

TEAM MANAGEMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mdlaza Nelson Moloko, B.A., B.Ed., M.Ed., S.A.T.D.

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Promoter: Professor A.M.C. Theron

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated, first of all to my late grandparents, whose interest and concern about my schooling is still vivid in my mind, thirty-six years after their death.

To my parents whose love and support I shall never forget and who never lived long enough to see me achieve this highest academic qualification.

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To all the Molokos dead or alive.

PREFACE

This thesis was written at the time of great political changes in the RSA. Nelson Mandela had been released from Robben Island after 27 years; the Codesa negotiations for an interim constitution were going on and subsequently led to the 1994 first democratic elections which were won by the African National Congress.

All these changes had an impact on education in the country.

For the first time, teachers organised themselves into unions e.g. the South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU). Through their strikes and mass demonstrations SADTU members disrupted the culture of learning and teaching in black schools. They also eroded the autocratic powers of school principals.

The fragmented former education departments were unified into a single national education department. The country was divided into nine provinces each with its own non-racial education department. The Gauteng province where this study was based was divided into 18 districts.

The finalization of the district boundaries caused a delay on the empirical study. Nevertheless, by the time the districts were properly functioning questionnaires had already been sent to those secondary schools predominantly attended by black learners i.e. ex-DET schools.

SUMMARY

The changed political climate in South Africa has contributed to the erosion of the traditional autocratic powers of the principal and the increased demand by teachers to be involved in the making of decisions which affect them directly. This has necessitated a different approach to school management. Team management is one such an approach.

The research aims are to determine the nature of team management, the task and role of the principal in facilitating team management and the extent to which team management is implemented in secondary schools attended predominantly by black students in South Africa. The research methods used to achieve the aims are a literature study and an empirical survey.

The investigation of the nature of team management revealed that the team management approach is based on the theories of McGregor, Herzberg, Maslow, Likert and Argyris, and that the advantages of team management outweigh its disadvantages. The prerequisites for team management were found to be active leadership, effective communication, participative decision-making and sharing power and authority. The 9,9 (team management) leadership style was found to be the most appropriate for team management. Communication within the teams should accord with Likert's System 4 communication process.

With regard to the role and task of the principal in facilitating team management the study revealed that he should create opportunities for staff development and establish good human relations; ensure that the plans of the different teams complement one another in promoting school goals and distribute the work load evenly amongst teams. The principal should also promote the active and effective participation of team members in decision-making. He should treat this participation not as a favour, but as the teacher's democratic right. The principal should also level the decision-making field by ensuring that all participants have sufficient information on the topic under discussion. It was also found that the role of the principal in team building consisted of improving people related and task related skills.

From the findings of the literature study a structured questionnaire was developed. The target population for the empirical survey consisted of principals, departmental heads and teachers in schools attended predominantly by black students in the Gauteng province. This part of the study revealed that the majority of principals perceived their leadership

style differently from their heads of departments and teachers. The target population in general perceived the communication process with regard to team management in the schools as favourable. However, almost half the number of teachers felt deprived of participation in decision-making on issues which fall under their zone of concern.

A few of the most important recommendations of the study are that principals should share leadership and authority with the various team leaders and teachers in the school. They should also rely on expert power rather than on legitimate power. In addition, the professional autonomy of teachers and the managerial authority of principals should be harmonised, while bureaucratic management by principals should be minimised.

Overall, it can be concluded that there are traces of team management practices in the schools attended predominantly by black students in South Africa. This means that the usage of the team management approach is limited and should therefore be promoted.

OPSOMMING

Die veranderde politieke klimaat in Suid-Afrika het bygedra tot sowel die erodering van die skoolhoof se tradisionele outokratiese magte as die toenemende eise van onderwysers om betrokke te wees by besluite wat hulle direk raak. Voorgenoemde noodsaak 'n nuwe benadering tot skoolbestuur. Spanbestuur is een so 'n benadering.

Die navorsingsdoelstellings van die studie is om die wesensaard van spanbestuur, die taak en rol van die skoolhoof in die fasilitering van spanbestuur en die mate waarin spanbestuur in skole wat meestal deur swart leerlinge in Suid-Afrika bygewoon word, te bepaal. Die navorsingsmetodes om die doelstellings te bereik, is 'n literatuurstudie en 'n empiriese ondersoek.

Die ondersoek na die wesensaard van spanbestuur het aan die lig gebring dat die spanbestuursbenadering gebaseer is op die teorieë van McGregor, Herzberg, Maslow en Argyris, en dat die voordele van spanbestuur die nadele daarvan oorskadu. Die voorvereistes vir spanbestuur is onder andere aktiewe leierskap, doeltreffende kommunikasie, deelnemende besluitneming en mags- en gesagsdeling. Die 9,9 (spanbestuur) leierskapstyl is waarskynlik die beste geskik vir spanbestuur. Kommunikasie binne spanne behoort in ooreenstemming te wees met Likert se Stelsel 4 kommunikasieproses.

Ten opsigte van die taak en rol van die skoolhoof in die fasilitering van spanbestuur het die studie aan die lig gebring dat hy geleentheid moet skep vir personeelontwikkeling en gesonde interpersoonlike verhoudings moet stig; seker maak dat die planne van die verskillende spanne komplementêr meehelp tot die bereiking van die skool se doelstellings; en die werkklas eweredig tussen spanne moet versprei. Die skoolhoof moet ook die aktiewe en effektiewe deelname van spanlede in besluitneming aanmoedig. Sodenige deelname moet nie as 'n guns aan spanlede beskou word nie, maar as onderwysers se demokratiese reg. Die skoolhoof moet ook die speelveld vir besluitneming gelyk maak deur te verseker dat alle deelnemers oor voldoende inligting aangaande die betrokke saak beskik. Daar is ook bevind dat die rol van die skoolhoof in spanbou die verbetering van mensverwante en taakverwante vaardighede insluit.

Uit die bevindings van die literatuurstudie is 'n gestruktureerde vraelys ontwikkel. Die teikenpopulasie het bestaan uit hoofde, departementshoofde en onderwysers verbonde aan skole in die Gauteng provinsie wat hoofsaaklik deur swart leerlinge bygewoon word.

Hierdie gedeelte van die ondersoek het aan die lig gebring dat die meerderheid skoolhoofde 'n ander persepsie van hul leierskapstyl het as hul departementshoofde en onderwysers. Die teikenpopulasie was oor die algemeen positief aangaande die doeltreffendheid van die kommunikasieproses rakende spanbestuur in skole. Bykans die helfte van die onderwysers was egter van mening dat hulle nie genoegsaam deel het aan besluite wat hulle direk raak nie.

Enkele van die belangrikste aanbevelings wat uit die navorsing voortvloei, is dat skoolhoofde leierskap, mag en gesag met die onderskeie spanleiers en onderwysers in skole moet deel. Skoolhoofde behoort hulself ook eerder op kundigheidsmag as wettige mag te verlaat. Voorts behoort die professionele outonomie van onderwysers en die bestuursgesag van skoolhoofde geharmonieer en burokratiese bestuur deur skoolhoofde tot die minimum beperk te word.

Oorkoepelend kan die gevolgtrekking gemaak word dat spore van spanbestuurspraktyke in skole wat hoofsaaklik deur swart leerlinge in Suid-Afrika bygewoon word, aangetref word. Die gebruik van die spanbestuursbenadering is dus beperk en behoort aangemoedig te word.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

DET	Department of Education and Training
HOD	Head of Department
PTSA	Parent Teacher Student Association
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union

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CHAPTER ONE

1 ORIENTATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The increase in school enrolment in black education in the Republic of South Africa has not only led to secondary schools accommodating more than a thousand pupils each but also to the employment of many younger teachers. On the one hand, this pupil expansion is causing a strain on the administration and management of the schools and affecting the pace of change and development. On the other hand, the younger teachers are increasingly opposing centralised decision-making which is a feature of some of, if not all, the schools.

Other factors which have an impact on the management of schools, especially on the traditional authority of the principal to take unilateral decisions, are: political changes taking place in the RSA, the unionisation of teacher organisations, the militancy of some younger teachers, the formation of the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), and student participation in education politics.

The aforementioned aspects confirm what Kanner (1974:40) meant when he said that the "good old days" of the principal as sovereign and absolute monarch ruling through divine right are gone. The changed political climate is motivating teachers to feel more justified in demanding greater participation in the management of the schools of which they are a part. The teachers are demanding a say in determining what they are to do, how they are to execute it and even how and when they are to be controlled and evaluated.

Boyan (1969:202) alleges that the more expert (i.e. **professional**) the teaching personnel become, the more restless they are concerning **management** decisions on teaching activities and the competencies of the principal to **supervise technical performance**.

A different approach to school management that utilises the professional skills and knowledge of the teachers, which empowers them to identify and solve problems, and give them a share in making decisions, is therefore of necessity (Duttweiler, 1989:7). Team management is one such an approach.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

A group of teachers becomes a "team" when there is a task which requires them to interact with one another for the purpose of accomplishing that task (DET, 1986:2). Team

management therefore, implies the utilisation of teams to deal with specific tasks or functions so as to facilitate the attainment of schools goals and the satisfaction of the needs of both teachers and pupils.

Wynn (1973:36) states that a management team is a body which exercises all administrative processes collaboratively: goal setting, planning, organising, co-ordinating, communicating, making decisions and evaluating. Swift (quoted by Gorton, 1976:84) opines that the main goals of the management team should be to develop school policies and procedures, solve common problems, and in general to improve education in the schools by utilising the collective talents and interests of the individual members of the team.

The concept of team management as applied to school management, is rooted in the literature of participative management (Pellicer & Nemeth, 1980:98). It is nurtured among others by McGregor's Theory Y, Maslow's Ego and Self-actualisation Needs, Ouchi's Theory Z and the Quality Circles. According to Hansen (1990:102), the primary purpose of the quality circle is to involve the individuals in a meaningful way to solve problems and make effective decisions. This author further alleges that quality circles rely upon voluntary and co-operative membership, thus ensuring a group willing and committed to serve.

The benefits of team management have been identified by various authors (cf. Robbins, 1988:111; Wynn, 1973:9-10; Pellicer & Nemeth, 1980:101; Gorton, 1980:240) as the following:

- it increases acceptance of a solution and ensures commitment;
- it facilitates better utilisation of the available expertise and problem solving skills which exist within the school community;
- it enhances the self-esteem, morale, and sense of responsibility of those participating in a team approach.

On the other hand, teamwork is perceived as dysfunctional because it requires more time, therefore delaying response to emergencies (Wynn, 1973:8) and possesses the potential for minority domination and pressure to conform (Robbins, 1988:12). Nevertheless, the potential advantages of co-operatively pooling human resources to achieve school objectives strongly support the need to organise a management team where possible (Gorton, 1976:84).

The principal as head of the team should not play a dominating role or exercise all of the leadership function in the management team. His main role should be that of facilitation and resource person for other team members and to stimulate their participation and leadership, as well as to promote co-operation among all team members (Gorton, 1976:86).

The principal should therefore create a collaborative culture. To establish such a culture, Lieberman (1988:650-651) advocates that teachers must be organised, led and nurtured by supportive and concerned principals. Grindle (1982:29-30) asserts that team management allows the role of the principal to be shaped so that he can share power and responsibility with teachers in a non-threatening way.

One of the factors which influences team management is the principal's attitude towards his staff. McGregor (1960) believes, for example, that the principal's behaviour is influenced by two basic attitudes which he refers to as Theory X and Theory Y. McGregor's Theory implies that unless the principal's attitude towards his staff is one of trust, confidence and respect, he is unlikely to involve them in management decision-making (Gorton, 1980:241).

Some of the factors which influence the successful operation of a management team, identified by Wynn (1973), are: faith in the democratic process, trust in people, commitment to an open climate, congruency of authority, responsibility and commitment to the administrative team.

Between 1985 and 1991, the DET exposed school principals and their deputies as well as heads of departments to management training in the form of eleven programmes called "Top-Down". Programme no. 7 of the Top-Down deals with team management. One would therefore expect principals to have established teams in their schools and to be involving teachers in decisions which affect them and their teaching activities. Whether this statement is true, is debatable.

Against the foregoing background the following problem questions arise:

- What is the nature of team management?
- What is the task and role of the school principal in facilitating team management?
- To what extent is the team management approach or the elements of team management implemented in schools attended predominantly by black students in the RSA ?

- Which guidelines can be laid down for principals to follow in implementing team management?

1.3 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

There are five aims to this study, viz.

- to determine the nature of team management;
- to determine the task and role of the principal in facilitating team management;
- to determine the extent to which the team management approach is implemented or the elements of team management are present in schools attended predominantly by black students in the RSA; and
- to provide guidelines for the implementation of effective team management in schools attended predominantly by black students in the RSA.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Literature study

A literature study on team management was conducted with the aim of determining the nature of team management, as well as the task and the role of the principal in facilitating team management.

1.4.2 Empirical research

1.4.2.1 Aim

An empirical investigation was conducted to determine the extent to which team management is implemented in secondary schools attended predominantly by black students in the RSA.

1.4.2.2 Instrument

Data for this study was collected through the use of a questionnaire survey technique which was developed in the light of what the literature study revealed. A structured questionnaire was designed and administered to the sampled teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and principals. Economy in time and expenditure is the main reason for the selection of this instrument.

1.4.2.3 Population

The target population (N=6206) consisted of principals (n=166), heads of departments (n=820) and teachers (n=5220) in schools attended predominantly by black students in the Gauteng Province of the RSA.

1.4.2.4 Sample

A sample of 60% (n=100) of the principals, 40% (n=328) of the heads of departments, and 30% (n=1566) of the teachers was selected by employing a stratified random sampling method to ensure that the three regions viz., North, Central and South of Gauteng are proportionally represented.

1.5 DIVISION ACCORDING TO CHAPTERS

The research report was structured according to the following framework:

Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 2: The nature of team management

Chapter 3: The task and role of the school principal in facilitating team management

Chapter 4: Research design

Chapter 5: Statistical analysis and data interpretation

Chapter 6: Summary, findings, recommendations and conclusions

1.6 RELATED RESEARCH

Van Rooyen's research (1984) is a literature study aimed at explaining the theoretical basis of team management, so that it can be applied at secondary school level. The three elements of team management, viz., leadership, communication and decision-making are explained. The foundation of team management and how team management functions are also discussed. One of the recommendations is an empirical investigation to determine whether team management can enhance the effective management of secondary and primary schools.

The shortcoming of this study lies in the fact that it is limited to a literature research and does not include an empirical study. Secondly, the study disregards theorists like McGregor and Maslow, who laid the foundation for team management. Thirdly, Van Rooyen refers to three elements or components of team management, namely,

leadership, communication and decision-making. Grindle (1982:30) has shown that there is the fourth and equally important element, viz., exercising shared power and authority.

Dreyer's study (1989) is aimed at establishing the nature of team management and the extent to which team management is implemented at primary school level and giving guidance for its implementation.

Like Van Rooyen, Dreyer overlooked the contributions made by theorists like McGregor, Maslow and Likert. Dreyer gives an account of Ouchi's Theory Z as the rationale for team management. Unlike Van Rooyen's study, Dreyer's study includes an empirical investigation. However, his investigation is confined to principals of primary schools. Teachers and heads of departments were excluded from his population.

The shortcomings identified in both studies have been addressed in the present study.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter team management has been identified as one of the approaches which can satisfy teachers' demands for participation. The approach utilises the professional skills and knowledge of teachers in order to achieve school goals.

In this introductory chapter, a brief background and a statement of the problem was given. It was followed by the aims of the research. Also included in this chapter are the discussion of the research methodology, the structure of the survey and an analysis of related research. Chapter two will look at the nature of team management.