

**LEADING FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE IN RURAL SECONDARY
SCHOOLS**

BY

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DECLARATION

I Kebonekhumo Lorraine Metswi, declare that this is my own unaided work. This work has not been previously submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University. All other materials taken from other sources contained in this research project have been acknowledged and referenced accordingly.

K.L Metswi

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify the leadership roles of principals and their impact on the performance of two rural secondary schools at Tlakgameng Village. The study was aimed particularly at the leadership role of the principal and how it influences school performance, how the relationships between the principal, teachers and learners affects school performance and how the principal as a leader can encourage performance of both teachers and learners.

Literature revealed that a school principal should possess various leadership qualities in order for the school to perform well. A principal should actively seek to motivate and develop educators by creating opportunities for them to grow and to learn from each other.

To gather data, a quantitative investigation was employed. Questionnaires were used as a major data collection instrument. 55 questionnaires were distributed to all educators of both secondary schools in Tlakgameng. Data was analysed using simple statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages.

The findings of this study indicated that principals of secondary schools carried out leadership practices at a minimal level. The indication of the study was that principals in rural secondary schools need extensive empowerment in leadership practices. It was also evident from the data collected that communication between principals, educators and learners needs to be enhanced.

On the basis of the findings from the study, recommendations were made to enhance the leadership roles that principals can play in order to improve the performance of schools.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER ONE: Orientation	
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Background to the problem.....	2
1.2.1 The main problem of the study.....	3
1.2.2 Sub-problem of the study.....	3
1.3 Objectives of the Study.....	3
1.4 Rationale of the Study.....	4
1.5 Research Design.....	4
1.5.1 The organization.....	4
1.5.2 Target population of the study.....	5
1.5.3 The Sample.....	5
1.5.4 Data Collection	5
1.6 Data analysis.....	5
1.7 Limitation of the study.....	5
1.8 Definition of key concepts.....	6
1.9 Structure of the study.....	7
1.10 Conclusion.....	8

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction.....	9
2.2	Leadership Defined.....	10
2.3	Theorising Leadership.....	12
2.4	Distributed Leadership.....	12
2.5	Leadership as relationship with followers.....	13
2.6	Leaders creating excellent school environments	14
2.6.1	The transformational leader.....	14
2.6.2	The visionary leader.....	15
2.6.3	The instructional leader.....	16
2.7	Organisational culture and leadership.....	18
2.8	Supportive and shared leadership.....	20
2.9	School character, school effectiveness and layered standards.....	21
2.10	Characteristics of a successful school.....	22
2.11	Leadership in effective schools.....	23
2.12	The leadership challenges of the rural schools.....	26
2.13	Is leadership always important?.....	27
2.14	Academic Leadership.....	27
2.15	School Governance.....	31
2.16	Learner Achievement.....	34
2.17	Conclusion.....	39

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

Page

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Introduction.....	40
3.2 The Purpose of quantitative research.....	40
3.3 The organization.....	41
3.4 Population of the study.....	41
3.5 The sample.....	42
3.6 Data collection method.....	43
3.7 Data analysis.....	44
3.8 Limitation of the study.....	44
3.9 Ethical consideration.....	44
3.10 Conclusion.....	45

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

4.1 Introduction	46
4.2 Review of Respondents.....	46
4.3 Biographical Data.....	46
4.4 Questionnaire items.....	51
4.5 Conclusion.....	61

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TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1	Introduction.....	62
5.2	Findings of the study.....	62
5.2.1	Findings on objective 1.....	62
5.2.2	Findings on objective 2.....	63
5.2.3	Findings on objective 3.....	64
5.3	Recommendations.....	65
5.4	Conclusion.....	67

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANNEXURE: A (QUESTIONNAIRE)

LIST OF TABLES

Page

Table 4.1: Response by gender.....	47
Table 4.2: Responses by age.....	47
Table 4.3: Responses by marital status	48
Table 4.4: Responses by highest academic qualification.....	49
Table 4.5: Responses by position held at school.....	50
Table 4.6: Responses about performance and leadership.....	51
Table 4.7: Responses about establishment of goals.....	52
Table 4.8: Responses about involving educators.....	53
Table 4.9: Ratings on involvement in classroom activities.....	54
Table 4.10: Ratings on establishment of lines of communication.....	55
Table 4.11: Responses on monitoring school practices and student learning.....	56
Table 4.12: Responses on completion of school syllabus.....	57
Table 4.13: Responses on provision of materials and professional development.....	58
Table 4.14: Responses on school accomplishment and failures.....	59
Table 4.15: Responses on shared beliefs and sense of community and cooperation.....	60

Chapter 1: ORIENTATION

1. 1 Introduction

Educational leaders must guide their schools through the challenges posed by an increasingly complex environment. Curriculum standards, achievement benchmarks, programmatic requirements, and other policy directives from many sources generate complicated and unpredictable requirements for schools. Principals must respond to increasingly diversity in student characteristics, including cultural background and immigration status, income disparities, physical and mental disabilities, and variation in learning capacities. They must manage new collaborations with social agencies that serve children. Rapid developments in technologies for teaching and communication require adjustments in the internal working of schools. These are just a few of the conditions that make schooling more challenging and leadership more essential (Leithwood & Riehl: 2003).

Leadership is between those who aspire to lead and those who choose to follow, because success in leadership is a function of how people work and play together (Kouzes & Posner: 2002).

In today's business environment, it is important for managers to realize the importance of their roles as leaders, as well as the morale of their workforce. There is an abundance of both internal and external forces that can build or destroy an organization. In any organization, the leader is the essential element to the success or failure of a business.

The theories of leadership applicable to the educator as a leader are the same as those that apply to a leader in general. In a school, where people have to act as leaders and have the rank of ordinary educators, those who are natural leaders have the necessary qualities of intelligence, charisma, sympathy for others and communicative skills.

The effectiveness of instruction in a school environment has the optimal development of learners as its aim and is determined to a large extent by how effective the members of staff are. The staff in turn is largely dependent, apart from professional training, on the success of the instructional leader.

According to Goodboy and Meyers (2008), communication influences students' participation and learning, so that students are motivated by instructors who communicate, and students participate more and challenge less in courses with instructors who engage in communication.

In any school setting the performance of the school is linked to the leadership role of the principal. Principals who are perpetually racing against time are seldom the most effective. It is important to realize that just 'thinking' is one of the positive uses of time. School principals often find themselves doing things they could and should have delegated if they had given the matter their attention earlier but at the time they were too busy with crisis management.

1.2 Background to the problem

It is a well known fact that rural schools face many challenges, however there are some schools in rural areas which strive against the challenges they face and produce good academic results.

This research is prompted by the recent performance of schools, especially those in the rural areas, where some schools performed better than others. The researcher wants to look at the relationship between leadership and school performance in general i.e. performance of educators and the learners.

1.2.1 Main problem of the study

Some rural schools in rural areas perform better than others. This may be influenced by the following sub-problems. The key question the research seeks to address was: How does the role of a principal as a leader influence school performance?

1.2.2 Sub-problems of the study

- Does the inability of the principal as a school leader to positively influence the school governance affect performance?
- Does the failure of academic leadership influence performance of both teaching staff and students?
- Does poor communication between principal, teachers and learners affect school performance negatively?

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 To determine whether the principal as a leader can influence the school governance positively.

1.3.2 To determine whether the principal is able to influence performance of teachers and learners to achieve best results.

1.3.3 To determine whether there is good communication between principal, teachers and learners.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

The study is important as the aim is to identify the gaps which lead to some schools in the rural areas performing better than others. The findings of the study may be used to improve the performance of the underperforming schools.

1.5 Research Design

1.5.1 The Organisation

The study focused on two schools, namely: Thuso Thebe High School which has a total number of 430 learners in Grade 10 to Grade 12, with 22 teachers (excluding the principal), and Sebetwane Secondary School with 455 learners and 33 teachers (excluding the principal). The distance between learners' homes and these two schools is between 5km and 12km. The distance between these two schools is approximately one kilometre. The district Office of Education, or the Area Project Office (Kagisano-Molopo APO) is situated 30km away from these two schools. The two schools under study are in the village of Tlakgameng in the Kagisano Local Municipality in the North West Province.

1.5.2 Targeted Population of the study

The target population of the study consists of educators from both secondary schools.

1.5.3 The Sample

All 55 educators from both schools were given the opportunity to become part of the study since they are almost at the same educational level. According to the biographic data on academic qualifications, 12 teachers at Thuso Thebe High School have a degree, which is almost the same as Sebetwane High School, where 14 teachers have degree qualifications. All of these teachers have professional teachers training. Above all, given the small number (55) of teachers, the researcher decided to include all of them as respondents of the study.

1.5.4 Data collection

Questionnaires were employed as a data collection method. These were administered personally to the educators.

1.6 Data Analysis

Simple statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages were employed to analyse the data.

1.7 Limitation of the study

Because of the small size of the population of the study, that is, educators from only two secondary schools within the Kagisano Local Municipality i.e. Thuso Thebe High and Sebetwane Secondary School in Tlakgameng, with both schools being in a rural area and where

one seem to be performing better than the other, the researcher will not generalize about schools in the rural areas.

1.8 Definition of key concepts

Leadership

Daft (2008) defines leadership as the process of influencing people, who people intentionally desire significant changes, and the changes reflect purposes shared by leaders and followers.

Kerzner (2001) defines leadership as ‘a style of behaviour designed to integrate both organizational requirements and one’s personal interest into pursuit of some objectives’.

Management

Management is frequently defined in terms of structure and procedures required to coordinate the diverse activities of an organization. Management in terms of education refers to the principal, deputies and senior staff. Management can also be seen as a group of people holding managerial positions within the organization or the tasks and activities performed by managers (Gomez-Meija et al: 2008).

Organisation

Mondy and Noe (1999) defines organization as two or more people working together in a coordinated manner to achieve group results. According to the Longman’s Dictionary of Contemporary English (1990), organization is the act of organizing, or the condition of being organized.

Hellriegel, Jackson and Slocum (2004) define an organization as a group of people who have a structure and strive to achieve goals which an individual acting alone could not reach.

School Principal

The school principal can be defined as an educator who has executive authority for a school. A principal is an individual who directs and monitors the academic and non academic activities within a school environment. The principal is the individual who plans and implements the daily routines within an educational setting (www.definitions.net/definition/principal).

School Performance

School performance can be seen as the ability of a school to produce good results or achieve educational goals (www.dtc.mil/cgi.bit).

1.9 Structure of the Study

The study will be divided into the following chapters.

- Chapter 1- Orientation
- Chapter 2- Literature Review
- Chapter 3- Methodology
- Chapter 4- Data analysis and interpretation
- Chapter 5- Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusions

Conclusion

This chapter was an orientation to the research. It consisted of areas such as the background to the study, a statement of the problem, aims of the study, rationale of the study, limitations to the study and definition of key concepts to be used throughout the research. It also outlined the division of the study into five chapters.

The next chapter focuses on literature review.

Chapter 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to provide a literature review dealing with school leadership and its impact on school performance, and also the conditions under which rural schools operate. Christie (2001) argues that rural schools mainly operate within poor communities, subjected to material deprivation and lack of human resources.

Fullan (2005) postulates that successful schools have a much more demanding culture such as a desire for greater heights, achievement of excellence, higher determination by every learner, teacher and leader. On the other hand, those in under-performing schools have less determination to achieve or improve, and pay less attention to factors influencing poor results. According to Halawah (2005), although the success of a school is influenced by many people, the principal remains one of the most important factors in this success.

Leadership is about having a vision or having a view of where the organization is going, by deciding what is important for the success or future of that particular organization. It is mostly about developing a vision and mission of the future, and strategies for achieving that vision.

The leadership role that is to be investigated is based in rural schools; hence this chapter will look at the challenges faced by principals in rural schools as well as the leadership concept. Leadership is represented in school districts by districts managers and in schools by the site

manager or school principal. It entails influence in the delegation of authority and the mobilization of resources to achieve goals. Educators may also exercise leadership in schools, classrooms and professional organizations.

2.2 Leadership Defined

For more than half a century the term 'leadership' has been a topic of discussion and research work especially in the field of management and organizational development. More often than not, such discussion or research work focuses on the issues of quality leadership, ability of a leader, leadership effectiveness or leadership styles (Adlam:2003). According to Adlam, leadership is a rather complex concept. This is especially true because several approaches have been employed to provide meaning to the term 'leadership'. Leadership has been defined from different perspectives and some of the definitions are discussed below.

Leadership can be seen as a process in which an individual takes the initiative to assist a group to move towards production goals that are acceptable, and to address the needs of individuals within the group that impelled them to join it.

Leadership, according to Cole (2002), can be defined as inspiring people to perform. Even if an institution has all the financial resources, it may fail dismally if the leadership does not motivate other to accomplish their tasks effectively. Leadership in that context pursues effective performance in schools, because it not only examines tasks to be accomplished and who should



execute them, but also seeks to include greater reinforcement characteristics such as recognition, conditions of service, morale building, coercion and remuneration.

Armstrong (2004) defines leadership as influence, power and the legitimate authority acquired by a leader to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of human resources that are the most important organizational asset, leading to the achievement of desired purposes. This can be done through the articulation of the vision and mission of the organization at every moment and influence the staff to define the power to share this vision.

The traditional perspectives perceive the concept of leadership as inducing compliance, respect and cooperation. In other words, the leader exercises power over the followers, to obtain their cooperation (Anderson Ford and Hamilton: (1998). In addition, the old leadership perspectives are based on the leader's role of formulating goals, and ensuring their efficient accomplishment.

Sashkin and Sashkin (2003) and Hoy and Miskel (2001) define leadership as the art of transforming people and an organization with the aim of improving the organization. Leaders in this perspective define the task and explain why the job is being done, they oversee followers' activities and ensure that followers have what they need in terms of skills and resources to do the job. These kinds of leaders develop the relationship between themselves and their followers; they align, motivate and inspire the followers to foster productivity.



2.3 Theorising Leadership

The main thing that is notable about current writing on leadership is the sheer quantity of commentary and analysis, what Day (2000) refers to as 'the swamp of literature on leadership'. There is an enormous amount of material written about leadership in general and leadership in education in particular. According to Coleman, Briggs and Ann (2005) some of the theories of leadership include the following:

- Focusing on the qualities of the individuals who have leadership status, seeing the leader as a 'great man' or as having special traits or qualities that makes him different.
- Seeing leadership as contextual, or, in other words, that leadership is a two way process dependent on followers as well as leaders working in a particular context. This would mean that one leader might fit one set of circumstances but not another.
- More recently there has been a move away from seeing leadership as identified with one person and a growing interest in the idea of leadership being 'distributed' throughout the organization and shared amongst its members (Coleman et al:2005).

2.4 Distributed Leadership

In most models of leadership there is an underlying assumption that there is one main leader in each school or institution. In fact the leadership of schools is often presumed to be in the hands of the principal or head teacher. However there is a growing belief that leadership can and should be shared throughout an organization. The idea of common vision is important. Harris (2002) identifies distributed leadership with the collective leadership of teachers working

together to improve classroom practice and therefore pupil outcomes. The ideal of distributed leadership is normatively preferred, that is, it may be stated that it is better for leadership to be shared rather than to be vested in one person.

Gronn (2003) refers to leadership practice being 'stretched' over the school. As an example sets of two or three individuals with differing skill and abilities, perhaps from across different organizational levels, can pool their expertise and regularize their conduct to solve a problem, after which they may disband.

2.5 Leadership as a relationship with followers

Today, whenever a person wants to lead an organization, as the key person who influences the organizational culture, the leader becomes part of the equation of organizational behaviour. Leaders need to be concerned not only with the leadership styles and techniques that they intend to use, but also with the quality and kinds of relationships with staff.

Leadership is about working with and through people to achieve organizational goals. As against commanding, an effective leader can empower, motivate and energise the followers. Leaders need to relate to staff in ways to arouse their personal commitments and motivate them towards the accomplishment of shared vision. The leader also needs to create an environment, which facilitates the realization of common goals (Gamage: 2006). The key to understanding leadership lies in understanding the leader's own perception of human nature, staff and how he or she relates to them.

2.6 Leaders Creating an Excellent School Environment

Researchers such as Edmonds (1982), and Caldwell and Spinks (1986) contend that strong leadership is a prerequisite for the creation and establishment of excellence in schools. The forms of leadership are:

- The transformational leader
- The visionary leader and
- The instructional leader.

2.6.1 The transformational leader

The transformational leader deals with the leader's effect on the follower's values, self esteem, trust and confidence in the leader and his motivation to perform 'above and beyond the call of duty'. The transformational leader's influence is based on the leader's ability to inspire and raise the consciousness of the followers by appealing to their higher ideals and values. According to Daft (2002) transformational leadership is based on the personal values, beliefs, and qualities of the leader rather than on an exchange process between leaders and followers.

The transformational leader instills feelings of confidence, admiration and commitment in the followers, furthermore the transformational leader helps staff to recognize the need for revitalizing the school by developing a need to change and avoid quick-fix solutions. The transformational leaders believe in people and try to empower others.

Transformational leadership, which was developed by Burns in 1978, is a holistic approach which emphasizes the organizational objective as well as the development and empowerment of followers. According to the literature the fundamental characteristic of transformational leadership is the normative and motivational influence of value. Transformational leaders use their charismatic, enthusiastic nature to garner influence and raise followers to higher levels of motivation and morality. When the school becomes a moral community, it provides for moral connection among teachers, heads, parents and students and it advocates helping all of them to become self managing (Sergiovanni:2001).

To be successful in the changing environment, site managers and other educational leaders should operate as change agents to be transformational leaders. In this role the educational leaders will have to develop educators to improve their performance in class.

2.6.2 The Visionary leader

All outstanding leaders have a vision for the organization. A vision can be defined as a view of a realistic, credible, attractive future for the organization. The vision of the school manager as a visionary leader should be communicated to the staff community and they should become committed to realizing the vision. The effective school manager will have a team of staff members who do not just respond to orders, but work enthusiastically towards the shared vision

2.6.3 The instructional leader

Instructional leadership, according to Greenfield in Van Niekerk (2002), refers to actions undertaken with the intention of developing a productive and satisfying working environment for educators and desirable learning conditions for learner. Therefore, principals must be sensitive to all factors influencing the effective functioning of their schools as learning institutions by developing their schools as a whole to achieve school improvement and effectiveness.

In addition Greenfield (1987) points out that in order to exert effective instructional leadership, school principals can use the following three options:

- Bringing in district specialists, trainers and consultants through quality choices as regards who to invite, for what purpose, and under what terms,
- Supplying leadership directly through evaluating educators, organizing team work and supplying the human and material resources for necessary innovation,
- Organizing and training staff to provide leadership for each other, such as training Heads of Departments as leaders, organizing peer coaching among educators and letting staff report back on staff development programmes

The main aim of the school is to achieve excellence in teaching and learning. To achieve this aim all educational leaders should be instructional leaders. Instructional leaders should meet the following requirements:

- The instructional leaders and their colleagues should have the knowledge and the skills to bring the vision to reality.

- The leader must have a vision for excellence in teaching: the instructional leader should work with other educators to develop a shared commitment to a common vision of excellence in teaching.

Instructional leadership can be seen as a process of guiding and encouraging the teacher along a path towards greater professional effectiveness. Such guidance demands very careful, far sighted and effective planning, based on professional insight and constructive and accurate analysis of the teaching-learning activity.

DeBevoise in Mathew and Crow (2003) defines instructional leadership as 'those actions that a principal takes, or delegates to others, to promote growth in student learning'. This can be analyzed as saying that instructional leadership is not a role of principals only, but also of teachers as they are the ones who are actively involved in the learning process and hence understand their own and their students' needs better.

According to Bush and Glover (in Bush: 2003), instructional leadership can be seen as focusing on teaching and learning and on the behaviour of teachers working with students.

Research has indicated that site managers in effective schools spend more time monitoring activities than site managers in other schools. They spend time in designing, evaluating and monitoring the use of these activities. Hallinger and Murphy (1986) further support the idea that site managers are viewed as instructional leaders and they cited three characteristics of the effective school site managers as instructional leaders as follows:

- Strong results orientation
- A related concern for systematically monitoring students progress

- A preference for high visibility and informal supervisory strategies.

Kruger (2003) suggested the presence of the following aspects in a school in order for instructional leadership to succeed:

- All the role players value the processes of teaching and learning;
- Practices reflect commitment to teaching and learning;
- The resources needed to facilitate the process of teaching and learning are available
- The school is structured to facilitate the processes of teaching and learning.

2.7 Organisational Culture and Leadership

Organisational culture and leadership are key aspects in any organization, let alone a successful school, as they are perceived to influence each other. According to Deal and Peterson (1999) organizational culture can be seen as a way for school leaders to better understand their school's own traditions, norms, and expectations that seem to permeate everything: the way people act, how they dress, what they talk about or avoid talking about, whether they seek out colleagues for help or not and how teachers feel about their work and their students.

Siehl & Martin (1998) have argued that the most important goal of a leader is to create an effective organizational culture. By establishing a consistent and shared culture, the principal engages the staff, students, and community in a sense of belonging and a shared commitment to the success of a school.

Deal and Peterson (1990) define the school culture as “the character of a school as it reflects deep patterns of values, beliefs and traditions that have been formed over the course of history”. They found that successful principals tend to employ several common strategies to shape school culture. These include:

- A clear sense of what is important (history, values and beliefs)
- Selecting compatible staff
- Dealing with conflict
- Setting a consistent example
- Telling stories that illustrate shared values
- Nurturing the traditions that reinforce school culture.

Sergiovanni (2001) fervently advocate that organisational culture shapes and influences leadership as it guides the leader in the way he should lead the organization. They assert that a leader expresses the meanings and values of the organizational culture; hence leadership acts are expressions of culture. If a principal detects that the organizational culture is dysfunctional and does not support organizational effectiveness, he can shape it and align it to the goals and objectives of the organization.

On the other hand if the principal perceives the organizational culture supports school effectiveness, then the principal will definitely align his leadership to the organizational culture that exists in the school; this scenario will most likely apply to a new principal or a school where teachers had a paradigm shift from the ‘school as an organization’ metaphor to the ‘school as a

community' metaphor. It is this view that if the culture of the school is drifting in the right direction, leadership will be left with no option but to follow and be shaped by it.

2.8 Supportive and Shared Leadership

The literature about school change and educational leadership clearly recognises the role and influence of the campus administrator (principal, and sometimes assistant principal) as to whether change will occur in the school. It seems clear that transforming a school organization into a learning community can be done only with the sanction of the leaders and the active nurturing of the entire staff development as a community.

Lucianne Carmichael, the first resident principal of the Harvard University Principal Center and a principal who nurtured a professional community of learners in her own school, discusses the position of authority and power typically held by principals, in which the staff views them as all-wise and all-competent; principals have internalized this '*omnicompetence*'. Others in the school reinforce it, making it difficult for principals to admit that they themselves can benefit from professional development opportunities, or to recognize the dynamic potential of staff contributions to decision making.

Furthermore, when the principal's position is so thoroughly dominant, it is difficult for staff to propose divergent views or ideas about the school's effectiveness. The relationship forged between administrators and teachers leads to shared and collegial leadership in the school, where all grow professionally and learn to view themselves as "all playing on the same team and working toward the same goal: a better school" (Hoerr:1996).

Louis and Kruse (1995) identify the supportive leadership of principals as one of the necessary human resources for restructuring staff into school-based professional communities.

Prestine (1993) also defines characteristics of principals in schools that undertake school restructuring: a willingness to share authority, the capacity to facilitate the work of staff, and the ability to participate without dominating.

Sergiovanni (1992) explains that the sources of authority for leadership are embedded in shared ideas, not in the power of position. Snyder, Acker-Hocevar, and Snyder (1996) assert that it is also important that the principal believes that teachers have the capacity to respond to the needs of students, that this belief provides moral strength for principals to meet difficult political and educational challenges along the way.

2.9 School Character, School Effectiveness, and Layered Standards

As the formation of character is central to the role of education, so the cultivation of an organizational character is central to the role of school leadership. Thinking about school character is not much different from thinking about individual character. When we think of individuals with character, we identify their integrity, reliability, fortitude, sense of purpose, steadiness, and unique qualities of style and substance that distinguish these persons from others. Substance, distinctive qualities, and moral underpinnings are particularly important.

Leaders with character anchor their practice in ideas, values, and commitments, bring to their practice distinctive qualities of style and substance, and are morally diligent in advancing the integrity of the schools they lead (Sergiovanni: 2000).

Similarly, schools with character are unique in important ways. Members of these schools know who they are, have developed a common understanding of their purposes, and have faith in their ability to celebrate this uniqueness as a powerful way to achieve their goals. Key to the success of schools with character is for parents, students, and teachers to have control over their own destinies and to have developed norms and approaches for realizing their goals. Both control and distinctiveness distinguish schools with character from schools where character is less developed. Both control and distinctiveness enhance sense of purpose, identity, and meaning for organizational participants. A school has character when there is consistency between the school's purposes, values, needs, and its decisions and actions.

2.10 The Characteristics of a Successful School

Quality performance is one of the distinguishing factors between a successful school and an unsuccessful school. Potter and Powell (1992) argue that a successful school is a school that has a proven ability to satisfy external criteria, such as the demands of the Ministry of Education, parents and students, and does well against comparable institutions in key areas of performance such as examination results.

Relationships between the principal and teachers, among teachers themselves, and between teachers and learners are crucial in a successful school. Goodland (in Preedy 1993) postulated that relationship is a significant area in which a successful school makes a contribution. If there is an absence of conflict between learners and teachers, there is often some kind of mutual respect or rapport.

Successful schools are presumed to have visionary leaders. A visionary leader inspires workers within the organization, relates well to individuals outside the organization, and sets the direction for the organization in order to enable the organization to cope with change (Wallace, Jr. 1996).

2.11 Leadership in Effective Schools

One of the key characteristics, which constantly emerges as a result of a research project, is outstanding leadership. The outstanding leadership is often qualified as vision in leadership that means that outstanding leaders have a vision for their schools that is a mental picture of a preferred future.

Emphasis should be put on transformational rather than transactional leadership. This means that the site manager as the transforming leader will respond to the needs of educators and learners, but will also look for potential in followers, will seek to satisfy higher needs like self realization and will engage the full person of the learner or the educator (Beare:1989).

The term “vision” is often used in the current context of leadership studies. According to Perez (1999) a “vision includes strategies for obtaining a desired outcome, provides a picture of what schooling should look like (i.e. its content) and how educators can recreate or process this mental picture in real life.” The principal’s vision must also be related to the existing needs and culture of the school (Keedy 1990) and it must be focused and consistent.

The vision of the educational leaders will include a mental image of:

- A possible and desirable future state of the school
- A leader's own view of what constitutes excellence in schooling.

The vision should reflect values and beliefs about work ethics, purpose of schooling, approaches to teaching and learning and approaches to the management of change. Vision must be communicated in a way that secures commitment among staff members. Vision should not be communicated by means of words but rather through actions of the educational leaders in the school. School leaders should communicate their vision enthusiastically to involve and commit all staff members to their dreams and goals for the school.

An important aspect of vision is the notion of "shared vision". Some studies indicate that it is the presence of this personal vision on the part of a leader, shared with members of the organization that may differentiate true leaders from mere managers (Manasse, 1986).

A leader's vision needs to be shared by those who will be involved in the realization of the vision. Murphy (1992) applied shared vision to previous studies of policy makers and policy implementation; he found that those studies identified gaps between policy development and its implementation, and concluded that this gap also applies to current discussions of vision. He stressed the need for the development of a shared vision.

The principal, who seeks commitment among educators of his school to a vision which entails raising the levels of self-esteem, will give careful thought to words, actions and rewards. The

site manager will attend to and may be participating in activities involving learner's self-esteem. In this way, the site manager will communicate to the educators and learners that these activities are valued. Rewards could be in the form of praise for educators who engage in similar activities.

Communication is the glue that holds different parts or sections of a school or any organization together. Communication assists organizational members to achieve organizational as well as individual goals, implement and respond to organizational change, co-ordinate organizational activities, and engage in virtually all types of relevant behaviours. Unless there is effective communication employees cannot be made aware of what is expected of them, how they should perform their jobs, and what others, especially their superiors, think about their work (Gamage:2006).

In the work of the educational leader, the following values are important: honesty, responsibility, justice and equality. Values such as honesty, responsibility, fairness and honouring commitments are fundamental requirements, if the school principal wants to gain the support of the educators. If the educational leaders are striving for excellence and are following a transformational leadership pattern, then equity, excellence, efficiency and justice would be important values.

2.12 The Leadership Challenges of Rural Schools

The challenges of rural schools are not only challenges to the school leaders but challenges for the whole society. Rural schools are bound to have poor academic results because they face numerous challenges, including:

- Inadequate textbooks
- Shortage of learning and teaching aids
- Lack of, or over-crowded classrooms
- Lack of laboratories and libraries
- Lack of furniture (desks and chairs)
- Shortage of teachers with relevant qualifications
- Lack of Parental involvement
- Poverty etc. (HSRC:2005)

Beside these shortcomings, teachers in rural schools rarely receive adequate support from subject advisors. In addition, both teachers and learners do not have access to the latest technologies. Children in the rural areas have to attend to household chores first thing in the morning before they go to school, which is often far from home, and this culminates in the learners coming to school tired or even late.

2.13 Is Leadership always important?

The belief that a particular leadership style will always be effective regardless of the situation may not be true. According to Robbins (1991), leadership may not always be important. Data from numerous studies demonstrate that, in many situations, any behaviours a leader exhibits are irrelevant. Certain individual, job and organizational variables can act as 'substitutes for leadership,' negating the influence of a leader. For instance, characteristics of employees such as experience, training, professional orientation, or need for independence can neutralize the effect of leadership. These characteristics can replace the need for a leader's support or ability to create structure and reduce task ambiguity. Similarly, jobs that are inherently unambiguous and routine or that are intrinsically satisfying may place fewer demands on the leadership variable.

2.14 Academic Leadership

Due to the current climate of school reform, principals are held more accountable for student success making school leadership even more critical (Levine: 2005). The principal is the individual best positioned within the school to evaluate the curriculum and evaluation process (Parkay, Hass, & Anctil:2010). This requires that the principal become deeply engaged in the school's instructional program (Hallinger:2005). Traditionally, principals were expected to set clear goals, allocate resources to instruction, manage the curriculum, monitor lesson plans and evaluate teachers (DiPaola & Hoy:2008). Today, the principal's responsibilities include a deeper and broader involvement in the mechanics of teaching and learning, the use of data to make decisions, and prescribing and participating in meaningful and innovative professional

development (King:2002). As a result, principals must find a way for managerial and instructional responsibilities to complement and support each other instead of being in constant competition (Shellard:2003).

The Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) states that in Standard 2, a school administrator promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth (CCSSO, 2008).

Leaders are vital to successful organizations, communities, and rural schools. Leaders come in many forms, serve many functions, exhibit many styles and are seen in many venues. Accordingly, management and organizational literature is rich with descriptions of leadership types: formal, informal, assumed, assigned, autocratic, democratic, team, dispersed, shared, collaborative, servant, primal, and contrarian leadership to name a few (Chrispeels:2004; Collins:2001; Fowler:2004; Gardner:1995; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee:2002; Sample:2002). In the rural school setting, educational leaders range from teacher leaders, principals, superintendents, and school board members to student leaders, parent leaders and community leaders involved with the school. Regardless of the leadership label, there are universal characteristics that commonly surface when considering qualities of effective leaders: sense of vision, ability to set goals and formulate plans, personal charisma, strong communication skills (particularly verbal and negotiation abilities), strong sense of self and personal convictions, relationship and empathy skills, and the ability to motivate and influence others. It is this last virtue, the ability to activate others to follow, which actually defines leadership itself.

Nummery (2005) found that principals who were at school sites for at least five years and had high ratings on ISLLC school leadership standards had higher achieving schools compared to those led by lower-rated principals.

Recent educational literature has turned its focus towards contemporary theories of leadership surrounding the notions of change, collaboration, and performance improvement. The following definitions were used for this study:

Transformational leadership theory describes leadership practices necessary to facilitate change. Critical factors characterizing effective transformational leadership are individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty: 2005). Fullan (2003) acknowledges that change forces exist at three levels: the school and community, the district, and the state, thus requiring leaders to fully understand and engage in the change process at multiple levels.

Distributed or collaborative leadership theory emphasizes the need for leaders at the top to share or distribute leadership functions amongst individuals across and between organizations (Chrispeels: 2004). Models of distributive leadership range from collaboration of teachers while planning instruction to formal partnerships between multiple organizations to implement college preparation programs.

Instructional leadership theory focuses on the leader's influence on student achievement: how he positively affects teachers, the outcomes of teaching, and raises student performance (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom:2004; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty:2003). Current research on instructional leadership stresses the role of the site-based leader in setting directions, developing people, and making the organization work (Leithwood et al.:2004). The principal

may share the responsibility of instructional leadership with other educational leaders through provision of resources and guidance for teachers, communicating vision and expectations, creating a positive organizational culture and professional learning communities, and exhibiting a visible presence in the school (Leithwood:2005; Waters et al.: 2003).

Because of constant challenging dynamics and few layers of administrative staff to turn to, rural educational leaders are dependent on others to help accomplish their shared goals (Chalker: 1999). Central to the discussion of instructional leadership for rural schools, Bauch (2000) argues that there are six unique attributes of rural schools in terms of community context which may be identified as assets: social capital, sense of place, parent involvement, strong church ties, school-community-business partnership, and community as curriculum. While physical, geographic and ideological circumstances may tempt rural leaders to function independently, sharing leadership functions with others within the school, within the community, and outside the local entity is fundamental to garnering support and resources for the school (Hadden:2000).

School-university partnerships, for example, constitute one such collaborative leadership model of value to rural schools, particularly high schools (Bauch:2000).

Challenges faced by a rural school district due to changes in the community were documented in a case study of a Midwestern district that had experienced a major influx of population resulting in suburbanization of the rural community (Howley et al.:2005). Three major unforeseen challenges emerged: first was the development of an *identity crisis* throughout the educational organization; second, *goal ambiguity* resulted from emerging culture clashes between old and new, rural and suburban constituencies; and third, because of historically conservative fiscal practices of frugality and balance juxtaposed with new state reform requirements, *ambiguities in*

resource allocation evolved. Out-moded operational practices within the new context resulted in inadequate allocation of resources and lack of capacity to access needed resources to meet organizational needs. Rural educational leaders need to be courageous and willing to go against the grain to proactively address community dynamics and the diverse needs of rural students (Chalker:1999).

To sum up, current research describes a myriad of socio-cultural challenges that rural schools and communities face, often centered around the impact of poverty and diversity. Research also suggests that the roles of educational leaders are significant to teachers, instruction, and outcomes of student learning and achievement. Finally, the dynamics of change call for leadership strategies that are flexible and responsive to contextual circumstances

2.15 School Governance

In recent years there have been fundamental changes to and renewal of the education system. The changes have culminated in reform legislation and policy initiatives. In the context of the South African education system, the fundamental object of the reform has been the redress of imbalances created in the previous dispensation and the restoration of the culture of teaching and learning, thereby improving standards. In the process of change, traditional practices are replaced by unfamiliar yet critical and essential elements necessary for the proper management of institutions. The new path set by reform legislation and policy ushered in a new era in the management of schools whereby conventional notions of school management are transcended. Consequently, the levers of power at school level are affected significantly (Maile: 2002)

There is a shift of emphasis from management to governance. A new framework of governance is built on accountability. It means that school managers must reposition themselves in such a way that they overcome:

- rule-driven bureaucracy;
- too much focus on administration and too little on management;
- sidelining of the education clients in the activities of the school;
- bureaucratic accountability; and
- denying access to information (Skweyiya:1995).

Therefore, accountability should be regarded as one of the essential elements of school governance to help strengthen the position of school managers, and share the much-contested power without losing it.

Potgieter, Visser, Van der Bank, Mothata and Squelch (1997) regard school governance as an act of determining policy and rules by which a school is to be organised and controlled. It includes ensuring that such rules and policies are carried out effectively in term of the law and the budget of the school. Buckland & Hofmeyr (1993) define governance as ‘... not simply the system of administration and control of education in a country, but the whole process by which education policies are formulated, adopted, implemented and monitored.’

Governance is an issue not only at the national level, but also at every level of the system down to the individual school. Because it is centrally concerned with the distribution of power, it is often summed up in the question: who decides?

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa establishes a democratic national, provincial and local government order, and binds all government and public schools to observe fundamental rights and protect fundamental freedoms, many of which directly dictate which decisions should be made by school governors and managements. The Constitution also obliges governments to negotiate with school governing bodies before changing their rights, powers and functions, and to fund all public schools on an equitable basis in order to achieve an acceptable level of education (Naidoo: 2005).

According to the Ministry of Education's school governance policy, stated in the Education White Paper 1, decision-making authority is to be shared among parents, teachers, the community (government and civil society) and the learners, "in ways that will support the core values of democracy". In turn, this requires a school governance structure which involves all stakeholder groups in active and responsible roles, encourages tolerance, rational discussion and collective decision-making. National and provincial policy should allow for the fact that such capacities may be under-developed in many communities and will need to be built.

Working definitions of the concepts of "governance" and "management" assist in clarifying the role of governing bodies. 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 both teachers and the school principal are responsible. These spheres overlap, and the distinctions in roles between principals and their staff, district education authorities, and school governing bodies, 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, within national and provincial policies.

Governing bodies should comprise at least the following members:

1. elected representatives of
 - i. parents or guardians of learners currently enrolled at school;
 - ii. learners (in secondary schools only);
 - iii. teachers;
 - iv. non-teaching staff;
2. the principal (ex officio);
3. members of the community, elected by the governing body (Government Gazette No.16987).

2.16 Learner Achievement

In the contemporary world, improvements in student achievements are recognized as the foremost objective of school reforms and restructuring efforts. With this objective in mind, many different reform packages are being implemented while the key focus of the reforms is more or less the same. The legislation on 'No Child is Left Behind by 2020' signed into law in January 2002 in the USA is one of the most prominent and visible actions taken by any government towards achieving this goal. In the meantime, many scholars have acknowledged that the role of school leadership is the most significant in enhancing school performance and student achievements (Hallinger and Heck:1998; Walker and Stott:2000; Fisher and Frey:2002;

Mulford:2003; Cotton:2003; Dinham:2004; Kearney:2005; Janerrette and Sherretz:2007; Gentilucci and Mut: 2007, Gamage:2009).

It has been found that effective leaders develop a school climate and culture that helps motivate both the students and teachers, leading to the creation of a better teaching and learning environment which is more conducive to higher levels of student achievements. Besides, in most school systems, the school principal is required by the authorities to improve student learning and is held accountable for it by building commitments in developing a shared vision for motivating and energizing the teachers and students (Gamage:2006; Ross and Gray:2006; Mulford:2003).

Cotton (2003) has asserted that the following types of behaviours by a principal have a significant impact on student achievements:

- The establishment of a clear focus on student learning by having a vision, clear learning goals, and high expectations for learning for all students
- Interactions and cordial relationships with relevant stakeholders formed by communication, emotional and interpersonal support, visibility and accessibility, and parent/community participation;
- Developing a school culture conducive to teaching and learning through shared leadership and decision-making, collaboration, risk taking leading to continuous improvements;

- Providing instructional leadership through discussions of instructional issues, observing classroom teaching and giving feedback, supporting teacher autonomy and protecting instructional time; and
- Being accountable for affecting and supporting continuous improvements through monitoring progress and using student progress data for program improvements.

According to Day (2004), particular leadership styles of school leaders could have positive impacts on teaching and learning environments and processes leading to improvements in student performance and academic achievements.

The school leadership provided or shared by a school administrator is one of the key factors in enhancing school performances and student achievements. The school leaders, in this context are “those persons, occupying various roles in the school, who work with others to provide direction and exert influence on persons and things in order to achieve the school goals” (Leithwood & Riehl:2003). This definition implies the importance of the school principal’s role, in collaboration with other stakeholders, in improving student performances and achievements. This was established on the basis of two studies of successful school leadership in the UK, involving parents, pupils, teachers, governors, senior managers, and head teachers.

Harris (2004) asserts that successful leadership in schools has resulted in higher levels of both student attainment and achievements, emphasizing the importance of distributed leadership. He also points out that findings from the studies have identified the limitation of a singular leadership approach in securing school improvements.

In response to the changing role of principals, Caldwell (2004) believes that training and professional development of the principals are significant in contributing to the quality of schooling. Gamage (2006) points out that the foremost challenge facing a principal is to understand the changing contexts and improve his interpersonal and communication skills, with the understanding that he is no longer the authority figure but is in a partnership with other stakeholders. Nowadays he is not in a position to issue instructions and expect the staff and students to obey. The altered role of the principal requires him to articulate his views for a shared vision while expressing the views on policy issues to convince the other members of the partnership in arriving at decisions before instructions can be issued in his capacity of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the school.

Walker and Stott (2000) affirm that the reform initiatives in conformity with prescribed standards have been judged largely unsuccessful in improving student performance. Those externally imposed prescriptions have created stress-related problems such as feelings of failure, depression, and even explosions of anger on the part of principals and teachers due to increased workloads and lack of or inadequacy of resources. However, they believe that performance enhancement through devolution of power and authority through school-based management (SBM) along with improved resources allocation has been successful in achieving student progress and quality education.

A study by Ruff and Shoho (2005) involving a novice principal and two experienced principals in three urban elementary schools at San Antonio, Texas, showed the importance of mental models for principals constructing their roles as instructional leaders. The mental models refer to: observations, assessments, designs, and implementation, while the principals' practice styles

refer to goals, factors to influence, strategies and the nature of decision-making by being reactive, proactive and consistent. Another study by Fisher and Frey (2002) at Hoover High School in San Diego reveals that the principal as an instructional leader led to increased student academic achievements while decreasing drop-out rates. In this context, the principal regularly modelled lessons in front of teachers and students and interacted with students to provide encouragement and strategies to achieve success.

Research findings on school reform initiatives reveal a number of major trends in school restructuring requiring the school leaders to confront new challenges and play new roles in order to meet the stakeholder and educational systemic expectations and prescribed standards. The new trends include the movement towards SBM with the devolution of power and authority to school levels.

School leaders are required to manage the schools, guided by school councils or boards with authority over and responsibility for managing financial, physical and human resources while being accountable to the systemic authorities and school communities. Consumer control is instituted through school councils or governors comprising parents and other stakeholders. De-zoning forces them to market their schools to prospective students, with the improvement of facilities, and student and school performances projecting a good school image. However, the empowerment of school leaders comes with many new responsibilities and challenges. These include:

- Recruiting, developing and leading school staff,
- Managing the financial and physical resources, and organizing and contracting out the provision of facilities and services required by the school.

More importantly, the principals of 21st Century schools are required to encourage, motivate and energize the teachers and students towards the creation of effective teaching and learning environments leading to continuous improvements in school and student performances (Gamage: 2009).

Conclusion

Leadership was the key concept under review in this chapter hence a detailed explanation of its meaning was provided in this chapter. It is always important to appreciate the difference between leadership and management in order to fully understand what leadership is all about. Managers typically perform functions associated with planning, investigating, organizing, and control, and leaders deal with the interpersonal aspects of a manager's job. Leaders inspire others, provide emotional support and try to get employees to rally around a common goal. Leaders also play a key role in creating a vision and strategic plan for an organization.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the research methods and the procedures used by the researcher during the collection of data from respondents. This chapter includes an explanation of the research design namely:

- Quantitative research method
- Sampling procedure
- Data Collection methods

3.2. The purpose of quantitative research

The purpose of quantitative research is to make objective descriptions of a limited set of phenomena and also to determine whether the phenomena can be controlled through certain interventions. Thus, initial quantitative studies of a research problem typically involve a precise description of the phenomena and a search for pertinent variables and their inter-relationships.

Ultimately, a theory is formulated to account for the empirical findings (Borg, Gall & Gall: 1993). Quantitative research is used to gather information about people's attitudes, opinions, beliefs, demographics and behaviour. Information gathered from a sample of respondents can be generalized to a population.

In this research study the researcher opted for the quantitative approach as it is the most suitable for gathering information from a sample of educators in secondary schools around Tlakgameng in the Kagisano Municipality.

3.3. The Organisation

The study focused on two secondary schools: Thuso Thebe High School with a total number of 430 learners in Grade 10 to Grade 12, with 22 teachers (excluding the principal) and Sebetwane Secondary School with 455 learners and 33 teachers (excluding the principal). The distance between the schools and the learners' homes home is between 5km and 12km. The district office of education or the Area Project Office (Kagisano-Molopo APO) is situated 30km away from the schools.

The two schools under study are in the village of Tlakgameng in the Kagisano Local Municipality in the North West Province.

3.4. Population of the Study

The population of the study consisted of all educators from both schools (55 excluding principals).

3.5. The Sample

All 55 educators from both schools were given the opportunity to become part of the study.

The study assumed that teachers from both the schools have similar characteristics. Given the teachers' educational and professional training the researcher assumed that they understand the complex dynamics in the schools' situation.

Mertens (2005) refers to sampling as the method used to select a given number of people or things from a population. The strategy for selecting the sample influences the quality of the data and the inferences that can be made from it. In most research studies, it is simply not feasible to collect data from every individual in the setting or population.

The diagram below depicts responses in terms of Gender from the 50 responses that the researcher got from the two schools.

TABLE 3.1 Response rate by Gender

Gender	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	8	16	12	24	20	40
Female	14	28	16	32	30	60
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

3.6. Data collection method

Data were collected by means of the questionnaires which the researcher distributed personally to the school educators. Questionnaire as an instrument of data collection was used to probe the perceptions of educators with respect to the principal's role as a leader and how it impacts or influences the performance of both the teachers and learners.

A questionnaire is a data collecting instrument used to get information directly from the interviewees. The major task is to design a questionnaire that will give the researcher the information she wants. The measuring instrument has a great influence on the reliability of the collected data, hence great care should be taken in the structure of the questionnaire to boost the reliability and validity of data to acceptable levels of tolerance (Shunetler:1989).

The questionnaire was mainly composed of questions where the respondents had to tick the block which best represented their observations (see the sample of attached questionnaire).

The questionnaire gave the respondents a chance to respond on their biographic data which includes questions on age, gender, marital status, level of education, and the position occupied at school. The respondents were expected to rate the principal's leadership role on a four point scale format, namely: Strongly agree, Agree, Strongly disagree and Disagree.

Fifty five questionnaires were distributed to respondents. However, only 50 were received back. The researcher distributed and administered these questionnaires in person. The questionnaires were distributed and collected from educators during their lunch break.

A pilot test was done with 5 questionnaires to find whether the respondents would understand the questionnaire on their own. The response was positive hence the respondents were left to answer the questionnaire without explanation from the researcher.

3.7. Data analysis

Simple statistical techniques such as frequencies and percentages were employed to analyse the data.

3.8. Limitation of the study

Because of the size of the population of the study (educators) from two secondary schools within the Kagisano Local Municipality i.e. Thuso Thebe High and Sebetwane Secondary School in Tlakgameng Village, where both schools are in a rural area and one seems to be performing better than the other, the researcher will not generalize to schools in the rural areas. It means that if this is the situation at one school it may not be applicable to others.

3.9. Ethical considerations

When conducting the interview the researcher must be aware of the rights of the subjects. He or she must know that the subjects have the rights of to participate or not participate in the study. The subject has also the right not to divulge information which will affect them.

Ethical issues relate to accuracy, confidentiality, and breadth of consultation, rights of access and continuity of purpose (Burgess: 1989). During the data collection process the subjects were reassured that whatever information they provide would be treated as confidential.

If the researcher's questions will impact on the subject either psychologically or emotionally, the researcher needs to structure her questions in a manner that will not have an effect on the subject. Subjects have also the right to safety i.e. the researcher must guarantee them the protection of anonymity and also the right to be informed about all aspects of the research.

The subject will also be informed about the purpose of the research and that their involvement in the research is voluntary. To be successful, the researcher must believe that the thoughts and experiences of the people being interviewed are worth knowing (Paterson: 1997).

The researcher must respect the people who are willing to take part. When an interview goes badly it is the responsibility of the interviewer not the fault of the subject. A guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality of interviewees were given to subjects.

3.10 Conclusion

Questionnaires and interviews are the major means of collecting data for survey research. The procedure involves eliciting responses on a selected topic from subjects, but each has unique advantages and disadvantages. It is important that the instruments used be reliable.

The researcher in this chapter has provided a description of the methodological approaches followed to collect data for the research.

Chapter 4 Data analysis and interpretation

4.1. Introduction

The data was collected through an empirical study, analysed and interpreted. Data analysis and interpretation helped the researcher to understand the responses from the questionnaire. The responses of the subjects were recorded as percentages.

4.2. Review of respondents

Fifty five questionnaires were distributed and only five were not returned. Therefore, the statistical analysis of questionnaires was based only on fifty responses.

4.3. Biographical data

The table below shows a picture of the biographical characteristics of respondents. A brief summary of the information is also provided.

Table 4.1 Response by Gender

Gender	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	8	16	12	24	20	40
Female	14	28	16	32	30	60
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.1 indicates that in both categories of schools, more than 50% of the respondents (60%) are females.

4.2 Response by age

Age	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
20-35	6	12	7	14	13	26
36-40	8	16	9	18	17	34
41-45	5	10	8	16	13	26
46-50	2	4	2	4	4	8
51 and above	1	2	2	4	3	6
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100



Table 4.2 above depicts the age category of respondents in years. The younger educators, those who are 45 years and younger, makes up the larger percentage namely 86% (26+34+26%).

TABLE 4.3 Response by marital status

Marital Status	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Married	11	22	10	20	21	42
Unmarried	10	20	13	26	23	46
Divorced	1	2	3	6	4	8
Widowed	0	0	2	4	2	4
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

The above table shows the marital status of respondents in both schools. The highest percentage namely, 46% (20+26%) of the educators in the study are not married.

TABLE 4.4 Respondents' highest academic qualifications

Educational Level	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Matric	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teachers Diploma	6	12	7	14	13	26
Degree	12	24	14	28	26	52
Honours and others	4	8	7	14	11	22
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In the table above 52% (24+28%) of educators from both schools have a Degree as their highest qualification.

Table 4.5 Response by Position Held at School

Rank of Position held at School	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Educator	13	26	19	38	32	64
H.O.D	8	16	8	16	16	32
Deputy Principal	1	2	1	2	2	4
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.5 above shows that a large percentage 64% (38+26), of respondents are educators. Only two (4%) are Deputy Principals.

SECTION B

4.4. QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

TABLE 4. 6 Responses about performance and leadership.

Leadership can be seen as a process by which the school principal directs and influences educators and learners, and gets them to perform to greater heights.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	8	16	5	10	13	26
Agree	6	12	13	26	19	38
Strongly Disagree	3	6	4	8	7	14
Disagree	5	10	6	12	11	22
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.6 high percentage 64% (38+26) of respondents believe that leadership can influence educators and learners in performing their duties. They therefore see the Principal as the main leader who can change the performance of the school by organizing, controlling, planning and directing performance to greater heights. Only 36% (22 + 14) of the respondents did not see leadership as a process whereby the principal can direct, influence educators and learners in their various tasks.

TABLE 4.7 Responses about the establishment of goals.

The principal establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	3	6	7	14	10	20
Agree	4	8	5	10	9	18
Strongly Disagree	5	10	7	14	12	24
Disagree	10	20	9	18	19	38
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.7 above a high percentage 62% (38+24) of respondents do not believe that principals set clear goals and keep them in the forefront of the school's attention. Only the low percentage of 38% (18+20) had a belief that the goals set by the principal are put at the forefront of the school's attention. It can therefore be deduced from this table that the principal does not set clear goals and keep them in the forefront of the school's attention, which may confuse teachers as goals and targets may not be known to them.

TABLE 4.8 Responses about involving educators

The principal involves educators in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	8	2	4	6	12
Agree	2	4	7	14	9	18
Strongly Disagree	9	18	7	14	16	32
Disagree	7	14	12	24	19	38
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.8 illustrates that 70% (38+32) of the respondents disagreed that the principal involves educators in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies. Non involvement of other stakeholders in formulating and implementation of policies is therefore a problem and this may not create sense of ownership to these stakeholders. There may be resistance to carry out instructions and implementation on new changes.

Only 30% (18+12) of the respondents agreed that the principal involved the educators in the design and implementation of policies and decisions.

TABLE 4.9 Ratings on involvement in classroom activities

The school principal is always involved in classroom activities of educators and learners	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	3	6	6	12	9	18
Agree	4	8	8	16	12	24
Strongly Disagree	5	10	2	4	7	14
Disagree	10	20	12	24	22	44
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.9 above, the highest percentage (58%) of the respondents disagreed that principals are always involved in classroom activities of educators and learners. This on its own is a problem as the highest performance can only be achieved through involvement of all stakeholders, teachers, learners, principal etc. Only 42% of the respondents agreed that the principal is always involved in the classroom activities of both the educators and the learners.

TABLE 4.10 Ratings on establishing strong lines of communication

The principal establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among learners.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	5	10	2	4	7	14
Agree	6	12	6	12	12	24
Strongly Disagree	4	8	9	18	13	26
Disagree	7	14	11	22	18	36
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.10 above shows that 62% (36+26) of the respondents disagreed that the principal establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among the learners. The lower percentage of respondents, 38% (24+14) agreed that the principal establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and learners. Teachers' satisfaction with the school discipline policy is related to their relationship with the principal (Duckworth: 1984). Good communication and shared values are important elements in this relationship. Student achievement is likely to be greatest where teachers and administrators work together (Buffie:1989). Ideally, a principal should be able to create consensus among staff on rules and their enforcement. The principal must have knowledge and understanding of effective communication strategies.

TABLE 4.11 Responses of monitoring school practices and students learning

The principal as a leader monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	4	8	8	16	12	24
Agree	3	6	2	4	5	10
Strongly Disagree	9	18	11	22	20	40
Disagree	6	12	7	14	13	26
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.11, 66% (40+26) of the respondents disagreed that principals monitor the effectiveness of the school practices and their impact on the learning of students. A lower percentage, 34% (24+10) of the respondents agreed that principals monitor the effectiveness of school practices on students learning. There seems to be problem with monitoring of school practices and their impact on learning of students.

TABLE 4.12 Responses on completion of the school Syllabus

The principal always shows concern over the completion of the syllabus at school.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	5	10	6	12	11	22
Agree	3	6	4	8	7	14
Strongly Disagree	10	20	14	28	24	48
Disagree	4	8	4	8	9	16
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.12, 64% (48+16) of the respondents disagreed that principals often show concern over the completion of the syllabus at schools. Only 36% (22+14) of the respondents agreed that principals often show concern over the completion of syllabus at schools. The failure to complete the school syllabus seems to exacerbate the problem of performance.

TABLE 4.13 Responses on provision of materials and professional development.

The principal provides educators with materials and professional development necessary for the execution of their jobs.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	12	8	16	14	28
Agree	4	8	3	6	7	14
Strongly Disagree	8	16	11	22	19	38
Disagree	4	8	6	12	10	20
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.13 shows that the highest percentage, 58% (38+20), of the respondents disagreed that principals provide educators with materials and professional development necessary for the execution of their jobs. The remaining 42% (28+14) agreed that principals provide educators with materials and professional development necessary for the execution of their jobs. It can therefore be concluded that provision of materials to educators and professional development is a problem. Literature indicates that principals play a vital role in many aspects of the school. One

of these aspects is to ensure that staff members develop professionally on a continuous basis. Trorey and Cullingford (2002) maintain that every school needs a leader to create a sense of purpose and direction, to set high expectations of staff and pupils, to focus on improving teaching and learning, to monitor performance and to motivate the staff to give of their best.

TABLE 4.14 Responses on school accomplishments and failures.

The school leader recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	12	10	20	16	32
Agree	1	2	0	0	1	2
Strongly Disagree	13	26	11	22	24	48
Disagree	2	4	7	14	9	18
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

In table 4.14 above, 66% (48+18) of the respondents disagreed that the principal recognizes and celebrates accomplishment and acknowledges failures. Only 34% (32+2) of respondents agreed that the principal recognizes and celebrates accomplishment and acknowledges failures.

The difference of 32% (66-34), in responses of the respondents, indicates that school principals need to recognize and celebrate school accomplishment, and acknowledge failures.

TABLE 4.15 Responses on shared beliefs and sense of community and cooperation.

The principal fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation in the school.	Thuso Thebe High School (Educators)		Sebetwane Secondary School (Educators)		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	6	12	7	14	13	26
Agree	2	4	1	2	3	6
Strongly Disagree	12	24	15	30	27	54
Disagree	2	4	5	10	7	14
TOTAL	22	44	28	56	50	100

Table 4.15 shows that the highest percentage (54%) of respondents disagreed that the principal fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation in schools. Only 3 (6%) of the respondents strongly agree that the principal fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation in schools.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter supplied an analysis and interprets the empirical investigation to determine the effect that leadership has on performance of the school. A questionnaire was employed as the main instrument in the collection of data.

Chapter 5 SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter gives a brief summary of the researcher's main findings, the analysis of empirical data and finally makes recommendations arising from the researcher's findings.

5.2. Findings Of The Study

5.2.1 Findings on Objective 1

With regard to objective 1, namely, to determine from literature the leadership role of a principal and how it affects or influences school performance, the following findings were made:-

- The relationship between the leadership role of the principal and school performance is indirect. Literature about performance in schools and educational leadership recognizes the role and influence of the school principal, those roles being those of a transformational leader, a visionary leader and finally an instructional leader.

Schools which are performing are presumed to have visionary leaders. A visionary leader inspires workers within the organization, relates well to individuals outside the organization and sets the direction for the organization in order to enable the organization to cope with change. According to Hoer: 1996, the relationship forged between the administrators and teachers leads to shared and collegial leadership in schools, where all grow professionally

and learn to view themselves as “all playing on the same team and working towards the same goal: a better school”.

5.2.2 Findings on objective 2

With regard to objective 2, namely, to determine whether the relationship between principal, teachers and learners affects school performance, the following findings were made:-

- Relationship between the principal and teachers, teachers among themselves and teachers and learners are crucial to how the school performs. By establishing a consistent and shared culture, the principal engages the staff, students, and community in a sense of belonging and a shared commitment to the success of a school. Most of the respondents do not agree with the fact that their school principal involves them in setting goals for the school and becomes involved in classroom activities of both teachers and learners. If there could be active involvement of principals in activities of learners and educators then the school could reach greater heights.
- Literature has also revealed that relationships make a significant contribution to a successful school. If there is an absence of conflict between learners and teachers often there is some kind of mutual respect or rapport. The ongoing transformation in education requires leaders who can work in democratic and participative ways in order to build successful relationships to ensure effective delivery of quality education.
- Communication is an important aspect that can maintain good relationships between the principal and the educators as well as the learners. Communication is the glue that holds different parts or sections of a school, or any organization, together. Without effective

communication, educators and learners cannot be made aware of what is expected of them, how they should behave in a school environment and how to perform their specific tasks.

5.2.3 Findings on objective 3

With regard to objective 3, namely, to determine how the principal as a leader can encourage or influence the performance of both teachers and learners.

- In the findings, the principal does not get very involved in the classroom activities of teachers and learners. The principal needs to get involved in the work of educators and learners (see table 4.9). He must also encourage the educators and the learners to complete the syllabus in order to ensure good performance. Literature portrayed the principal as someone who is focused on teaching and learning, which comprise the core businesses for an effective school. The leadership role of a principal can only be realised when the principal is always visible, i.e. always seen around in the school, visiting classrooms and always engaging teachers and learners with regard to teaching and learning.
- Educators, learners and even community members get inspiration from, the principal. When educators and learners see that their principal is committed, they are likely to copy that type of behaviour. The principal also needs to foster a deep-rooted culture of academic excellence in both educators and learners. In the study, most of the respondents did not agree that the principal fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation in school. See Table 4.15.

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Learning and teaching need to be a co-operative effort (Johnson et al:1989). It is not the exclusive responsibility of one party only. Responsibility for the overall outcome should be shared by all. Teaching processes and outcomes will be richer when more people participate and contribute.

Based upon the findings of the study, the following are recommended.

Recommendation 1

The researcher recommends that relationships need to be built within the school. Building relationships is an important task of the school principal because it determines work satisfaction of the educators as well as providing a conducive environment for learning to take place, and, as a result, the performance of the school will improve. Teamwork should be emphasised. If the school principal and educators work together as a team, then the goals and objectives of the school would be reached.

Recommendation 2

School rules should be clearly communicated. In this way, order within the school can be maintained, and every individual within the school can know his/her responsibility. If a school system is to be effective, two-way communication between the formal organization and the people outside the organization is essential.

Recommendation 3

Strategies for improving teaching and learning should be established and maintained. All in the school should actively participate in school activities to promote positive work performance. Regular meetings should be held between educators and the school principal to discuss the progress of the school, including performance of teachers and learners.

Recommendation 4

Since the information obtained from the literature review and empirical research suggests that there is a strong relationship between school principal leadership and performance of both educators and the learners, the researcher recommends that both the school principal and educators needs to receive continuous training on the leadership process. The school principal should ensure that every educator is trained and has infrastructural support that will enable them to assist learners within the school. There should also be mechanisms in place to deal with the academic development of staff.

Recommendation 5

It is not only the responsibility of the school principal and the educators to see that the learners' academic work is up to standard. The researcher recommends that parents need to be involved in the school work of their children. Some parents tend to ignore their role as parents in the

education of their children. They tend to delegate the roles, duties and responsibility into the hands of the educators.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to determine the effectiveness of the school principal's leadership role and how it impacts on the performance of the rural school. Leaders should strive to develop productive and satisfying environments for teachers and desirable learning conditions and outcomes for learners. School principals should facilitate the introduction of all policies and other changes taking place in the educational system in order to achieve better learning and teaching within the school.

Rural schools need strategic leaders, who are not discouraged by challenges, but who are willing to go the extra mile with the limited resources they have at their disposal. The educational leader should have a clear view of the needs, possibilities and duties of his leadership position. When the school principal is executing his function of leading, it is essential that all staff members be taken into consideration as people; therefore knowledge of human behaviour is necessary for the educational manager as a leader.

By leading effectively, a certain climate will be created in the school in which the educational leader and the staff are best able to serve the cause of education in a happy and relaxed atmosphere.

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ANNEXURE: A

You are requested to complete the questionnaire by kindly ticking the most appropriate answer. There is no right or wrong answer

Section A

1. Gender

Male	
Female	

2. Your age category in years

20-35	
36-40	
41-45	
46-50	
51 and above	

3. Marital Status

Married	
Unmarried	
Widowed	
Divorced	

4. Your highest qualification

Matric	
Diploma	
Degree	
Post Graduate	

5. Your position at School

Educator	
H.O.D	
Deputy Principal	
Site Manager	
Other (specify)	

Section B

1. Leadership can be seen as a process by which the school principal directs and influences educators and learners, and gets them to perform to greater heights.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

2. The principal establishes clear goals and keeps those goals in the forefront of the school's attention

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

3. The principal involves educators in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

4. The principal is always involved in classroom activities of educators and learners

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

5. The principal establishes strong lines of communication with teachers and among students.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

6. The principal as a leader monitors the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on students' learning.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

7. The principal always shows concern over the completion of the syllabus at school.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

8. The principal discusses with learners the progress of their academic work.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

9 The school leader recognizes and celebrates school accomplishments and acknowledges failures

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

10. The principal provides teachers with materials and professional development necessary for the execution of their jobs.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

11. The principal fosters shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation in the school.

Agree	
Strongly Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly Disagree	

Thank you for your time/cooperation.

Regards

.....

Lorraine Metswi