time-consuming. On the other hand, principals also have to tend to the designated and unforeseen tasks, which are customary features in the daily running of a school.

P1 confirms this,

I need lots of energy because I am under pressure all the time, I've seen many principals who just can't cope with time constraints.

P2 agrees wholeheartedly

...many things are happening at once, and I find myself busy, busy, busy trying to keep abreast with all departments and with policy issues I don't agree with. I also have a substantial teaching timetable.

All circuit managers confirm these challenges are prevalent. According to C2, "... firstly trying to make sense of all the changes that have to happen is very difficult ..." and C1 empathises; "... to keep up with all the policies and circulars is very tough for principals." Although C3 finds:

Many principals do not have a broad picture of new reforms and how they fit into one another. Principals need a good perspective of reforms before they can implement them.

4.3.5.2 Difficulty implementing new policies and directives

After making sense of the policies and circulars, all the principals and circuit managers indicated the next challenge for the principals was implementation.

According to Coombe and Godden (1996: 7-34) and McLennan (1997:39) various education systems have been managed neither effectively, in the sense of ensuring delivery of services, nor efficiently, in the sense of saving resources. In the new system, there will be a need to find a balance between effectiveness in terms of the basic objectives to be achieved, and efficiency, in terms of the most rational use of resources. They maintain principals managing the system will have to develop a new set of standards for managing and allocating resources and educational services.

As P1 put it

... even as an experienced principal the responsibility for implementing changes in education today is a major challenge. It is also challenging for me to prioritise implementation appropriate to the needs of my school.

P5 sees this challenge as difficult, as “... changing the culture at school.”

The circuit managers concur. C1 refers to principals having difficulty

... putting transformation into practice. “Putting your money where your mouth is”. This includes finding a balance and effectively handling policies. In addition, the principals making adjustments to effectively implement policies.

C5 agrees, “... principals find dealing with transformation very hard...”

According to C4

Principal’s and SGB find it difficult to manage diversity and multiculturalism when appointing new teachers who are representative of the school population who could assist with managing transformation.

Although principals did not specifically raise the challenges of managing diversity, multiculturalism and multilingualism, the circuit managers raised it as a great challenge for principals generally.

Another challenge highlighted by circuit managers and not by principals was, according to C3, “... to present a school development plan, which is a new concept - they didn’t really know what to do; also school self evaluation was very challenging for principals”

4.3.5.3 Difficulty getting all stakeholders significantly involved

In order to implement most of these policies and directives, all principals and circuit managers agree that it involves significant inclusion of many stakeholders, which is challenging.

The SASA requires representative governing bodies to be established in all public schools. The sphere of governing bodies is governance, in which the democratic participation of the schools' stakeholders is essential (DoE, 1996c:16).

Principals also indicated they have the tremendous challenge of consistency in management when working with school governing bodies.

P6 feels,

... it is challenging to get a school governing body who is supportive and not confrontational. It is difficult for the principal to manage harmony between the SGB and the staff, especially if there is tension between the two. An SGB can cause havoc and be obstructive to the common vision of the school if they have their own agenda. In addition, it is like 'pick-a-box', with the uncertainty of what the next SGB would be like.

The SGB also poses many challenges for the principal. P1 maintains, "... as principal I have the responsibility to prepare, lead and support the SGB." P2 & P5 agree that they find themselves being responsible to get SGBs trained and re-trained. Many principals agree that they still have the responsibility of calling meetings and setting agendas. Circuit managers agree that to have an effective SGB is challenging for the principal who has to take most of the responsibilities.

All principals found that their responsibilities and accountability for others had grown extensively beyond the staff to the entire school community which was very challenging.

Building teams is another great challenge for all principals. According to P4, “drawing in the teachers and the community has been very challenging”. P6 maintains,

It is a great challenge for the principal to get the school community to firstly support and then follow a common vision. My biggest challenge is to get my staff together. Not everyone supports the common vision, some have their own missions and when they are powerful enough they can be destructive.

Circuit managers agree, according to C1 & C2, that it is difficult for principals to convince the staff to do things differently and make paradigm shifts. According to C6

Because of the low morale, confusion, frustration and rapid changes it becomes difficult for principals to encourage and inspire teachers. Many good experienced lead-teachers have taken the package or resigned. This leaves principals with many new and inexperienced teaching staff, to empower to work efficiently with new reforms.

In addition, most principals find motivating many experienced teachers entrenched in their way of doing things, difficult to lead and manage. The number of people the principal is responsible for and the human resource management has increased tremendously. According to P6,

The principal has a responsibility for individual appointments and the development of the appointees. We also have to budget for funds for training and development.

Therefore, most principals have indicated that they must be aware of all labour policies involving appointments and in-service training because as P3 put it "... teachers are more labour orientated". C4 is adamant, "... the vast labour issues affecting staff and parents are very challenging for principals." P2 argues that,

Although the principal has more responsibilities, principals find themselves in the position where they have to know so much and are still restricted in how much they are able to do.

The Employment of Educators Act 76 (1998: c65) requires that principals guide, supervise and offer professional advice on the work and performance of all staff in the school.

4.3.5.4 Issues of declining discipline

Most principals indicated that they face the enormous task of being responsible for the discipline of the school community that includes teaching staff, non-teaching staff, learners and parents. Most principals concur that there has been a decline in discipline at their schools.

In Donahue's (1997: 213) overview of schools in South Africa, she noted that:

... there is much discussion in South Africa about the need to restore a 'culture of teaching and learning' in schools, as there is abundant evidence that in many schools such a culture has broken down. There is no one single cause for this collapse, but a consequence of an interrelated series of problems, which is the legacy of the past.

According to P5, "Teachers and learners tend to be more confrontational. Many misunderstand democracy to mean doing what they want." P6 feels there is a contradiction in the Education Department's general policy that requires democratic and participatory management.

P6 argues that if principals go the route of the Education Labour Relations Act and proceed with progressive discipline, as the Department wants the principal to apply it, the principal could destroy relationships. P6 believes,

The principal should be part of the process but the human resource division of the education department should drive the process so that the principal can concentrate on building and developing teams.

C4 reported that learner discipline in high school is worse than in primary schools. All circuit managers agree that ill-discipline within the school community is on the increase and challenging to principals, as reflected in numerous problems reported to the Education Department.

Managing conflict is an arduous challenge for most principals. C6 reports that principals constantly have to deal with explosive situations of conflict between members of the school communities. The principal is ultimately responsible for dealing with the conflict.

4.3.5.5 Socio-economic challenges

The interviews clearly highlighted the enormous challenges principals of schools in lower socio-economic areas face, challenges that their colleagues in more affluent areas do not have to contend with. This is in line with what Van der Linde (2002: 519) states, that facets of the management of change as a reaction to the current problems in South African schools like disputed and disrupted authority relations between principals, educators and poor school results, violence in and out of schools and poor attendance by educators and learners.

Principals, P1, P3, P4 and P5, serving learners from lower socio-economic areas find the adverse environments in which their schools are situated immensely challenging. These principals are experiencing that the problems of their surrounding environments are spilling over into their schools. P1 and P5 affirm that vandalism, gangsterism, criminal elements from the surrounding community constantly interrupt their schools. P4 feels disappointed by the community,

Our school was situated near the city centre. We moved to be situated physically within the community we serve. Now we find the surrounding community is not interested in getting significantly involved as we anticipated; they cause more problems and provide more challenges.

P3 also expressed her disappointment,

I am experiencing a cultural change at school. There has been a migration of our 'better learners' to ex-model C and private schools. Due to all our socio-economic problems, many of our learners are really underachieving and are being blatantly rude.

C5 is convinced that:

... principals' from the ex-DET and those working in the township ex-HOR schools have more challenges than others who attract the 'cream of the crop' learners. The 'have not's keep on not having'. Nevertheless, many of these principals are doing their utmost under trying circumstances. The majority of these principals are continually 'swimming against the tide'.

All circuit managers indicated an awareness and understanding of the plight of principals serving communities in lower socio-economic areas.

4.3.5.6 Discrimination against women in leadership

The following table indicates the male and females interviewed. The researcher purposefully included a gender representative sample to determine whether gender was still a challenge in education management.

Table 3 – Gender representation in the sample.

Principals	M/F	Circuit managers	M/F
P1	M	C1	M
P2	F	C2	F
P3	F	C3	M
P4	M	C4	F
P5	F	C5	M
P6	M	C6	M

According to most interviewees while the majority of teachers in this EMDC region are women, only approximately 30% of the principals and circuit managers in the EMDC region are females. Female principals and circuit managers still find themselves in the minority in their respective professional categories. The delineation of roles is still evident. Four of the five females indicated that discrimination against women in educational leadership and management is still rife in the education sector. These females still experience stereotyping and negative attitudes towards them in their respective positions.

The Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) in their report argues that:

It would be foolhardy to assume that there is consensus about whether women's subordination exists, and if it does what its distinctive characteristics are. Further, there is a degree of wearisome intolerance about discourse on gender equity.

(WCED, 1997:27)

C2 had a culture shock when she came to Cape Town,

I was accepted as a professional colleague in my own right in a different province, but in the Western Cape, I experienced disapproving attitudes towards a woman and me being black.

C3 had a similar culture shock and experienced blatant challenges and disapproval of her being a black woman from a disadvantaged area. She maintains,

... even three years later people were still undermining me. I constantly had to anticipate their attacks, but the challenge gave me strength and I now feel more confident.

P4 argues, "Males are usually perceived as being strong but 'actions speak for a women'." P3 is adamant, "... our decisions are not always accepted as easily as males, but it is improving." P3 also felt that the culture in her school community discriminated against females in leadership positions. A parent once refused to see her and demanded to see the 'real' principal.

Female principals maintained that it takes tough females to survive in educational leadership and management.

All the principals indicated that even though more decisions have been devolved to school level, they do not feel empowered to deal with all the responsibilities.

The changes and challenges that these principals are facing are consistent with the global trends highlighted by Davies (1999:11).

Leaders and managers in schools are faced with the challenge of operating in a rapidly changing world. In this world, the globalisation of economic systems, technological advance and the increased expectations that society has of its education system have replaced past certainties with new and uncertain frameworks. Dynamic change has become the order of the day.

It is evident that principals are consistently faced with many challenges. Over and above the common dilemmas, certain principals' experience a whole lot more daunting challenges. They therefore need support and development to deal with these difficulties.

4.4 Support and development of principals by their EMDC

Principals and circuit managers were asked to describe the support and leadership development principals received from EMDC for their contemporary roles. In addition, they were asked whether it adequately addressed their leadership challenges they face.

According to all principals, the EMDC has come up with some good initiatives for developing professional relations between principals. According to P1, a principal's forum was created to discuss matters worrying principals at school level. According to P2, although this did not happen before 1994, they now have more support in the circuits. Most principals feel they know the other principals in their circuits personally and are beginning to share and support each other.

The IMG component of the EMDC's focuses on management and governance co-ordination, support and empowerment, with a view to support in the development of effective, self-sustaining learning sites that provide quality education within the framework of national and provincial education goals (WCED, 2000:30).

All principals indicated that they have a good professional relationship with their circuit managers and this was confirmed by the circuit managers. Quality improvement to area offices enables circuit and area managers to function effectively in their relationships to each other and to schools (Teachers Inservice Project, 2002:3). All principals maintain that relationships are beginning to be established with circuit managers and between principals and they are beginning to work as a team.

All principals found the seminars and workshops arranged by the EMDC helpful, but not enough to assist with all the leadership challenges they face. All the circuit managers agree, and indicated it is the intention of the EMDC to meet their principals' development needs and to support their contemporary professional roles. The Education Management and Leadership Development (EMLD) planned by the EMDC for their principals for August 2003 to March 2004 are as follows:

- * *Organisational Development;*
- * *Introduction to Strategic Planning;*
- * *Human Resource Management;*
- * *Managing Policies; and*
- * *Progressive Discipline/ Law Amendments.*

All these are two day workshops presented by service providers outside the WCED. Most of them are presented from 14.00 to 18.00, except Organisational Development, which is presented from 08.00 to 16.00.

Issues addressed in workshops are: effective school management; service conditions; leadership; supervision; team building; time management; evaluation processes; and implementing certain policies e.g. OBE, time management, team building. According to C1, only one workshop so far was poorly presented, and circuit managers felt the need to follow up on the workshop. Even though outsourced facilitators ran them, principals found them quite relevant. P5 felt "... it was needs driven and addressed relevant issues." P1 found, "Workshops and seminars that dealt with new developments in education were most useful." P6 argues, "... except for the Covey workshop, no real leadership management training pertinent to our leadership of schools has been offered." Four other principals tend to agree with this.

All the circuit managers agree that meeting the principals' needs is of priority but also challenging for them as the system is constantly redefining their roles. The system is more geared towards monitoring than development and the control component is in place. Circuit managers indicated that they still spend most of their time having to monitor and control what schools are doing. This is contrary to the EMDC's aim to offer a new organisational model for supporting school development (Robinson *et al*, 2002:2). C5 admits,

We may have been naïve and idealistic in believing we would be developmental officers as two years down the line it has not materialised at the EMDC. We have not done as much as we would like. The circuit manager is best placed professionally as a link between the school and the education department.

The circuit managers are convinced that development and support for principals is a process and they have initiated the process. C4 maintains that,

... we are training principals from surveys we have sent to principals to access their needs – but not actually involved principals in drawing up the surveys and looking into their needs – what they really need. The EMDC has their perceptions of what we think they need for training.

C4 concedes,

It is a challenge for the EMDC to see that all their principals are adequately empowered for their contemporary tasks. There is training in progress but ‘time on task’ is a major hindrance.

Circuit managers are confident that although it is difficult they are making progress to empower their principals for the challenges they face in their contemporary roles.

4.4 Leading educational reform in schools

Principals were asked how they were dealing with current reforms that require managers to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery. Circuit managers were asked to verify how the principals were dealing with these reforms.

It is evident from all the principals' responses and all the circuit managers' perceptions that many principals are becoming more empowered and confident when dealing with new reforms. Most principals find that they are not as reliant on the EMDC as previously and feel more confident to take the initiatives at school.

Circuit managers agree as they found enquiries and requests from principals about educational reform have subsided since 2000. According to C2,

In the middle of 2002 I become conscious that my telephone did not ring as often as it usually did. I started getting many telephone calls from my principals to inform me of their initiatives rather than ask for my initiatives. I then realised that principals are developing and beginning to address their own challenges.

Most circuit managers also experience principals collaboratively addressing issues with them and within the circuits. The principals who are best able to deal with current reforms are those who are 'open' to change and committed to lifelong learning.

However, all circuit managers have indicated that many other principals in their circuits are not able to deal with the current reforms in education due to either inexperience and or lack of fundamental skills. C1 is convinced,

Everyone is using transformational jargon and agreeing in principle. However, it is evident by the complaints lodged at the EMDC that reveal many principals still have to change, some more than others to deal with issues of discipline (learner & teacher) and culture.

Nevertheless, all circuit managers are optimistic and confident that they are in a position to assist and support these principals. This is to ensure transformation in schools towards a democratic and participatory education for all stakeholders.

4.6 Conclusion

Davies (1999:11) insists that leaders and managers in schools are faced with the challenge of operating in a rapidly changing world. He maintains that in this world, the globalisation of economic systems, technological advance and the increased expectations that society has of its education system have replaced past certainties with new and uncertain frameworks. The researcher has succeeded in determining that the role of the principals in the study has indeed changed. Dynamic change has indeed become the order of the day according to all the interviewees.

It is evident that since 1994 the nature of the role of the principals has changed, and is extensive and comprehensive. The principals highlighted three major components in their roles.

- The leadership component involves interaction among people to initiate new objectives and measures that contribute to the ability of the school community to meet current and future demands. These social processes emphasize participation as the means through which principals obtain the consent of school community to be led and managed;
- The management component is concerned with carrying out policy and handling the day-to-day, routine functions and activities of the school to keep it running smoothly. Management deals with the short-term issues of how, what and when things are done and by whom; and
- The support component deals with the pastoral duties of the principals. These duties include helping groups and individuals who have professional and personal problems within the school community.

The researcher was also able to determine the common challenges faced by the principals; bombardment of policies and directives, difficulty in implementing new policies and directives, difficulty in getting all stakeholders significantly involved and issues of declining discipline. In addition, it was determined that many principals are facing immense socio-economic problems directly affecting their schools. Principals serving lower socio-economic school communities experience significantly more challenges than their colleagues serving higher socio-economic school communities. They have to lead school communities in increasingly dangerous and volatile environments. Managing maintenance and security at these schools are overwhelming challenges. There are also indications of gender disparities in educational leadership and management. Female managers indicated that discrimination against women in leadership and management is still prevalent.

All principals recognised the EMDC has come up with some good initiatives for developing professional relations between principals. It was established that, although all principals found the seminars and workshops arranged by the EMDC helpful, it was not enough to assist with all the leadership challenges they face. All the circuit managers concurred, and indicated that there is the notion of shifting away from control of schools, towards the idea of transforming EMDCs into Professional Development Centres that focus on support for schools which is the purpose of the EMDCs as indicated by Robinson *et al* (2002:1).

Although there is an indication that many principals are getting to grips with dealing with current reforms in education, many are still struggling to deal with new education policy, which requires managers to be able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

Education reforms necessitate school leaders who are competent to work in democratic and participatory ways to build significant relationships, as well as to ensure effective and efficient education that addresses redress and reconstruction. The overarching conclusion of this study is that this contemporary role places exacting demands on principals. They have the responsibility to drive and sustain the process, yet the researcher found no formal training for this critical position. Leadership and management development therefore becomes imperative for building capacity amongst school leaders. Recognition of the need for specific preparation for aspiring and practising principals in order to generate the positive effects identified in the school effectiveness research has been slow to emerge.

Chapter 4 documented strong views that are in favour of the notion that the contemporary role of the principal is more extensive in the context of current reforms. Principals are under pressure all the time, as their responsibilities have grown immensely. Change is being experienced as being too rapid, too vast and in too many areas simultaneous. At this rate, burn out seems inevitable. Being a 'change agent' in the transformation process was found to be the most challenging aspect of the contemporary role of the principals in the study.

What is particularly evident is the sheer volume of work that principals are involved in on different levels. A pattern that emerged in the analysis is that on an almost daily basis due to constant interruptions and new developments, the principals' are prioritising duties. This highlights the tremendous pace at which they are working, as they shift between the teachers, learners, community, administration, and organisational support and development. Principals experience an incongruity in general education policy that advocates democratising and decentralising SBM. More powers are devolved to principals but they do not feel empowered to implement them. Principals are still experiencing predominant features of working in a bureaucratic system. They indicated that they are being bombarded with numerous policies and circulars with ridiculous response and implementation deadlines. The unrealistic demands on their time are hindering effective leadership.

The ill discipline of learners as well as teachers appears to be on the increase, which negates the effective management of schools. Principals find empowering new teachers, and motivating experienced teachers very challenging. Teacher and learner absenteeism has escalated to extreme levels in many disadvantaged schools. Many teachers seem to be more concerned with their own labour issues and less with the vision of the school. Principals in disadvantaged schools understand their teachers are under enormous pressure to implement change in classrooms that are not conducive to teaching and learning, and those in former 'black and coloured' schools are finding their best learners are migrating to former 'model c' and private schools.

Getting all role players significantly involved is an arduous task for all principals. Many still criticise rather than contribute. Four of the six principals indicated that the SGB is a burden rather than a benefit.

A frightening task for principals in disadvantaged schools is the perilous responsibility of ensuring the safety of everyone at school in volatile and dangerous environments, which is worsening. The psychosocial needs are distracting principals from the core business of ensuring quality teaching and learning. Unless these factors are attended to, the principals of disadvantaged schools will not be able to lead their schools optimally. The EMDC will definitely have to develop a position around this issue for leaders of these schools. Their colleagues in advantaged schools are optimally utilising their adequate resources (human and physical) to lead to successful results. Advantaged schools in this study are to a large extent already able to initiate, organise and manage their own support. This is an indication that many advantaged schools have already succeeded in school-based management. Unfortunately, many are still oblivious of their colleagues who are still stuck in a struggle to acquire and maintain inadequate resources (human and physical) for quality education.

Another struggle that prevails is gender representation. Although the majority of teachers in the EMDC region are female only 30% are in management positions.

Most principals are still caught up or bogged down with issues at school level and do not comprehend their vital contribution to national reform.

Chapter 4 also served as a vantage point to witness the attitudes of the principals and circuit managers towards the crucial role they play as change agents in the transformation process. The overall impression created by the research is that the principals and circuit managers are cognisant that they should empower themselves with the expertise to lead transformation in education effectively and efficiently.

Circuit managers stated that all principals agree with transformation in principle, but several complaints lodged at the EMDC indicate that many principals are not able to put democratic and participatory principles into practice. It emerged that even though circuit managers are aware of the challenges principals' face, their intervention attempts are frustrated by loads of administration and the top down approach from the head office. Circuit managers only feel able to interrogate decisions made at EMDC level but not those coming from the head office. Owing to this, the researcher concluded that the circuit managers are not involved in the authentic development approach that was envisaged for EMDCs as stated in Chapter 2.

Despite the hindrance by the head office, there is an indication that the foundation for the process of developing and supporting school leadership is being set. Communication networks between principals and circuit managers are being established. A spirit of collegiality between principals and circuit managers is starting to emerge, although it was highlighted that principals from the same race groups still gravitate towards each other. The networking initiated by the EMDC is becoming effective because messages and information for school leaders are reaching recipients promptly and efficiently. Many principals are making optimal use of the networking to share, support and learn from each other.

Principals indicated that they found many aspects of the Education Management and Leadership workshops useful. However, they were inadequate to equip or empower them for their contemporary roles and the challenges they face. The circuit managers conceded that they are only in the initial stages of rendering quality service through the Work Skills Plans that has become an important vehicle to render service for school management needs on an ongoing basis.

It is against this background that the researcher arrived at the conclusion that the pace of the transformation process for education management development is rather slow. However, with the optimism of the principals and circuit managers towards the transformation process, the pace may increase.

5.2 Generalisability and limitations of the study

Generalisations are met with scepticism in single case studies (Mhlanga, 1999:70). However, Cohen and Manion (1989: 25) acknowledge alongside other researchers, that there are valuable insights to be gained from a study of a single rather unique case in so far as case studies probe deeply and analyse intensively.

The extent to which this study can contribute to the academic debate on education management development needs to be located within this context. This research study has attempted to give detailed insight into the reforms affecting the leadership and management of schools. In addition, the contemporary role of the school principals was revealed and the relationship between the challenges principals face and the development and support of their EMDC explored.

This study was conducted during a significant the period of educational transformation in South Africa. Legislation requires public schools to undergo transformation. EMDCs were created to assist in development and support for schools in their regions. From the case study, conclusions about the role of the principals and the challenges they face could be generalised to other EMDC regions as they have similar public schools and principals from similar circuits. This study indicates many common experiences in the transformation process that other EMDC regions might also identify with.

Therefore, this study opens up broad issues for principals and circuit managers in other EMDC regions to reflect on and consider, given their respective contexts. It is hoped that other EMDC regions can benefit from this study by identifying with commonalities in management and leadership.

Due to transformations in public schools more case studies of this nature are required. This is affirmed by Mhlanga (1999: 70) who points to the richness and accuracy that a combination of case studies can give.

This study has produced a rich variety of international literature regarding educational leadership management and development. However, the researcher found very little South African literature on the subject.

There is also insufficient education leadership and management theory and practice developed from the local, South African reality. International perspectives are usually utilised.

Due to the scope of this mini-thesis, this study was limited to the principal and did not include the School Management Teams, who are vital to school leadership and management.

The Human Resource Department could have been included in interviews as they are also directly involved in education management development (EMD).

Despite these limitations, the principals and circuit managers responded adequately to all the research questions.

5.3 Recommendations

Bearing in mind the significance and complexity of the contemporary role of the principal in leading transformation in school communities the following recommendations are made: -

The different directorates at Head office and the different components of the EMDC should have a co-ordinated system of dispensing policies and circulars to schools, to avoid duplication. They should meticulously refine policies and circulars so that principals are not burdened with unnecessary irrelevant information. This must be done timeously so that principals can plan strategically. Communicating information can be done in a forum so that principals can interact with it and each other.

Principals need to be empowered to identify and be aware of individual and organisational needs and how to address them. Principals require an awareness of the potential problem of stress, to understand the dynamics of stress and take steps to manage work stress in order to maintain maximum effectiveness. Principals should also be more involved in needs analysis for professional development. Experienced principals indicated that they preferred ongoing residential refresher courses as they too can become complacent. These courses should keep principals abreast of the rapid reforms in education.

Principals should be accommodated by getting time off, and away from school. This is essential before the implementation of new complicated policies or after a major crisis at a school, as it could avert psychological and physical burn-out. Principals need opportunities to reflect, gain insight and enhance their leadership by interacting significantly with peers, other local and international colleagues.

Principals should not be included as part of the educator/learner ratio in the school establishment, as most principals are too busy leading and managing to teach. In addition, circuit managers should be allocated fewer than their approximately 20 schools so that they can provide a developmental approach, putting democratic and participatory principles into practice.

A system should also be established for clearer career paths for educators - most respondents felt that a principal could stagnate and retard the development of the school for many years. Contract positions for five years have been suggested in the study.

Even though our region is rich in training providers with considerable diversity and skills, it is imperative to have a national strategy in place to deal with leadership, management and planning training needs.

The following recommendations for the preparation, development and support of aspiring, newly appointed and experienced principals, adapted from Bush and Jackson (2001) can provide useful guidelines for the paramount task.

- * Well-structured educational leadership and management programmes should be established for aspiring principals. These leadership and management programmes should focus on: Policy, district and school context, vision, mission and transformational leadership, as well as instructional leadership that gives prominence to issues of curriculum, learning and teaching. Finally, it is important to incorporate the main task areas of administration and management, such as human resources, professional development, finance and external relations.

- * The complexity of the school leadership role arguably necessitates higher order intellectual skills, therefore leadership and management programmes should be certificated at master's level. In addition, these qualifications should be mandatory for appointment to a principal's post.
- * A compulsory internship should be incorporated in the leadership and management programmes. These leadership and management programmes should be offered at a special academy or institution available to aspiring school principals.
This internship should preferably be completed in different school contexts with different principals to gain as broad an experience as possible.
- * Effective, efficient and experienced principals are ideal models to be shadowed by trainee principals. The experienced principals could be trained to coach and mentor aspiring intern principals.
- * Provision should be made to include retired principals in the orientation programmes to acquaint newly appointed principals with their positions. These retired principals could assist inexperienced principals on a part-time basis during their first year in the post.
- * As it is a professional service to mentor, induct and nurture intern and newly appointed principals, these mentors should receive monetary compensation for the work they do.
- * It is evident that principals in different school contexts experience different challenges, so consultation at school level is crucial when planning professional development for experienced principals.

- * School principals require advanced studies and practice to acquire the ability to develop understanding as well as knowledge and skills to go beyond description to analysis and synthesis.
- * In dealing with a wide range of issues, plus managing relationships with many different groups within and outside the school, principals need to be able to call on an extensive reservoir of expertise and experience, to identify solutions to what are often intricate problems.
- * New, more systematic thinking to develop a South African understanding of education management is necessary. In addition, a systematic conceptualisation of education management development strategies is essential. Educational leaders, managers and researchers should be involved in producing South African material on education leadership and management, that is theory and practice based.

The Department of Education (1999: 14-15) maintains that changes implemented through districts in a jurisdiction take up to ten years to become effective. The following recommendations adapted from Fullen (1991) could be beneficial for the IMG and EMDC to assist the process:

- The EMDC director should be knowledgeable and actively supportive of change in the IMG component.
- A goal should be to develop incrementally the EMDCs administrative capability to lead and facilitate improvement. The IMG must have the ability and willingness to work closely with principals. In addition, they should develop the management capabilities of administrators and principals to lead change.

- Directly and indirectly (e.g. through principals) provide resources, training and the clear expectation that schools are the main centres of change.
- IMG officials will have to understand the local history of innovation experiences and overcome the barriers by their actions and improve efforts for change at school level.
- Strategies should be used both consistently and persistently to establish norms and capacity for collaboration and continuous improvement.
- Recognise that implementing any strategy for improvement is itself a fundamental implementation problem – developing new procedures for improvement means working with system members over a period of time in which they come to understand, modify and become skilled and believe in the effectiveness of the change approach being used.
- Monitor the improvement process – the information-gathering system to assess and address the problems of implementation must be institutionalised.
- Above all, the IMG must work on becoming an expert agency in the change process – vision building – working and thinking through problems with others in conceiving alternative futures. Becoming expert in the change process means increasing the number of people in the EMDC who become experts in change – the capacity for change must permeate all aspects of the EMDC.

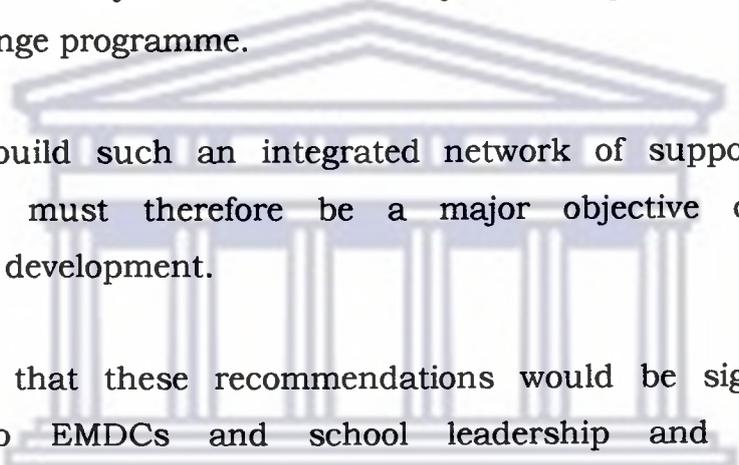
The central task of the EMDC is therefore to build the capacity of the IMG and their school principals to lead innovation for the new education reforms in schools in the Western Cape.

Therefore, it necessitates EMDCs changing district operations so that they constantly provide support required for schools to achieve their goals.

Such reforms according to Marshall-Smith *et al* (1994: 117) would be greatly facilitated by a movement away from separate projects to a coherent change programme.

Helping to build such an integrated network of support to school management must therefore be a major objective of education management development.

It is hoped that these recommendations would be significant and beneficial to EMDCs and school leadership and management development.



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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Dear Principal

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your significant cooperation in allowing me to conduct an interview with you.

The purpose of the interview is to gather information about the reality of your position as school principal. Thus, I would like to discuss the following issues with you:

- Your role as principal since 1994**
- Your experience with the new school reforms**
- Your challenges to lead and manage your school effectively**
- Your professional development provided by your EMDC**
- Your recommendations for effective and efficient school leadership**

I look forward to our interview because I am sure you have a great deal of essential information to contribute to this study.

Thanking you for your valuable cooperation

Yours in the interest of education

Sharlene Rayners

(Researcher)

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Dear Circuit Manager

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your significant cooperation in allowing me to conduct an interview with you.

The purpose of the interview is to gather information about the reality of your position as circuit manager. Thus, I would like to discuss the following issues with you:

- **Your role as circuit manager since 1994**
- **Your experience of your high school principals roles since 1994**
- **Your principals experiences with the new school reforms**
- **Your principals challenges to lead and manage their schools effectively and efficiently**
- **Your EMDC's professional development services you provided to your principals.**
- **Your recommendations for effective and efficient school leadership**

I look forward to our interview because I am sure you have a great deal of essential information to contribute to this study.

Thanking you for your valuable cooperation.

Yours in the interest of education

Sharlene Rayners (Researcher)

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE PRINCIPALS

(MALE/FEMALE)

1. How many learners are enrolled at this school?
2. How many teachers employed at this school?
3. How long have you been teaching before you became principal?
4. How did you proceed to become principal? What formal training did you receive for the position?
5. How long have you been a principal, and how significant is your role?
6. How has your role as principal changed since 1994?
How would you describe your contemporary role as principal?
7. What are the challenges you face as the leader of your school?
8. Describe the support and leadership development you have received from your EMDC for your contemporary role?
9. How are you dealing with new education policy requires managers who are able to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery.
10. Did the leadership development adequately address the school leadership challenges you face? Explain.
11. What recommendations would you make for developing effective principal leadership?

INTERVIEW GUIDE
CIRCUIT MANAGERS

(Male/Female)

1. How long have you been a circuit manager?
2. How many schools to you manage?
3. How has your management of schools changed since 1994? Explain.
4. Describe your professional relationship with principals in your circuit, and how you are able to assess their competence?
5. How would you describe the contemporary role of the principals in your circuit since 1994?
- 6 What are the leadership challenges facing principals in your circuit?
7. How does the EMDC support and develop principals to deal with their challenges in their contemporary roles? Leadership Development Programmes etc.?
8. How are your principals dealing with current reforms that require managers to work in democratic and participative ways to build relationships and ensure efficient and effective delivery?
9. How would you assess the relationship between the leadership development and support principals receive and the school leadership challenges they face?
10. What recommendations would you make for effective leadership in your schools?