

# **An exploration of the demands of democracy on leadership practices of school principals**

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Dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree *Magister Educationis* in Education Management at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

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May 2014

**APPENDIX A**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE EXPLORATION OF THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. This questionnaire is confidential. Do not give your name or the name of your school.
2. Please respond to all questions and statements.
3. There are no wrong or right answers. Honest and frank answers will be appreciated.
4. Please follow the instructions given under each section.

For office use only

QUESTIONNAIRE NUMBER		(1-3)
No.	CARD	(4)

**SECTION 1**

Place "X" on one response in each category.

**1.1 GENDER**

Male	1
Female	2

**1.2 AGE**

35-40	1
41-45	2
46-50	3
51-55	4
55+	5

**1.3 Highest Academic Qualification:**

Advanced Certificate	1
Bachelors Degree	2
Honours Degree	3
Masters Degree	4
Doctoral Degree	5

**1.4 Experience in principal post**

Less than 2 years	1
2-5 years	2
5-8 years	3
9+ years	4

**1.5 Number of years in the current school:**

01-03 years	1
04-06 years	2
07-09 years	3
10+	4

**1.6 Size of the school**

Less than 500	1
501- 1000	2
1000+	3

**SECTION 2**

**INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

**THE EXPLORATION OF THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

1. To what extent does 'Democratic participation' agree with your natural style of management?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. What training do principals undergo in managing schools democratically?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. Do you think principals are equipped to implement and manage democracy in schools?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. What is the attitude of the community towards a principal who practices democracy in his/her school?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

5. Do you think participation of Stakeholders hampers/promote your management of the school?

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.....  
.....

6. How would you describe the support you get from departmental officials?

.....  
.....  
.....

7. What challenges do you experience in your relationship with departmental officials?

.....  
.....  
.....

8. How would you describe your relationships with various stakeholders within the school?

.....  
.....  
.....

9. In what way do you promote participation of stakeholders in the management of your school?

.....  
.....  
.....

Thank you for your time

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation towards the following people and institutions for their support and encouragement during the process of writing this dissertation:

- My Lord and saviour Jesus Christ for the wisdom bestowed upon me;
- The memory of my late eldest sister: LOUSIA MANASO SESANE, for raising me into a man I am today;
- My supervisor, Professor J.M. Mosoge for his insight, patience and guidance through this journey;
- I also would like to shower my Son, Obakeng- with gratitude- for whom I owe a lot of time spent during my studies;
- To my Nephew, Thapelo Sesane for your helpfulness in my time of need;
- The wonderful staff at Tsunyane Primary School for their unrelenting support and guidance.
- To the Area Manager of the Area Office of the Department of Education in Rustenburg, Mrs. M.J.Paledi, for allowing me to conduct interviews with principals in her schools;
- The 7 Principals who participated in the interviews. Thank you for sharing your experiences with me and for making time available for this research study;
- To all my friends for their unequivocal support throughout the study. Thank you very much;
- To Mr. Isaac Modimokwane and Ms. Aletta Letlhake for typesetting the research document;
- To Mr. Jerry Raolane for his assistance and insight;
- To Mrs. P.Du Toit for the language editing of this dissertation.

## **SUMMARY**

School principalship has evolved over the years. The dawn of democracy in South Africa has brought with it a myriad of changes which are demanding to both novice and experienced principal.

The study is based on the premise that there are challenges facing school principals within the current democratic milieu. The research study aimed at arriving at an exploration of the demands posed by democracy in schools.

The study adopted a Qualitative approach based on an interpretivism paradigm. A lacuna of literature was reviewed to gain insight on the concept: democracy in education.

The population of the study is school principals within the Rustenburg Area Project Office structured interviews were used to collect audio – taped data. The data was analysed and collapsed in categories which subsequently themes were indentified.

The identified themes with literature reviewed were condensed into findings. The findings had a direct link to literature renewed in previous chapters. Recommendations and suggestions for further research finalised the study. Principals are facing challenges in their leadership roles within a democratic milieu.

**Keywords:** Democracy, Democratic milieu, Democratic participation, Stakeholder participation, Leadership and School management

## OPSOMMING

Skool hoofskap het oor die jare ontwikkel. Die aanbreek van demokrasie in Suid-Afrika gebring het met dit 'n magdom van veranderinge wat eis om beide beginners en ervare skoolhoof .

Die studie is gebaseer op die veronderstelling dat daar is uitdagings wat skoolhoofde in die huidige demokratiese milieu. Die navorsing wat daarop gemik is om tot 'n verkenning van die eise van demokrasie in skole .

Die studie het 'n Kwalitatiewe benadering wat gebaseer is op 'n interpretivisme paradigma. 'n Leemte van letterkunde is hersien om insig te kry oor die konsep : demokrasie in die onderwys.

Die bevolking van die studie is om skoolhoofde in die Rustenburg Area Projek Kantoor. Gestruktureerde onderhoude is gebruik; klank -band opgeneem om data in te samel. Die data is ontleed en duie gestort het in kategorieë wat later temas is geïdentifiseer .

Die geïdentifiseerde temas literatuur is gekondenseer in bevindings. Die bevindinge het 'n direkte skakel na literatuur hernu in die vorige hoofstukke . Aanbevelings en voorstelle vir verdere navorsing afgehandel is in die studie. Skoolhoofde in die gesig staar uitdagings in hul leierskap rolle binne 'n demokratiese omgewing.

**Sleutel woorde:** Demokrasie, Demokratiek milieu, Demokratieke deelneming, Liddeelneming, Leierskaap en Skoolbeheer.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.1	INTRODUCTION .....	1
<b>AN EXPLORATION OF THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOLPRINCIPALS</b>		
1.2	REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE .....	2
1.3	PROBLEM STATEMENT .....	10
1.4	RESEARCH QUESTIONS .....	10
1.5	AIM OF THE RESEARCH .....	11
1.6	RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY .....	11
1.6.1	Literature Review .....	11
1.6.2	Research paradigm.....	12
1.6.3	Qualitative Research Method .....	13
1.6.4	Data Collection Method .....	14
1.6.4.1	Structured Interviews .....	14
1.7	POPULATION AND SAMPLING .....	15
1.7.1	POPULATION .....	15
1.7.2	SAMPLING .....	15
1.8	TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA .....	16
1.9	DATA ANALYSIS .....	17
1.10	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS .....	18
1.11	CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY .....	18
1.12	PRILIMINARY CHAPTER DIVISION .....	19

## CHAPTER 2

### THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION

2.1	INTRODUCTION	20
2.2	EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS	21
2.2.1	Democracy	21
2.2.2	Democratic milieu	22
2.2.3	School	22
2.2.4	Leadership practices	23
2.2.5	Leadership styles	23
2.2.6	Management	24
2.2.7	Manager	25
2.2.8	Community	26
2.3	COMMENT	26
2.4	THEORETICAL GROUNDING OF DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION	27
2.4.1	CRITICAL THEORY AS THE BASIS FOR DEMOCRACY	27
2.4.2	DIRECT DEMOCRACY MODELS	32
2.4.2.1	Participatory Model	32
2.4.2.2	Deliberative Model	33
2.5	INDEIRECT DEMOCRACY MODELS	35
2.5.1	Liberal Model	35
2.5.2	Republican Model	36
2.5.3	Socialist Model	37
2.5.4	Elitist Model	38
2.6	Comment	40
2.7	DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION	41
2.7.1	DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY	41
2.7.1.1	Advantages of democracy in education	42
2.7.1.2	Disadvantages of democracy in schools	45

<b>2.8</b>	<b>THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPAL POWER IN DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>.....46</b>
<b>2.8.1</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF POWER IN A DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>.....48</b>
<b>2.9</b>	<b>AUTHORITY AND ACCONTABILITY</b>	<b>.....48</b>
<b>2.10</b>	<b>TYPE OF POWER</b>	<b>.....53</b>
<b>2.10.1</b>	<b>Legitimate power</b>	<b>.....54</b>
<b>2.10.2</b>	<b>Power by reward</b>	<b>.....55</b>
<b>2.10.3</b>	<b>COERCIVE POWER</b>	<b>.....56</b>
<b>2.10.4</b>	<b>REFERENT POWER</b>	<b>.....56</b>
<b>2.10.5</b>	<b>EXPERT POWER</b>	<b>.....57</b>
<b>2.11</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>.....57</b>
<b>2.12</b>	<b>TYPE OF LEADERSHIP ENVISAGED FOR A DEMOCRACY.....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>2.12.1</b>	<b>Participative leadership</b>	<b>.....59</b>
<b>2.12.2</b>	<b>Distributive leadership</b>	<b>.....62</b>
<b>2.12.3</b>	<b>Empowering leadership</b>	<b>.....63</b>
<b>2.12.4</b>	<b>Transformational leadership</b>	<b>.....64</b>
<b>2.13</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>.....65</b>
<b>2.14</b>	<b>CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC MILLIEU</b>	<b>.....66</b>
<b>2.14.1</b>	<b>Workload related challenges.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>2.14.2</b>	<b>Challenge in implementation and management challenges.....</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>2.15</b>	<b>PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE DISTRICT AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT</b>	<b>.....69</b>
<b>2.16</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>.....71</b>
<b>2.17</b>	<b>CHAPTER SUMMARY</b>	<b>.....72</b>

**CHAPTER 3 .....73**

**THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF  
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

<b>3.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>3.2</b>	<b>A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE STIPULATED DUTIES OF A PRINCIPAL AND THE DEMANDS OF A DEMOCRATIC MILEU</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>3.3</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>79</b>
<b>3.4</b>	<b>STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION WITHIN A DEMOCRACY</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>3.4.1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>3.4.2</b>	<b>SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMT's)</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>3.4.3</b>	<b>SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB)</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>3.4.4</b>	<b>TEACHER UNIONS</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>3.4.5</b>	<b>COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>92</b>
<b>3.4.6</b>	<b>THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>94</b>
<b>3.5</b>	<b>THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PRINCIPAL WITHIN DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>3.5.1</b>	<b>The role of school principals in democratized South African Context</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>3.6</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>97</b>
<b>3.6.1</b>	<b>Benefits of democratic school governance and leadership</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>3.7</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>3.8</b>	<b>DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP AND LEGISLATION</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>3.8.1</b>	<b>Democratic leadership demands and the legislative Framework</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>3.8.2</b>	<b>Democratic milieu and education law imperative</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>3.9</b>	<b>COMMENT</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>3.10</b>	<b>CHAPTER SUMMARY</b>	<b>111</b>

**CHAPTER 4 .....112**

**EMPIRICAL RESEARCH,PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

<b>4.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>4.2</b>	<b>RESEARCH PARADIGM</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>4.4</b>	<b>STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS</b>	<b>115</b>
<b>4.5</b>	<b>POPULATION AND SAMPLING</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>4.6</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE</b>	<b>116</b>
<b>4.7</b>	<b>TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>4.7.1</b>	<b>Truth value ensured by the strategy of credibility</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>4.7.2</b>	<b>Reflexivity</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>4.7.3</b>	<b>Triangulation</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>4.7.4</b>	<b>Member checking</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>4.8</b>	<b>ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>4.8.1</b>	<b>Informed consent</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.8.2</b>	<b>Anonymity</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.8.3</b>	<b>Confidentiality</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.8.4</b>	<b>Protection from harm</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.8.5</b>	<b>Permission to conduct research</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>4.9</b>	<b>THE DISCUSSION OF THEMES EMERGING FROM THE STUDY</b>	
	<b>FINDINGS</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>4.9.1</b>	<b>THEME 1: Understanding of democracy in Practice</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>4.9.2</b>	<b>THEME 2: Extend of participation of stakeholders</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>4.9.3</b>	<b>THEME 3: Support offered to principals by</b>	
	<b>Departmental Officials</b>	<b>124</b>
<b>4.9.4</b>	<b>THEME 4: Managing relationships with</b>	
	<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>4.9.5</b>	<b>THEME 5: Challenges that Principals experience in</b>	
	<b>implementing democracy</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>4.10</b>	<b>SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS</b>	<b>138</b>

<b>CHAPTER 5</b>	<b>.....140</b>
------------------	-----------------

**FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY**

<b>5.1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>.....140</b>
<b>5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>.....140</b>
<b>5.3 FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH</b>	<b>.....143</b>
5.3.1 Findings on Research Aim 1	.....144
5.3.2 Findings on Research Aim 2	.....145
5.3.3 Findings on Research Aim 3	.....147
<b>5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>.....148</b>
<b>5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH</b>	<b>.....151</b>
<b>5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</b>	<b>.....151</b>
<b>5.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY</b>	<b>.....153</b>

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

**APPENDICES**

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **AN EXPLORATION OF THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Education in South Africa has undergone a number of changes since the inception of a fully democratic political dispensation in 1994. These changes, introduced through new legislation and policy initiatives, radically shifted the direction and vision of the education system, South African Schools Act,(84/1996 b:10). The major direction of these changes is embedded in the concept of democracy and this changed the way leadership and management is to be exercised in schools. Van der Horst and McDonald (2001:56) argue that the shift to democracy meant the principals are required to apply and foster democratic principles in the day-to-day running of the school. According to Chapman (2005:7) democracy in schools must be applied in a manner that requires school principals to be able to deal with challenges of a democratic milieu.

The introduction of various legislative and transformational policies adopted after 1994, prescribed a type of leadership that was required to broaden and strengthen democracy. The largely political concept of stakeholder participation became the watchword of democratic participation in all institutions, be in public or private. In schools, the most telling change in the leadership and management of the school was brought by the introduction of the South African Schools Act (SASA) (84/1996). This Act, according to Mabasa and Themane (2002: 111), should be seen as the main instrument for the introduction of the concept of stakeholder participation in the governance of schools.

## 1.2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Leading a school in the post Apartheid era requires a principal to apply and implement a variety of leadership styles. According to Borole (2010:27) it is possible to choose those styles that are relevant within a democratic milieu. The problem facing principals revolves around choosing a leadership style that is appropriate for running the school in accordance with the demands of a democratic milieu. Mitchell (2000:19) warns that principals should possess constructive leadership attitudes which would result in a move to democratic school leadership.

However, deciding which leadership types are appropriate for the democratic milieu is a matter of great contestation mainly because of the variety of meanings and applications of the concept democracy (Mosoge, 1996: 32; Heystek, 2001: 207). To understand which leadership types are appropriate for democratic milieu, one should start by understanding the major principles of democracy as it is applied in this research.

Further, it is important to note that democratic principles as named hereunder would form the basis for democratic leadership;

- **Individual freedom:** Ensuring the respect for freedom such as freedom of speech, assembly, association. This includes rights of individuals to criticize and propose alternatives. Rights also entail the recognition of the rights of other people.
- **Choice:** The right to choose as, for instance, the right to choose a political party is fundamental to democracy.
- **Participation:** this refers to the extent to which member is of a democratic society are involved in the political process. However, not all citizens can be involved at the same time due to the complexity of modern states. Thus participation is limited to elected representatives who are accountable to the citizens they represent and are representatives to laws like every citizen.

- **Openness:** This is often called transparency whereby information is freely made available to members of society to enable them to make informed choices.
- **Protection:** Democratic societies accept the responsibility for the safety and well-being of the citizens and improvement of their quality of life.
- **Personal growth:** A democratic society is enabling in that creates an environment that allows individuals to lead a full and rich life.

The above presents some of the principles that the principals should observe in leading the school so that there is agreement between the community and the school. Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge & Ngcobo (2008:128) advocate a reciprocal partnership between the school and its partnership between the school and its surrounding community. The school does not stand alone, apart from the community but forms an integral part of the surrounding community. Continual interchange of values, beliefs and principles occurs between educators, parents and learners because the school provides these participants with a platform to interact with and engage one another.

In South Africa, the above principles of democracy constitute the demands for transformation of schools from the pre 1994 era to a post-1994 education agenda. To achieve congruence between the school and the community, principals are required to lead schools in such a way that democratic principles are not only compiled with but are actually practiced, experienced and acted upon within the school (West-Burnham, 2010:65).

However, Keedy (2003:37) argues that principals have a problem of interacting with the community and this often results in opportunities of building trust between the staff and the community unachieved. The participative and democratic management approach suggested above is new for most principals and most do not have prior experience and theoretical grounding in it (Heystek 2004:309).

Principals, long accustomed to authoritarian, hierarchical and exclusive practices, were suddenly confronted by a situation where they had to share power with many stakeholders (Mabasa & Themane, 2002:111, Naidu, et al 2008:4, Heystek 2004:309 ). Transformation from the traditional type of leadership, as conceptualized in the Western tradition; (West-Burnham, 2010:38) has yet to take root in the minds of many principals.

One of the most obvious principles of democracy is that of participation. This principle is encapsulated in the SASA (84/1996), which presents a model of participation of stakeholders in the school. According to (Heystek 2004:309) democratic principle that citizens can participate in the democratic elections of a country means that parents can vote for members of the governing body.

Maboe (2000:46) is of the view that principals cannot lead democratically if stakeholders are excluded. This view is supported by Rajeev (2009:4) who believes that the value of participation and involvement of parents provides stability to the effectiveness of a school. The School Governing Body thus offers a forum of participation for educators, learners, parents, non-teaching staff and other community members.

In terms of art, 23 of the SASA (84/1996) the principal acts as an ex-officio member in the School Governing Body and according to (Heystek 2004:308) is expected to assist and ensure that this body functions effectively. Bush (2007: 403) asserts that leadership is a process of influence based on clear values and beliefs whereby the principal should gain commitment of stakeholders to the vision of a better future for the school.

However the political nature of stakeholders' participation is suggestive of group-interest theory whereby each group of representatives attempts to advance and protect its own interests even at the expense of school goals (Naidu, *et al* 2008:111). The principal is placed in a difficult and stressful situation in that he/she must balance the expectations of the government with the expectations of representative groups in the SGB for the benefit of the school (Heystek 2004:308). This means the principals is caught in a complex web of relationship where he/she finds to define and ensure his/her autonomy and expertise.

The principle of participation also includes the tenets of consultation and transparency. Consultation implies that the consulted people are knowledgeable and have a stake in the issue at hand. It appears most members of the community especially in township are have s a stake in education issues but lack the necessary knowledge to make effective inputs. Naidu *et al* (2008: 134) and Kgaffe (2001:29) summarizes the following factors that mitigate the contributions of the community in effective consultation.

- Low education and illiteracy levels which leads to misunderstanding on education matters;
- Long working hours that prevent community members from attending school meetings;
- The changing family structure;
- Limited time for communication;
- Lack of transportation to and from school;
- Invitations to meetings arriving late;
- Lack of school policies and the practice of parental involvement; and
- The inherent fear of the principal towards the community.

The challenges related to consultation have the same effects on transparency. For participants to make informed decisions, sufficient information must be freely available. There must be sufficient information (Naidu, *et al* 2008:72). As a person serving as a conduct for information from the Department of Education, and as one who receives information about the school on the ground, the principal faces a dilemma concerning the amount of information that must be disclosed.

As a result of the requirement for confidentiality attached to privileged information, the principal may find it difficult to disclose personal information of an educator, for example, specific type of illnesses like HIV/AIDS, when necessary to account to the School Governing Body about the prolonged absence of an educator. In other cases, the principal is reluctant to disclose information that may place the school and his/her management in a bad light. Transparency, like rights, should be circumscribed by other considerations without exposing the principal to the accusation of lack of transparency.

The implementation of legislation is a challenge to principals within a democracy. There has been in recent years such a proliferation of legislation in South Africa that many principals hardly had time to acquaint themselves with these laws. According the Naidu *et al* (2008:18) the knowledge of legislation and policies is important in leading a school. Mabasa and Themane (2002:73) have found that principals experience a challenge in applying legislation and related policies when dealing with learner discipline and educator misconduct.

However, Departmental Circular (49/2010) states clearly the procedural requirements on how cases of absenteeism of educators must be handled. This view is further pursued by Moonsamy and Hasset (2007: 37) that there disciplined and co-operation problems amongst learners, incidents of learners arriving late a school and leaving earlier than it is expected.

The above challenges apparently arise from the emphasis placed on a culture of human rights, which is one of the building blocks of a democratic society. Mistaken perceptions about the implementation of a human rights culture contributes towards an increase in disciplinary problems. Reid (2007: 48) is convinced that an over-emphasis on rights without an equal emphasis on responsibilities has made teaching more difficult that in already is Botha (2004:249) asserts that the idea of misinterpreting rights, which often leads to misbehavior, should be dealt with seriously.

Toby (1998:71) is of the opinion that due process gives unruly students better protection against teachers but it also gives the educational process less protection against disorder. Maphosa and Shumba (2010:388), addressing the effects of learner rights; state that the school is facing a dilemma of finding adequate and meaningful rights that are applicable to learners but also to teachers.

Taunyane (2006: 91) points out that some of offences by teachers take a long time to be heard or dealt with thus negating the injunction that justice must be seen to be done. While a human rights culture is to be applauded and is fitting for a democratic milieu. While a human rights culture is to be applauded and is fitting for a democratic milieu, it is impinges negatively on the leadership rights of the principal as it appears to present a dilemma with regards to the principles of the rule of law and freedom of individuals. Principals are sometimes hesitant to apply disciplinary measures as the rule of law demands lest they trample on the rights of the school members.

According to Botha (2004: 239) the major reason for challenges in leading lies in the inability of principals to deal with people. Research reveals mainly three problem areas for adaptation of principals to democratic demands in their leadership: first, apartheid give rise to a particular understanding of education and education management amongst school principals (Behr, 2005:54); secondly, a move towards a democratic educational systems requires the use of policies that need transformation to be applied (Maboe, 2000:89).

Thirdly, adequate training for school principals to apply new approaches are needed (Berkhout, 2007:407). Swanepoel (2008:39) also echoes the above reasons when stating that school principals in South Africa and worldwide are faced with the task of continuously practicing and implementing educational restructuring. The above studies show that there is a problem as far as school leadership is concerned.

Some research studies specifically address challenges faced by principal in other countries. Ojo and Olaniyan (2008:172) found that leadership has become a complex phenomenon because of the nature and political advancement in Nigeria; whereas research undertaken by Clifford (2010:1) in the United States revealed the new school principal experience pressure in practicing democracy in schools. In addition, research by Ferrandino (2001:440) focused on the skills that principals need to address a variety of situations in a school. Agezo (2000:40) dealt with the role of a school principal in Ghana and concludes that the modern-era school system is increasingly complex. The use of a mixture of skills in effective school leadership formed part of the study by Hancock and Muller (2010:299) in the United Kingdom.

A study by Mitchell (2000:001) in South Africa focused on the characteristics of the school were changed is embraced and well-managed by the constructive leadership attitudes displayed by the principal. The study further highlighted the following findings:

- Policy changes, particularly in South Africa focused on the characteristics of the school were change is embraced and well-managed by the constructive leadership attitude displayed by the principal. The study further highlighted the following findings:
- Policy changes, particularly the abolishment of corporal punishment and greater learner and staff diversity contributes to low moral; and
- Stakeholders; Educators, parents and learners are not convinced of the integrity of the principals in implementing stability during these times of social and organizational change.

Recent research in South Africa concentrated on the challenges posed by the involvement of stakeholders stipulated in SASA, such as parent governors (Mabasa & Themane, 2002; Heystek, 2001) and learner governors (Heystek, 2001). From these research studies, it may be concluded that there relatively few studies that have addressed the specific challenges that have faced principals in leading schools within a democratic milieu. While some of the challenges that face principals as a result for the democratic milieu have been alluded to in the above research studies, none has presented a coherent picture of these challenges.

### **1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

Changes brought about by the shift to a new democratic dispensation have been accompanied by unprecedented and unintended challenges in the leadership of principals. These changes meant that principals had to exercise their leadership within a democratic milieu. This shift found many principals unprepared and untrained to cope with the demands placed on them by the participative and democratic management approach envisaged in legislation, particularly the SASA.

For principals, long accustomed to authoritarian and top-down modes of leadership and lacking experience in the new democratic approaches, the new dispensation presented untold challenges to their exercise of leadership in the school. Specifically, the application of the tenets of democracy such as participation, consultation and transparency constituted enormous challenges facing principals in leading schools within a democratic milieu.

The democratic milieu in South Africa places a high premium on the creation of a human rights culture. Principals are expected to exercise their leadership with due consideration to the respect and facilitation of a human rights culture in the school.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

It is behind this backdrop that the following questions will be asked:

- What is the role of school principal within a democratic milieu?
- How is leadership challenges currently perceived, implemented and managed in school?
- How could school principals be assisted in leading schools within a democratic milieu?

## **1.5 AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

From the above research questions the following research aims were formulated:

- Research aim 1: To determine the role of school principals within a democratic milieu;
- Research aim 2: To determine how leadership challenges are perceived, implemented and managed in a school;
- Research aim 3: To suggest a guide to help principals to lead successfully within a democratic milieu.

## **1.6 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

### **1.6.1 Literature review**

A literature study will be conducted to explore challenges principals face in leading their schools within a democratic milieu. Primary and secondary sources, as well as national and international literature will be used. Relevant literature will be located using data-basis such as EBSCO-Host, Eric, Sabinet, Google and Nexus

The following descriptors will be used to locate sources: leadership, challenges democracy, milieu and school principal.

### **1.6.2. Research paradigm**

The researcher would adopt an interpretivism paradigm in discussing challenges facing school principal in leading schools within a democratic milieu. This is done within the broader view of the nature of the research problem. According to Maree (2010:58), the choice of this paradigm bears its reasons to the fact that the research text is the expression of the thoughts of the researcher; interpreters must attempt to put themselves within the researchers' "horizon" in order to reconstruct the intentions of the study. The researcher would therefore have to understand the parts in order to have a holistic view on the problem.

Furthermore, the choice of the paradigm is based on the views reiterated by (Cohen and Crabtree, 2006:1) that the interpretivism paradigm yields what the researcher and the problem are linked such that who are and how we understand the world is a central part of how we understand ourselves, others and the world, Brandon (2008:2) believes that the interpretivism paradigm is characterized by seeing the social world from a highly subjective viewpoint.

In summary the interpretivism paradigm has the following characteristics (Maree, 2010 Cohen and Crabtree 2006; Angen 2006 and Brandon, 2008):

- Phenomena is understood through the meanings that people assign to them;
- Interpretivism paradigm give rise to the fact that the study reflect the same everyday constructs that people use of interpret social life;
- People are placed in their contexts and therefore a greater opportunity to understand the perceptions they have of their own activities with regards to the research problem;
- An Understanding of the whole is understood by uncovering causes of terms reference on the research problem and insight is gained;
- Knowledge of social world affects human behavior and realities differs across time and place; and

- This result in the realization of the way in which a particular group of people make sense of their situation.

However, the researcher is aware that the paradigm chosen has its pitfalls as outlined by Mouton (2001:67): Conflicting interpretations may arise due to the unending dialogue through investigation results and findings and misunderstanding of the social world can be created between researcher and respondents during the investigation.

Whereas Brandon (2008:2) has found that results may not be taken and applied to other situations other than educational research because they are subjective truths and not objective facts. It would be fair to point out that the researcher took considerable care on the application of the paradigm in order to arrive at justifiable and reasonable results.

### **1.6.3 Qualitative Research Method**

The research study would be based on Qualitative research method. This method is chosen on the notion that Qualitative research method is used in investigations amongst individual groups within an organization and that it is focused on the behavioral regularities of everyday situation. (Welman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2006: 193). This is done with the understanding that the study will uncover ways in which subjects in the population sample can be understood, take action and manage their situations as well the problems and difficulties they encounter, Creswell (2005: 145).

Furthermore, De Vos (2000: 240) argue that the choice of qualitative research method is chosen as it is a multi perspective approach aimed at describing and interpreting interaction in terms of the meanings that the subjects in the population sample of the study attach to it. This view is also echoed by Welman *et al* (2006: 193) that qualitative research method processes of uncovering facts are based on successive observations and interviews.

The latter are important as they guide the researcher on the next stages in the research study process.

#### **1.6.4 Data Collection Method**

It is important methods that are scientifically approved in order to arrive at truthful answers to the research problem. The researcher would use the following methods to collect data as Meyer (2007:1) states the process of collecting data should be based on validity and reliability on the variables relevant to the research problem.

##### **1.6.4.1 Structured Interviews**

The researcher will apply individual interviews in order to learn about views, opinions and beliefs of the participants on the research problem. Maree (2010:145) posts that the aim of individual interviews is to see the world through the eyes of the participants.

The advantage of the interviews is that the response rate is much higher than in quantitative research. For research interviews to be successful and yield the desired information the researcher should (Cohen, *et al* 2006:34):

- Brief the respondents as to the nature or purpose of the interview;
- The researcher must give the researcher consent on the interview process;
- The researcher must remember that he is a data collection instrument and try not to let his biases, opinions or curiosity affect his behaviour; and
- The researcher must be at pains to conduct the interview carefully and sensitively.

The researcher however, is not oblivious of the fact that the choice of individual interviews is not without shortcomings. Welman *et al* (2006:178) believe that the high cost of preparing and applying interviews often cast a dark shadow on its success and time may be consumed. The researcher will take precautions to counteract these shortcomings by clearing up any misunderstanding on the part of respondents, (Creswell, 2000:34).

## **1.7 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

### **1.7.1 POPULATION**

The study population will be comprised of primary, middle and high school principals in the Rustenburg Area Projects Office, in the Bojanala education district. However, due to the vast expanse of the district and for purposes of logistics and accessibility, the research study will be limited to the Rustenburg Project Office. There are 151 schools in the Rustenburg Area Project Office: 4 combined, 18 intermediate, 91 primary and 38 secondary schools. The study population would comprise school principals in the Area.

### **1.7.2 SAMPLING**

The researcher believes that by using a simple that is relevant to the research study would be give rise to reliable answers; therefore random sampling would be applied. According to Maree (2010:79) the choice of this sampling technique has its values in the fact that the researcher would select participants because of a defining characteristic that make them holders of the data needed of this study. Furthermore, this would lead to decisions made explicitly for the purpose of obtaining the richest possible sources of information to answer the research questions, Creswell (2007: 146).

## 1.8 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA

The researcher would ensure that data collected is held in high esteem. This would be achieved by adhering to procedures for accessing the collected data; this would be done by checking it consistently for credibility. According to Maree (2010: 113) using data from different sources would help the researcher check the findings thoroughly. The researcher would pronounce satisfaction if the data from different sources correlate, therefore deeming the research result credible.

Furthermore, De Vos (2000:331) is of the idea that in order to ensure trustworthiness the following aspects would be relevant as the researcher would apply them:

- Truth value: the researcher will establish confidence in the truth of the findings for the subjects and the context in which the research would be undertaken;
- Applicability: The researcher would have to ascertain the degree to which the findings can be applied to other situations or with other focus groups;
- **Consistency:** The researcher would establish whether the findings would be consistent if the investigation were to be replicated with the same focus group or in a similar context; and
- **Neutrality:** The researcher would ensure that the findings are a function only if the participants and conditions of the research and not for any other purposes of bias and viewpoints.

The researcher would therefore maintain confidentiality of participants in order to obtain a dignified and trusted research report.

## **1.9 DATA ANALYSIS**

The researcher would establish how participants made meaning to the responses given on the research problem. This according to Maree (2010:99) would be applied by analyzing the respondent's perceptions, attitudes, understanding, knowledge, values, feelings and experiences in an attempt to broaden their insight on the research problem.

Furthermore, the researcher would analyze data inductively in order to allow the findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in the already collected data, (Maree, 2010:99). This approach would enable the researcher not be clouded by preconceived ideas and being bias.

Data analysis is delicate processes that need one to steadily apply techniques that would yield valid research conclusions. In additions, the researcher would have to revisit accumulated data in order to verify views. Any gaps encountered are to receive attention; this would then form a part of bigger whole with regards to the research problem.

Creswell (2007:208) postulate that is important to summarize what the research has seen or heard in terms of words, description and experiences shared to by respondents. The researcher must not measure but interpret and make sense of what is in the data, (Maree, 2010:100). Therefore, it stands to reason that a systematic approach would be applied that would enable the researcher to stay focused to the research questions as well as the aims and objectives of the study.

### **1.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The researcher would request permission from the Rustenburg Area Project Office to undertake an investigation. A letter of request shall be submitted to the Rustenburg Area Project office for approval to conduct research among the sample population. A covering letter requesting respondents to volunteer to take part in data collection processes would be presented to participants. Furthermore, the researcher would have to apply to the Ethics Committee of the North West University, Potchefstroom Campus for permission to undertake the research study.

The researcher will take all possible to ensure participants in the study that their participation would be treated with the strictest confidentiality. The outcomes of the study would be made available to interested parties upon request and also assuring those of the confidentiality with which their responses would handled.

### **1.11 CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY**

The study is necessary as it would benefit school principals, educators, education specialists and practitioners as well as stakeholders within the education department. The study would bring awareness of the challenges facing school principals in exercising leadership within a democratic milieu. The study recognize the complexity of leadership in the South African education scenario and attempts to contribute to this phenomenon through investigative methods that would be reliable to further research in the problem.

Furthermore, according to Quail (2001:68) the transformational atmosphere of the Department of Education would be realized and this is imperative in schools and this will be realized through the guidelines derived from this study. It stands to reason that school principals and the department, through this study would reap beneficial rewards.

## **1.12 PRELIMINARY CHAPTER DIVISION**

**Chapter 1:** Introduction

**Chapter 2:** Overview of democratic leadership

**Chapter 3:** Duties and functions of principals in a democratic milieu.

**Chapter 4:** Empirical research presentation and presentation of data

**Chapter 5:** Findings, Recommendations and summary

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL OVERVIEW OF DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In South Africa education was differently provided before 1994 through different race based systems. According to Beckmann and Prinsloo (2009:1) the establishment of school governing bodies brought a significant decentralization of power in the running of schools. This means that schools had to adhere to the prescripts of the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996. School principals as heads of schools have a task of prescribing to the latter note of the contents of the (SASA). The (SASA) plays an important role in encouraging the principles of democracy in education and mutual responsibility in education. The democratization of schools means an increase in participation in the governance of schools, however, this is not necessary the case (Davies 2004:14).

The role of a school principal has since changed due to the demands of democracy. Mncube (2008:2) argues that principals are now experiencing considerably heavier workloads and escalating demands of a democratic milieu like: accountability, stakeholder involvement and transparency. School principals are faced with a responsibility of exercising leadership that promotes participation in order to promote democracy, (Apple 2000:12). These developments have a bearing on how school principals practice leadership within a democracy.

In this chapter the theoretical grounding of democracy in education will be outlined, with specific references to Direct and Indirect democracy models. The discussion will further resonate on the nature of the South African democratic milieu bearing insights from: the role of democracy in education, the type of envisaged leadership for a democracy and the role of stakeholder participation.

The chapter concludes by detailing challenges faced by school principals within a democratic milieu. The emphasis and argument is on the link between a democratic milieu and its relevance to education particularly within the South African context. Varieties of sources are reviewed to gain balanced and valid information for critical discussion. The chapter concludes with a summary.

## **2.2 EXPLANATION OF CONCEPTS**

It is important to first explain concepts of the study. The aim is to find reasonable understanding for discussion. According to the title of the study the following concepts need to be explained:

### **2.2.1 Democracy**

The following are representative of definitions usually given of the concept of democracy:

Onions (2007:516) defines democracy as a form of government in which the sovereign power resides in the people, and is exercised directly or indirectly by them or by offices selected by them.

Powell (2001:266) defines democracy as a government by the people or their elected representatives.

O'Neill (2000:205) defines democracy as a form of government in which the people elect representatives to govern them.

It may be deduced from these definitions that democracy is a process whereby people govern themselves through electing representatives who would apply their collective views, in the context of this research it means a form of governance applied at present in the education system of the country.

### **2.2.2 Democratic milieu**

There is no definite definition of a democratic milieu but rather what constitute a democratic milieu are a number of aspects that include amongst others:

- The type of governance;
- The view of people towards the governance of the day;
- The practice of varied forms of democratic characteristics;
- Transparency and accountability; and
- An openness to criticism

### **2.2.3 School**

O'Neill (2000:743) defines a school as a place or institution where education is received, especially primary or secondary education.

Powell (2001:982) defines a school as a place where people, especially young people, are educated.

Onions (2007:1902) defines a school as an establishment in which boys or girls or both receive instruction.

It may thus be said that a school is a place whereby individuals receive skills to lead them to successful adulthood. In this research context, a school refers to ordinary public or private schools, enrolling boys and girls from Grades R (Reception) up to Grade 12 (Matric). The schools are categorized into Primary, Middle and High schools within the jurisdiction of the North West Education Department (NWED).

#### **2.2.4 Leadership Practices**

Gibson, Donnelly, Ivancevich and Konopaske (2003:299) define leadership practices as attempts to use influence to motivate individuals to accomplish some goals.

Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson (2000:90-91) define leadership practices as activities of influencing people to strive willingly for group objectives, interpersonally exercised in a situation and directed, through communication processes towards the attainment of a specialized goal or goals.

Greenberg and Baron (2003:471) define leadership practices as processes whereby one individual influences group members towards the attainment of defined group or organizational goals.

It may thus be said that leadership practices have one common goal: accomplishment of desired objectives. Borole (2010:11) believes that the definition of leader from which leadership practices is derived from implies that the leader should be able to see the future or what is coming to solve problems and take proper actions. In this research context, leadership practices mean any action a leader applies that has its aim as achieving results within a school as an organization.

#### **2.2.5 Leadership styles**

According to Newstrom and Davis (2002:326) leadership styles are manners and approaches of providing direction, implementing plans and motivating people. Whereas, Robbins, Odendaal and Roodt (2003:245) are of the idea that by applying a leadership style would yield the key factor in the nature of leading itself. Furthermore, the mode of applying leadership styles is situation and person orientated in an organization.

Anthony, Perrewe and Kacmar (2004:462) summarize the following as determinants of a leader in their ability or inability to apply leadership styles:

Business literacy; People skills; Conceptual skills; Track record; Taste; Judgement; and Character.

Leadership encompasses different aspects of ensuring that wishes of an organization are driven through by the use of varied ideas and approaches of its leader.

### **2.2.6 Management**

Management can be defined as the organization and coordination of the activities of an enterprise in accordance with certain policies and in achievement of defined objectives. Furthermore, management is often included as a factor of production along with equipment, materials and money.

According to Seale (2002:02) management is a derivative from Old French *management* “the art of conducting, directing”, from Latin *manu agere* “to lead by the hand” which is characterized by the process of leading and directing all or part of an organization through the deployment and manipulation of resources: human, financial, material, intellectual or intangible.

Cronje, Du Toit and Motlatla (2000:100) as quoted by Borole (2010:12) point out that management is the process in which financial, human, physical and information resources are used to achieve organizational objectives. The main responsibility of the manager in a school is to control and manage school resources, budget effectively and produce results.

Borole (2010:120) summarizes the following more precise definitions of management:

Dunham and Pierce (2000:6) define management as the process of planning, organising, directing and controlling organisational resources (human, financial, physical and information) in pursuit of organizational goals. Hellriegel and Slocum Jr (2002:8) define management as an activity that involves planning, organizing, leading and controlling people working in an organization and the ongoing set of tasks and activities they perform.

Yukl (2006:6) defines management as an activity that seeks to produce predictability and order by establishing action plans with timetables, and allocating resources; organizing and staffing (establishing structure, assigning people to jobs); monitoring results; and solving problems.

The researcher holds a stern agreement to the statement that management is a discipline that consists of the interlocking functions of formulating policy, organizing, planning, controlling and directing an organization's resources to achieve organization's objectives. In this research context, management implies to the carrying out of tasks to run a school as an effective organization with achievable goals.

### **2.2.7 Manager**

The *Online* Dictionary defines a manager as an individual who is in charge of a certain group of tasks, or a certain subset of a company

According to Dictionary reference (2011:1) manager is defined as a person who has control or direction of an institution; a person who manages; a person who manipulates resources and expenditures.

It may be concluded that a manager is an overseer of what is happening in an organization. It is behind this backdrop that school principals should see themselves fitting the definitions above particularly in a democratic environment like South Africa.

### **2.2.8 Community**

According to the O'Neill (2000: 124) community is defined as a body of persons in the same locality: a body of persons leading a common life.

Onions (2007:289) define community as the quality of appertaining to all in common; common ownership.

According to Naidu *et al* (2008:132) schools in many areas are situated in the middle of potential resources that can be harnessed in efforts to improve learners' academic achievement.

In this research study, community is used to refer to the periphery around the schools radius. These also include the local authority, businesses, governmental and non-governmental institution.

### **2.3 COMMENT**

The above explanation of concepts indicates that school principals lead within a defined democratic state with the constitution as the supreme law to be upheld. Furthermore, schools are areas of learning and a distinguished difference between leadership practice and management are explained from a variety of sources.

The concepts defined define the environment in which school principals find themselves in. It is within these environments that challenges emerge. School principals are faced with a huge task of enabling themselves to lead under these challenges, paying special reference to the tenets and prescripts of the constitution of the republic.

The concept of theory as the keyword for the chapter is also defined from different sources reviewed. This is done to get clearer and connected definition to the concept. This leads the discussion to the different democratic theories, which is done in the next section. Having a workable theory of democracy on leadership is a demand that needs to be fully explored.

## **2.4 THEORETICAL GROUNDING OF DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION**

### **2.4.1 CRITICAL THEORY AS THE BASIS FOR DEMOCRACY**

Critical Theory is defined and explained as a tool to seek human emancipation; to liberate human beings from circumstances that enslave them. Further, it emerged being in connection with the many social movements that identify varied dimensions of the dominations of human beings in modern societies. It provides the descriptive and normative bases for social inquiry aimed at increasing freedom in all its forms.

Literature reviewed depicts Critical Theory as being explanatory, practical and normative. The researcher believes that it is through Critical Theory that the merits and demerits of democracy must be explained. It can also be added that all the pillars of democracy and people responsible for its change are identified and it provides clear norms for criticism and achievable practical goals for transformation.

Critical Theory is concerned about a sophisticated analysis of the contrary psychological burdens of democracy. Theories have worked extensively on critical theory and education: Ewert (1991); Young (1990); Freire (1969) is argued that according to critical theory young citizens are on the threshold of a learning level characterized by the personal maturity of the decentred ego and by open communication that fosters in them participation and responsibility for all.

Freire (1969) believes in the application of lower borne in the not so popular idea of concretization. The following are typical attributes displayed within a critical theory milieu: Domination is dealt with; political dialogue and engagement are imperative. West (1993) argues that the idea of involving people in social dialogue gives rise to the dynamics of these dialogues of how ordinary people can and do make judgment; on how people think, feel and act.

Critical Theory in education has undergone metamorphosis as quoted by Giroux which acted the fact those earlier versions of Critical Theory: did not develop a comprehensive theoretical approach for dealing with the patterns of conflict and contradictions that existed in various cultural spheres, does not go well with capitalism. The problem is that social inequalities taints the essence of democracy and secondly, inequality relations among citizens.

Critical Theory gives rise to post modernism, critical pedagogy and critical feminism. Education is seen as technologically advancing giving rise to consumerism and the media posing serious threats in modern societies particularly in democracies. Burbules and Berk (2005: 11) add that Critical Theory in correct education stance in South Africa would be to urge teachers to help students become more skeptical toward accepted norms.

Furthermore, the application of Critical Theory would give rise to the idea that citizens would be aware of some deficient in the abilities or disposition that would allow them to discuss certain kinds of inaccuracies, distortions and even falsehood, (Burbules and Berk, 2005:12). There is distinct relation between Critical Theory and its modern day counterpart: post modernization.

Many scholars in this field echo the following sentiments: (Alston, 1995; Alston, 1991 Robert, 1996; Richard, 1994 and Harvey, 1996): Critical Theory gives rise to specific concern with the influences of educational knowledge, cultural formations, rattling of status quo; resistance to change; sides are taken on behalf of those groups who are disenfranchised from social, economical and political possibilities.

Burbules and Berk (2005:34) argue that by helping to make people more critical in thought and action, progressively mind educators can help free learners to see the world as it is and to act accordingly. The researcher argues that school principals are not aware that education can increase freedom and enlarge the scope of human possibilities.

One important aspect of criticality is an ability to reflect on one's own views and assumptions as themselves feature of a particular cultural and historical formation. Furthermore the researchers believes that the prospective of reviewing critically as a practice helps us to see that critically is way of being as well as an intellectual capacity (Burbules & Berk, 2005).

Critical Theory is a vital philosophical tradition in normative disciplines of social and political philosophy. Critical inquiry aims at creating the reflective conditions necessary for the practical verifications of its inquiring and these conditions are not confined only to democratic institutions. Critical Theory is no longer a unique approach; politically it loses meaning as the aims and struggles of the age of globalization become more divine and not automatically connections by the commitment to any particular holistic social theory.

It is important as institutions and social relations may foster critically or suppress it. This is important as it is always social in character; partly because relations to others influence the individual; and partly because certain of those activities arise from an interaction with challenging alternative views (Burbules 1993: 18). It can thus be postulated that Critical theories are not democratic theories, but their practical consequences are assessed and verified in democratic practice and solved by inquiry into better democratic practice (Burbules 1993; 20).

The next discussion is on direct and indirect democracy models.

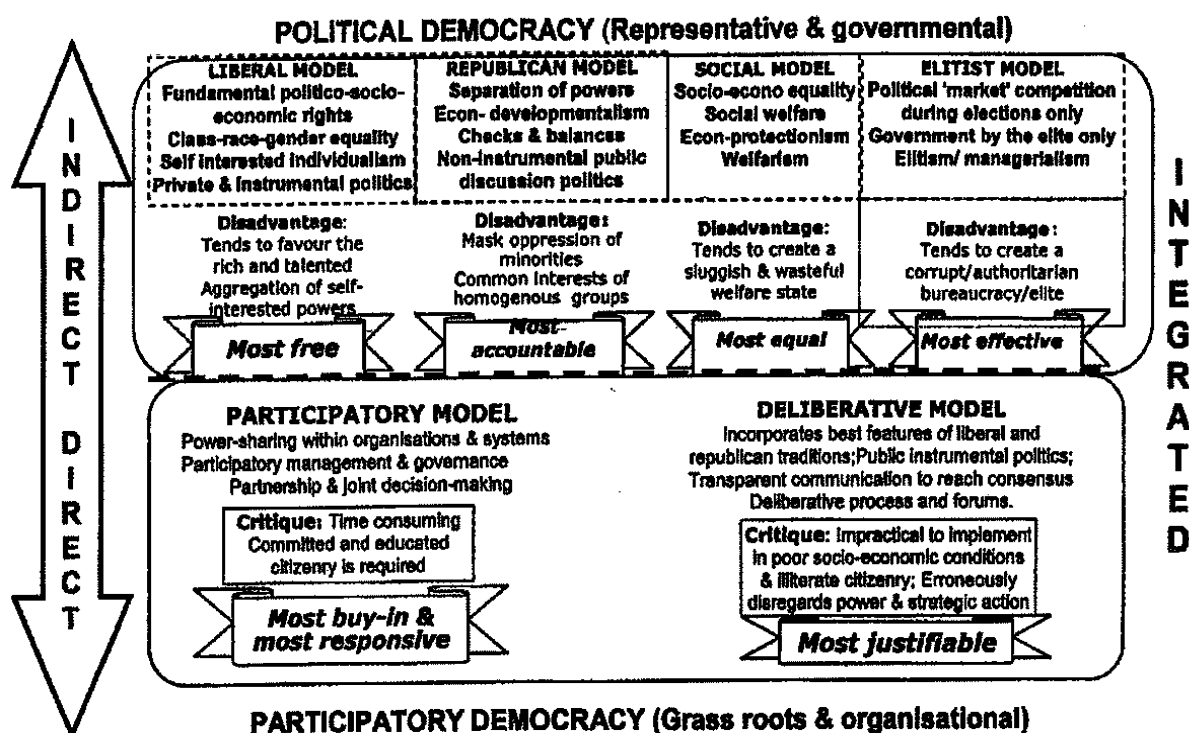
According to Smit and Oosthuizen (2011:59) models of democracy have evolved over the centuries from direct democracy in ancient Athens to the modern representative models of; Liberal democracy, Republicanism, Social democracy, Elitism, Participatory democracy and Deliberative democracy.

In South Africa the tenets of democracy are enshrined in the constitution of the country which spells out an unequivocal commitment to representative and Participatory democracy. Higham, Hopkins and Antharidou (2007:24) argue that education can be practiced at the heart of school leadership within a democracy:

Ensuring consistent teaching and learning; Integrating sound grasps of knowledge and skills within a broad and balanced curriculum; Managing behaviour and attendance strategically, managing resources and the environment; Building the school as a professional learning community; and Developing partnership beyond school to encourage parental support for learning and new learning opportunities.

The following discussion is based on direct models of democracy: Participatory and Deliberative as well as Indirect models: Liberal, Republican, Socialist and Elitist models. A critical analysis discussion on the application of the theories in schools also receives attention.

The diagrammatic representation of models of democracy and their inter-relatedness to society is illustrated in Figure 1 as outlined by Smit and Oosthuizen (2010:60).



McLeod (2007:76) summarized the following challenges facing school principals when implementing democratic theories when leading:

The synergy between upholding standards welfare the drive to increase the learning experience of learners; the implementation of work reform; and the impetus for school diversity and parental choice.

The choice of theory to be implemented lies on the ability of the school principal to diversify methods of leading. The following discussion is analyses of individual theories of democracy, their advantages, known disadvantages and each model's role on education practice.

## **2.4.2 DIRECT DEMOCRACY MODELS**

### **2.4.2.1 Participatory model**

Participatory democracy is a process emphasizing broad participation of constituents in the direction and operation of political systems. In addition, participatory democracy is more advocated than traditional representation democracy.

According to Corrigan (2011:10) Participatory democracy entails the use of knowledge, expertise and conflict available to achieve the common goal on any issue and it allows the dealing with of complex issues by using collective intelligence of all people concerned and getting their buy-in.

The following are advantages of participatory democracy:

Creation of opportunities for all members of a particular group to make meaningful contribution to decision making; Technology advancement is key to implement measures; Small-scale group participation is enhanced; and The role of non-governmental organizations leads to a strong liberal democracy.

From the above factors, the researcher would like to highlight the fact that this form of democracy is the most favoured as it incorporates the essence of involving all stakeholders to make decisions in organizations. However, according to Corrigan (2011:1) the negative factor is that this type of theory does not have room for hierarchies.

Smith (2011:23) outlines the following pointers with regards to the benefits of the application of participatory democracy: The use of collective intelligence to inform decision-making and the creation of safe-fail environment that promotes learning, whereas, Corrigan (2011:78) adds that in education, schools are seen as communities where everyone shares information, the role of parents in the education of their children receives attention, learners learn according to their abilities-nothing is forced upon them and school governance is enhanced.

This form of theory is over-confident because it does not cater for individual opinion as every aspect is group –based, Conflict of interest may arise in areas concern this may well lead to multi-faceted lack of focus goals reached within an institution.

#### **2.4.2.2 Deliberative model**

The most distinctive feature of deliberative democracy is that deliberation- and not voting is the primary source of a law's legitimacy. It can thus be assumed that in a deliberative democracy, ones role in debating issues of the day is the key in contrast to being silent to issues of concern in society.

According to Cohen (2010:106) the following points tend to put deliberative democracy to its advantage: ongoing independent associations with expected continuation, Citizens have the privilege of structuring their institution such that deliberation is the deciding factor in the creation of the institution, and institutions allow deliberation to continue.

Furthermore, a commitment to the respect of the majority of values and aims within the society is practiced through the use of this theory. It is more easily able to incorporate scientific opinion and base policy on outputs of ongoing research and deliberative democracy generates ideal conditions of impartiality, rationality and knowledge of the relevant facts. It can thus be emphasized that this form of theory allows participants in society to deduce what is morally correct, (Cohen, 2010: 107).

Adams & Waghid (2005:31) mentions the following characteristics of deliberative democracy:

- Participation is governed by norms of equality and symmetry because it gives a chance for everybody to question, to interrogate and to open debate;
- All have the right to pose questions on the assigned topic;
- All have the right to initiate arguments about the very rules of deliberation.

Through the implementation of deliberative democracy much can be achieved as different opinions on subjects can be weighed against one another to arrive at a solution whereby all parties benefit. Adams and Waghid (2005:32) conclude that deliberative democracy is grounded in the meanings of deliberation, concern for the other and recognition of unheard voices.

## **2.5 INDIRECT DEMOCRACY MODELS**

### **2.5.1 Liberal model**

A liberal democracy is a representative democracy in which the ability of the elected representatives is to exercise decision-making power subject to the rule of law. This stands to reason that representatives are by nature of this theory bound to carry out the wishes of the people who put them to power. Carson (2010:2) believe that liberal democracy benefits a select group of individuals and that the right to vote is given to all regardless of race, gender or property ownership. It can thus be assumed that this form of governance lay out a system of checks and balances in all spheres of government.

The following are noted disadvantages of liberal democracy according to Carson (2010:3): Compensation for poorly constructed laws is rife, curriculum is difficult to conceptualize for those unfamiliar with the norms of modern scientific culture.

Furthermore, this type of democracy has capitalist, class-based and not democratic or participatory values and may lead to monopoly of state assets by powerful individuals. It may thus be summarized that liberal democracy may lead to the encouragement of bureaucracy and short- term focus, (Carson: 2010: 4).

The belief that people choose representatives to apply their wishes has its own flaws: Voters may feel cheated by representatives and thus vote with their “feet” to greener pastures, the will of the majority can be exercised over the rights of the minority and many decisions from ordinary people on the ground are not necessarily taken into consideration.

Nevertheless, the theory has the following benefits to education: Students who are already familiar with the conventions of formal intellectual culture as it is currently constituted are at a distinct advantage and the theory answers to current cultural needs and interests of students due to variety of approaches used than traditional norms,(Carson 2010:5).

### **2.5.2 Republican model**

According to Lovett (2010:1), the term “republicanism” is generally used in two different contexts: the first refers to a loose tradition or family of writers in the history of western political thought and the second context is a reference to a specific interpretation of the classical republican tradition, with emphasis on the value of political liberty. Republican democracy can thus be defined as a government chosen by the people whether it being direct or representative.

The notable fact about this type of democracy is that its leader: head of state or president is chosen by the people. Bohman (2008:41) echoes the following inputs as advantages of republican democracy: The importance of civic virtue and related political participation, the awareness of the negative impact of corruption and the benefits of an “open” constitution and the rule of law. Republican democracy gives the right to people to have a voice in lawmaking right to defend or be defended in an event of disputes.

There is an underlying factor that seeks to underpin the idea that a republican democracy often gives people the power to decide what is best for them and this always result in debate that balances the negative and the positive aspects of this kind of democracy. According to Bohman (2008:35) republican democracy is often overpowered by factionalism which demerits the essence of this kind of democracy. This view is also echoed by Lovett (2010:2) that controversy may brew with respect to who the tradition’s members are, and their relative significance.

Dagger (2009:34) is of the opinion that republican democracy is silent on how members should interpret its underlying philosophical commitments with regards to the role members must play in developing the society. Lovett (2010:3) summarizes the disadvantages of republican democracy by juxtaposing the fact that republicans are only interested in political liberty from powers of the day within a state.

Conniff (2011:3) is of the belief that the republican view on education in the Wisconsin State in the US did not contribute positively to education. This was brought about by the fact that rural school districts were to be wiped out, drain resources from city schools and eradicate an entire state-wide system of public education. These three factors do not add importance to education in the agenda of republicans.

However, Patten (2000:61) argues that the value of republican democracy in education is that it gave school boards a positive sense of exercising self-control on the running of schools both financially and in infra-structure delivery. According to Smith (2001:2) the essence of a republican democracy in education is to offer the minority or less privileged citizens, an education appropriate to future political leaders, the majority an education fitted to their primary social role as producers, workers and consumers.

### **2.5.3 Socialist model**

According to Ormrod (2004:10) social democracy theory is a theory that focuses on the learning that occurs within a social context. Peters (2010: 310) defines social democracy as form of government whereby citizens have absolute power in the running of the affairs of the society. Both definitions have the same bearing that people learn from one another, including such concepts as operational learning, imitation and modelling. It can be said that the society is a learning ground for all individuals.

The following are known advantages of social democracy according to Takis (2006:297):

Students often learn a great deal simply by observing other people; describing the consequences of behaviour can effectively increase appropriate behaviours and decrease inappropriate ones; modelling provides an alternative to shaping for teaching new behaviours; self-efficacy of students is highly developed; and teachers' interventions in students' life help them set realistic life expectations.

It can thus be summarized that people can learn by observing the behaviour of others within the society and therefore be holistic people.

This theory is applicable to schools as according to Ormrod (2000:2) the environment in which people grow reinforces their being. Furthermore, the theory influences cognitive processes that promote learning; however, just like the contents of the SASA, the theory is very loud on the issue of meting out punishment as according to Peters (2010: 374) punishment has indirect effects on learning. Self-regulation is the key in the moulding of an individual.

#### **2.5.4 Elitist model**

Elitism democracy is defined as the belief that certain persons or members of certain classes or groups deserve favoured treatment by virtue of their perceived superiority, as in intellect, social status or financial resources. Whereas, Halberstam (2005:432) defines elitist democracy as a practice based on the belief or attitude that some individuals, who form a select group people with intellect, wealth, specialized training or experience or other distinctive attributes are those whose views on a matter are to be taken most seriously or carry the most weight; whose views and/or actions are most likely to be constructive to society as a whole, or whose extraordinary skills, abilities or wisdom render them fit to govern.

The most highlighted disadvantage of this theory is that power is concentrated in the hands of a limited number of people. This may also be viewed from the angle that an elitist democracy benefits only a select group of people Khan (2003:214). Furthermore, a situation arises in which a group of people claiming to possess abilities or simply an in-group or cadre grant themselves extra privileges at the expense of others, discrimination is rife and power is centralized in this form of democracy, Halberstam (2005:321).

Elitist democracy theory like any other theory has the following advantages and benefits to education in society: a long track record in specialized fields can be achieved, a concentration on or allocation of funds to best students can be realized and on assessment, this theory can be based on conventional learning abilities, knowledge or other abilities Khan (2003:453). In society in general, power hungry individuals thrive best under this form of democracy as personal egos are displayed, gratification is the order of the day and rigorous study in particular fields may lead to expertise, Gabardi (2001:390).

Furthermore, materialism is the character of this theory which then leads to social strata. According to Halberstein (2005:286) elitist democracy favours a few and tramples on the wishes of the majority. In education context this theory led and is resulting in few exclusive educational institutions that are hard to enter and this contributes less to the vast majority in society, (Khan 2003:321).

## 2.6 Comment

The discussion outlines different theories that make up the principle of democracy in education. The role of democracy in education received attention. Kelly (2008:101) argues that one of the major tasks that education must perform in a democratic society is the proper preparation of young citizens for the roles and responsibilities they must be ready to take on when they reach maturity. However, the issue of implementing suitable theories to democratize education poses a demand on the role a principal play in the running of a school.

An Illustration, Fig. (I) of democratic theories and their inter-dependence in society is explained. Detailed comparisons and relations of theories are highlighted by the illustration. Education is seen as a tool that, according to Smith (2010:9) quoting Dewey is the fundamental core of social progression. It stands to reason that within a democratic milieu, implementing leadership should be viewed against the backdrop that education is a regulation of the process of coming to share in the social consciousness and that the adjustment of individual activity on the basis of this social idea is the only sure method of social reconstruction, (Smith 2010:23).

The discussion highlighted that Participatory Model is more suitable to adapt to a democratic society. The demand of this model on principals would be their inability to create opportunities for all members of staff to participate in roles and decision making; the inherent fear of sharing information with other role players; fear of being criticized by subordinates and stakeholders as well as perception of over delegation of participation which may be viewed as passing the buck.

It can thus be concluded that the choice of a democratic theory or a mixture of, will only bear fruit if it is implemented coherently and with room for unforeseen challenges. The role of the community a school finds itself in is very crucial. The community's duty to education is, therefore its paramount duty, (Nemerowitz and Rossi 2010:107).

The next discussion will deal with the democracy in education.

## **2.7 DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION**

### **2.7.1 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DEMOCRACY IN EDUCATION AND EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRACY**

South Africa post 1994 has seen a myriad of changes. The researcher is of the idea that the political events that helped to shape what South Africa has become are nothing short of envy to most countries-in Africa and elsewhere. According to Thompsons (2010:317) the niche that South Africa has carved for herself in a sense that issues like transparency, accountability and the will of the people are observed.

Furthermore, Wilkinson (2009:25) believes that if it was not for our tenacity, vigorous debates and public opinion resulted in a democracy that is ours. Whereas, Milner (2009:165) argue that if South Africa does not guard and add more emphasis on her hard earned albeit bloodless transition, nothing would be achieved. The challenge is to sustain all the attributes that make up the microcosm of what a democracy is to be defined by in recent times (Gibson, Donnelly Jr, Ivancevich & Konapaske, 2003:24).

The discussion below is based on the advent of democratic characteristics which includes amongst others: the concept of rights, equity and redress, equality before the law and the negative and degrading issue of discrimination in South Africa.

The advent of democracy in South Africa has led to the prescription and application of democracy in schools. This issue has its roots in the fundamentals of democracy in its entirety. The role of democracy in education is viewed as being based on a theory of learning and school governance in which students and staff participate freely and equally in a school situation.

According to West-Burnham (2010:47) in order to understand the role of democracy in education, the starting point is to ascertain if the following questions based on Dewey's model of democracy form the core propositions for education: Is our system of education truly open to all its citizens?; are needs for learners entering the education system catered for?;

Does the education system widen the scope of learner interests and break down barriers between social classes (See Elitist Model) and establish a context for wider shared interests?; does the education system take the views of stakeholders prior to taking decisions? It is behind this backdrop that the discourse on the role of democracy in education shall take course.

#### **2.7.1.1 Advantages of democracy in education**

As practiced in schools democracy has been seen as yielding the following features, Firstly, the assumption of a free market of ideas and interchanges of interests amongst individuals. Secondly, the fact that responsibility is bestowed upon individuals and thirdly, governance is transparent, open and people orientated.

According to West-Burnham (2010:40) the foremost advantage of democracy in schools is based on the person in the stature of school principals who must possess the following attributes: Leader are not invested with symbolic status; leaders do not see themselves as having primary responsibility for the vision and values of the school as an organization; leaders have a clear personal accountability for the performance of their schools; and leaders have skills to control resources and significant powers of patronage.

One of the advantages of democracy in schools according to West-Burnham (2010:11) is shared leadership as a positive attribute a school manager should possess. Figure 2 demonstrates the advantages of effective application of democracy which translates into the relationship between various factors that determine the nature of relationships in a school situation according to West-Burnham (2010:11)

<b>Immature</b>		<b>Mature</b>	
Personal Power		Shared authority	
Hierarchy		Teams	
Low trust		High trust	
Dependency		Interdependency	
Control	Delegation	Empowerment	Subsidiarity

Figure 2 offers a model of shared leadership which seeks to demonstrate the relationship between various factors that determine the nature of organizational relationships. The following is a discussion on these elements:

- **CONTROL-** Power and authority located with one person or a small group. Very limited participation and choice for the majority; relationships are essentially hierarchical with clear lines of command and formal answerability with sanctions: a dependency culture based on immature social relationships;
- **DELEGATION-** A balance of the handing over of responsibility and authority. On the left hand side of the continuum responsibility will tend to outweigh authority. Relationships are hierarchical and bureaucratic with clear definitions of areas of responsibility;
- **EMPOWERMENT-** The level of authority is sufficient or greater than is needed to do the job. Individuals are able to exercise choice and discretion in their work within the context of broad organizational imperatives which they have to contribute to; and
- **SUBSIDIARITY-** The concept of subsidiary is probably best understood as a form of Federation-high degrees of autonomy within interdependent structure with significant levels of choice and decision making at local level.

Schools should be made into democracy spheres whereby learners are moulded and served. The argument lies in the fact as to whether school principals are able not to be just reactive to society but should also be actively committed to changing it. The basic idea being that education is a key for the achievement of social justice.

If this argument can be fully debated and applied then there are a range of possible developments for schools, (West-Burnham 2010:19). The following discussion is on the disadvantages of democracy in education.

#### **2.7.1.2 Disadvantages of democracy in schools**

The researcher holds the notion that for democracy to receive its important role in any given society, it must be practiced within its nature. The following factors however, are viewed as disadvantages of the application of democracy in schools:

- Everyone attempts to persuade others to agree to their point of view and free to oppose points of view, the assumption is that if a variety of opinions are free to compete continuously and publicly, the ideas best for society will win out in the long run, therefore accurate and uncensored information, outlining contrasting points of view on current issues, be available for public consumption.

It may thus be concluded that democracy spells out openness to variety of information which often leads to negative reaction in many ways. School principals are faced with a challenge of balancing the leaking of sensitive information as well as being transparent.

The following is a discussion on the type of leadership envisaged for a democracy.

## **2.8 THE BASIS OF THE PRINCIPAL POWER IN DEMOCRACY**

### **2.8.1 THE ROLE OF POWER IN A DEMOCRACY**

As the role of school leadership changes through the years, the purpose of using power in leading and managing school is one of the attributes a school principal should demonstrate. The researcher holds the idea that school principals perceive power negatively. According to Michelson (2008:193) power should be considered organizational, group and individual goals. There is a need for school principal to realize that the correct use of power in an ethical and purposeful way, nothing evil can be expected.

Cushman (2002: 9) argues that only when school principal scheme school leadership it then that power can be defined as positive. The following discussion is based on the role of power in a democracy.

Firstly, the tenet of democracy encompassed power as a tool to gain any sort of attention. Grobler, Bischoff and Beeks (2012:2) disclaim that there appears to be a dearth of espoused policies, concerning the transformation of school leadership from one of a bureaucratic nature to a more collaborative form that encompassed the use of power to gain results.

The problem facing school principals is their implementation of collaborative forms of leadership in a bureaucratic milieu that is characterized by mandates? More training has been provided to school principal to assist them in order to adopt new attributes like to correct use of power. (Michelson, 2008:241).

Secondly, school principals need to acquire and use of power to accomplish school goals as well as to strengthen their own positions inclusive of talking into account of general or organizational goals. It is behind this statement that the researcher based his arguments on the fact that school principals are unable to achieve success at influencing the behaviour of other stakeholders in schools as organizations Michelson (2008:67) and Cushman (2002:3) hold the supporting statement that the dimensions of leadership are generic to school leadership in general; the school principal as educational leader is also concerned with contemporary ideological dimension as well as formal prescription from the government and other norms that attempt to regulate social behaviour school principals need to withstand these and their power be felt regardless.

Thirdly, Grobler, Bishoff and Beeks (2012:45) contends that a brief survey of liberation indicates that the earliest leadership studies focused on physical, sociological and psychological traits of the leader (Litterer, 1993; Sikila, 1993; Modiba, 1997), whereas the personal-behavioral approaches in turn suggested such as the should consider situational attributes such as the use of power, expectations, skills and previous experience of their followers.

This is negated by Nxumalo (2001:73). When asserting that the current leadership role of a school principal needs an explanation on the importance of leader member relationships, structure of the task at hand and the use of positional power. Michelson (2008:13) concludes this discussion by affirming that, in a general sense, power acquisition and power use in democratic organization like schools can have an impact on career progress, on performance, on organizational affections and on the lives of numerous people.

Badat (2012:23) warns however, that there is no perfect leadership model. Leadership and pioneering in thought and action, school principals should be willing to take action to address challenges by using power and wisdom to charge school leadership landscape for the better. The next discussion is on authority and accountability with reference to schools in a democratic Milieu.

## **2.9 AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

Current trends in school leadership prescribe that principals are the first and the last buck stoppers with as far as authority and accountability are concerned. According to Jacques (2005:1) a leader is someone that carries three accountabilities that are embedded over authority. This clearly brings to the fore the nature of leadership envisaged Clarke (2007:42) holds the belief that school principals must be able to implement a holistic framework of leadership as leading within a democracy is a complex mixture of ideas. The following discussion is based on the role of school principal with regards to authority and accountability.

Firstly, Jacques (2005:6) cites the first form of accountability as being the ability of school principals to be therefore the work of subordinates and adding value to it. Hoffman (2009:2) defines the principal's role in accountability as entailing a culture of justification in which those in authority are required to explain their policies and justify their decisions, actions and omissions. The researcher doubts the ability of the school principals as to whom and for what are principals accountable?

Secondly, school principals are set to be able to maintain a team that is capable of producing the required outputs, (Jacques, 2005:7). This suggests that every individual in the staff irrespective of their rank should be taken on board. The opening sequence would be according to Hoffman (2009:2) is to be accountable to the constitution the supreme law of the land. The argument would then be raised in the event of a dysfunctional school. Shall it then equate to accountability on the sides of principals whose learners have emerged from their schools functionally illiterate.

It is believed that the point in case is a breach of the constitutional admonition to respect, protect, promote and fulfill the rights guaranteed in the bill of rights, (Hoffman, 2009:2). Thirdly, the researcher affirms the statement by (Jacques, 2005:37) the principals has a duty for setting direction and the staff to follow willingly and enthusiastically to adhere the goals of the organization.

Clarke (2007:20) however argues that even though the principles and values prescribing accountability are set out both in the SASA and the constitution. The drawback is that, these measures offer a good basis for measuring performance of school principals; the problem is that is there openness, transparency and responsiveness to the need of the staff and other stakeholders?

Furthermore, the researcher seeks to find answers to the seething questions as to what principals holding standards do principals hold with regard to maintaining professional ethics with effective, economic and effective use of resources as their disposal? The other worrying factor is the issue of cultivating good human resource management and career development practices for the staff, Hoffman (2009:40) wonder if principals are able to place. Personnel management practices. Based on ability, objectively, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past? School principals need to answer these questions in the affirmative whilst at the same time being accountable.

In comparison, Duke, Tucker, Salovey and Levy (2007:17) argue that in the US one of the complicating factors affecting the accountability of the school principals is that they have many different constrictiveness to answer to in their day-to-day round of activities for which they are responsible: learner being the primary concern, stakeholders in all their protocols make demands on the time and talents of principals, other principals, politicians, community and a host of do-gooders may also pose challenges, the alumni and parents who are eager to register and deregister their learners in the school, time management and dealing with diverse cultures.

In Australia, Walker (2003: 46) argue that school principals are faced with the challenge of giving due attention to stakeholders enhance school effectiveness and cohesion however accountability is divided by a series of channels of reports often dampens the ability of principals to gain insight in accounting to the schools requirements.

This view is also echoed by Legotlo and Mathibe (2006:7) that the challenge for principals in the South African education system is to redefine their rules and functions of management and leadership in order that they fit in with the national strategy for and of building democratic institutions.

Ntshagase (2002), Tshifura, (2001), Joubert (2002:47), Mabasa & Themane (2002), Ngidi (2004) and Mkhonto (1998) believe that even though principals are accountable for the day-to-day running of the school, one should not overlook the role of parents as represented by the SGB. Literature reviewed indicates that if principals do not include views of SGB's accountability measures and conclusions can be taken automatically. Botha (2004) argues that studies of effective and excellent principals reveal that the major reason for principal's failure is an inability to deal with issues in a clear open and transport manner: accountability.

The Principal's role in expressing and exercising authority are scrutinized by forces that wish to see the school not achieving its goals. Jacques (2005:1) believes that a person cannot be held accountable unless he or she has the necessary and appropriate authority. Smit & Cronje (1999: 240) quoted by Van De Venter (2010:118) defines authority as the legitimate right to command, to give orders or to instruct. Further it is explained that authority includes the right of the principal to take action to compel the performance of tasks and to punish default or negligence by stakeholders. A lack of authority and an inability to interact is a sure indicator of a principal who is not good, (Hoffman, 2009:23).

There is a disturbing trend that school principals should be held accountable but this is only possible if they have the requisite authority. The researcher argues that the responsibilities school principals have determines the nature and volume of authority possessed or displayed. Van Deventer (2010:118) states that education department is the "owners" of the school and thus authority flows downward. The democratic environment under which school principal works is always not conducive Authority resides in positions, rather than in people the position gives the person authority and not their personal characteristics.

Hoffman (2009:23) argues that in human resources management literature the school principal is a person whose authority is of a high order. Furthermore it is assumed that principals who are regarded as 'good and lead successful schools have a great deal of authority deriving not only from the position they occupy but also for the wealth of experience and expertise they bring to bear upon the staff and stakeholders in which they function. Cronje et al (1993: 117) quoted by Van de Venter (2010: 140) maintains that authority has to do with the right of the manager to enforce certain action, with specific guidelines, and these right to take action against those who will not cooperate to achieve certain aims.

Authority is synonymous with integrity without integrity there can be no principled conduct no prospect of winning trust and inspiring and uniting people around a vision, no effective communication, no ethical and responsible leadership, (Badat, 2012: 23). It is not for these reasons that this discussion investigates the essence of authority. School principals hold in the running of schools. The researcher can thus inter that authority is related to leadership. In the school situation, the school principal, as the executive officer of the school, is given authority by the need of provincial education to enforce their authority in the school. (Van de Venter, 2010: 140).

In conclusion, one should always remain buoyant as far as the role school principals should play in expressing and emphasizing accountability and authority to run schools. Hoffman (2009:2) believes that there is no 'quick fix' for all that ails our fledgling democracy; it must surely be obvious that equipping principals and potential principals with suitable leadership skills is a necessary precursor to the success of the school in which they play their professions.

Many school principals have authority but lacks the power to assets authority effectively (Gerber et al 1998: 300) quoted by Van de Venter (2010:140) school leadership prescribes accountability and authority as leadership is nothing more than the ability to energize others. School principals must learn how to do so as a requirement in a democracy. School principal ship is primarily about the distribution of authority and accountability. Authority and accountability are both explicit and implicit and involves the culture and values that determine the ethos of a school, (Joubert, 2002:43). Authority and accountability are the bases of school principal ship. The next discussion is on the types of power.

## **2.10 TYPE OF POWER**

There are several different definitions of the word: Power. The following are notable definitions: Mabovula (2008:6) quoted (Haralambos 1995: 501) defining power as the chance of a man or number of men to realize their own will in a communal action even against the resistance of others who are participating in the action: Furthermore, Weber (2007:25) explains power as the ability to get one own way even when others are opposed to ones wishes.

Archaic review of liberate states that power gives rise to decision-making, where different individuals or groups express different policy preferences and influence the making of decision or various issues, (Lukes, 1974: 13). Current literature reviewed defines power as a measurement of an entity's ability to control its environment, including the behaviour of other entities (Wikipedia, 2012:1) Power i.e. the ability to influence the behaviour of others, (Prinsloo 2010:140). The following discussion dissects the concept of power and its relevance to a democratic society.

School principals have to have the ability to use their power in a manner that seeks to develop the school as a organization literature reviewed distinguish between the following types of power principal may subscribe to in order to make their schools effective or dysfunctional. The use or abuse of power suggests that in South Africa at the present moment degree of power and practice, (Mabovula, 2008: 29). Prinsloo (2010: 140) is of the opinion that school principal can influence followers and exercise authority effectively because their job description prescribed that their day to day running of the school allows them to practice power in order to achieve the goals of the school.

Kotter (1985) in Michelson (2008:26) warns that workplace like schools have high degree interdependence existing due to varied stakeholders. Furthermore, it is assumed that decisions of any significance, staff members could be in a position to retard, block or sabotage the principal's action because they have some power over the situation. Michelson (2008:28) argues that the kind of power school principals need to possess comes from numerous sources and multiple bases. School principals need time, energy and management to harness skills to transform power into influence. The researcher is worried about the following questions: what specific steps do effective leaders take to avoid abuses of influence? How do effective school principal sustain and maintain power over time.

Michelson (2008:29) summarizes the following highlights with regard to Power:

Power is acquired through constitution and maneuvering; the importance of power has its basis on relationships carried in an organizations; School principals need to communicate efficiently, be flexible, getting involved at the outset of the decision-making process; Being visible in problem areas, delegating duties effectively; and  
The ability to be relevant

The following discourse is on different types of power.

### **2.10.1 Legitimate Power**

Van de Venter (2010:140) defines legitimate power as also known as position power, delegated authority given to a problem. The nature of the school principals' job reserves the right to expect subordinates to carry out their duties. Furthermore, legitimate power is also defined as the power of an individual because of their relative position and duties of the holder of the position within an organization.

Whereas Learn Marketing (2012: 3) state that legitimate power is the power that the leader has a “right’ to instruct them and that they have an obligation to follow institution. There is a strong sense in their type of power that the person at the helm has the right to give orders.

French and Raven (2008:75) previously believed that power must be distinguished from influence because is the only thread that holds relationships. The researcher believes that in order to achieve required expectations in a school, School principals need to apply mindful tactics to get the job done of the dynamics of a school as an organization (Morgan: 2000: 45).

### **2.10.2 Power by reward**

Reward Power depends on the ability of the wielder to confer valued material rewards; it refers to the degree to which the individual can give other a reward of some kind such as benefits, time off, desired gifts, promotions or increase in pay or responsibility, Wikipedia (2012:8). Learn Marketing (2012:3) defines reward power as created when the leader is able to offer a reward to his followers for completing task or behaving in a certain manner.

The use of this power the researcher argues that it can be dangerous and detrimental to the school as an obligation as it may lead to favouritism and “cliques”. Van der Venter (2010:141) warns that rewarding can be very effective to motivate or divide the staff to realize the aims of the school.

Learn Marketing (2012:3) warns through that the use of this power leader must always keep their word and to their promises. Furthermore, this type of power needs to be used carefully to prevent followed becoming accustomed to rewards and refusing to complete routine tasks without a reward, Wikipedia (2012:243). School principal need to be aware or influence that offering a reward had on the follower.

### **2.10.3 COERCIVE POWER**

The researcher agrees with Van der Venter (2010:140) that this kind of power disclaims the very essence of the importance of leadership. This power is defined as enforce by inspiring fear in followers whether psychological or physical.

Furthermore, this kind of power is defined as the application of negative influence; it includes the ability to denote or to withhold other rewards. The desire for values rewards or the fear of having them withheld that ensures the obedience of twice under power. School principal must be aware that choose to be coercive builds resentment and resistance from the people who experience it and coercion should be used carefully overuse can lead to unhappy stakeholders.

### **2.10.4 REFERENT POWER**

Referent power refers to the power or ability of individuals to attract others and build loyalty; based on the charisma and interpersonal skills of the power holder. Furthermore it must be added that referent power is dependent on how the follower views the personality of their leader.

School principals need to know that the need for them to be admired needs more effort in order to practice this kind of power. This kind of power needs more of the individual's character to influence people to make and act in the way they deem fit.

### **2.10.5 EXPERT POWER**

Van de Venter (2010:140) argue that this type of power is based on knowledge for leaders practicing this type of wielding their power over those that need the knowledge and expertise power in an individual's power deriving from the skills or expertise of the person and the organizations needs for those skills and expertise.

## **2.11 COMMENT**

School leadership is not prescriptive on the type of power principals must use however, authority and power must be used to ensure successful task execution, (Van de Venter 2010:141). It can thus be emphasized that school principals should realize that one cannot work in isolation in an organization like a school. Therefore it is important to create a school environment where staff members actions are directed by good leadership punctuated by relationships at all levels, (Van de Venter 2010:141)

It is important for school principals to develop effective power lines and influence to make social complexity feasible. Michelson (2008:37) postulates that in order for school principals to be successful, stronger power bases are needed with greater care. If power is misused and abused it consistently leads heightened and unproductive episodes of conflict thereby obscuring the aspiration of even a willing dynamic school principal.

The problem here is that principals would not be able to know the kind of power to apply in schools or which power is relevant for a democratic milieu. From literature reviewed, expert, referent and legitimate powers can be recommended as being suitable for a democracy based on the fact that expert power relies mainly on the knowledge possessed by the principal; the ability to attract others and build loyalty as prescribed in referent power and the inherent knowledge of subordinates that the principal has the right to instruct and the subordinates' role is to follow. It is behind these explanations that the researcher believes that principals are faced with a mammoth task of choosing and applying a fitting power strategy suitable for a democracy.

## **2.12 TYPE OF LEADERSHIP ENVISAGED FOR A DEMOCRACY**

One of the attributes that a school principal must possess is leadership. According to Seale (2002:1) school principals should currently apply skills that concentrate on how leadership occurs as well as the ability to define the type of behaviour that guides the school. According to Newstrom and Davis (2002:200) leadership is explained as a process of influencing and supporting others to work enthusiastically towards goal achievement. The critical fact is that school principals have to demonstrate their ability to identify goals of the school and then motivate every stakeholder in achieving that.

The scope of this research would not allow the discussion of all types of leadership that exists. However, attention is given to those types that seem to be relevant within a democratic milieu of the post-1994 South Africa and which seem more appropriate for the gist of this research study. The following leadership types bear relevance to the research study: Participative leadership, Distributive leadership, Empowering leadership, Distributive leadership and transformational leadership.

The following is an in-depth discussion of these types. The researcher wishes to highlight the fact that literature reviewed used the term Middle Managers more often. For the sake of easy understanding the term Middle Managers should be read as School Management Teams (SMT).

### **2.12.1 Participative leadership**

Borole (2010:28) quoting Leithwood and Steinberg (1992:2) state that participative leadership assumes that the decision-making process of the group ought to be central focus of the group. According to Shriberg, Shriberg and Kumari (2005:185), the emphasis is on consultation with group members. Pheng and Leong (2001:131) agree with this statement by declaring that decision-making is shared on an equal basis. Participation of subordinates provides the necessary legitimacy to the decision and in turn this impacts positively on production.

Suggestions of all stakeholders are important and taking suggestions from subordinates does not necessarily mean that the principal will lose authority, as the final decision still lies with them. A leader engages staff and make use of their ideas but retains the final authority to make decisions (Bens, 2006:21). Participative leadership also does not imply rigidity. Flexibility and the allowance of free flow of ideas from subordinates to enable them to respond quickly the needs and demands of clients is restored (Davies and Anderson, 1992:10). Moreover, this implies that all stakeholders are able to take appropriate action on the spot.

The issue of using all members of the staff is equally important for School Management Team (SMT) members to act as conveyors of decisions either top-down or down-up. The researcher believes that School Managers must be able to realize that subordinates particularly the SMT are strategically placed to link senior management with subordinates in the school as an organization. The SMT will either convey the directives of senior management to subordinates, or take subordinates grievances up to the senior management.

One fact that needs to be understood is that playing this role does not mean that SMT's are mere messengers in three approaches. Complex decisions are taken by SMT's in their respective capacities and their discretion are valued. It may be argued if as to whether decisions taken by school principals as influenced by SMT's are recognized by other stakeholders?

According to Puth (2002:169) decisions can be made either by SMT's individually or in a group. Very often decisions taken by SMT's unilaterally are not received well by subordinates. Kerry (2001:78) stresses that everyone in the inclusive environment should actively participate in decision making and feel as a valued part of the group. The researcher asserts that the most common reason that compels subordinates not to co-operate fully with SMT's is the absence of including other staff members.

School principals need to be aware that when subordinates detect that there is not enough consultation and discussions before decisions are taken, they would suddenly feel that the principal does not take them serious enough. Jenkins and Jenkins (2006:221) state that SMT's must know how to listen to subordinates. Communication between SMT's and subordinates will make the organizational goals achievable. The achievement of objectives including the involvement of followers in decision making is enhanced through communication as well as giving feedback (Barber and Warn, 2005:1033).

Although a certain power is given to SMT's in decision making, it must be remembered however, that the very decisions are influenced by those taken from the top. Frohman and Johnson (1993:10) state that SMT's as senior managers in a school situation decide to shift a certain power to decide about everyday operations to other stakeholders because they are closer to the operations and the client base (learners, parents and the community). The researcher feels that SMT's play an important role in the organization in terms of decision making because a certain degree of power is given to them.

There is a tendency of school principals to deprive SMT's the opportunity of being involved in decision making. Frohman and Johnson (1993:11) found that middle managers complain that senior managers promised to move decision making down to their level but that is just lip-service as is the case in other organizations. In a school situation this may suggest that SMT's cannot always be seen as decision makers.

Every member in the school as an organization, especially subordinates at the lowest level of hierarchy wants to be heard and contribute in all decision making processes. Sims, Veres, Jackson and Fateau (2001:219) believe that everyone must solve problems and make decisions at work. SMT's sometimes make use of subordinates' ideas and this approach proves to be working perfectly. Problems are always lessened when using many possible solutions from different individuals (Rothwell, 2001:290).

There is a belief that emotionally intelligent SMT's always identify subordinates feelings, use their feelings to direct their thinking and understanding the reasons for these feelings (Caruso and Salovey, 2004:27). In identifying how subordinates feel the SMT's engage with the staff to establish how a particular point is viewed. Olsen and Eoyang (2001:65) maintain that if feedback is initiated from subordinates then the level of trust is increased. Therefore in school situation, SMT's should allow subordinates to participate in decision making by means of constructive engagement.

In addition, When SMT's and subordinates work together as a team; it becomes easy to influence decisions taken at senior management level. Wildman and Warner (2003:20) state that matrix decisions allow teams to analyze and influence the pros and cons of each recommended solution against criteria selected by forces outside the staff.

### **2.12.2 Distributive leadership**

According to Borole (2010:31) quoting Youngs (2007:106), Timperley (2005:396) and Hartley (2007:203) distributive leadership is defined as a form of delegated leadership responsibility; where individual leaders at the 'top' of a hierarchical structure delegate authority to others to exercise leadership themselves. Distributed leadership demands that SMT's should be decentred and the phenomenon of leadership be distributed amongst them (Bennett and Anderson, 2003:82). The assumption is that the SMT's workload will be reduced and efficiency increased.

The idea of having subordinates participation is a clear indication that leadership is accepted which would then lead to rotation of roles in all levels (Ciulla, Price and Murphy, 2005:17). According to Farrell and Weaver (2000:133) making the decision and following through with it is the point at which decision making process sometimes goes off track. It is then that SMT's should monitor the decision-making process very closely to ensure that consensus is reached and that every member of the team is able to take responsibility (Aranda, Aranda and Conion, 1998:105).

The following are distinct advantages of distributive leadership according to Mayrowetz, Murphy, Louis and Smyth (2007:77):

- It increases the variety of skills that can be brought into management;
- The level of task significance among followers is increased because the followers see a broader picture in which the job is embedded;
- It is easier to identify tasks done rather than the narrow task facing a subordinate; and
- Subordinates are more inclined to understanding feedback. In such a case, accurate feedback is given through techniques like action research and collective inquiry.

According to Timperley (2005:397), both transformational and distributive theories involve mobilising personnel on tasks of an organisation or institution. Subordinates participate actively and feel valued when a certain level of responsibility is given to them despite their position in the hierarchy.

### **2.12.3 Empowering leadership**

Empowering leadership encompasses the idea of the motivation and self-efficacy of people are influenced by the behaviour of leadership, the structure of the organization, job characteristics and needs and values of an institution (Yukl, 2006:107). Whereas Arnold, Arad, Rhoades and Drasgow (2000:254-255) identified the following as distinct behaviours of empowering leadership:

- **Leading by example-** refers to a set of behaviours that shows the leader's commitment to their work as well as the work of their team members.
- **Coaching-** refers to a set of behaviours that educates team members and help them become self-reliant.
- **Encouraging-** refers to a set of behaviours that promotes high performance.
- **Participative decision making-** refers to a leader's use of team members' information and input in making decisions.
- **Informing-** refers to a leader's dissemination of company-wide information such as its mission and philosophy as well as other important information.
- **Showing concern-** is a collection of behaviours that are important when interfacing with the team as a whole, as individuals and as a group.
- **Interfacing with the team-** this construct incorporates behaviours that are important when interfacing with the team as a whole.
- **Group management-**refers to a leader's management function of promoting group cohesion within the team.

It is believed that Investing in the development of one's subordinates in the persons of SMT's lead to the highest level of professionalism attained through a highly skilled, motivated and guided workforce. Vargo (2000;1) reiterates the fact that leaders invest themselves in others; that is, people development, and they motivate, encourage, mentor and help them become what they are capable of becoming. Failure to empower subordinates through development programmes affects efficiency in management. According to Yukl (2006:107-108) delegating responsibility for a more significant task will not be empowering if subordinates lack the skills and knowledge required to perform tasks successfully.

It can thus be concluded that empowering leadership enables and equips subordinates to deal with more complex systems independently. It is for that reason that Schuitema (2004:71) agrees that empowerment means to give subordinates the means, ability and accountability to perform their tasks.

#### **2.12.4 Transformational leadership**

One of the aims of this type of leadership is to bring about change in individuals and organisations. According to Nguni, Sleedgers and Denessen (2006:147) and Sahn (2004:388), transformational leadership entails raising the level of motivation of followers beyond exchange values and thus achieving a higher level of performance and the followers' self-actualisation. Shiva & Roy (2008:64) argue that in comparison with the results of transactional leadership, those of transformational leadership usually lead to greater improvement, development and performance.

Furthermore, it must be stated that transformational leadership enables to do more things that will empower followers and make them less dependent on a leader (Yukl 2006:271 and Nemanich & Keller, 2007;50). The SMT's should see themselves as transformation leaders seeking to achieve the organisational goals by promoting the development of subordinates' skills and the creation of other fair and just empowerment activities.

There is a belief that in transformational leadership, followers are encouraged to question established ways of solving problems (Rowold and Heinitz, 2007:123). The level of openness is established when practising transformational leadership since stakeholders have the luxury of challenging and questioning systems and operations are applied without fear or favour. This ultimately increases the capacity of the SMT's to help lead the school. Transformational practitioners enhance the job satisfaction of their subordinates by making them feel special and by making them feel that they are called to a higher purpose (Nemanich & Keller, 2007:52).

One of the dimensions of applying successful transformational leadership is the ability to take into consideration the issue of ethnic and cultural diversity that exists in varied organizations. It can thus be helpful for SMT's to strive towards the understanding of diversity management.

### **2.13 COMMENT**

The researcher argues that school principals and SMT's are not in the position to apply a leadership type suitable for a democracy due to the unique nature of schools as organizations. The notable fact in this regard is that leadership is evolving whereby different organizational patterns are emerging and the idea of adapting to change is not always welcomed.

School principals in the current leadership roles find it difficult to allow subordinates to participate fully in decision making; suggestions of subordinates are always frowned upon or ignored; communication is always flawed; duties are seldom delegated resulting in increased workload to principals; subordinates are demotivated due to changing curricular and work ethics and resistance to change makes a mockery of transformational leadership style.

A democratic milieu demands that a school principal adapt and use a style that accommodates all of the above with the outmost subtlety and tenacity in leading schools forward. Challenges recorded should be dealt with as professionally and profoundly as possible. The research seeks to find out which leadership style is suitable for a democracy.

## **2.14 CHALLENGES FACED BY PRINCIPALS WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC MILIEU**

School leadership within a democratic milieu demands much of a principal. Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:155) are of the belief that it is important that one should understand the link between effective leadership and the advent of being able to motivate stakeholders towards a common goal. The following discussion is based on challenges principals face within a school situation. These are: stakeholder relationships-, workload related- and change implementation and management challenges. In an era of accountability, the school's success is measured increasingly by the performance of its principal as the leader.

### **2.14.1 Work load related challenges**

School principals are according to Terblanche (2010:23) key delivery agents in the education sector. This means that principals are the most important partners in South Africa's renewal campaign. In an era of shared decision-making and site-based management, a school principal has varied and complex roles to perform, particularly within a democracy. The discussion is based on workload related challenges of a school principal.

According to Phillips (2009:194) a school principal's role is to be seen as that of an education executive with responsibilities ranging from academics, to management, finance, marketing, counselling and many more. Walker (2000:67) summarizes the following as work related challenges facing school principals:

- Principals have to deal with education department officials who are often hostile and unhelpful, while they have to battle to maintain standards;
- Principals have to possess a range of skills while having to try against all odds to raise standards in their schools;
- Dealing with hunger and malnutrition, health issue, crime and other social problems;
- Inadequate budgets which depends entirely on what the department allocates;
- Transformation and diversity management issues;
- A declining staff pool, economic climate, immigration, the parenting role the principal must assume;
- The ability to remain a steadfast principal in a changing and diverse society;
- Dealing with business leaders outside of the school, staff and learners, planning and budgeting;
- The challenging areas of technology, standards and discipline as well as the role of parents;
- Most principals also complain that the education department puts unwarranted pressure on them instead of supporting school in maintaining their high educational standards.

Historically, around the beginning of the twentieth century, schools grew from small farmhouse structures to complex infrastructures they are today. The need arose for someone to manage these more complex organizations. Clifford (2010:37) adds the following about the issue of being a school principal in the US and its challenges:

- Most principals have to be responsible for financial operations, building maintenance, student scheduling, ,public relations, school policy and the coordination of the school curriculum;
- As accountability movement gained momentum, the role of the principal changed from school manager to school instructional leader, and then to school leader;

- Ability to create a shared vision within the school community and success in implementing policies;
- Principals have to work with parents with regards to learner discipline;
- Principals have to deal with educators who are demotivated; and
- The most pressing issue is the ability to manage safety in schools.

In South Africa, the roles, duties and responsibilities of school principals are stipulated in the Personnel Administrative Measures (1994). However the researcher feels that the above-stated challenges are not anticipated as the PAM is very silent on the actual challenges school principals are to face. The following discussion is on change implementation and management challenges.

#### **2.14.2 Change implementation and management challenges**

The ability of school principals to implement and manage change in schools is a challenge. According to Rooney (2000:36) the following are challenges facing principals in dealing with change:

- The issue of diversity adjustment;
- Incoherent learner population resulting in massive admissions and mass exodus;
- The manner in which principals are prepared for professional educational services;
- The inability to influence administrative leadership practice;
- Adapting to transformation within the education sector;
- Recruitment, selection and mentoring shortfalls;
- Low remuneration; and
- Implementation of policies.

Xaba (2011:5) reiterates the fact that two issues are of outmost importance in managing school within a changing milieu. Firstly, there are challenges in executing management function, which confirms various studies that reveal a host of challenges. Secondly, the nature of the roles, responsibilities and additional duties school principals need to perform in their day to day running of schools. The questions that need an urgent answer is whether school principals would be able to withstand challenges that are brought up by their appointment to the position of principals in this current democratic milieu?

## **2.15 PROBLEM RELATED TO THE DISTRICT AND EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**

The following are problems related to District and Education Department as experienced by school principals, according to (Clifford: 25): Teacher Shortage; under qualified teachers; Poor teacher performance; Insufficient resources; Inadequate infrastructure; Failure of appropriate inspection and monitoring and confusion caused by changing curricula change without proper communication and training.

In order to gain insight into South Africa's education system, one should acknowledge the following as problems facing school principals brought by district and national departments according to (Botha, 2002:4).

Firstly, there is a direct shortage of educators/teachers. The problem is brought by the fact that there is a massive backlog brought by the rationalization and redeployment practices. Furthermore, when newly qualified teachers stay in place for long periods, it becomes extremely difficult to implement any kind of change. The matter is also exacerbated by the culture shock awaiting new recruits with modern methods who according to (Drew 2008:71) are confronted with stubborn resistance to change by established teachers who often use outmoded methods and pour work practices. The result is often resignation or adaptation to old ways and thus hampering education.

Secondly, there is a horde of under qualified and temporary educators in the employ of the department. The researcher believes that each province in S.A has a considerable number of these educators. Absorption of these teachers is slow and this becomes a bitter taste in the tongues of the school principals.

Thirdly, the following are challenges facing school principals in democratic South Africa: insufficient resources the inequalities are displayed through unequal distribution. The quintile system seeks to address the shortfalls however the gaps are far too wide. Inadequate infrastructure poses yet another threat to effective service delivering of education.

Failure of appropriate inspection and monitoring them subject advisory division as well as support from inspectors is inadequate and according to (Rooney, 2000:45) lacks focus and direct leaving school principals to fend for themselves. Confusion caused by changing curricular without proper communication and training. There is confusion in S.A about what a curriculum is as opposed to syllabi.

The problem lies in the fact that rather than talking about improving the various syllabus talk was on curriculum change. Drew (2008:54) argue that the whole system was turned upside down too soon and in the process much of what was effective in the old system was lost (Prew 2008:5). Furthermore, according to the S.A. journal of education: a total respite Rooney (2009:17) it was stated that principals had confidence in their ability but their professionalism was channeled out and moreover the clause of training college meant that the status of effective school sank been further.

In addition, according to Joubert (2002:26), school principal view education as one of the most important aspects of national regeneration and progress. This view is further supported by Xaba (2011:28) adding that existing schools are not strengthened, new schools are not built and appointment of competent personnel is barred by current allegiances and unnecessary bureaucratic red tape.

There is a need for district and national education department inspire principals by engaging in dialogue to promote education that is suitable for all citizens of S.A. The researcher believes that principals must feel they are a crucial component in the building of the Nation (Prew 2008: 18).

## **2.16 COMMENT**

The above discussion seeks to bring to attention all demands school principals are faced with in a democracy. School principals have are unable to lead with the broader aim of motivating subordinates towards a common goal; a high volume of principals are teaching, despite administration work they face; departmental officials do not support schools as expected; budgetary constraints are a challenge; and the ability of school principals to be transparent in their management lacks luster.

Furthermore, stakeholders are not participating as much as it is desired of them; lines of communication between stakeholders and staff breeds conflict; implementing and managing change due to democracy is also problematic. Human and physical resources are also a backlog school principals have to deal with on a daily basis and the ever changing curriculum. It is expected of School principals to withstand the above mentioned factors as professionally as possible.

Policy is set at national level and supposedly implemented at school and provincial level. This means that provinces are excluded from policy-making. This results in little interest in delivery. A more genuinely de-centralized system would promote much greater involvement and participation. There is a need for school principals to talk about these issues as silence breeds a dearth of implementation.

## **2.17 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter outlined in detail and illustration the theoretical perspective of democracy. Concepts were explained to gain a firmer and full understanding what democracy entails. Different democracy models were discussed with emphasis in their relation to education. A South African Democratic milieu was explained using special anecdotes from legislation and education matters.

Furthermore, the researcher laid out the role of democracy as well as the envisaged leader for a changing South Africa. It had to be important to reveal the different role played by stakeholders in the education sector as well as their unique challenges. Comparisons were drawn from here and abroad in order to balance the argument with regards to the discussion on how a democratic milieu should be and the demands posed on school principals.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **THE DEMANDS OF DEMOCRACY ON THE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The role of school principals has evolved over the years. Different school environments have emerged and thus resulting in changes in the way education is run. According to Finck and Resnick (2000:1) principal's duties and responsibilities include scheduling, handling relations with parents and community members, dealing with multiple crises and special situations that are inevitable in schools. Harris and Chapman (2004:14) believe in successful but challenging school principalship as a norm that should prevail in this democratic era. In this chapter, the demands of democracy on the leadership practices of school principals shall receive attention with special emphasis on duties and responsibilities in correlation with the demands of a democratic milieu.

#### **3.2 A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ON THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE STIPULATED DUTIES OF A PRINCIPAL AND THE DEMAND OF A DEMOCRATIC MILIEU**

Principals are faced with a variety of problems within a democracy. The stipulated duties of principals as prescribed in the Personnel Administrative Measures (1994) illustrate clearly what is expected of a school principal. The situation school principals find themselves in always clashes with the prescripts due to transformation. There also appears to be a dearth of espoused policies concerning leadership from one of a bureaucratic nature to a more collaborative form of management (2012:44).

Principals need to implement the duties and at the same time get rid of their “old and redundant” tendencies and adopt a more transformational and participative approach to leading. The problem is that the demands of today far outweigh the stipulations, (Botha, 2010:37).

The problem that plagues principals according to Botha (2004:239) is that principals are unable to see their role as playing a defining part in withstanding the demands of a democracy. Mncube (2008:77) is worried that even though the PAM prescribes clearly duties of a principal, the actual workload and practical execution of the very duties are threatened by the volume of demands posed.

Silns and Mulford (2008:340) however, believe that even though accountability is a necessity in school management, the demands of a democracy dictates the role of a principal as that that demands a more affluent person who would not only run the school but see their roles as that of an executive. There is a gap that exists between the ideal forms of leadership and that which is practical or prescribed, (Grobler, Bischoff and Beeka, 2012:44).

Furthermore, one of the major duties of a school principal is to achieve high levels of performance through effective people management. Botha (2004:34) holds the critic that the duties of a principal are simple on paper but the major reason for principals’ failure is inability to deal with people. Democracy demands that the principal administer, lead people, teach and be involved in extra- and co-curricular activities, interact with stakeholders and communicate effectively at all levels, Personnel Administrative Measures(1994).

Time management is an essential tool in school management. Botha (2007:78) argues that the role of a principal has changed owing to the fact that workload is becoming more and more unmanageable and time has become an enemy. Caldwell, 2002:9; Edwards, 2002:4; Budhal, 2000:4; Van Huystenn, 1999:12 and Steyn, 2002:251 echoes the fact that many principals lack the time for and an understanding of managing time wisely in executing their duties.

The research seeks to investigate the problem underlying the fact that school principals are unable to successfully use varied leadership styles in order to deal with the demands of a democratic milieu.

Principals need to manage by walk-about and on-the-face strategies. Presently, principals are unable to visualize the mission of their schools, lead the school community in its development and strategize to support educators' efforts. Johnson (2010:45) adds that school principals are not able to act as transformation agents due to current changes and demands. School principals are unable to focus, are also not future orientated and not fully responsive to changing educational climate (Heystek, 2007:78). This does not serve stipulated duties any good.

In order to understand the way school principals deal with the demands of a democratic environment a comparison is drawn with the Victorian State in Australia with the South African context. According to Schedule 2 of the Victorian Government Schools Agreement (2008:2) the following are stipulated as core duties:

Firstly, the delivery of a comprehensive, high quality education; Participation in the governance structure; implementation of decisions of the school council; establishment and management of school financial systems; representation of the department in the school and the community and above other responsibilities compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements and departmental policies and procedures should be adhered to. The stated duties should be executed in accordance to any political and/or bias.

Secondly, The National Association of Private Catholic and Independent schools (2000:12) cites the following as the core duties of a principals: Establishment and promotion of high standards and expectations for all students and staff for academic performance and responsibility for behaviour; Manage, evaluate and supervise effective and clear procedures for the operation and functioning of the school consistent with the philosophy, norms and values a school subscribes to; Supervise, in a fair manner all procedures that need to be followed in the running of a school, which amongst others include accountability, evaluation and implementation of just and measurable measures to run an effective institution.

Thirdly, the most subtracting factor to the above statements is the fact that, according to Botha (2004:239) school principals are unable to see their role as playing a defining part in withstanding the demands of a democracy. Mncube (2008:77) argues that education worldwide is becoming increasingly accountable to the public and therefore school principals need to be adept to the social demands of any educational environment. The demands of a democracy dictates the role a school principal plays and seeks to demand a more affluent person who would not only run the school but see their roles as that of an executive, Silns and Mulford(2008:340).

According to Harris and Chapman (2004:15) school principals are the ones who give schools the tone, colour and direction. The present democratic environment presents itself as needing approaches and styles that can be easily alternated to suit the day to day running of the school. The researcher wishes to suggest an approach whereby principals adopt leadership approaches that matches the specific context of the school as well as addressing the needs of the immediate community. The researcher is worried that school principals are unable to balance these axes.

Furthermore, school principals are unable to choose a leadership style that moves the school forward and that empowers others them to apply and to apply distributed tasks and instructions without aggression. The problem is that school principals are unable to successfully use varied leadership styles in order to deal with the demands of a democratic milieu (Mashuele 2011:35).

Botha (2004:239) summarizes the following as pertinent demands a school principal has to deal with in a democracy: devolution of Power from the National sphere of government to schools as end users; authority given to schools to govern; increased stakeholder participation; a change in stakeholder values; a general shortage of funds; disciplinary issues; the changing curriculum; implementation and management of change; resistance to change; unionization and learner issues.

According to Caldwell (2002:345) the workload of school principals has changed dramatically over the years and more unmanageable as lack of time and an understanding of issues is rife. There is a misunderstanding between the principal's role as manager and leader within the changing sphere of principalship and the just application of duties at hand. The afore mentioned duties and responsibilities of principals are relevant to schools in the Victoria Territory of Australia and in schools under the jurisdiction of the Independent Catholic Schools of South Africa but problematic if put into practice.

The problem is the correlation between the above mentioned duties and the demands posed by the environment under which principals find themselves in. The researcher believes that the demands are much challenging if they are to be dealt with under the auspices of democracy.

Autocratic tendencies often prevail. Botha (2004:240) is of the opinion that principals should be leaders in learning and not merely leaders of learning; principals should understand contemporary issues of their duties and their effective implementation.

Furthermore, it must be understood that for principals to be at par with the demands of a democratic environment, Edwards (2000:247) adds that principals are not spending time establishing appropriate preconditions and following through with interventions aimed at improving teaching and learning. Mncube (2008:78) echoes the sentiment by adding that the problem lies in the fact that principals are unable to create a balance between instructional leadership and management. The researcher holds the notion that for the correlation between duties and responsibilities of principals and democracy to be understood, one needs to first understand the democratic nature of the school.

The changing role of school leaders in a changing society has shown the principal to be a key to a school's successful transition into an institution that will adequately prepare students. As society continues to change and technological advances change the tools available for teaching, the role of the principal had to change. Vouchers, charter schools, and technology have the potential to change schooling in fundamental ways. As these changes take place, the role of the principal also needed to change, (Davies, 2002:108).

In addition, school and districts set expectations for principals through their principal evaluation criteria and procedures. One disclaimer of note is that some state legislation requires the removal of principals when schools are classified as low performing for a specified period of time (Gerhard, 2009:56). The researcher believes that the latter statement is not practiced in South Africa as principals' posts are protected under the Labour Relations Act. However, training and continuous support have yielded very successful results in addressing shortfalls.

### **3.3 COMMENT**

The above discussion outlined the various roles, duties and responsibilities of school principals juxtaposed with the demands of a democratic milieu within a South African context. Parallels were drawn from other countries in order to have a balanced argument on the discourse. It is clear that the role of a school principal demands more of their varied levels of aptitude than ever before.

Terry (2008:32) holds the belief that presently principals should understand contemporary theories of learning and should have an explicit personal theory of learning and should also be able to utilize this knowledge to the benefit of the school. The researcher argues as to whether school principals are able to redefine the functions of leadership as outlined in the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM). The argument is further supported by the fact that the redefinition is crucial for change to occur and to build democratic schools.

In addition, it is assumed that by developing necessary democratic knowledge and skills schools would be led democratically. Botha (2004:170) is worried as to whether a principal in the twenty first century is able to demonstrate the following attributes: Professionalism; ability to own and be involved in the process of evaluation and improvement and be a strategist.

The investigation seek clarity on the issues surrounding school principals accepting the realities and demands of a democracy and school principals acting in a way that takes into account the character of the world that is emerging.

In conclusion, the researcher believes that school principals should be sophisticated users of knowledge. This can be achieved by the will in principals of seeking out and keeping abreast of current research and knowledge on learning and teaching. The researcher strongly believes that by seeking high performance from all stakeholders in achieving excellence and realizing that things will not get easier punctuated by the knowledge that the task of professional principals as leaders and strategists in creating better and excellent schools within a democratic era never ends,(Botha 2004:242).

The next discussion is on stakeholder participation within a democracy with specific reference to the role of school principals in a democratized South African education context as well as democratic governance and school leadership.

### **3.4 STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION WITHIN A DEMOCRACY**

#### **3.4.1 Introduction**

According to Gerhard (2009:54) in the United States, the duties and responsibilities of school principals are delineated in state statutes. The following are notable facts: school and districts set expectations for principals through their principal evaluation criteria and procedures; One of the duties of a principal is to improve the school's instructional programme as mandated by legislation in some states and to lead school reform that would raise student achievement - the problem is that principals cannot create a shared vision within a school community in implementing new organization structures that engage stakeholders in shared decision-making.

The foremost skill a school principal should possess is the immeasurable ability to deal with people at diverse levels. According to Newstrom and Davis (2002: 145) a school would fit a democratic milieu if it subscribed to the ability of the school principal in directing tasks to harness performance, being concerned about colleagues well-being and needs and a positive attitude of inviting and accommodating participation. This, according to literature is however not practiced in most schools. There is a need to lead school to a lacuna of mindsets whereby the key ingredient is a shift from self-leadership to school-based people-centred management, (Moloi 2007:5).

The following are challenges school principals face with regards to stakeholder relationships according to Kruger (2000:41): Weak/poor attendance of both educators and learners; Educators lack of desire to teach; Staff conflict; Tensions between the various elements of the school community; Vandalism; Gangsterism; Drug Abuse; High drop-out rate; Poor school results; Weak leadership; Management and administration backlogs; Lack of resources: Human and Infrastructure hiccups and Apathy among educators.

Site Based Management - The devolution of decision-making in schools based on Democratic principles enabling broader participation by those "on site" to deal directing with challenges that need to be resolved. These people have "on site Expertise:

Team Work-Collaboration, co-operation and consultation lessens the value of challenges, (Scott and Walker 2000: 145). Significant role in decision making is harnessed, (Scott and Walker 2000: 52) and by dealing with challenges as a team problems are solved more creatively than individually as a overwhelming flow of ideas are recorded, (Scott and Walker 2000: 53);

Structural Support - Are School principal ready to nurture and experiment with more organizational patterns of problems solving? The patterns here means being dynamic, ability to grow through challenges, flexibility (Scott and Walker 2000:39);

Distribute Leadership - A radical move to distribute roles and responsibility among then management team. This requires a shift in how principal perceive their leadership Ineffective School Government; Demonstration and low morale; inefficient policy implementation; and Resistance to change.

This paints a bleak picture about the wishes and aspirations of school principals and the above are factors that need to be dealt with. Furthermore, according to Suttor (2011:2) the issue of having to deal with parents brings in its own agenda. Parents may have criticism about a particular educator, curriculum or extracurricular activity. It would suggest that parents are simply looking to cause difficulty for the principal, refusing to involve these parents is also a difficult and en route undemocratic route to take (Collins 2010: 14).

Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008: 2) asserts that the notion to regard school principals as solely responsible for leadership and management of schools is gradually being replaced by the unavoidable knowledge that leadership and management are the prerogative of many, if not all stakeholders in education (Dept. of Education, 1996) despite the above stated challenges. This stands to reason that the ability of a school principal to rise above these challenges would arguably result in effective schools.

The role of shared responsibility as seen by many scholars as the only selection to the impasse summarizes the following strategies applied to counter stakeholder challenges and to boost participation.

### **3.4.2 SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAMS (SMTs)**

Relationships in schools are vital. School principals' meet and have to interact with different people on different levels. Van de Venter (2010: 108) holds the adage that different people converge on the school in different capacities; as well as people with vested interest in education. This further considered in the (SASA) that a democratic dispensation brings together different stakeholders for the purpose of governance and management. The researcher believes that the relationship between the principal and members of the school management team (SMT) is very important. The following is a discussion of this relationship.

Loliwe (2004:9) asserts that schools are organizations whose functions is to attain this goal, the role the school principal play in relationships within the school sometimes come under fire. The importance of these relationships is critical. Reinshaw, as cited by Bush (1986: 16), enforces that most schools remain static, hierarchical and paternalistic in character. The idea that a school is hierarchical in nature would then suggest that the principal, the deputy principal and the heads of departments form the school management team (SMT). This body has tasks and functions that are regarded in nature.

The introduction of SMT's can also be viewed simultaneously with the tenets of Participation Management. According to Ngubane (2005:2) the concept of SMT is viewed as an ideal style of leadership and management for school development purposes. There should be increased potential for relationships that threaten to disable schools for carrying out their core business effectively. Ntuzela (2008:1) agrees that SMT in SA Schools hold formal positions of leadership within the school as an organized structure within a democracy.

The relationships a principal may have within the school have since been harnessed as far back by Mosoge (1996:117) by reiterating that the use of teams in schools is embedded in participative management because the members interact and influence each other positively in collective pursuit of a common goal. Mampuru, as cited by Ndou (2008:15) argue that SMT's are not aware that they are regarded as chief facilitators and managers of schools. The researcher believes that school principals should ensure that the relationship that exists between them and their respective SMTs is one that only wishes to uphold the status of the school.

Furthermore, DOE (2000: 2) confirms the above fact that SMT's were part in place to ensure that the school culture is dynamic and principals are supported to realize effective teaching and learning all time. The rationale for SMT's introduction is the increasing completing of school as organizations, faced with demands of educational transformation, (Loliwe, 2004: 9). It is incumbent of SMTs inclusive of principals to select the best practices for their respective schools to accommodate diverse needs which exists in schools currently, (Ndou. 2008:9).

Mbatha, Grobler and Loock (2008); Ntuzela (2008); Ndou, (2008); DOE (2000); Van der Merwe (2002) Bush and Oduro (2008); Mineduc (2008); Mosoge (1996) and Loliwe (2004) summarizes the duties and responsibilities of the SMT and emphasis the role these duties and responsibilities play in democratic school and the underlying causes for effective or dysfunctional schools:

Delegation of duties to SMTs by school principals is of utmost importance for effective school management. SMTs carry the responsibility of ensuring that leadership is distributed to other colleagues irrespective of status or authority in the hierarchy. It is the responsibility of the SMT to ensure that the school delivers its brief against its mission, vision, goals and action plans;

SMT is expected to align the current practices and plans to strategies structures and system which bring the school closer to attaining the outcomes within the school; Expected to select the best practices for the school accommodate the diversity of needs which exists in the school 'Planning and managing school finances, making decisions, delegating work and coordinial work, solving problems, monitoring and evaluating plans and building and sustaining relationship internally and extremely;

To work out how the school can be best organized to bring about the vision of the school community to enhance teaching and learning;

SMTs must make sure that policies agreed on by the SGB are put into practice, that all areas in the school function effectively and that people work productively towards achieving the schools vision;

SMT effectively if the senior managers to assist the school manager in promoting quality of education; meet parents update professional standards and improve communication with parents;

To produce action programmes concerning the functioning of the school and to execute these programmes. The SMT aims at reconciling the various and divergent interests of the member of a school as an organization. Dissemination and articulating the mission among staff members once it has been agreed upon in the governing body.

Collating the part plans of teachers for presentation to the SGB so that a total plan can be made; Setting goals and objections for various operations teams within the school concerning teaching matters;

Collating budgeting requests for the teachers teams so as to enable the SGB as to draw a comprehensive school budget; and

The SMT is responsible for effective management of the school and this consists of planning, leading and control.

The above roles are entrusted in democracy. These are aspects through which effective management and administration are reflected in a school as they are often used as norms for evaluating the success of a school, Loliwe (2004:15). The next discourse is based on challenges that seek to undermine the role of the SMT towards school development.

### **3.4.3 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB)**

Stakeholder participation within schools is a pre-requisite of the current democratic dispensation. School principals have a task of ensuring that all stakeholders: parents (as represented in the School Governing Body, to be referred to as SGB henceforth), educators and people with vested interest in the governance of schools. Hopkins (2004:200) argues that most often stakeholders do not participate fully in the affairs of the school. Rajeev (2009:4) adds by posing a question as to whether principals are aware of the value of participation of stakeholders.

The belief is that participation provides a measure of stability that leads to the effectiveness of a school. It can thus be overemphasized that school principals need to be able to involve and sustain co-operation within stakeholders. The South African Schools Act, Act No.84 of 1996, henceforth referred to as (SASA) in the research document spells out the essence of the role of stakeholders in particular that of the SGB. The crux of the matter is that there is a disturbing factor that undermines the role played by SGB'S. This presents itself in the form of varied problems that challenge this role. and the strengthening of uniformity, every SGB member must have a constitution which provides basic guidelines and the legal framework for its operation. According to the SASA, the following are roles the SGB must play with regards to governance of schools:

The SGB should ensure that the school is conducted to provide educational services in accordance with the provisions of the relevant educational laws and regulations that may be in existence or may come into existence from time to time;

The SGB needs to develop and control the general policy of the school within the framework of the SGB's constitution and any by-laws and regulations relating to education;

Meetings of the SGB should be held regularly and on a schedule set by policy to discuss the dispatch of school business;

The SGB causes the school annual budget to be prepared, approved and submitted to the appropriate education authority for the provision of government grants for the operation of the school in the ensuing year;

The SGB ensures that all funds of the school are properly managed and accounted for by the head;

The SGB causes the school to submit to the relevant education authorities such information, returns and audited accounts as may be required by such authorities from time to time;

The SGB may cause an annual survey of the school to be conducted to verify the physical operation of the school in relation to the financial expenditure incurred during the year; and, but not limited to-

The SGB holds the school principal responsible for the effective operation of the school and for the provision of information to the SGB to enable it to be current and to make informed decisions on the school (SASA).

Whereas, Van De Venter in Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:263) amongst others the formal responsibilities of the SGB include the following:

The control of the school;

SGB determine an admission policy provided it does not conflict with national and provincial guidelines;

SGB may determine a language policy for the school, provided it does not conflict with national and provincial guidelines;

The SGB must draft a code of conduct for learners after consulting with learners, parents and educators;

SGB have the right to suspend a learner for a period of up to one week pending the decision of the provincial authorities on whether the learner should be expelled;

The SGB drafts a mission statement for the school. This clearly states the core values of the school as an institution;

One of the most important functions of the governing body is to assist the principal and educators in their execution of their tasks. Education should be a team effort.

The governing body should therefore also strive to involve all the parents in the activities of the school; and

One of the most important functions of the governing body is the appointment of educators. Although the SGB does not have the authority to appoint educators, it does the actual selection and advises the education authorities of its choice.

Furthermore, the SGB's role is extended to the following according to Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:265) quoting Christie (1999:29):

The maintenance and improvement of the school's property, buildings and grounds;

Determining the extramural activities and choices of subjects in accordance with provincial guidelines; and

The purchasing of textbooks and other educational media and materials.

Comparatively, according to Bush (2011:1) the following are statutory roles of school governors in the California District of education in the United States of the America:

Allowances and expenses for governors: Governors should have a policy on payment of governors' expenses;

School prospectus: each year the governing body must publish a school prospectus for parents and prospective parents;

Complaints: The governing body is required to have procedures in place for handling complaints of a general nature and for applying procedure for complaints about the curriculum;

Committees are to be formed with outlined duties and roles;

Meetings: Detailed information on meetings of the governing body and its committees; and

Standing orders and terms of reference in the event of disputes with regards to school related matters.

There seem to be significant similarity between the roles of school governors in the California District of education in the US according to the Ofsted Report (2011:1-7) and the envisaged role of SGB's within the South African context. The following are remarkable similarities:

The choice of curriculum;

The practice of equality and diversity management to stakeholders; and

Feedback on leadership to be given to parents and the educational authority on a continuous basis.

The most disheartening fact is: does encouraging parents as represented by the SGB to play a more active role in their children's education lessen the role of educators? According to Bush (2008:1) most parents care deeply about their children's education. The challenge is that parents are often overextended due to the imbalance that exists between family and work. In addition, school principals need to be aware that there are countless educators who also feel overwhelmed and helpless, who are faced with challenges of under-funded schools, unruly learners and limited support from education officials (Bush, 2008:1).

According to research conducted on the role of the principal in the SGB with specific reference to the promotion of parent participation in the SGB highlighted the following findings:

The importance of functions principals fulfill with regard to the functioning of the SGB;

The pronouncement of principals as the finger on the pulse of what is happening at school;

Principals are viewed as resource persons for other members of the community;

Ensuring that all duties are carried out adequately;

Setting the tone in SGB meetings; and

SGB to be responsible for interpreting education policies and on ascertaining their implementation.

The disquieting fact however is that it was found that persistent power struggles in rural schools often arise when principals overplay their roles as this creates tension among SGB members (Bush, 2011:3). It can thus be emphasized that principals need to rise above conflicting situations. Karlsson (2002:1) warns that drawing out from recent studies contended that the governance role failed to include measures that prevent a re-enactment of South African power relations of race, class and gender at schools and *apartheid*-era inequalities continue to manifest in schools.

#### **3.4.4 TEACHER UNIONS**

The inception of the union movement in 1990 in the education system was so to encourage stakeholder participation and debate. The introduction of unionism in education was welcomed with mixed reaction. On one hand pro-unionists saw it as a platform to engage and let educators see themselves as 'workers whereas union contenders saw this as a demise of an era of 'good education (Estate, 2010: 154).

School principals according to Van de Venter (2003:260) often find themselves in a difficult position with regard to their relationship with educators unions. It must be noted however that the belonging to a union is a choice. Educators have the right to strike. The crux of the matter lies in the questions of professional and responsibility Van de Venter (2003: 251).

Principal have a problem of enhancing the sense of responsibility that educator have towards their learners. The ability to communicate responsibility to educators comes as prescripts in dealing within unionism in schools. According to Heystek and Lethoko (2001:224) Unionism in education was introduced with all its characteristics like industrial action, collective bargaining and lobbying. The main aim of unionizing education was to bring the ability of teachers to be free from domination and threat of local communities.

This brought up an argument as to whether the role of the union is to protect its members or to uphold the ethos of the profession Woods (2008: 141). Heystek and Lethoko offer a quick solution to the matter that: Union activities add a moral issue to the professional function of the teachers. However, there are negative perceptions of unions particularly on the issue of strikes. One can argue teachers go on a strike to get an improved teacher: Pupil ratio.

According to Heystek and Lethoko (2001:224) professional unionism is when teachers and management work together. This may be realized through joint committees on education matters, peer review, bargaining, training and development. The main here is to engage various in matters and issues that affect the day-to-day affairs of education in schools.

However unionism faces its own challenges as cited by Heystek and Lethoko (2001:226): Poor salaries, lack of discipline in teachers and learner, the use of corporal punishment, politics in education, resistant stakeholders and the redeployment and rationalization process. The role played by various in education is one aspect school principal need to know and uphold particularly in a democratic milieu.

Unions must make their members aware of different codes of conduct, establishment of good relationship between unions and the department with the same aims and goals so as to avoid strikes shall restore the image of the teaching profession and thus enhance the role unions play in education, (Heystek and Lethoko, 2001; 227).

#### **3.4.5 COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

According to Naidu, Joubert, Mestry, Mosoge and Ngcobo (2008:129) a community is defined as a collection of individual who are bonded together by natural will and who are together bound to a set of shared ideas and ideals. This would mean that every household living within the perimeter of the school should possess common interest with regards to the role to be played towards the school.

Furthermore, Leistyna (2002:9) believes that the area around the school referring to the geographical community and the institutions, services, leisure activities, local businesses and commercial enterprises that constitute the broader community. One of the main aspect that a school and as surrounding community should demonstrate is the issue of collaboration.

According to Butcher and Ashton (2004:40) collaboration is explained as working together and sharing responsibility for results. It may thus be argued that the community and the school's collaboration history is the one that leaves much to be desired. This is brought by the fact that the community does not provide anticipated support only criticism.

The crux of the matter is that the community is special of collaboration, the mutual and provision of services between the school and the community is not reciprocated due to profound differences (Woods, 2008:34). The principal task is to balance the interests of these various groups for the benefit of the school (Rigidu et al 2008: 131).

The relationship between the community and the school is contentious. NCREL, 1995; Mavhiva and Heystek, 2002; Kirschenbaum, 1999 and Maboe 2005 as quoted by Naidu (2008: 134) summarized the following as challenges facing school-community collaboration: The issue of low education and illiteracy among community members, an uninviting atmosphere that community members experience when visiting the schoolyard.

In addition, the negative attitude of principals and its teacher towards parental involvement, possibility as a result of dealing with overcrowded classrooms, scarce resources and unpleasant encounters with parents of wayward children the belief that educators work is not to tackle socialities that face the learners and not to act as substitutes for ideal parent.

These factors dampen the spirit of wonderful school community relationships. Van de Venter (2003: 257) argues on the role of the community on good school-community relationships: school facilities and resources are not made available to the community for education and social is often sketched, contact with community institution is not always upheld, the school staff does not have the knowledge on how to handle or deal with the public and often the principal take sides in local politics, neutrality and impartiality are hampered.

The above always lead to the issue of the community behaving untoward to the school as a learning institution. According to Van de Venter (2003:257) a school principal should be aware that there are vested interests threatening change. The problem here according to Naidu et al (2008:158) is that principal do not always involve all interested parties. Failure to involve all parties encouraged members of the community to undermine authority. School principals still need to understand that they are mutually dependant on each other for the benefit of the school.

#### **3.4.6 THE ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT**

In post-apartheid South Africa, the passing and adoption of the South African Schools Act and the recent norms and standards for funding were passed to guide the way in which education is to be run. The processes that preceded the passing of these pieces of legislation involved the views of all stakeholders and interested parties in education.

According to Naidu, et al (2008:148) The Public school system in South Africa is administered at three principal levels: the National, Provincial and Local. The government has a pivotal role in the sense that all the educational needs are centralized and disseminated through the three levels. One of the roles of the government is to ensure that national and provincial educational objectives are to be acquired bearing in mid any conflicting viewpoint from other stakeholders or school.

Different piece of legislation safe guard the smooth provision of education as a service is delivered. The South African Schools Act pronounces the governance of schools; the Act also stipulates the functions to be played. Furthermore employment of educators Act of 1998 makes reference to the role, status and functions of governing bodies.

The following are cited as the role the government plays in education keeping a balance between resources and under-resourced schools through the inception of the norms and standards for funding, dealing with the ever growing levels of illiteracy through the introduction of teaching systems that not only addresses illiteracy but measures the country's competitiveness globally through the annual national assessment (ANA), poverty eradication through the national schools nutrition programme (NSNP) this sees primary education secondary schools being fed a balanced meal at school, other programmes include the prioritization of early childhood development, HIV/AIDS awareness programmes in schools are the culture of learning and teaching LOLT Programme.

Behind these wonderful attempts by the government to provide a service that seeks to enlighten and equip the nation lies a number of challenges that seeks to undermine the essence of the government's role in education provision: incomparable learner performance, low teacher morale, learner and teacher ill discipline, teacher absenteeism, the impact of HIV/AIDS, high learner drop-out rate, drug abuse and low teacher salary, resistance to change.

Education in South Africa needs school principal who demonstrate outmost levels of emotional and intellectual intelligent who would be able to withstands all sorts of pressures and still be able to provide education to the masses. The discussion outlined the importance of the role the SGB play in the running of schools. A formal and additional roles of the SGB as outlined in the SASA were compared with those of the board of governors in the California District of Education.

It must be noted in serious light and caution that general democratic school governing bodies have fallen short of the transformation vision. Karlsson (2002:1). This is worrisome when taking into the duty of a school principal within a democratic milieu into account. However is the community's role through their electing of SGB members and boundaries in school governance clearly understood by all role players so that the school benefits from the participation of those who have the best interest of the school at heart? (Van de Venter and Kruger, 2010:265)

### **3.5 THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PRINCIPAL WITHIN DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

#### **3.5.1 The role of school principals in a democratized South African context**

The change from a one Party state to a democracy resulted in South Africa having to adapt to a myriad of changes. Education as one facet of a multiparty democracy had to undergo a metamorphosis of series of changes. One of changes is school leadership and management under the watchful eyes of principals. According to Cushman (2008:34) the principal must keep a delicate balance between the often conflicting pressures coming from teachers, community, district and the state.

It is no wonder that today centuries later school principals are legally accountable for what happens in their schools. Principals are to share school leadership with a number of unknowns who later would be known,(Cushman,2008:36).The preceding paragraphs are dedicated to the responsibilities of a principal within a democratic leadership.

### **3.6 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

The starting point in discussing this matter is to understand that governance plays an important role in a democracy and as one aspect in the running of schools; the researcher believes that applying democratic principles would enable school principals to withstand the pressures of a developing democracy like South Africa. Mncube (2008:77) argues that the mechanisms to involve learners in the governance of schools are employed globally as a form of democratizing education. This is a starting point if we are to understand the role school principals must play in a changing society.

Van Wyk (2006:29) as quoted by Mncube (2008:77) laments that governance (National) shifts their responsibilities to the principals on the grounds that principals are the ones who are more familiar with issues of school governance. This is a concern as far as the level of knowledge of school principals is concerned.

School leadership must be practiced cautiously and conscientiously particularly within a society that is fledgling in democracy. Mncube (2008:78) asserts that without democratic development of a society, a more democratic system of education cannot be promoted. This clearly indicates the fact that for democracy to be practiced efficiently school principals need to be conversant with the principles, norms, expectations and values of a democracy. Conversely, without a more democratic system of education, the development of a democratic society is unlikely to occur (Mncube, 2008:79).

In order to understand the democratic running of schools fully Van der Westhuizen and Van Vuuren (2007:438) believe that the school itself must be organised along democratic lines, taking into account that democracy is best learned through implementation of democratic strategies, whereas Backman and Trafford (2007:34) are of the opinion that a school leader works in more or less decentralised systems based on complex interplay of many autonomous partners.

Furthermore, it must be noted however that; school principals should be in a state of acknowledging the fact that a local community where the school is situated has to interact with global forces that are sometimes beyond democratic control (Mednick, 2003:2). The problem is that school principals are unable to acknowledge all the positive effects globalization had had on our daily lives. The researcher argues that school principals do not see diversity and change as opportunities.

The research aims at exposing school principals to the notion that if democracy is to be implemented, school principals would not be seen as an instructional leader but the educational leader who mobilizes the expertise, talent and care of others. The following is an illustration of the varied roles of school principals with regard to democratic governance and school leadership:

The role of the school principal has changed. The argument is brought to the fore as to whether principals are able to share real decision making power with staff and stakeholders? Can principals provide support for effective functioning of staff members? Are principal's Instructional leaders who prompt others to continuously learn and improve their practice?

Are principals able to develop collaborative accountability? And managing and monitoring the change process to make sure it is always moving forward, (Glickman, 2003:3)

Antonio and Gamage (2008:2) summarize the following factors with regards to democratic governance and leadership In the Philippines:

- (a) environment in a democratic school is characterized by a democratic way of life, a democratic process of learning, and a democratic participation in the life of the community of the school; and
- (b) Provision of opportunities for stakeholders to participate more in the affairs of the school is responsive to what has been conceded as one of the essential characteristics of successful schools.

It is worrying that principals are unable to allow people to participate in decision making as well as increasing their commitment levels to a school as an organization; motivating colleagues to provide good quality work is still lacking; Persuading colleagues to share accurate information or incorporate high degrees of communication to the school as a whole needs rejuvenation; Offer continuous learning and development through training; and principals have a problem in allowing people to work freely and maintain humorous relationships through people-centred leadership and management. It is important to note that principals have to be positive and know that passion is caught not taught (Sim 2013:4).

The punch line in this discourse would be entangled in the fact that democratic school governance and leadership are positively affected by effective strategies and implementation and according to Antonio and Gamage (2008:9) School Governing Bodies need to be empowered to take full control of schools. Principals need to be ready to share the commitment for the benefit of our country.

### **3.6.1 BENEFITS OF DEMOCRATIC SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP**

The acquisition of democracy gave birth to the realization of changed roles and responsibilities. The crux of the matter lies in the fact that many school principals are not aware of the value and benefit of applying democracy and reaping rewards. According to Backman and Trafford (2007:11) the following are benefits of democratic school governance and leadership:

Discipline: The first objection to involving stakeholders such as learners in the decision making is usually about discipline. If pupils cannot follow strict and simple rules with clear sanctions if you break them, how can we expect them to make mature and responsible decisions on their own; enhances learning: Learning is an individual thing. By practising democracy learners are given greater freedom to choose how to work and the related assessment standard; Problems with underachievement and lack of motivation are often reduced; Reduces conflict: Management of relations and communication channels give rise to mutual respect.

School principals need to be aware that by applying authoritarian principles are applied people can feel it necessary for their survival to form alliances for protection or protection or personal favours; Makes the school more competitive: Schools must be able to withstand the changing roles and perceptions on how children are brought up in their families; and Secures the future existence of sustainable democracies: Learners must be given the opportunity to choose and also be able to distinguish between Rights and responsibilities as these are pillars of democracy.

The above discourse clearly demonstrates the fact that democracy seek to empower citizens by virtue of being governed by fellow citizens however citizens need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding the tenets and value of democracy.

Mncube (2009:3) argue school principals are not aware that in South Africa, democratic school governance refers to the institutional structure entrusted with the responsibility of authority to formulate and adopt school policy on a range of issues which include school uniforms; school budgets and development priorities, endorsement of the code of conduct for learners, staff and parents. The researcher believes that if democratic principles are applied, school principals would be able to withstand the challenges brought about by change in a changing society, (Karlsson, 2002:35).

Literature demonstrates that although parents are part of school governance, most of them are not on board. Furthermore, Mncube (2009:17) adds that even though parents participate in decision-making processes, principals are not abreast of the fact that the very parents are not always given opportunity to participate in crucial decisions affecting the life of the school.

This view is also corroborated by Giddens (1984:34) as quoted by Mncube (2009:17) that governance of schools is a political activity, involving education professionals and lay people who have their own views on what school is about and the way it should be organized. This view is also held by Botha (2004:242) as the new millennium stretches before us, the principalship of today is more demanding than ever. The researcher holds the adage that what are certain school principals will continue to find them constantly struggling to make the best of their management as well as to ensure that professional standards are enhanced. Leadership and strategy are vital for the principal who faces the challenges of the future, (Botha, 2004:242).

### **3.7 Comment**

The previous discussion had its parallels on the view that school governance is vital in a democratic country however caution should be taken not to overlook both the benefits and challenges brought by school governance structures particularly in a fledgling democracy like ours. A demonstration was drawn to the fact that school principals are faced with a myriad of features that are embedded within school management and leadership. According to Backman and Trafford (2007:85) no change in schools happens immediately.

The following factors formed part of the discussion in the preceding paragraphs. Firstly the inevitable changing roles and responsibilities as prescribed by the job description. The traditional role of the school principal was juxtaposed with the current demands, Botha (2004:239). Secondly, high levels of discipline are enhanced by the implementation of democratic principles, thirdly, reviewed research studies revealed that conflict incidences decline through effective implementation of democratic governance.

Lastly, the inherent nature of democratic governance poses a few episodes of Challenges to school principals. Karlsson (2008:45) summarizes them by adding that school principals in their attempt to spread democracy in schools are stressed by the fact democracy challenges old hierarchies and authorities; school principals have shown through scientific methods that in their bid to implement democracy, in most cases the exercise is perceived as a one-man-show by all subordinates and stakeholders alike. The researcher believes that this need not be the case. The difficulties are significant, but the rewards are immense, (Backman and Trafford, 2007:85).

School principals need to be aware that the authoritarianism of school leadership and school governance characteristic of the *apartheid* era have disappeared, yet issues concerning values, behaviour, attitudes and skills necessary for full democratic participation remain,(Mncube, 2009:17). The following discussion is based on the democratic leadership and legislation with specific reference to democratic leadership demands and the legislation framework.

### **3.8 DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP AND LEGISLATION**

South Africa post 1994 has seen a myriad of changes. The researcher is of the idea that the political events that helped to shape what South Africa has become are nothing short of envy to most countries-in Africa and elsewhere. According to Thompsons (2010:317) the niche that South Africa has carved for herself in a sense that issues like transparency, accountability and the will of the people are observed.

Furthermore, Wilkinson (2009:25) believes that if it was not for our tenacity, vigorous debates and public opinion resulted in a democracy that is ours. Whereas, Milner (2009:165) argue that if South Africa does not guard and add more emphasis on her hard earned albeit bloodless transition, nothing would be achieved. The challenge is to sustain all the attributes that make up the microcosm of what a democracy is to be defined by in recent times (Gibson *et al*, 2002:24).

The researcher holds strong beliefs along the idea that for South Africa to prosper all care should be taken in enhancing and practicing democracy in its entirety. The discussion below is based on the advent of democratic characteristics which includes amongst others: the concept of rights, equity and redress, equality before the law and the negative and degrading issue of discrimination in South Africa.

### **3.8.1 Democratic leadership demands and the legislative framework**

The demands posed by a democratic state that emerged in South Africa after 1994 brought with it multiple and contradictory demands: firstly, the expectation to deliver a just and humane society was high on the list. Secondly, the state was expected to provide the conditions for economic growth and development, (Sayed 2008:1).

The issue at stake was to level the playing fields in order to spell the words: equity and redress. The new state was expected to be responsive to the will of the people and to guarantee that every South African is equal before the eyes of the law; hence the birth of our constitution, Act Number 10 of 1994. The concepts of equity and redress are hereunder fully detailed:

According to Motala (2010:34) the concept of equity and redress would receive fair judgement if it is reviewed from the tangent of addressing the enormous disparities inherited from the *apartheid* system, both through the redistribution and allocation of resources to historically disadvantaged schools and the poorest provinces and through increased access to schooling,(Sayed 2008:14).

Furthermore, according to the USAID CASE STUDY REPORT (2010: 7) achieving equity within the education system is critical for our country to deal with the highest levels of poverty and socio-economic inequality. For the concepts to be fulfilled Fiske and Ladd (2004:74) argues that in order to achieve optimum objectives in addressing these issues, three distinct definitions of equitable education that could be applied are specified for educational planners and scholars to analyze: equal treatment, educational adequacy and equal educational opportunity.

Firstly, equal treatment according to Motala (2010:37) would be attained by adding more value in stressing a particular constitution of justice which is linked more to administrative concerns of how resources ought to be distributed than to cultural and moral concerns. However, Botha (2009:27) argues that the explicit objectives of South African education policy have been to reach distributional equality through the reallocation of resources to poorer schools.

The disjuncture is the ineffective management of these resources in bridging the gap between previously advantaged and disadvantaged schools. School principals must be able to manage and lead schools in ensuring that resources reach their intended destinations.

Secondly, school principals are expected to run adequately funded schools. According to the USAID CASE STUDY REPORT (2010:8) the Quintile system has resulted in inadequacies. The Quintile system flaws are further escalated by the relatively small government allocation coupled with low rates of school fee payment by parents and in most instances schools are declared no-fee schools. This results in a burden under which school principals have to manage under. The researcher feels that the fact that school principals have to manage underfunded schools hampers even the most effective school principal to realize their potential.

Thirdly, South Africa enrolls a large number of learners as compared to other developing countries. The problem is that the introduction of the school fee policy is a barrier to education access in most schools Botha (2009:45). According to Webber (2002:8) the quality of education accessible by poor learners is not equal and equitable. The argument lies in the fact that the concept of equity may not, in fact, be equitable since simply allocating equal resources may not make up for historical oppression or the present levels of poverty.

School principals are therefore faced with these questions: Can equity be seen as addressing unjust outcomes? How can all students benefit equal opportunities?

There is also a need for school principals to find answers to the above stated question: Is the current education system addressing historical inequalities established under colonial and *apartheid* rule? The South African education system has a huge task of addressing equity and redress because the reliance on modernization and neo-liberal theories based on user fees, fiscal discipline and school governance in which privatization, decentralization and the market are primary means of achieving parity in the education system,(Vally 2010:20).

### **3.8.2 Democratic milieu and Education Law Imperative**

One of the pillars of a democratic society is equality. Western countries like the USA and France through their revolutions had one fight in common: equality since then, these values is central to the concept of democracy Snyman (2008:28). Literature sources reveal that equality has never been a norm in democracies and South Africa is no exception. According to Van de Venter and Kruger (2010:132) equality before the law is defined as a measure of how society treats difference.

There is a tendency to iron out differences with a hasty pursuit for uniformity. This often breeds contempt. Van de Venter and Kruger(2010: 133) confers to the idea that equality seeks to ensure that differences between people are not unjustly used to favour or disadvantage some in relation to others and that disadvantage unjustly suffered by some persons compared with others is rectified. The following discussion is the concept of equality before the law with regards to education in South Africa.

According to Bennet (2005:57) the dimension of equality ensures that to the extent there is no material difference between persons, everybody is treated the same. Equality endorses the recognition of pertinent differences and requires that persons be treated differently to the extent that there is a relevant difference between them. To treat persons the same when they are in fact already unequal is to perpetuate rather than to eliminate inequality Snyman (2008: 45).

It must be noted however, that equality is more than the absence of discrimination, whether direct or indirect. According to Van de Venter and Kruger (2010:136).The issue of equality is not solely a matter of individual effort.

There is a need to understand that the practice of equality involves the development of strategies which would actively promote a society based on principles of social, economic and political inclusion.

The researcher believes that this means that by practicing equality, it embraces the taking of positive measures to enable persons to overcome disadvantage and to afford them equal opportunity. It is important to recognize that by applying such measures does not necessarily mean that they do not constitute discrimination but rather promote equality.

The following are arguments as to whether equality should be denominated as a core norm in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa according to Xaba (2011:34):

Democracy is premised on the principle of equality, it is desirable that it should be defined in the constitution as a core norm which would inform, temper and qualify other constitutional provisions; True freedom depends on equality in a broader than legal sense-on having the resources for effective participation in the democratic system.

Exclusion from full and equal participation for whatever reason: economic, social, cultural or any other weakens the sense of community and common purpose and thus makes more difficult the achievement of desirable reforms, such as the removal of unfair discrimination.

Greater economic equality would lead to greater political stability on which the effective functioning of democracy depends; and there is a danger that the equality provisions of the constitution might be interpreted as subordinate to other provisions unless the judiciary is expressly required by the constitution to treat equality as a core norm.

However, the following pointers are argument against the practice of equality in a democratic society according to Bennet (2005:87) as summarized below: It is not appropriate to introduce into the constitution a form of ranking of fundamental rights, the consequence of which could not be predicted and might on occasion be undesired. Equality before the law is a fundamental right whose position will be strengthened by the constitutional amendments; the guarantee of equality before the law in Article 40.1 is an absolute guarantee which is already central and must inform the interpretation of other rights, many of which are expressly qualified; and political debate argues for an optimum degree of socio-economic equality rather than strictly for equality before the law. The interrelationship between the two is acknowledged but the former is a policy issue appropriate to be addressed by government rather than constitutional assertion.

It must be noted that according to the constitution it is stated that every person shall have the right to equality before the law and equal protection of the law. The above is also applicable to a school as an organization and the above-mentioned factors apply. The most disturbing fact is that school principals on a number of situations diverge from the prescripts of the constitution and thus the concept of equality is compromised. The department of education also has a duty to ensure that the prescripts are practiced without fear or favour by all parties in the education sector is concerned.

The following discussion is on discrimination as an education imperative and its legal standing.

According to Kirkpatrick (2002:356) discrimination is defined as an act of selecting a particular characteristic; by the elimination of all other inputs, Whereas O'Neil (2000:3001) defines discrimination as the act of distinguishing the condition of; the power of observing differences, or mixing exact distinctions.

The following discussion is based on the following forms of discrimination in relation to democratic practices in schools in South Africa according to Kirkpatrick (2002:393):

Sexual harassment can be described as unacceptable behaviour of a sexual nature or behaviour based on someone's sex which is unwelcome. This could include unwanted comments of a sexual nature or inappropriate touching. Sex discrimination is where someone is treated less favourably because of their sex than someone of the opposite sex would be treated in the same circumstances; this applies to both boys and learners; a learner may be a victim of racial abuse and violence from other learners, either on the school premises or on the way to or from school. Clear policies should be implemented to deal with early signs of this kind of discrimination.

Comparatively, in England and Wales, it is against the law for any school or provider of education, including colleges, to discriminate against disabled pupils. This may lead to exclusion to access to education or admission. In South Africa, The SASA is very load on the issue of admission as it is stipulated in the admission policies of public schools which bears reference to the constitution. It is against the law in South Africa and in England to discriminate against learners who are lesbian or gay or who are children of lesbian or gay parents.

This often leads to bullying practiced on learners perceived to be gay or lesbians. Cases studied reveal that no case was ever won by the state with regards to discrimination on the grounds of sexuality both here and in the US and England. It is against the law to discriminate against the parents of a learner because of their religion or belief. Discrimination against someone with no religion is also against the law.

The issue of religious practices in some private schools in South Africa is however, not well documented. The foremost notable aspect would lie in the precepts of the admission policies of such schools to subscribe to the values enshrined in the constitution. In England and Wales; it is against the law for a school or other education provider to discriminate against someone who is undergoing gender reassignment. It is also illegal to discriminate one if one is intending to undergo or have already undergone gender reassignment. The Constitution and the SASA covers these issues subtly to avoid any contradictions and controversies.

### **3.9 COMMENT**

South Africa as a democracy is faced with a lot of challenges that seeks the contribution of all in order to achieve the main aims of the constitution. It is behind the discussions above that school principals need to familiarize themselves with all legislative concepts mentioned in order to make sound and measurable judgment in their daily running of schools. Sayed and Jansen (2001:241) summarizes the following factors to be borne in mind by school principals in order to understand the South African democratic milieu:

The absence of basic school resources; poor quality of learning and teaching; lack of adequate trained staff; the inadequacy and failings of bureaucrats and administration in the system; lack of community participation; Management skills; school governance and its relevance; observable and quantifiable impediments to delivery with regards to resources; conflictual nature of policies with specific reference to implementation; resistance to change; and comparison of validity of policies to other countries.

### **3.10 CHAPTER SUMMARY**

The chapter outlined in detail and illustration the theoretical perspective of democracy. Concepts were explained to gain a firmer and full understanding what democracy entails. Different democracy models were discussed with emphasis in their relation to education. A South African Democratic milieu was explained using special anecdotes from legislation and education matters. Furthermore, the researcher laid out the role of democracy as well as the envisaged leader for a changing South Africa. It had to be important to reveal the different role played by stakeholders in the education sector as well as their unique challenges. Comparisons were drawn from here and abroad in order to balance the argument with regards to the discussion on how a democratic milieu should be and the demands posed on school principals.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **EMPIRICAL RESEARCH, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter the empirical design of the research study is presented. The discussion focuses mainly on the research paradigm and the qualitative research method. A clear discussion on the nature and choice of the interview protocol is given, reasons for selecting the interview are given and the advantages and disadvantages of the interview are discussed. Then the data is presented and interpreted.

#### **4.2. RESEARCH PARADIGM**

A paradigm is a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects or reality which gives rise to particular world-view-it addresses fundamental assumptions taken on faith, such as beliefs about the nature of reality (ontology), the relationship between knower and known (epistemology) and assumptions about methodologies, (Maree,2010:48). It is behind this introductory adage that the researchers' choice of paradigm lies. In addition, the Interpretive paradigm is about understanding the everyday lived experiences of people in a specific area or historical setting, (de Vos, 2002).

According to Mavuso (2000: 54) interpretive paradigm is about epistemology that advocates that it is necessary for the researcher to understand humans' roles as social actors and the meaning the humans give these roles. The research problem falls within the parameters on interpretive nature in that it sought to explore how school principals deal with the demands of a democratic milieu. The responses from the discussions as well as the responses from the questionnaire would interpret what the real situation is in schools.

There is a lacuna of arguments by interpretivists that reality is pluralistic and is constructed in language and interaction (Leavy & Hesse-Biber, 2006). The core of the study is that meanings must be derived from actions of the subjects in their real working situations. The interpretive paradigm states that actions are only meaningful to us as long as we are able to ascertain what those who are studied intend to do. The relevance of this paradigm to this study is that the demands and challenges principals face in this democratic dispensation of school leadership is explored. Their roles, duties, challenges and pressures exerted upon them were explored.

In conclusion, Cohen and Crabtree (2006:2) posit that interpretive standpoints are founded on the theoretical belief that reality is socially constructed and fluid. The researcher believes that the responses from questionnaire and interviews can be taken to be valid or true however; the interactions from the negotiations would yield multiple but valid claims to knowledge.

#### **4.3. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH METHOD**

It is important to choose the design and method that would yield desirable results. Mouton (2001:55) asserts that a research design should be viewed as a blueprint of how a researcher intends to conduct the study. The research design selected for this study is the qualitative method. An attempt would be made to find the meaning which people attach to their experiences or phenomena within society (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

Furthermore, the choice of the qualitative method is based on several reasons, amongst others:

- The use of interviews brings a clearer understanding of the research phenomenon by deploying a range of interconnected practices hoping always to get a better understanding of the subject matter at hand (Lincoln, 2000:3-4); Walliman (2005:275). The subject of this study is very sensitive as principals were supposed to report on their day-to-day running of the school according to precepts of democracy. It looked as if they were inspected or assessed.

- Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate in the experience of under-researched groups and/or groups that are misunderstood. (Letherby & Bywaters, 2007:73). As indicated in chapter one, not much research has been conducted on this subject.
- The need to use this method was also necessitated by the fact that the researcher needed to explore people's lives and their everyday behaviour as echoed by Silverman (2000) and Schwandt (2001).
- Qualitative methods emphasize the usefulness of individuals' experiences of their environment (Mouton, 2005:53). In this way, the researcher was able to understand the principals' views in the context of their work situation.

Furthermore, according to Mouton (2005) the qualitative research approach is the one in which research takes the point when insiders give their perspectives on social action. School principals were requested to detail how they deal with challenges they face in their bid to run schools.

The researcher was cautious about the following disadvantages of the interview:

- Firstly, qualitative research lacks relevance for everyday life because it is not sufficiently dedicated to exactly describing the details of a case in its concrete circumstances (Flick, 2006:12).
- Secondly, it is based on a subjective meaning which is a mere narration of one's experiences.
- Thirdly, the approach is unable to establish the extent of a problem; it only gives the description of the problem (Kumar, 2005), and
- Fourthly, it is difficult if not impossible to generalize the findings to other situations.

The following section deals with the structured interview as the methodology used in the current research.

#### 4.4. STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

The structured interviews introduced the researcher to a world of unknown facts on the demands posed by democracy in schools in this era. The goal of this research is defined as describing and understanding rather than the explanation and prediction of human behaviour (Mouton, 2005:53). The interview is any formal person-to-person interaction between two or more people with a specific purpose or objective in mind on a specified date and time (Kumar, 2005). The researcher used the structured interview to collect data from the respondents. The researcher had to arrange to visit respondents in order to get information.

In using structured interviews the researcher had the advantage of probing respondents' meaning of the topic. This includes their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions. The structure interviews enabled the researcher to observe and study respondents in their natural settings. The researcher was well aware that the interview is a technique that is easy to administer because it permits the researcher to have a well- defined role of sitting with an interview protocol on his/her lap (Plummer, 2001).

The structured interview, however, has certain disadvantages, as follows:

- **The structured interview is time consuming.** The interviews were conducted during the middle of the years when principals are busy with their respective schedules. In addition, the researcher had to travel long distances to locate the selected principals. Moreover, the reading and writing of transcripts, the interpretation of voluminous data and the presentation of results consumed more time than expected.
- **Financial implications:** The researcher had to cover costs involving the purchase of audio-tapes and pay the transcribers of data. A vast area covering schools in the population of the study travelling.
- **Human error:** The researcher had to guard against human bias and error because the researcher became immersed in the phenomenon being studied. Chances of human bias were increased by the fact that the researcher is also a principal of a school.

Despite the above disadvantages the researcher decided to use the structured interview as a data-gathering instrument in order to understand how principals dealt with the demands of the democratic milieu in managing their schools.

#### **4.5 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

The study's population will be comprised of primary, middle and high school principals in the Rustenburg Area Project Office. There are a total number of 151 schools in the Area Project Office; this then translates to 151 principals either on permanent or acting capacities.

The total number of respondents for this study was 15. Due to the timing of the research and geographical distance between the schools, only 7 respondents were accessed. The reasons based on reviewed literature are that convenience sampling makes no pretence of identifying a representative subset of a population and is also based on convenience in accessing the sampling population (Leedy and Ormrod, 2005: 206).

A thorough analysis of responses given by respondents and the views raised in the interviews gave the researcher a clearer understanding.

#### **4.6 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE**

The researcher applied for the ethics clearance (research to the Ethics Committee of the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus.

The North-West Department of Education was requested through a letter to grant permission to conduct research in the Area project Office. This letter was sent to all levels of the Education department in the district in order to be granted permission for visitations. Permission was also sought and given from principals of schools. On visiting a school, the researcher contacted the principal for access to the school premises.

Thereupon the researcher requested to be given a place to conduct the interview. In most cases the interviews were conducted in the principal's office although it was prone to disturbance by people who wanted to speak to the principal.

#### **4.7. TRUSTWORTHINESS OF DATA**

In qualitative research trustworthiness is used to establish the validity and reliability of the data (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005:100; Golafshani, 2003:601-602). The researcher conformed to high standards of trustworthiness in this study. This was achieved through the use of many guidelines to enhance trustworthiness. Lincoln and Guba (as cited by Seale, 2002:1) identified guidelines for the trustworthiness of qualitative research.

They concluded that trustworthiness can be established by, amongst others, prolonged observation in the field, persistent observation, the collection of sufficient data, triangulation, member checking and peer review. They state further that the conformability of findings is based on the researcher's critical self-reflection.

Guba's model of trustworthiness (as cited by Rutherford, 2009:133-134) is used in this study. The model has four criteria, of which some were applied in the study.

##### **4.7.1 Truth value ensured by the strategy of credibility**

The truth value was considered in this study to describe accurately the phenomenon involved. This was done by establishing confidence in the truth of the findings. The principle of credibility was influenced by the following criteria (Schulze, 2002:79):

#### **4.7.2. Reflexivity**

The researcher has a psychological and emotional buy-in with this study. However, such feelings and experiences can become detrimental to the study. The risk of this happening was minimised through the promotion of reflexivity. Reflexivity was promoted through the use of a tape recorder and the interview field notes.

#### **4.7.3. Triangulation**

Responses from transcripts, field notes and draft reports from individual interviews were compared to establish consistency and accuracy of statements (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003:463-464).

#### **4.7.4. Member checking**

The research results were discussed with the respondents and Area Office functionaries as well as the supervisor of the study. (Creswell, 2003:196).

### **4.8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The researcher adhered to strict ethical considerations as demanded by the North-West University's Ethical Committee. The interview should maximize the trustworthiness of data but also minimise inconvenience to the respondent before, during and after the process. The following ethical practices were observed during the interviews (Cohen & Manion, 1994:354; Coleman & Briggs, 2002:79; Leedy & Ormrod, 2001:107):

**4.8.1. Informed consent:** The researcher informed the respondents about the purpose and benefits of the research. They were also informed that although the Area Office had given permission to conduct the research, this permission was not binding on the individual respondent and that each respondent was free to withdraw from the research before, during and after the interview without having the risk of unpleasant consequences. Each respondent was allowed to read the informed and sign the informed consent form.

**4.8.2. Anonymity:** Respondents were asked not to mention their names and the names of their schools during the interview and were told that their names will not be used in the research.

**4.8.3. Confidentiality:** Respondents were informed that their individual responses will not be made available to third parties especially their colleagues and the Area Office personnel. Moreover, they were assured that the information collected will only be used for the current studies and that no information will be disclosed for any other purpose except for the studies.

**4.8.4. Protection from harm:** The researcher assured the respondents that there were no risks involved in the interview. The researcher made sure that the respondents were comfortable during the interview and that no questions that make them uncomfortable were asked. Respondents were told not to answer question that they felt were threatening or compromising their positions.

**4.8.5. Permission to conduct research:** The researcher obtained permission to enter the sites of investigation from the Area Office of Rustenburg and from the principal of every school that was visited. The researcher also asked permission from each respondent to record the interview on an audio-recorder.

## **4.9 THE DISCUSSION OF THEMES EMERGING FROM THE STUDY FINDINGS**

The paragraphs that follow will discuss data from the interviews. The five identified themes will now be discussed. The discussion is based on the interviews held with school principals

### **4.9.1 THEME 1: Understanding of democracy in practice**

Knowledge of democracy increases the chances that a principal will adopt its principles in managing and leading the school. The knowledge that the principal should demonstrate is contained in the theories of democracy as given in par. 2.3. A variety of responses was aired by respondents on the understanding of democracy and its relative application. Most respondents answered on behalf of the stakeholders instead of exposing their knowledge of democracy. An example is respondent 6 who said;

*As I said democracy is something that people do not understand.*

The respondents referred to the lack of knowledge of democracy among the stakeholders. It seems the respondents understood democracy to mean the absence of rule of law. Respondent 1 said:

*If I exercise too much democracy, if I am being too democratic the school will turn out to ungovernable. So at times I just have to put my foot down.*

This respondent reiterated that he sets boundaries because being too democratic will cause the teachers and learners to become sort of loose. Another respondent (Respondent 4) asserted that:

*It is not always possible as a school manger to follow it [democracy] up to the letter, the word democratic.*

In agreement with other respondent, Respondent 5 also believed that democracy means the absence of the rule of law by saying:

*You see in democracy people tend to take advantage of doing things as they like.*

In practice most respondents found a difference between their own style of leadership and the style of leadership demanded by democracy. Literature shows that authoritarian tendencies still exist in schools where the style of management of the principal consists of being in charge and take all the decisions without involving others (par. 2.4.3). Respondents showed that the democratic style of leadership did not agree with their natural style of leadership. This means there was a clash in the leadership style of the principal and the leadership style demanded by democracy.

Respondents 2 and 5 expressed this view as follows:

*“There is a clash with my leadership style and democracy, since my leadership style it is of autocratic system of leadership wherein I do not allow anybody to do whatever he likes or say whatever he likes”*

Respondent 6 supported this view by saying:

*“According to me democratic participation does not agree with managerial style of management”*

However another respondent differed from the above views. Respondent 1 clearly puts it:

*“I can say it [democracy] agrees with my style of management because it works for me”*

Respondent 7 and Respondent 2 summarised it as follows:

*“Democratic participation agrees with my style of management”*

An idea that emerged from the interviews was that democracy seemed to be understood as laissez-faire type of leadership where everybody does as he/she wishes. The literature clearly shows that this type of leadership is not suitable in a democratic milieu (par. 2.6.5).

Respondent 2 was more succinct:

*"To me democracy does not mean a thing as long as people do not want to do as they wish."*

It can thus be said that there are differing views on the understanding of democracy and this leads to difficulty in its implementation. Another factor was the issue of practising democracy in schools as an everyday thing.

Respondent 4 said:

*As a principal I would like to be informed about everything that is going on in my school.*

Respondent 5 believes that practising democracy has its merits and demerits: *Sometimes they do respect you but the others take advantage, they do not understand what democracy is. To them you know democracy it is to be free to do whatever they think and they usually show you that they do not think that you are educated. We are also free, we can do whatever we think and we can, Even if you are doing correct things. But to them they are always right and are always full of threats sometimes. Especially when you try to show them what to do, so they think as if you are undermining them.*

Furthermore, there was a lot to say on the undemocratic behaviour principals often resort to in order to gain respect.

Respondent 4 added

*But I also have the authority then as a principal that says..let us discuss my agenda first before addressing other issues.*

Respondent 3 had this view:

*If there is no time to communicate with others, so I take decisions on my own*

Two opposing views emerge from this theme as some respondents express the view that democracy does not agree with their natural style of leadership while others find agreement between their style of leadership and democracy.

For those respondents who do not find resonance with the democratic style of leadership there can be no hope that implementation of democracy will prosper in their schools. Such principals need training in the leadership styles appropriate for democracy as espoused in par. 2.6. This confirms the literature finding that most schools remain static, hierarchical and paternalistic in character (par. 3.3.2).

#### **4.9.2. THEME 2: EXTENT OF PARTICIPATION OF STAKEHOLDERS**

The discussion on the role of stakeholders was well received with a myriad of opinions gained. The discussion was based on the role and value of various stakeholders within the school: SGB, SMT, educators, community, learners and business (par. 3.3). The democratic milieu demands that the principal should have immense ability to deal with people at all levels and the ability of inviting and accommodating participation (par. 3.3.1). In fact all theories of democracy have participation as a common denominator whether direct or indirect democracies (par. 3.2.2 and 2.3.3). As indicated previously the Department of Education holds the belief that school governance and management is not the duty of one person but of many persons (par. 3.3.1). According to Moloi (2007:5) there is a shift from self-leadership to school-based people-centred management. The question is to what extent do the stakeholders take part in the governance and management of the school? The major respondent in school governance is the SGB and opinions of respondents centred on the role played by the SGB in attending meetings. Respondent 1 said:

*Members of the SGB are available when I need them in the school and they are doing their job.*

In agreement with the above sentiment respondent 2 put it this way:

*The SGB is of great help especially when you invite them to meetings or maybe if you need some donations then they do help.*

It seems some respondents experienced challenges in involving parents who fail to attend meetings. In some case parents feel challenges by principals who need money from them and the parents see meetings as a way seeking funds from them. Respondent 2 had this to say on this matter:

*I think it is a question of talking about funds, how can we raise funds so that we can get some extra teachers, so parents when you talk of money most of them are unemployed.*

Not only are parents challenged in their participation by unemployment but also by their level of literacy. Most of the schools involved in this investigation are rural schools where most parents are illiterate (par. 3.3.3). Respondent 5 said the following with a little bit of exaggeration:

*This one of the SGB that I am having at this schools that they are not enlightened now when coming to the governing of the school, they do not understand anything.*

From the above views it may be deduced that participation is a challenge to principals. Lack of understanding of their duties in a democratic school, exacerbated by illiteracy among parents, leads to poor participation.

#### **4.9.3 THEME 3: SUPPORT OFFERED TO PRINCIPALS BY DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS**

The literature (par. 2.1) points to the fact that principals are now experiencing considerably heavier workloads and escalating demands of a democratic milieu. According to Mabasa and Themane (2002:78) principals come out of an era of authoritarian styles of management and have got to learn new democratic styles to manage and lead their schools. Indeed, principals need support of departmental officials in their struggle to comply with the demands of a democratic milieu.

The departmental officials are, therefore, expected to offer training to principals to enable them to run their schools democratically. The departmental officials' aim to see schools that promote and uphold the precepts of democracy as this represents a school that is progressive and opposed to the former apartheid regime.

According to the literature (par 2.7.1), principals complain that the Department of Education puts unwarranted pressure on them instead of supporting the school in maintaining high educational standards that include the teaching of democracy in its curriculum. The aim in this theme is to find out whether the findings of the literature are confirmed by this research.

Views of respondents show that departmental officials do not offer support to principals and seldom visit the schools. Respondent 1 said:

*The departmental officials are not supporting us and this makes things difficult for us.*

*I think their management plan is somehow not addressing issues.*

The other respondent (respondent 2) was very disturbed by the support shown by departmental official. When probed on the regularity of their visit she snapped.

*Once in a blue moon.....they really do not come here, because they regard us as a problem so they are always afraid of problems. I usually see them maybe once in a quarter.*

Respondent 6 put it this way:

*There is little support that we receive from departmental officials....they come to school and spend five to ten minutes only. The departmental official cannot come to your school and stay with you the whole day. Maybe the reason is that they have a high number of schools to manage.*

Respondents expressed the view that departmental officials who do visit are not helpful in encouraging principals to manage their schools democratically. This is in agreement with the literature (par.2.7.3) that there is a lack of proper monitoring and inspection in schools by departmental officials. It seems on such visits the departmental official would criticise instead of supporting the principal. Respondent 6 viewed the visit as some sort of policing when he said:

*They sometimes come to visit and harass you, checking everything as if they are policing.*

In agreement with the above view respondent 1 stated the following:

*They have a tendency of coming to schools and trying to find fault*

This is highly problematic, given the fact that support, as illustrated in the literature study, is of paramount importance as far as managing schools is concerned, both here and abroad. The crux of the matter is that without support, principals are therefore left to their own devices. Some respondents offered the reasons for this lack of support by departmental officials.

Respondent 4 explained as follows:

*They [departmental officials] are working in vacuums, me as a principal I do not think they are all in position to answer and to provide you with answers under these issues.*

Respondent 1 was very critical of the departmental officials and said:

*I feel very much discouraged and insulted that I sometimes feel like quitting. I wish someone would make them aware that what they are doing is an injustice to the system.*

Having spelled out their dissatisfaction, respondents were also able to prescribe remedial actions. Respondents suggested that departmental officials need to sharpen their communication, try to find answers to needling questions and issues and work harmoniously with principals. Respondents 6 wishfully said:

*Their support will make us to work positively.....They should make an appointment, come to the school, and work with us harmoniously....advise us on what to do and what not to do. I think such support will make a positive impact on us.*

Respondent 7 had this to say about the issue:

*My wish is that they [departmental officials] must help us, they must not just criticize.*

Respondent 7 added;

*When they are at our school they must know that they are there to develop us not to criticise us, but give us the instruments that are relevant.*

Another distinct feature in the discussion with regards to support was the disturbing issue of lack training of principals. Due to the novelty of principles of participation, training should be provided to all stakeholders especially principals who should ensure that the school is successful (par.3.3.7). Besides the fact that training was viewed as irrelevant to the management and leadership within a democratic milieu, respondents complained that it was too short to be any value to them. All respondents echoed the same sentiment that there is no training for principals and that they go for workshops, which is not enough. Respondents elaborated widely and expressed their feelings differently on training.

Respondent 2 said:

*I do not think there is any proper training sometimes you will be undergoing some, what you call them, workshops maybe they will workshop you for a day or some hours.*

In support of this view respondent 4 was concerned about the short time allocated for workshops:

*Three days, it will be a workshop for three days.... It happens sometimes.*

Respondent 1 put it bluntly when he said:

*To be honest with you, there is no training that teachers are being exposed to, unless they develop themselves academically*

Respondent 6 was worried by this lack of training and in-school support of newly-appointed principals by departmental officials when saying that:

*The department officials will only interview you, will only hear of such questions during the interview...officials they do not do follow ups, to capacitate those principal who are newly appointed.*

Respondent 4 was worried by the definition of word training. To him training meant a hands-on workshop. He said:

*So I am not too sure how much practical training is going into these workshops for teaching principals to manage democratically.*

Respondents expressed the idea that without training principals had to rely on other strategies to gain knowledge of management and leadership. It seems most gained their knowledge by enrolling at universities or collaborating with peers. Respondent 1 said:

*If I have attended workshops on managing, it was either through my honours studies*

To this the same principal added:

*I think many principals manage their schools either through their natural skills or by experience or by experience gained from their colleagues*

Respondent 7 supported this view by saying:

*In order for them [principals] to be equipped they just have to develop themselves so that they are able to address the changes that are taking place”*

Views expressed by respondents show that departmental officials do not offer support but criticise principals instead. As for training offered it is irrelevant to school management and most irrelevant in training principals to manage and lead their schools democratically. Moreover, the training offered lasts for a few days, which is inadequate. Respondents expressed the view that departmental officials who do visit are not helpful in encouraging principals to manage their schools democratically.

Respondents were also able to suggest remedial actions. They suggested that the departmental officials should make appointments with them and advise them on what to do and what not to do. The fact is that without support, principals are left to swim or to sink.

#### **4.9.4 THEME 4: MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

The opinions of the majority of respondents focused on the conflict between the stakeholders. The literature point out that representative democracy has the problem of clashes between the interests of the stakeholders (par. 2.3.2.1). However, this does not agree with the findings in this research as most of the respondents said that democracy was working well for them.

One source of conflict between the principal and the stakeholders is that around information-giving where the stakeholders wrongly expect to be informed about everything that happens in the school. In order to preserve confidentiality principals may withhold certain information from stakeholders but this will clash with the precept of openness and transparency. Respondent 1 had this to say:

*“Stakeholders should be encouraged to participate positively in the school, and informed of every little thing that is taking place in the school, otherwise, if they are not being informed of everything that is taking place in the school there is going to be conflict among the stakeholders and the management.”*

At the same time a principal who allows participation is seen in a bad light by stakeholders. The community still expects the principal to be autocratic although democratic demands lead to a different view. Respondent 6 had this to say on the matter:

*Sometimes the parents will be happy when we say that the principal is practicing this kind of ruling, democracy whereby they will be given chance to maybe say in a school situation whereby stakeholders come in the school and take decisions....but at an ultimate end when you apply that democracy the stakeholders will take advantage of you and say you are a bad person.*

The literature portrays a principal as a person who holds legitimate power due to his appointment as head of the school (par. 2.5.3.1). The principal is therefore expected to lead the stakeholders in governance of the school and bears the ultimate responsibility and accountability for the success of the school. If he/she is dictated upon by the stakeholders even to the detriment of the school, then he/she is not applying his/her legitimate power to the full (par. 2.5.2). However, the principal finds himself/herself challenged by the participation of stakeholders who have the view that they are in control of the school. On this matter respondent 5 complained:

*I think as a principal if you allow them [the community] free for all you are going to lose your authority as the principal definitely. You must always keep in mind that you are in charge and you are the responsible person at the end of the day. As an accounting officer I must make it a point that everything is in order so that when asked by my officials I must be in a position of accounting.*

The same sentiment was expressed by respondent 3 when he said:

*It is like when you tell them something and they do not agree with you and personally you feel that that thing will help develop somewhere, and it becomes very difficult to make decisions on that.*

A more succinct view was expressed by respondent 7 who said:

*In a matter where there is disagreement on a particular issue, I tell them that I also have authority to decide which issue is more important than the other*

Respondent 4 added:

*The community leaders must be of such a calibre that they must know that as a school principal you have certain responsibilities because the school belongs to the state. So just to open up and everybody comes in and want to do as they want is not going to work.*

Another respondent complained that:

*The ward committee, they would like to claim the school for themselves; they would like to take over the management of the school*

The discussion were disappointingly summarised by respondent 6 who seemed to have lost hope when he said:

*I am saying that this democracy always will pose a threat to the managerial, or to the management, because everyone has a say in democracy, irrespective of what you say is a fact or a reason, but democracy will always have a problem, and you will always have a threat when you are a manager in a democratic country, in a democratic society. Threats will always be there.*

The respondents, however, also viewed participation of stakeholders as beneficial to the school as the following verbatim quotes show:

Respondent 6:

*In democracy to my view stakeholders promote the running of the school because democracy does not say you should be isolated as a principal, you should call stakeholders and listen to them. They will make you aware of things. So they are very important sometimes.”*

Respondent 7

*Well in our area, some members of the community cooperate, but some of them they do not cooperate.*

Respondent 4:

*They are supportive; I do not have any problem with them. They are also very much concerned about the education of their kids.*

Concerning the working relationships of the principal with specific stakeholders, most respondents referred to the role of unions in the school. The literature (par. 3.3.4) refers to two points of view concerning unionism: pro-unionists saw unions as the platform to let educators see themselves as workers but union contenders saw unionism as the demise of good education. Interviews with respondents reveal that these views are still prevalent among principals. Again the literature (par 3.3.4) states that principals often find themselves in a difficult position with regard to their relationships with educator unions.

It appears challenges arise where a school is housing more than one union.

Respondent 5 had this to say:

*It [unions] is also a very serious challenge because there are more than one union within the school. When SADTU calls for a meeting then the majority of the educators will be leaving the school and when I point out that the remaining educators should be in charge of the school, they complain about the absence of SADTU members.*

Respondent 1 added:

*Luckily we all belong to one union which is SADTU so we do not have a problem of conflicting ideas from different unions. In a school where there are different unions there are problems because in one school there are three different unions so most of the time they had problems.*

According to the literature (par 3.3.4), the question of whether the role of unions is to protect its members or to uphold the ethos of the profession is crucial in determining the relationship of the principal and the unions. It is expected that unions must work together with the Department of education because both share the same goal and that unions must, therefore, make their members aware of the code of conduct of educators.

Comments emerging from the interviews show that unions only care about the grievances of their members and not about education of the learners.

Respondent 7 put the following statement on the table:

*As they [educators] are having unions sometimes they find it difficult to instruction, then they go and report to their union that such and such a principal is abusing them.*

Respondent 6 complained about the unions and said:

*They [union executive] will only come to your schools when there is a dispute. That is the only time when you see union officials coming to your school. But in terms of capacitating educators, teach them how to behave, their conduct, they do not do that. They do not make educators understand that you are there at school for learning and teaching.*

The findings on this theme point to a clash of interests between the principals and the stakeholders because of lack of understanding of democracy. It seems the community still expects the principal to show undemocratic tendencies in running the school. The opinions of the majority of respondents focused on the conflict between the stakeholders.

The literature point out that representative democracy has the problem of clashes between the interests of the stakeholders (par. 2.3.2.1). However, this does not agree with the findings in this research as most of the respondents said that democracy was working well for them because there are cordial relationships between principals and the community.

Furthermore, the findings in this theme show that stakeholders clash with the authority of the principal who is held accountable for everything that happens in the school. Another finding is that unions do not play a positive role towards education as expected.

#### **4.9.5 THEME 5: CHALLENGES THAT PRINCIPALS EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING DEMOCRACY**

Principals who are able and willing to implement democracy in their schools are often off-set by systemic challenges. It was pointed out in the literature (par. 2.7) that the role of the principal has become more complex because of the expansion of schools, expansion of knowledge, socio-economic factors and the introduction of democracy in schools. Although the concept of the school management team has been introduced in South African Schools to assist the principal in discharging most of his/her duties, accountability for the success or failure of the school still depends on the principal. Respondents in the current research found themselves challenged in implementing democracy. The views expressed are indicative of the fact that managing and implementing democracy is not easy. One respondent (respondent 5) said:

*If you look at where we come from, which era, from which background, you can understand that it is not easy for use to quickly have democracy in our schools; it is not actually so easy.*

A factor that ran through this theme was that the workload of the principal hampers him/her in focusing on the implementation of democracy. This finding confirms the literature study that principals struggle to find a balance between executing their management duties and the implementation of policies such as democracy (par. 2.7.2). Respondent 2 said this on this matter:

*I am class-based and really do not have time to manage this school, I am always in class.*

Respondent 3 apparently teaching in a multi-grade school, had this to say:

*Remember I am having 18 subjects that I am teaching and you expect me to carry out democracy to the full? Really it is impossible.*

Another respondent (6), speaking about parents) said:

*They do not understand how we work, especially the workload that we have here*

Besides the matter of the workload, respondents viewed communication between the school and the departmental officials as challenge that hampers the smooth implementation of democracy.

Respondent 4 put it in this way:

*There is a lack of communication, somewhere in the communication processes.*

Respondent 6 said:

*We have got a very, very poor communication between us and the department and because of poor communication some of us fail to attend workshops.*

A systemic challenge aired by respondents concerned the lack of resources to carry out the duties befalling principals as a result of the democratic milieu. As the literature (par.2.7.3) indicates, it becomes extremely difficult to implement any kind of change when confronted by a situation where the school is faced with a shortage of educators, inadequate infra-structure and vandalism.

Respondent 2 had this to say:

*Like, for instance we do not have a photocopy machine. We lack electricity and as far as technology is concerned, we are not acquainted with such things.*

The findings of this theme may be summarised as follows:

- The views of respondents point to the fact that managing and implementing democracy is not easy especially when we take into consideration the era of authoritarianism from which principals come.
- T principals struggle to find a balance between executing their management duties and the implementation of policies such as democracy (par. 2.7.2). Respondent he workload of the principal has increased so much so it hampers him/her in focusing on the implementation of democracy.
- Principals cannot balance the executing their management duties with the implementation of democracy
- Communication between the school and the departmental officials was viewed as a challenge that hampers the smooth implementation of democracy.

- Lack of resources hampered principals from satisfying the demands of democracy on their leadership

The next section deals with a summary of the findings.

#### **4.10. SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS**

It was found that the selection of respondents of the research study were relevant as the nature of responses indicated maturity and valued experience due to the varied responses received. It was clear that experience does not play any roles in the occurrences of demands relates to a myriad of demands for novice as well as highly experienced school principals.

The demands do not differentiate size of school and the number of years a school principal spent in the school. There is alarming significance correlation between the way school principal's deal with the demands posed by democracy and the expectant support they should be receiving from departmental officials; it was found that support is lacking and in most cases non-existent except for unannounced visits which the majority of respondents outlined, as being Policing rather than developmental.

It was also found that school principals are not trained with the demands of school management as the department does not offer training. It emerged that training was only limited to five day induction courses which, according to the majority of respondents was not enough.

It was interesting to note that most respondents did not commit to the parallels drawn between democratic participation and their natural style of managing schools. There was an emerging pattern of responses claiming to be able to manage democracy supplemented by the help received from stakeholders.

Collected data indicate clearly emerging themes in different schools are aired by respondents during the discussion. The major concern is the issue of lack of support of support, guidance and mentoring to the school principal by their supervisors.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter is subdivided into subtopics. Firstly a brief summary of research study is given with each chapter and its main focus. Secondly, the findings of the study will be presented based on the research aims as elaborated in Chapter 1. Recommendations of the study will be presented thirdly. The chapter will also outline recommendations for further research. Finally the chapter concludes with a summary

#### **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY**

**Chapter 1** outlined the idea and reason behind the study, and further explains the research topic from a variety of sources. Principals should possess constructive leadership attributes which would result in a move from autocratic to democratic leadership (cf. Par. 2). An indication of research design in which consists of review of related literature, problem statement (cf. Par. 3), research questions, and aims of the research, research design and methodology and described. (cf. Par 3 and 4).

In **Chapter 2**, the first section of this chapter defines and explains key concepts of the study such as: Democracy (cf. Par. 2.2.1), Democratic milieu (cf. Par. 2.2.2), School (cf. Par. 2.2.3), Leadership practices (cf. Par. 2.2.4), Leadership styles (cf. Par. 2.2.5), Management (cf. Par. 2.2.5) and Community (cf. Par. 2.2.6).

A discourse on the theoretical grounding of democracy in education was done through reviewing direct models (cf. Par. 2.3.1) and indirect- democracy models (cf. Par 2.3.2). Maxwell (2009:36) posits that the choice of theory to be implemented lies on the stability of the school principal to diversify, this was said to be a sign of bravery and tenacity on the side of the principal (cf. Par. 7).

Kelly (2005:101) argues that the major task that education must perform in a Democratic society is proper preparation of young citizens in education; their readiness is what is challenging to principals (cf. Par. 2.3.3), the basis of the principal's Power in democracy, the type of leadership envisaged for a democracy (cf. Par. 2.6.5).

The last section of the chapter discussed the challenges by principals within a democratic milieu. The Constitution spells out all values that seek to prescribe and underpin the way of life in South Africa. However this does not go unchallenged. Sayed and Jansen (2001:241) reiterated the following as challenges and demands school principals are faced with within a democratic milieu, these include amongst others: absence of basic school resources, poor quality of learning and teaching, lack of adequate trained staff, lack of stakeholder participation,(cf. Par.3.5.3).

In **Chapter 3** dealt with the correlation between the stipulated duties of a principal and the demands of a democratic milieu. Various roles, duties and responsibilities are discussed. A parallel is drawn between these roles here in South Africa and abroad (cf. Par. 3.2.1).

The responsibilities of a principal within democratic school leadership received attention. In a democratic country like South Africa, caution should be taken not to overlook both the benefits and the challenges of school governance. According to Figure 1, it was demonstrated that school principals are faced with a myriad of challenges as far as management and leadership are concerned (cf. Par. 3.4.4).

Democracy spells out openness to information sources which according to literature often leads to negative reaction in many ways (cf. Par. 3.5.3). This was evident when dealing with democratic leadership and legislation. It was concluded that a balance between the leaking of sensitive information as well as being transparent should be maintained.

One of the attributes that a school principal must possess is leadership. (cf. Par. 2.6) This chapter explains the type of leadership envisaged for a democratic milieu. It was critically argued as to whether school principals are able to demonstrate their ability to identify goals of the school.

The role of stakeholder participation within a democracy cannot be wished away, (cf. Par. 3.6.2). The researcher drew similarities and differences from here and abroad with a broader view of understanding the intensity of the role of stakeholders in co-leading the school within a democracy. Karlsson (2002:1) threw caution that generally in democracies around the world, the role of stakeholders has fallen short of the transformation vision.

The discussion concluded by paying special attention to the challenges faced by principals within a democratic milieu. Management of function execution, the nature of roles and responsibilities principals are faced with on a daily basis as well as the ability of principals to rise above these challenges was amongst discussed, (Par. 2.8.4).

**Chapter 4** is the discussion on empirical research, presentation and interpretation of data. The initial discussion is based on the paradigm path the research is following, (cf. Par.4.2). The second phase of the discussion was on the research method chosen: Qualitative, (cf. Par.4.3). Structured interviews were further elaborated with punctuations from literature in (cf. Par.4.4). The researcher also exposed advantages and disadvantages of structured interviews (cf. Par.4.4.1 and 4.4.2) respectively.

The interview protocol outlined all stringent measures taken (cf. Par. 4.4.3). The population and sample earmarked for this study are discussed in (cf. Par. 4.5). The researcher explained the trustworthiness of data collected, administrative procedures as well ethical considerations, (cf. Par. 4.6; Par. 4.7 and Par.4.8). The chapter is concluded by interpretation of data (cf. Par.4.9), respondents' analysis (cf. Par.4.9.2) and the discussion of themes emerging from the study (cf. Par. 4.10).

The next section presents the findings of the study.

### **5.3. FINDINGS FROM THE RESEARCH**

The discussion will indicate how the findings relate to the same research aims as stated in Chapter 1 (cf. Par. 5). A reflection is also evident in the volume of literature reviewed and the findings of the data analysis

The major findings of this research may be presented as follows:

### **5.3.1 Findings on research aim 1: To determine challenges school principal face in leading schools within a democratic milieu:**

- The findings on this aspect reveal that school principals do face challenges particularly when they are not democratic in their leading of schools.

The discussion revealed that there are internal and external forces swaying implementation of democracy to non-compliance, (cf par 2.3);

- Furthermore, it was found that autocratic tendencies are displayed by some principals in their bid to be taken seriously. Participant 5 and 2 clearly put it during the discussions that democracy clashes with their autocratic leadership styles (cf par 4.3.1);
- The most disturbing finding is that the role played by the SGB is vital only if they displayed favourable skills in literacy.
- The following challenges facing school principals were outlined:: Diversity management, incoherent learner admissions, the manner in which principals are prepared for professional educational services, the inability to influence administrative leadership practice, legislation implementation challenges and lack of departmental support (cf. par 3.8.4);
- Literature reviewed (cf. Par 2.3.3) reveal that school principals have issues of using a workable theory of democracy on leadership; the choice of theory to be implemented lies on the ability of the school principal to diversify methods of leading. The ability of school principals to choose a theory or a mixture of and implement coherently and with room for unforeseen challenges is an attribute lacking in dealing with the challenges of leading.

- One of the distinct future of leading is the ability to have authority and account objectively. The discussion yielded the fact that principal like their authority but would only share it delicately. This was brought by the fact that the culture of values that determine the ethos of the school were highly prized;
- It was found; in the literature, (cf. Par 3.6.4) that school principals are not in the position to apply transformational leadership whereby different organizational patterns are embraced and the idea of adapting to new emerging culture are not wholly welcomed. The discussions revealed that the ability to transform was at a steady pace and there is a huge sense of fear and uncertainty on the outcomes of the process.
- Furthermore, it was found that training was highly needed to address new concepts in order to smooth adaptation to democracy. In addition, departmental officials lacked a sense of support to principals and that stakeholders' role is important only if it benefits the school.

### **5.3.2. Findings on research aim 2: To determine leadership functions of school principals.**

Literature reveals that there are challenges in executing management function; the nature of the roles, responsibilities and additional duties poses a variety of challenges. It was found that principals are unable to allow people to participate in decision making as well as increasing their commitment levels to a school as an organization; motivating colleagues to provide good quality work is still lacking; persuading colleagues to share accurate information to enhance communication, (cf. par 3.4.2).

In addition, the function of the school principal in leading is weakened by lack of support displayed by district and education officials. It was also reveal that teacher shortage, poor teacher performance, insufficient resources and inadequate infrastructure and confusion caused by changing curricula without proper training, policing tactics makes functioning as a principal an undesirable job in a democratic environment.

Interview discussions revealed that there is significant difference between the way school principals deal with the demands posed by democracy and the expectant support received from departmental officials. In addition, participants aired alarming views on the lack of support needed and anticipated (cf 4.10.4). Literature, (cf par 2.8.2) highlighted and illustrated the value of the support given to principals by departmental officials.

The discussion revealed that implementing democracy is a definite developmental tool of a school either transparency and stakeholder consultation were viewed as basic functions of an effective democratic school principal however; the demands are greater if the views of the SMT were not taken into consideration and principal were to see themselves as “Know-it-all “agents.

Literature revealed that the SMT is responsible for effective management of the school and this consists of planning, leading and control. According to Loliwe (2004:15) the stated roles are entrusted in democracy and these are aspects through which effective management and administration are reflected in a school as they are often used as norms for evaluating the success of a school,(cf par 3.3.2.1).

The disclaimer here is the lack of support from departmental officials and their feverish police tactics, added to that unwillingness on the side of the principals to further their studies (Biographical information section). The fact that time is a contextual factor is inexcusable as this robs the system of valuable skills that would be fitting to competing with the demands in the current education milieu.

Participants in the interviews echoed facts that without support, principals are therefore left to their own devices. The problem highlighted is lack of communication and a reluctance of dealing with matters hands on, (cf 4.10.4). It can thus be concluded that without support, their demands to deal with challenges in a democratic milieu are overwhelming to school principals.

### **5.3.3. Findings on research aim 3: To determine empirically views of school principals on their leadership functions and challenges experienced.**

The findings in this section are derived from the discussion of themes and are divided into five main themes;

5.2.3.1. Theme 1: Understand of democracy; Training (cf par 4.10.1)

5.2.3.2. Theme 2: Democracy participation (cf par 4.10.2)

5.2.3.3. Theme 3: Democracy as a weakener; Managing implementing  
Democracy (cf par 4.10.3)

5.2.3.4. Theme 4: Departmental officials support to principals (cf par 4.10.4)

5.2.3.5. Theme 5: The relationship of principals with various stakeholders.  
(cf par 4.10.5)

## **5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the line with research Aim 4, which seeks to suggest a guide to help principals to lead successfully within a democratic milieu, the following recommendations are proposed.

### **Recommendation 1**

School principals should face challenges they face in their schools head on.

#### **Justification**

The literature revealed that school principals are faced with internal and external forces which sway implementation of democracy towards non-compliance, (par. 2.3). All methods of leadership should be exhausted and consulted in order to acquire a clearer view on democratic leadership displaying excellent levels of authority and accountability in an objective way. Transformational and situational leadership styles are highly recommended in this regard. Literature sources need to be reviewed with the aim of gaining insight on current leadership trends.

### **Recommendation 2**

Departmental officials and stakeholders should support principals by administering positive and constructive continuous monitoring, transparent management and feedback at all times as well as provision of physical and human resources to schools. Implementation of the Norms and Standards for school Infrastructure should be applied with the view of improving schools to be desirable learning environments.

### **Justification**

The findings of this study show that principals receive very little support from Departmental Officials. By receiving support, school principals would feel protected and confident in their respective job execution. Generally school performance and efficiency would be enhanced through open communication lines between all stakeholders. Furthermore, continuous training of stakeholders is important as it capacitates them to perform their respective duties fully within a democratic framework schools find themselves in.

### **Recommendation 3**

The department to draft training initiatives based on: understanding of democracy, participation of stakeholders, solving problems democratically and democratic leadership style as developing elements of a school for beginner and experienced principals.

### **Justification**

Training should be done on a regular basis to keep abreast of democratic global trends of management within a democratic milieu. Training should be done through continuous evaluation and monitoring with the aim of assisting principals to cope with their workload.

### **Recommendation 4**

School principal should improve their qualification. The Department of Basic Education must make it a priority for serving principals to upgrade their qualifications on a regular basis.

### **Justification**

Empirical research revealed that most principals have junior degrees. These imply that principals cannot cope with current demands of leadership and management. Upgrading of qualifications would make principals abreast of trends and current methods of managing schools in any environment. This idea would also minimize training costs and lessen challenges principals face.

### **Recommendation 5**

The Implementation of the Norms and Standards for School Infrastructure Policy as stipulated.

### **Justification**

An acute shortage of resources is a precursor to the ever growing number of potential principal leaving the profession of greener pastures. It is suggested that the national department's prescripts of the implementation of Norms and Standards for provision of proper infrastructure to all schools be accelerated to lead to effective school management.

### **Recommendation 6**

School principals must seek total stakeholder participation and community involvement as the means of managing schools.

### **Justification**

The role stakeholder plays in a valuable taking into account the tenets of the constitution of the country. By continuously educating stakeholders on the running of school would result in the ownership of these very schools.

## **5.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

A further study should be conducted to investigate challenges school face in leading school within a democratic environment. The following aspects are to receive attention:

- The beginner principal;
- The course of principalship; and
- Retention of school principals within the system.

The study revealed a host of challenges facing school principals in the running of schools. Empirical research of this study exposed excuses and cover-ups intentionally and unintentionally. A further study should therefore be conducted to design a comprehensive measuring tool that would effectively assess and evaluate leadership and management functions of schools principals.

It was also revealed that school principals are overloaded as most are teaching principal. This lessons the intended aim of principalship. Against this background a study should therefore be conducted to investigation the link between workload and efficient school management.

## **5.6. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The first limitation is that this was a very small-scale study conducted by a novice research with no research experience. 7 principals were interviewed from primary, and high school. For broader information, all school principals could have been interviewed at the Rustenburg Area Project Office.

Another limitation is that a few techniques were employed in the interviews. As a result, many unintentional errors were made. However, through continuous reflection on these errors, both the study and researcher were enriched. For these reasons, findings could not be generalized, but would inform schools and the Department of Education of how crucial it is for being aware of the demands posed by in the leadership role of school principals.

Democracy in school is still a problem that needs further investigation. As a result of the above limitations of the presented study further research could be conducted as follows:

- Research using a larger sample and other such as observation document analysis and quantitative approaches should be conducted. In this way more information, rich in detail, can be collected to understand the experiences and perceptions of respondents.
- Further research should be conducted in neighbouring Area Project Offices' schools because there was a clear indication that the sample was very small.
- Further research should concentrate on the development of quantitative instruments that will enable the department to gather more information on school leadership within a democratic milieu.

## **5.7. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

School principals are faced with a variety of challenges. School principalship requires a person with a variety of attributes to cope with the changing situation around the environment under which they lead and manage. School principalship has evolved over the years.

The data and findings of the research indicate the necessity of the total overhaul of principalship in South Africa in order to keep it as par with school principalship in the global world.

This chapter presents the findings, recommendations and justifications. Issues that limit the study are outlined and suggestions for further research are exposed.

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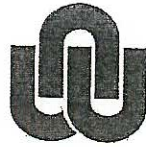
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24 July 2012

FOR ATTENTION: Professor J.M.Mosoge

From: A.M.Sesane (Mr) STUDENT NUMBER: 16802918

Dear Professor

**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

I am studying towards a M.Ed Degree at the above institution and wish hereby to request for permission to conduct research in schools in the Rustenburg Area Project Office.

This will consist of requesting principals to complete questionnaires and take part in Focus Group Discussions. The questionnaires are made up of open and close-ended questions. The respondents will remain anonymous and the schools' name will also not be reflected in any questionnaire or on the final report. The Title of my research is:

**An Exploration of the demands of democracy on leadership practices of school principals**

The research would be conducted to 50 randomly selected schools; 30 Primary-, 10 Middle- and 10 High schools principals. Individual Interviews would be conducted on 8 individuals: 4 Primary, 2 Middle and 2 High school principals. Focus Group discussion will be conducted on 3 Primary, 1 Middle and 1 High school principals.

It is hereby assured that the research will be conducted after school so that it does not encroach on teaching-learning time.

I further promise to abide by any condition that you may set for carrying out this research.

A.M.Sesane(Mr)



## education

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e-mail: Mpaledi.nwpp.gov.za

### **OFFICE OF THE AREA MANAGER: RUSTENBURG AREA PROJECT OFFICE**

To : **Prof. J.M. Mosoge**  
*ATT: Mr. A.M. Sesane*  
NW University – Potchefstroom Campus  
**SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

From : **Mrs. M.J. Paledi**  
Rustenburg Area Manager

Date : 25 September 2012

**SUBJECT: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH - APPROVED**

Kindly be informed that Mr. A.M. Sesane, of North West University has requested to visit Schools within Rustenburg Area, in order to do research. We do request that the results of the research be made available to the Area afterwards.

Kindly give him the necessary support whilst at the same time you ensure that no teaching and learning time are compromised.

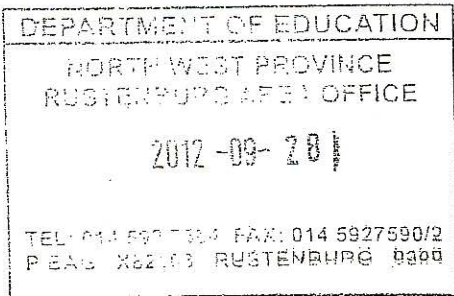
Your support is always appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Duly Signed*

**Mrs. M.J. Paledi**  
Rustenburg Area Manager.

cc Ms. M.P. Mokhutle – Director: Professional Support  
Institutional Support Coordinators



## INFORMED CONSENT FORM

**RESEARCHER:** SESANE M.A...

**TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT:** An exploration of the demands of democracy on leadership practices of school principals.

**PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH** is to investigate the experiences and perceptions of participants in responding to the demands of democracy on their leadership practices.

**DURATION:** The duration of each interview session will be approximately 20–30 minutes.

**PROCEDURES:** Interviews will be one-to-one and observations after school hours.

**POSSIBLE RISKS:** No possible risks to participants are envisaged. However, in the event of questions that may be perceived as threatening or causing discomfort, you may decline to answer such questions without providing any reason for doing so.

**BENEFITS:** No direct benefits or compensation will be due to any participant.

**VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION:** Participation in this research is completely voluntary. You may at any stage, refuse to participate and or withdraw at any time. The researcher will ask you to give permission to use an audio-tape to record the interview.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:** Data in this study will be confidential. As such all data collected will be kept at the North West University and no parties will be allowed access to the data. No names of individuals and schools will be used. Audio tapes will be kept confidential until they are erased after a period of seven years.

**CONTACT:** The research is conducted by a M.Ed student, M.A. Sesane under the supervision of Prof M.J. Mosoge from the School of Educational Sciences: North-West University – Potchefstroom Campus. Prof Mosoge can be reached at 018 299 4752 (o/h) for questions regarding this research project.

This research has been ethically approved by the North West University Ethics Committee.

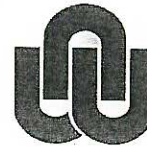
### CONSENT:

I ..... have read and understand the nature of my participation in this research project and agree to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE



## FAKULTEIT OPVOEDINGSWETENSKAPPE / FACULTY EDUCATION SCIENCES

### Notule

#### Vergadering

Fakulteit Opvoedingswetenskappe

Navorsingsetiëkkomitee

Datum: Donderdag, 15 Augustus 2013, 9:15

Plek: Seminaarkamer 299E, C6

ITEM		Bladsy/ Page												
1	Goedkeuring van nuwe etiekaansoeke													
1.1	Fakulteitsaansoeke													
1.1.1	<table border="1"><tr><td>Projekhoof</td><td>Prof J Mosoge</td></tr><tr><td>Studente/Span</td><td>MA Sesane</td></tr><tr><td>Etiëknommer</td><td>NWU-00099-13-S2</td></tr><tr><td>Titel</td><td>An exploration of the demands of democracy on leadership practices of school principals</td></tr><tr><td>Werkverdeling</td><td>Dr J Rens Dr M Mdakane Prof L Meyer</td></tr><tr><td>Besluit</td><td><p><b>Magtiging.</b> Die komitee versoek dat daar aandag gegee word aan die volgende punte, en die dokumente aan die voorsitter beskikbaar gestel word:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alle briewe moet taalversorg word.</li><li>• Alle kommunikasie aan ander partye moet op 'n universiteitsbriefhoof geplaas word.</li><li>• Kontakbesonderhede van die projekhoof sowel as die student moet op al die korrespondensie verskyn.</li><li>• Die toestemmingsbriewe aan die Departement, Distriksbestuurder en ingeligte toestemmingsbriewe moet verskaf word.</li></ul></td></tr></table>	Projekhoof	Prof J Mosoge	Studente/Span	MA Sesane	Etiëknommer	NWU-00099-13-S2	Titel	An exploration of the demands of democracy on leadership practices of school principals	Werkverdeling	Dr J Rens Dr M Mdakane Prof L Meyer	Besluit	<p><b>Magtiging.</b> Die komitee versoek dat daar aandag gegee word aan die volgende punte, en die dokumente aan die voorsitter beskikbaar gestel word:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alle briewe moet taalversorg word.</li><li>• Alle kommunikasie aan ander partye moet op 'n universiteitsbriefhoof geplaas word.</li><li>• Kontakbesonderhede van die projekhoof sowel as die student moet op al die korrespondensie verskyn.</li><li>• Die toestemmingsbriewe aan die Departement, Distriksbestuurder en ingeligte toestemmingsbriewe moet verskaf word.</li></ul>	
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Notulehouer: Me E Conradie

# J.W.P. DU TOIT EDITING AND TRANSLATION SERVICES

REG NO: 2011/045425/ 23

33 Van Belkum Street  
Rustenburg  
0300

081 464 1050

E-MAIL: [jwp.dutoittranslation@gmail.com](mailto:jwp.dutoittranslation@gmail.com)

To : The Supervisor: Prof J.M. Mosoge  
North West University: Potchefstroom Campus

From : J.W.P. Du Toit

Date : 09 November 2013

RE : Language Editing Report

This confirms that I received a dissertation titled:

An exploration on the demands of democracy on leadership of school principals.

I edited the document for language proficiency and professionalism. I am satisfied that the document meets requirements for any further examination.

Yours truly

J.W.P. Du Toit





M and D department

**SOLEMN DECLARATION**

**1. Solemn declaration by student**

I, ABRAHAM MOKONE SESANE  
declare herewith that the thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation/article entitled (exactly as registered/  
approved title), AN EXPLORATION OF THE DEMANDS OF  
DEMOCRACY ON LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF  
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

which I herewith submit to the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus, in compliance / partial compliance with the requirements set for the M.ED. degree, is my own work, has been language edited and has not already been submitted to any other university.

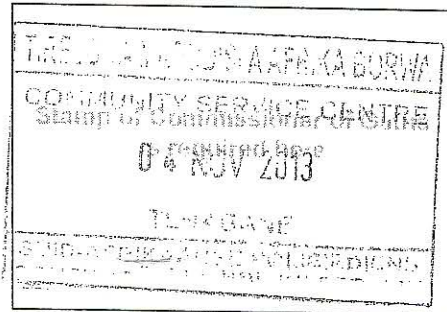
I understand and accept that the copies that are submitted for examination are the property of the University.

Signature of student Amoko S. University number 16802918

Signed at TLHABANE this 04 day of NOVEMBER 2013

Declared before me on this 04 day of NOV 2013

Commissioner of Oaths: MOCHERU G.C.  
7012021



**PLEASE NOTE: If a thesis/dissertation/mini-dissertation/article of a student is submitted after the deadline for submission, the period available for examination is limited. No guarantee can therefore be given that (should the examiners' reports be positive) the degree will be conferred at the next applicable graduation ceremony. It may also imply that the student would have to re-register for the following academic year.**

**2. Declaration by supervisor**

The undersigned declares:

1. The student is hereby granted permission to submit his/her mini-dissertation/dissertation or thesis.
2. That the student's work has been submitted to TurnItIn and a satisfactory report has been obtained.

Yes	No
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Signature Supervisor/Promoter: [Signature] Date: 13/11/2013