

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

A brief summary of this study is presented in this chapter. Furthermore, a reflection on the major findings of the study is provided, as well as recommendations for the improvement of the current position of the professional development of school principals and areas for further research as revealed by the study.

8.2 Summary

In chapter 1 the rationale for the study and a statement of the problem are outlined. More than ever before concern is expressed about the managerial and institutional capabilities of schools. In an attempt to improve the efficiency of the school system attention needs to be focused on the professional development of school leaders, because school principals are the key to success in schools.

Chapter two outlined the nature and scope of induction. From the literature consulted it came out clearly that an assortment of lenses are used in conceptualising induction.

The tridimensional conceptualisation of the professional development of school principals (cf. 4.2.1.2) is the most powerful tool to be employed to understand the concept **induction of beginning principals**. From this perspective it could be concluded that induction is viewed as starting at the pre-service preparation programmes in countries where the training of principals is the vogue, or at the pre-appointment phase in countries like Bophuthatswana where training of school principals is not yet given the full attention it deserves.

From the literature studies it emerges there are major role players in the induction of the school principals (cf. 2.7). Some of the role players, like the district officials, are on stage right from the recruitment and selection stages of beginner principals (cf. 7.4). The major role player is the circuit

education officer (cf. 2.7.2). His main task is to ensure that the new principal is welcomed and secured, which of course is in line with beliefs and norms of the society to welcome the newcomer or the actor on stage. It is also true that others may give him a false honeymoon period or simply reject him because he represents change himself. Change, of course, is not always welcomed by all people - it is often resisted (cf. 3.3.5). So, new principals are welcomed with mixed feelings. Therefore, new principals should know that they may not be welcomed by all the people, and be ready to manage such situations effectively.

In chapter 3, from the literature consulted, it emerged that new principals experienced a variety of problems. They experienced problems at the personal level, administrative problems, problems with senior management team, problems with instructional staff, student problems, and problems with management of external relations.

Furthermore, they need specific skills such as self-awareness skills, technical and social skills in order to be more effective in carrying out their roles (cf. 3.8, 3.2.4, 3.2.5). New principals are often faced with the problem of understanding the ship called principalship.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of induction programmes in some countries. It is clear from the literature consulted that induction of new principals is still in its infancy, and very few well-structured induction models have been developed. Although induction in some systems had always been there, taking variety of forms and duration and being mostly in an ad hoc fashion, the need for well-structured induction programme is highlighted in the study. Some states in the U.S.A. like Ohio have developed guidelines for the induction of new school principals in the system.

In chapters 5 and 6 an empirical investigation was conducted to determine the problems facing new principals and critical skills for beginning principals.

From the empirical investigation it emerged that new principals in developing countries have problems that can be ascribed to systems problems. However, because new principals are expected by the system

to address such problems, it came out clearly that new principals need support and information on how to address problems like shortage of classrooms, pupils who can not afford to pay fees and buy books (cf. 3.9).

Furthermore, the empirical investigation revealed that the intensity of problems facing new principals in developed countries may not be the same for new principals in a different cultural setting like Bophuthatswana. It is clear that beginner principals may not experience similar problems like their counterparts in developed countries such as the U.S.A. and the U.K. For example, the problem of isolation experienced by beginner principals in the U.S.A. and the U.K. is clearly pronounced, while in Bophuthatswana it is not stressed as a problem for new principals. In developing countries like Bophuthatswana such problems are not common among new principals.

The study also revealed that new principals need self-awareness skills and technical and social skills to carry out their roles more effectively (cf. 6.6).

Lastly an induction model for beginning principal was developed, guided by the findings from the literature studies and from the results of the empirical investigation conducted in chapters 5 and 6. The paucity of structured comprehensive models for inducting new principals was marked in the review of literature in chapter 4. The induction needs revealed in the review of the literature formed the basis for the development of an induction programme for new principals in Bophuthatswana.

Because of the complexity of induction, and its far-reaching implications a comprehensive and complex New Principal Induction Programme was developed (cf. 7.3-7.4). The NPIP operates at different levels from macro to micro level. The management structure of the proposed NPIP highlights the needs for collaboration, commitment and mutual respect and understanding among all parties involved (cf. 7.4). Special induction teams and sub-programmes like training of mentors and mentoring as a tool of the trade in helping beginning principals to jump the first hurdles, were highlighted. An induction programme has five important phases that

focus at helping the beginner to adjust to the new setting and to be more effective in the performance of his role (cf. 7.4).

From this study, there are important findings in each section that are important to the professional development of beginning principals.

8.3 Research findings

8.3.1 Findings on Aim 1

With regard to Aim 1, namely to determine from the literature the nature and scope of induction (cf. 1.3), the following findings were made:

- * Induction of new principals starts during recruitment and selection. Effective induction programmes use recruitment and selection to furnish the prospective principal with information about the nature of the position, community and the school system itself (cf. 2.3.1.).
- * An effective induction programme has clearly articulated goals and objectives. Goals and objectives are important signpost in the development and implementation of an effective induction programme (cf. 2.5.2).
- * An effective induction programme for new school principals has five major phases, namely pre-appointment, principal-designate, induction workshop, follow-ups and evaluation phase (cf. 2.6, 7.4).
- * There are people responsible for the induction of school principals by virtue of their position like the education officer, the out-going principal, and the school council. The mentor also plays an important role in supporting the new principal to learn the ropes (cf. 2.7.3.). The new principal has to take some initiative to facilitate his own induction. He has to arrange a meeting with the out-going principal, get to know the school and circuit policies, learn how things are done in the new settings (cf. 2.7.3).

8.3.2 *Findings on Aim 2*

With regard to Aim 2, namely to determine from the literature the problems and critical skills for new school principals, the following findings were made:

- * New principals encounter a variety of problems as they carry out their roles (cf. 3.2, 3.8, 3.9);
- * they encounter problems at the personal level, like how to balance authority and power, how to manage stress and tension (cf. 3.2.1);
- * they encounter problems when dealing with the instructional staff like how to supervise and evaluate teachers, how to handle an incompetent teacher (cf. 3.3.2);
- * they encounter problems when dealing with members of the senior management team, like how to handle unco-operative members of the senior management team (cf. 3.3.1);
- * problems with external relations include how to get the support of parents and how to win the support of members of the school council (cf. 3.6).
- * too much administrative work, and the problem of limited time;
- * in developing countries beginning principals encounter unique problems like shortages of physical facilities, shortages of trained teachers, pupils who can not afford to pay the fees and buy books (cf. 3.9);
- * new principals need skills to be effective in the performance of their roles. There are three categories of skills that are more important for them (cf. 3.8):
 - Technical skills (cf. 3.8.1);
 - social skills (cf. 3.8.2); and
 - self-awareness skills (cf. 3.8.3).

New principals need to demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a school principal, thus how to balance authority and power associated with the position. They should also demonstrate an awareness of why they were selected, be aware of their own strengths and weakness. More importantly, for them to be effective they should have vision, and demonstrate the desire to help students to change (cf. 3.8).

8.3.3 *Findings on Aim 3*

With respect to Aim 3, namely to examine the current induction programmes for new school principals the following findings emerged:

- * Few well-structured induction programmes have been designed for beginning principals, more especially in developing countries. Similarly, little attention has been paid to the induction of school principals (cf. 4.1). Thus current induction programmes range from trial and error, swim or sink, wait and see strategies adopted by some school districts. While other school districts employ uncoordinated ad hoc strategies, very few have well-structured induction strategies in place (cf. 4.2.3.3).
- * In some countries like the U.S.A., there are a number of opportunities offered by the school districts and professional associations to support both the new principals and veteran principals (cf. 4.2-4.2.3.6). To cite a few examples, the National Association of Secondary school principals offers a number of programmes for supporting both new and veteran principals like (cf. 4.2.1.2):
 - Lead 1, 2, 3 programme;
 - Springfield;
 - mentoring and coaching programme;
 - from the desk; and
 - institutes.
- * Current developments for supporting new principals in the U.K. include the recently launched mentoring scheme for new principals. The new mentoring scheme in the U.K. has great potential of helping beginning principals to jump the first hurdles (cf. 4.3.6).
- * In most African countries, particularly Commonwealth countries, promising efforts are being made to support both new and veteran principals by offering in-service training courses to improve the managerial capabilities of school principals (cf. 4.4.1).

- * In Southern Africa efforts made to help new principals include in-service training course for both new and veteran principals (cf. 4.5.1, 4.5.2).

8.3.4 *Findings on Aim 4*

Regarding Aim 4, namely to determine empirically the problems and critical skills for new school principals, the following findings surfaced:

- * The empirical investigation conducted revealed that new principals in developing countries like Bophuthatswana are more concerned about what could be described as systems problems. For example, in this study it came out clearly that the new principals experienced problems of a higher magnitude when dealing with shortage of classrooms, pupils who can not afford to pay fees and buy books (cf. 6.5.8).
- * Furthermore, new principals encounter problems when dealing with incompetent teachers, poor staff morale, how to evaluate staff, dealing with too much administrative work, time management and stress management (cf. 6.7.1; 6.7.2). The study revealed that problems experienced by new principals in developed countries like the U.S.A. and the U.K. are not similar problems for new principals in developing countries. One of the major findings of this study is that new principals in different cultural settings have unique problems as compared to their counterparts in developed cultures. So in designing an induction programme needs assessment is the best tool.
- * However, the study revealed that new principals in Bophuthatswana are also aware of the critical skills needed in carrying out their roles, like self-awareness, technical and social skills (cf. 6.6.21-6.6.23; 6.8.1; 6.8.2).

8.3.5 *Findings on Aim 5*

With regard to Aim 5, namely to develop an induction programme for school principals in Bophuthatswana, the following findings were made:

- * The development and implementation of an induction programme should take into account the complex nature of a comprehensive induction programme (cf. 7.4).
- * There are a number of stakeholders, and interwoven structures involved in a comprehensive induction programme that call for policy-makers in the ministry of education to formulate guidelines to ensure harmony and mutual understanding among all bodies involved (cf. 7.4).
- * A comprehensive induction programme should have well-defined goals and objectives, and sound management structures to ensure that its goals and objectives are actualised for the benefit of both the state and the new principal (cf. 7.4). Both human and physical resources should be earmarked for the induction of school principals.
- * An induction programme should be evaluated to ensure that it keeps abreast of all new developments and the needs of the inductee and the school system (cf. 7.4 and 7.5).
- * The implementation of the proposed induction programme (NPIP) calls for unfailing commitment and collaboration of all participants. Mutual trust, respect and understanding are vital to the success of the NPIP (cf. 7.4).

8.4 Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION 1

More attention should be paid to the professional development of new school principals with a particular focus on the effective induction of new school principals

Motivation

Very little is done to support new principals in their entry years. However, new principals do not just need to survive, but have to be effective in the performance of their roles. Without effective performance

of their roles, quality education for the future citizen of this country will remain a pipe-dream.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Selection and recruitment strategies for school principals should be improved to ensure that suitable candidates are appointed to principalships and that they be aware of their expected roles and conditions under which they will be working.

Motivation

Principals are key ingredients for success in schools, hence inadequate strategies employed in the recruitment and selection of new school principals are not cost-effective. The low applicant ratio in particular challenges the strategies used in the recruitment and selection of new principals.

RECOMMENDATION 3

Principal centres and various opportunities should be made available for the professional development of school principals.

Motivation

Principals should be given opportunities to share ideas, and common problems. To see how others run their schools. Critical reflection of what they are doing as opposed to what they think are doing, is essential for the professional growth of new school principals.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Possibilities of launching mentor programmes for new school principals should be explored.

Motivation

Principals learn better in the hands of other principals who share to the some extent same feelings and frustrations. Mentoring promotes collegiality, collaborations and networking.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Professional associations of school principals should be established and supported by the Department of Education and the business sector.

Motivation

Professional Association offers opportunities for networking, collaboration, and enhance the image of the profession. Principals, need support of other principals in order to be more effective in their jobs.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Educational management units and research units at universities should redirect their focus on the management development of school principals.

Motivation

Very few universities offer specialised degree programmes in Educational Management, more especially in black universities. Universities can contribute a lot in improving the professional development of school principals.

Universities offer theoretical tools for understanding principalship. Few universities in black South Africa conduct research on management development of school principals to direct the reforms and refocusing in the professional development of school principals.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Department of Education should formulate a national policy on the management development of school principals.

Motivation

The effective management development of school principal can only see the light of day if it is supported by the Department of Education in principle. Principals need time to meet and support each other in their efforts to improve their skills.

RECOMMENDATION 8

Universities and the ministries of education need to pay more attention to the improvement of the managerial capabilities of school principals in developing countries.

Motivation

Low morale among veteran principals, teachers, low productivity as indicated by low internal efficiency of the school system, challenges the managerial capabilities of schools.

8.5 Conclusion

Very little attention has been paid to the induction of school principals; similarly there is a paucity of structured induction programmes for beginning principals. The "new South Africa", with a number of challenges like dealing with diversities in schools, calls for specific attention to help new principals to deal with pupils from different cultural backgrounds and to cope with their ever-demanding jobs. Without effective principals the quality of education offered will be diluted.

Effective induction of new school principals is a profitable investment in line with human capital theory.

In conclusion, while this research has revealed the nature and scope of induction, it has also revealed the need to implement the newly-proposed induction programme. Without such actions the managerial and institutional capabilities of schools will pose an increasing threat to the

quality of education as well as to the social, political and economic fabric of society.