

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE
ROLE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
IN MANAGING DIVERSITY**

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JABULISIWE ANGEL NGEMA

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BY

JABULISIWE ANGEL NGEMA

**SPTD (APPELSCBOCH COLLEGE) HDE (SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE)
B.ED HONOURS (UNIVERSITY OF NATAL)**

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**SUPERVISORS : PROFESSOR R.V. GABELA
DR M.A.N. DUMA**

DATE SUBMITTED: MARCH 2009

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation entitled “An investigation of the role of the primary school principal in managing diversity” represents my own effort and that the views of other researchers have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.A. Ngema', is written over a horizontal line.

J.A. Ngema

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my beloved late husband, **SIPHO PATRICK NGEMA**, who made it possible for me to obtain tertiary education and to be called a teacher today. May his soul rest in peace.

I also dedicate my study to my late father, **MANGEMPI NZUZA**, and my beloved mother, **BANGISILE NZUZA**, who raised me and made it possible for me to obtain basic education.

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- My niece, **Thandeka**, who provided practical support by doing typing as well as by looking after her cousin, Mthokozisi, while I was busy doing this study;
- My **University study group** and staff of **Kusakusa J.P. School**, for encouraging and motivating me to continue with my study.

ABSTRACT

This study was influenced by multiplicity of policy documents such as national Constitution (Act 108 of 1996), White Paper 6 of 2001 and the South African Schools Act (Act 84 of 1996), which provides for an inclusive educational system in which diverse racial groups and genders of different ability can co-exist and enjoy educational opportunity unimpeded. Such a system of education calls for diversity management within the school, where differences are to be found among teachers and learners, even though they share a common history.

The inclusion of learners and teachers from vastly different milieus may indeed be a noble endeavour, but accommodation of these differences within the same school becomes a complex task for school managers. The diversity that must be catered for include a wide range o religious and cultural mores and standards, varying levels of physical an mental ability, a wide array and talents and different sexual orientations, lifestyles, family norms and languages in individual educational institutional.

This study investigated the role of primary school principals in managing diversity in Umbumbulu Circuit in the Mafa, Amanzimtoti and Umbumbulu Central Wards. In carrying out this project, the researcher also reviewed relevant literature on policies that provide for the implementation and management of diversity and strategies for optimising the use of learning opportunities in schools. The role of the principals in managing diversity in this regard was highlighted.

The following are some of the key findings that emanated from the empirical study:

- There is a lack of institutional policies that mandate the principals and staff in the management and implementation of diversity.
- There is a lack of stakeholder involvement in managing diversity.

On the basis of the above findings referred to above, the researcher recommends, among others, that every primary school principal and teacher should be trained adequately to manage diversity effectively. Furthermore, the School Governing Body, parents, teachers and learners should be actively involved in managing diversity. The Department of Education should provide meaningful and adequate support services to principals and schools to ensure that diversity is managed efficiently and effectively.

This study may prove to be valuable in assisting schools to make the process of diversity management really inclusive, because it encourages open discussion and negotiation between schools and their stakeholders.

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ACRONYMS

DoE	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
RSA	REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
SACE	SOUTH AFRICAN COUNCIL OF EDUCATORS
SASA	SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT
SGB	SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
SMT	SCHOOL MANAGEMENT TEAM

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The new South African Government established in 1994, introduced ground breaking national policies and educational policies to transform school management so that it could break free from the apartheid mould in which it had been cast. The new legislation with regard to education included the South African Schools Act (SASA, Act 84 of 1996) and the Employment of Educators Act, Act No.66 of 1998. These pieces of legislation changed the task and the role of the principals as school manager, thereby acknowledging the fact that they have very important roles to play in managing change in schools and in improving the quality of learning and teaching in schools (DoE, 2000c: 1).

Apart from reflecting a combination of many racial groups, South African schools also include different religions and cultures, levels of physical and mental ability, talents, sexual orientations, life styles, family norms, and languages (Duma, 2001: 32). The National Constitution of South Africa, (Act 108 of 1996) laid the foundation for a democratic state and common citizenship, based on the values of human dignity, the achievement of equality and the advancement of human rights and freedom.

The principal's role has undergone a radical change in that he or she now has to perform various leadership tasks applicable to the school, to see to it that school policies are developed and implemented, and to attend to the management of diversity in the school all of which assist the school in fulfilling its aims (DoE, 2000a: 1). The principals, therefore, use management of diversity as a socio-cultural tool for improving learning and teaching.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

After 1994, official policy in education centred on inclusion and covered a range of factors of diversity such as language; genders; the physical condition; home background; talent; race; culture and value system. Therefore, management of diversity became important to make educators and learners feel welcome in the schools. The principals, being the leaders of the schools, play active roles in ensuring that their schools do not discriminate against learners and educators due to their differences. Currently the emphasis is on managing change and diversity.

According to Flederman (1996: 1) 'managing diversity' implies a very different way of viewing individual differences. Instead of promoting a culture of assimilation and uniformity, a school committed to managing diversity establishes a school culture, which supports individual differences towards the achievement of school goals. The apartheid education system promoted race, gender, class and ethnic divisions and emphasised separateness rather common citizenship and nationhood (Dladla, 2003: 3). According to current educational policy the principals are required to support individual differences towards achievements of school objectives and goals.

Managing diversity has a great deal to do with encouraging a culture of tolerance and respect. When people respect one another, they can learn from one another. Managing diversity implies that the school leadership is able to foster equality for all and fight against discrimination. It requires a consultative and participatory approach to leadership. Since the schools have diverse individuals, the role of the principals is to manage diversity effectively in order to make their schools the inclusive institutions.

The Department of Education maintains that schools do not reflect the wider society, where there is still suspicion and fear about diversity. The schools should emphasise respect for the rights of all, with particular emphasis on the recognition of diversity (DoE, 2000a: 2).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

During the apartheid era, policy makers tended to regard diversity as the basis for discrimination. In South African schools, people had to recognise that diversity existed and that South Africa was, for example, the home of many religions and cultures (Duma, 2001: 32). Duma also states that our schools are full of differences and in the past these differences have led to many inequities. The challenge is to see whether principals can turn these differences into strengths.

The principals are the key role players in determining effective implementation of any new policies, including the new policy of inclusion (Fullan, 1993: 127). Too often change in education has failed because insufficient attention had been given to the current practices and needs of those who are expected to put it into effect (Wermouth, et. al., 2000: 36).

The principals, as the school managers, are in key positions to manage diversity. Principals encourage other school stakeholders to see themselves as part of this process. Principals are also able to understand the policies and laws put in place in order to make education a celebration of diversity. They are able to handle conflict so that diversity becomes part of the solution, rather than part of the problem. The principals are to be open to discuss and negotiate with stakeholders, and involved them in the process of managing diversity (DoE, 2000a: 31).

Today, official policies in education cover the range of 'differences'. It includes learners who are struggling to keep up with the official curriculum, different language groups, both genders, the physically challenged, different home backgrounds, different talents, different races, different cultures and values systems. The emphasis today is more on managing change and difference, and dealing with conflict constructively.

Policies and laws reflect the change in official policy, but we have not yet learned as a nation to deal with our own diversity. Managing diversity is not about making differences

go away; it is about using them and building on them to create a rich and exciting experience of life. Schools reflect the wider society, where there is still suspicion and fear about diversity. Schools need to take practical steps to end discrimination and use diversity to improve their experience of learning and teaching. The principals need to learn to appreciate diversity instead of being afraid of it.

The principals as school managers, they are in a key position to promote equity and manage diversity. They can encourage other school stakeholders to see themselves as part of the process of managing diversity. The primary school principals are main people who can assist the department of education to manage diversity. In the primary schools most learners come to school with an empty stomach. Staffing is also a problem and learners have different learning needs. The school infrastructures are not yet ready to manage diversity and policies that manage diversity are not yet developed. This study investigated the role of the principals in managing, in particular, diversity in primary schools.

1.4 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

In order to ensure clarity and understanding, certain key concepts in this study needed to be defined.

1.4.1 Role

According to Terry and Thomas (1977: 249), 'role' can be defined as a pattern of matters and goals, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours that members of a group expect to see in a typical occupant of a position in society. In this study, 'role' means the functions of an incumbent, such as the principal, or the tasks, which he or she is required to perform.

1.4.2 Principal

The principal is the holder of the post of chief accountable officer of the school (Lawton and Gordon, 1998: 145). He or she is the main figure of authority in the school that leads by her or his examples and by supportive actions. The principal negotiates the value system with learners, staff and community at large, articulates the value system and reinforces it through the administration of disciplinary systems (Squelch and Lemmer, 1994: 11). The fact that the principal is referred to as an educational leader and educational manager automatically implies that he/she is in charge of all that goes on at school (Mol, 1990: 12; Steyn, 1999: 131). According to the South African Schools Act, the principal is an educator appointed as the head of the school (RSA, 1996b: 4).

In this study 'principal' refers to the chief accountable officer and the most senior educator of the primary school, either male or female. The principal is also an educator whose primary responsibility is to teach and lead the school.

1.4.3 Educator

The South African Council of Educators, Act 31 of 2000 defines the 'educator' as a person who teaches, educates or trains other persons or provides professional educational services at an institution (RSA, 2000: 3).

In this study 'educator' means a person who teaches in the school. The concept 'educator' is synonymous with the concept of 'teacher.' It includes the 'principal.'

1.4.4 Diversity

'Diversity' refers to the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds, styles, perspectives, values, and beliefs as assets to the groups and organisations with which they interact (Smit and Cronje, 2002: 243). Smit and Cronje further explain 'diversity' as the

definition that applies to and includes everyone. It is not exclusionary. This definition implies that we are all different from one another, but being different is not wrong.

According to Duma (2001: 32) diversity means a combination of many racial groups, different religions and cultures, levels of physical and mental ability, talents, sexual orientations, lifestyles, family norms and languages.

In this study 'diversity' means differences of language, religion, gender, abilities, interests, cultures, learning needs, backgrounds and ages.

1.4.5 Managing diversity

Managing diversity is creating an environment that allows every individual to make his or her own unique contribution to the school and to develop fully as an individual (DoE, 2000a: 8). It is a new approach that supports individual differences towards achievements of the school goal. It allows for all kinds of people to reach their full potential in pursuit of the school's objectives (Flederman, 1996: 1). It is the process that accepts the unique characteristics of people from different backgrounds (De Beer, 1998: 55).

In this study 'managing diversity' in a school context means developing an environment that allows all kinds of people like learners, staff and parents to exercise their abilities in reaching their educational goals or in support of what the schools stands for. It also means taking responsibility and looking at one's prejudices and finding out about what is best for other people at the school.

1.5 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To examine educational legislation and policies which promote implementation and management of diversity.

- To explore important concepts relevant to the management of diversity by way of literature review.
- To investigate the role of the principals in managing diversity.
- To make recommendations relative to the effective management of diversity.

1.6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions in this study were as follows:

- What are the educational policies that mandate the implementation and management of diversity?
- What strategies can principals adopt to manage and implement diversity?
- Are principals effective in managing diversity?

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This study serves to evaluate implementation of legislation and policies, which promote diversity. It looks at challenges of diversity management; the role of the school principal, and the extent to which the principal functions to manage diversity

1.8 METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design. It looks at primary schools principals and educators as functionaries in management of diversity, and examines their views on diversity management. The researcher conducted the survey study by means of questionnaire.

The empirical investigation was conducted on the primary schools of the Umbumbulu Circuit. Three (3) wards namely, Mafa, Amanzimtoti and Umbumbulu Central were selected at random. The researcher selected thirty-four primary schools. Forty questionnaires were distributed to each above-mentioned ward at random. Simple random

sampling was conducted in each ward by selecting the schools that would be used to collect data. The researcher randomly selected thirteen primary schools in Amanzimtoti Ward, eleven in the Mafa Ward, and ten in the Umbumbulu Central Ward. Out of one hundred and twenty (120) questionnaires that were distributed only one hundred and six (106) returned.

Questionnaires were administered to principals and educators because principals are the main targets and educators are the most important partners of the principals in supporting and promoting diversity in the schools. The most significant interactions in the schools take place in the classrooms. The principals and educators played interdependent roles in implementing and executing policies relative to diversity. The researcher believed that educators could best provide reliable information about the roles of the principals in managing diversity. The researcher was also of the opinion that the principals were best equipped to provide insightful opinions about their roles in managing diversity. Sometimes principals give false answers that favour themselves.

Questionnaires were given to them by means of the random sampling method to ensure that all respondents in the schools that have been sampled have equal chances of being selected for the study. The pilot study was done to two schools. The permission to do the research was granted by the Circuit Manager and the principals of chosen primary schools. The questionnaires were delivered to schools by the researcher. The questionnaire has closed and opened questions.

1.9 THE STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study is planned as follows:

- Chapter one:** provides orientation to the study.
- Chapter two:** provides a literature review on the role played by the primary school principals in managing diversity and strategies for the effective management of diversity.

- Chapter three:** gives details of the research design, methodology for data collection and the target population.
- Chapter four:** presents analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the respondents.
- Chapter five:** provides the summary, findings and recommendations of the study.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter provided an orientation to the study; the background of the study; statement of the problem; definitions of the operational concepts; research aims; and research questions; significance of the study; method of research and organisation of the study. The following chapter gives a review of literature on the role of the principals in managing diversity.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In the light of the major sociopolitical changes that have been brought about by the demise of apartheid and the adoption of the National Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 (RSA, 1996a: 7), it has become critical for schools to implement and manage diversity as one of the components of the process of promoting equality and to achieve quality education. Diversity applies to and includes everyone; it is not exclusionary. Educators and learners in the school are diverse (Smit and Cronjé, 2002: 243). Diversity is something desirable and beneficial because people may be different, but enjoy their diversity of strengths and experiences. According to Smit and Cronjé (2002: 247) there is a need for diversity management in the school because there are differences within educators and learners. These groups may share a common history, while at the same time displaying certain uniqueness of backgrounds, experiences and abilities.

In this chapter, the researcher presents a review of literature on the role of the primary school principals in managing diversity. National policies and school policies, which provide for implementation and management of diversity, are examined, together with strategies for effective implementation of diversity.

2.2 POLICIES WHICH PROVIDE FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF DIVERSITY

To assist the principals to exercise good and wise leadership in the schools, every school must have policies to direct effective school management (Buchel, 1995: 86). School policies are derived from legislation and they exist for the benefit of all the members of the school community. Buchel emphasises that the principals and their staff are responsible for formulating and applying institutional policies. The principals, as leaders

of the schools, are responsible for pioneering the policies of the schools in consultation with School Management Team (SMT) and other stakeholders.

According to the Department of Education (2000b: 15), policies ultimately reflect a school's real attitudes towards development and flexibility to meet the needs of people, while also regulating life in the school. Policies are developed within the framework of the national policies and according to the needs of the community (Andry, 1994: 147). The principals make sure that school policies support the school's efforts to manage diversity in a constructive way.

2.2.1 National policies on diversity

Three important pieces of policies, which provide for diversity are discussed, namely the National Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, the South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996 and White Paper 6 of 2001.

2.2.1.1 The National Constitution Act, 108 of 1996

The National Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 carries the Bill of Rights as the cornerstone of democracy in South Africa since it enshrines the rights of all people, as well as affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom in our country (RSA, 1996a). The National Constitution furthermore states that everyone has the right to freedom of expression and the right to freedom of association. 'Rights', 'freedom of association' and 'freedom of expression' inform the promotion of 'diversity' in schools.

The fundamental right to basic education commits the state to the achievement of equality and to non-discrimination in all facets of human existence, including the educational system (RSA, 1996a). The Constitutional imperative is particularly important for protecting all learners, including those who are disabled and in any manner or have special learning needs of a sort.

The challenge for the school principals is to create an environment that allows every individual to make his or her own unique contribution to the school and to develop fully as an individual (Engelbrecht, et. al., 1999: 46).

The role of the principals in respect of the above mandates is to make their schools, the schools that manage diverse educators and learners.

2.2.1.2 The South African schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996

SASA, (Act 84 of 1996) provides a school system, which aims to improve the quality of education for all on an equal basis. Each school must be committed to the provision of the best possible quality of teaching and learning and the establishment of a human rights culture. Each school is a learning organisation in which educators; learners and the school community are motivated and disciplined to take education very seriously. The act provides for a public school to be an ordinary school that caters for special education needs of all learners (RSA, 1996b: 9)

In promulgating the South African's Schools Act, the Government intended to prevent discrimination and to promote diversity. This suggests that diversity is one of our strengths as a country, and that schools have an obligation to recognise it and act on it.

2.2.1.3. White Paper 6 of 2001

The White Paper 6 of 2001 acknowledges the importance of providing an effective response to learners with special education needs in the mainstream schools. The White Paper 6 also acknowledges that all children can learn and that they need support. It more specifically outlined the Ministry of education's commitment in providing educational opportunities for those learners who have experienced barriers to learning.

According to Department of Education (2001: 6), the policy documents referred to above provide some pointers to key strategic area for systemic change across all the sectors that

are flexibility of the curriculum. In the White Paper 6, the specific emphasis is placed on the accommodation of diversity. It provides some pointers to key strategic areas for systemic change across all the sectors, including flexibility of the curriculum; a coordinated and strengthened education support system; respect of diversity, including advocacy and non-discriminatory policies, and increasing access for previously disadvantaged learners, especially those with disabilities.

2.2.2 Institutional policies that inform diversity

In order to manage diversity in the school, the principals should ensure that the school policies are in line with national and provincial laws and policies, and that they both respect and celebrate diversity (DoE, 2000a: 15).

The school policies are developed within the framework of the national legislation (DoE, 2000b: 16). It is the responsibility of the principals to assist School Governing Bodies (SGB) and educators in promoting institutional policies that encourage and celebrate diversity

2.2.2.1 Learners' code of conduct

According to the SASA, Act 84 of 1996, a code of conduct must be developed to establish a disciplined and purposeful school environment, dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process (RSA, 1996b: 35). According to this law, the code of conduct reflects the constitutional democracy, human rights and transparent communication that underpin the ethos of the South African society. The principals make sure that the learners' rights are respected.

According to Joubert and Prinsloo (2001: 124), the aim of a learner's code of conduct is to create a school environment that is disciplined and purposeful. "Disciplined" means that the learners exhibit qualities, such as self-control, obedience, responsibility and quest for exemplary conduct (Joubert and Prinsloo, 2001: 125).

According to Allan (1999: 120), all stakeholders need to be involved in the formulation of policies. The content of the code of conduct informs the learners about the way in which they conduct themselves at school. In formulating a code of conduct, the principals should involve the parents, learners, educators and support staff at the school.

The legislative framework for education directs the code of conduct that gives expression to a culture of reconciliation, tolerance and mutual respect at the school. The principals should ensure that all stakeholders in the school community negotiate the learner's code of conduct and that it is reviewed yearly. This code could focus on what is important in terms of the school's mission and goals and values of the school. In this respect, the code of conduct prescribes behaviour that respects the right of learners.

The principals should make sure that the code of conduct is fair and reasonable (Joubert and Prinsloo, 2001: 131), as an instrument, which is used to nurture a congenial environment, which is non-discriminatory and non-sexist. Schools need to be very careful that the learners' code of conduct is flexible and not rigid.

2.2.2.2 Educators' code of conduct

According to the South African Council of Educators (SACE), every school must develop an educators' code of conduct (DoE, 2000: 17). An educator registered with the SACE should acknowledge that the attitude, dedication, self-discipline, ideals, training and conduct of the teaching profession determine the quality of education in South Africa.

According to the Department of Education, educators' code of conduct must state clearly what is done to ensure that educators become committed in using a wide variety of materials in their lessons. The educators should also take account of the diversity of the school population, which is sensitive to the views and beliefs of the different cultural, religious and language groups in the school (DoE, 2000a: 34).

The educator should respect the dignity, beliefs and constitutional rights of learners and particularly of children, which include the right to privacy and confidentiality. He or she should acknowledge the uniqueness, individuality and specific needs of each learner by guiding and encouraging each one to realise his or her potential. He or she should strive to enable learners to develop a set of values, which are consistent with the fundamental rights contained in the Constitution of South Africa (RSA, 1996a: 17).

According to SACE, the educator must avoid any form of humiliation and refrain from any form of abuse, be it physical or psychological (DoE, 2000: 17). He/she must promote gender equity and use appropriate language and behaviour in his or her interaction with learners, acting in such a way as to elicit respect from the learners. Joubert and Prinsloo (2001: 125) agree with SACE (2000) in that misconduct relating to the following matters must be dealt with in the code of conduct for educators:

- Infringement of the dignity and other rights of persons involved in the school, and
- Intolerant behaviour, including racism, sexism, and use of hate speech and verbal abuse of others.

The principals, as educators, should make sure that the South African Council of Educator's act is respected. They need to think critically about how they could help educators to promote the management of diversity. The principals have the responsibility to help educators embrace the idea of diversity because individual educators may have varying beliefs about and attitudes towards different types of people at school (DoE, 2000a: 34). For the educators to function successfully in a diverse school environment, there needs to be a common vision of what constitutes unity in diversity at school.

2.2.2.3 Language policy

The policy document on language in education was published in 1997. The policy encourages multilingualism and reaffirms the individual's right to choose the language of teaching and learning (DoE, 2000a: 16). In a multilingual country like South Africa, it is

important that learners reach high levels of proficiency in at least two languages, and that they are able to communicate in other languages. As the school deals with a diversity of people; it may be easy to settle on one, or at the most two, languages of instruction. The home language of the majority of learners in the school and the staff language skills are usually the factors that influence what languages a school will use (Duma, 2001: 33).

For many learners, teaching and learning takes place through a language that is not their first language (Naicker, 2002: 139). This not only places these learners at a disadvantage, but it also leads to linguistic difficulties that contribute to disruption of learning.

The principals should make sure that the school language policy is developed according to national guidelines. No form of racial discrimination may be practised in implementing policy (RSA, 1996b: 6). Stakeholders should make sure that the policy meets the needs of the school community that speak a different home language from the school's language of instruction. The principals should make sure that the language policy is reviewed to encourage diversity.

2.2.2.4 Religious policy

Section 15 of the Constitution of South Africa, guarantees both personal freedom of conscience and religion, and the right to conduct religious observances in state and state-aided institutions, provided that:

- These observances are conducted in accordance with rules.
- They are conducted on an equitable basis.
- Attendance is free and voluntary (RSA, 1996a: 8).

The principals should make sure that all different religions are catered for in the school religious policy. In managing diversity, tolerance and respect are important.

According to the Department of Education principals should manage religious diversity by:

- Setting a time each week in which all religious groups attend their own services in the school.
- Encouraging each religious group in turn to take assemblies, and giving each group the opportunity to inform others about their values, beliefs and customs.
- Making sure the school events do not clash with important religious events of any members of the community (DoE, 2000a: 17).

The principals can invite parents from different cultural groups to come to school and talk to the learners and explain about different religions and what they do during their religious holidays (Landau, 2004: 202). This will help the learners to have a clear understanding of the core values underlying the belief systems represented in the country and how multi-cultural society is.

2.2.2.5 Gender policy

Democracy involves freedom, equity, justice and recognition of human dignity for all persons, irrespective of race or gender. It involves freeing mankind of injustice, discrimination, domination and humiliation (Steyn, 1999: 38).

The democratic election of 1994 was politically significant in ending white domination and apartheid in South Africa. Democracy, non-racism, non-sexism, freedom and equality have found expression in all legislation. Policies are now oriented to addressing past inequalities, including those of race, class and gender. Democracy has brought the heightened expectation that political change should facilitate eradication of social and economic inequalities. The democratic Constitution of South Africa obliges the state to address these inequalities (RSA, 1996a: 7).

South African Schools' Act (Act 84 of 1996), outlines the need for a new national system for schools, which must serve the learners educational requirements without unfairly discriminating in any way, while redressing the past injustices in education. It aims to:

Provide an education of progressively high quality for all learners and in so doing lay a strong foundation for the development of all our people's talents and capabilities, advance the democratic transformation of society, combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance, contribute to the eradication of poverty and the economic well-being of society, protect and advance our diverse cultures and languages, and uphold the rights of all learners...(RSA, 1996b: 4).

The principals should encourage gender sensitivity by making sure that a gender policy is developed and put into practice and by providing an environment where males and females, feel free to develop their range of talents, skills and interests (DoE, 2000a: 18). The schools are to be helped to avoid stereotyping in sports and cultural activities, given to the fact that girls are increasingly playing sports or taking part in activities traditionally seen as only meant for boys and men (DoE, 2000a: 19). South Africa consists of a diverse society. It is possible for sports and cultural activities to take place side by side if the school is fortunate enough to have the resources.

2.2.2.6 Human resource development policy

A school's greatest asset is the people who make up the school community (DoE, 2000a: 18). This includes staff, learners and parents or guardians. A school's human resource development policy looks for a representative mix of individuals. The school communities in the new democratic South Africa are diverse. If schools are to be managed effectively, then their structures need to reflect diversity as well. (DoE, 2000a: 18). Diversity needs to be reflected in SMT and SGB. According to Steyn (1999: 207), if

learners in the schools are diverse, then the staff should be diverse. This means that a school's human resource development policy must look for a representative mix of staff.

2.3 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPALS IN MANAGING DIVERSITY

According to De Beer (1998: 55), management of diversity requires acknowledgement of the unique characteristics of individuals from different cultures. Acknowledgement builds trust and tolerance amongst diverse individuals. Without trust and tolerance there will be no unity and common purpose in the school. Management of diversity requires that all the stakeholders not only acknowledge, but also accept that each group has unique characteristics or differences, which are assets that should be utilised to enrich and benefit everyone (Smit and Cronje, 2002: 237).

Managing diversity has a great deal to do with encouraging a culture of tolerance and respect. The school leadership must distinguish between what is important and what is not important (DoE, 2000b: 2). It requires courage, wisdom and a consultative approach to leadership.

According to the Department of Education, diversity implies the rich mixtures of differences that make up our society and schools are particularly diverse (DoE, 2000a: 7). One way to understanding the diversity of people in a school is to think about the different groups of stakeholders involved in the schools, which are learners, educators, SGB, parents and support staff. Each of these groups has different expectations and a different role to play. If one adds to this the individual differences among the people involved, one could begin to see how diverse a school community is (DoE, 2000a: 7).

Flederman (1996: 4) identified the following key characteristics of managing diversity, which principals should take cognisance of:

- Managing diversity is based on a management perspective and is concerned with a participatory management approach.

- Managing diversity is implicit in empowerment and team-based management for it attempts to take advantage of all that a staff member has to offer.
- Managing diversity requires principals to do their jobs differently.
- Managing diversity is about principals empowering all people in the school.
- Managing diversity addresses the corporate culture, the basic, often unexamined, assumptions driving the school, its vision, values, strategies, networks, systems and traditions.

Since managing diversity is a process, it can only live within the school that has a strong team spirit or participatory management. The principal should use open communication (two-way communication) and problem solving approaches, which encourage innovation and feedback from all possible sources within and outside the school.

2.3.1 Components of managing diversity that the principals apply

De Beer (1998: 72) has identified the following components that the principals use to manage diversity:

- Creation and management of a diverse workforce.
- Establishment of quality interpersonal relationships.
- Full utilisation of human resources.
- Understanding, respecting and valuing differences.
- Mutual respect among groups.
- Creating an environment appropriate for full utilisation.
- Managing a flexible curriculum.

2.3.1.1 Creation and management of a diverse workforce

A diverse workforce is created in the school at all levels and accelerated training is a link to identification of skill, requisite of development and overall human resources requirement of the school (Thomas, 1997: 12). Regular reviews and continuous monitoring systems are, however, established to secure a diverse workforce. Programmes of understanding differences and the process of managing diversity should all be undertaken as parallel initiatives.

The creation of a vision with clear and measurable performance standards, based upon the concept of total quality, will allow staff to utilise their strengths and to achieve shared goals (Thomas, 1997: 40). The role of the principals is to develop the school culture by enabling all the individuals in the school to be fully utilised to add value to the school. Thomas (1997: 40) also states that the principals can support the diverse workforce through induction, orientation and mentoring programmes.

2.3.1.2 Establishment of quality inter-personal relationships

Managing diversity is intrinsically linked with managing democracy. The principals create a good relationship among the stakeholders in order to make their schools the democratic ones. The democratic attitude requires an inter-personal sensitivity for the feelings and needs of another person. It comprises an attitude of understanding of the other person. The principals make their business to cultivate sound interpersonal relations (Steyn, 1999: 61-66). This process will help build a future society where respect and peace will rule the day.

2.3.1.3 Full utilisation of human resources

Human resource systems must be aligned with the corporate vision to celebrate diversity (Thomas, 1997: 40). Aligning systems include the establishment of accountability for the effective management of diverse individuals involved in the school. Human resource

development is important because of curriculum changes, changing approaches to teaching changes to school management and governance and changing laws about forms of discipline. All these changes mean that individuals are constantly faced with challenging to adjust to new circumstances (Davidoff and Lazarus, 1997: 137). This can become stressful if the individuals are not given support to cope with all these demands. The principals develop on-going programmes to encourage and support individuals in the school.

2.3.1.4 Understanding, respecting and valuing differences

Management of diversity actively promotes a culture of value tolerance between the different cultural groups (De Beer 1998: 58). It is important that the principle of diversity be linked to the principles of integration so as to ensure that the focus on differences is towards commonality rather than a notion of separate development (Engelbrecht, et. al., 1999: 46).

According to Engelbrecht, et. al. (1999: 47), respecting diversity within a school population means:

- Developing a genuine respect for all people.
- Combating prejudice and discriminatory practices.
- Drawing on the different strengths of the human resources available in the teaching and learning context to the mutual benefit of all.
- Acknowledging and supporting the rights of all learners and others to full participation in the learning and teaching process.
- Developing a flexible curriculum that meets the diverse needs of the learner population.

Against this background, the principals should avoid any form of discrimination against educators and learners.

2.3.1.5 Mutual respect among groups

Mutual understanding and trust inevitably leads to mutual respect. Stakeholders need acceptance, understanding and trust. Schools, in which trust and understanding prevail will, undoubtedly, promote personal development of all its staff members (Steyn, 1999: 63). The principals should motivate the school management team, learners and parents to embrace diversity through respecting differences such as race, ethnicity, social class, etc. among the different social groups within the school and community at large.

2.3.1.6 Creation of a positive environment

The school climate consists of two facets, namely; the school climate, which refers to certain factors within the management situation that influence the quality of life of the educators as well as their perception thereof, and the educational climate, which refers to how learners experience the quality of their working lives as determined by their relationships with their educators (Van der Westhuisen, 2000: 631).

According to Department of Education, the importance of creating a positive school climate for effective teaching and learning needs to be considered (DoE, 2000b: 12). It is stated that the school climate builds and facilitates the relationships and behaviours that enable the school to do its work. The official guidelines also emphasise the need for the school to have clear objectives and performance expectations, which constitute the climate of the school.

From the percepts sketched above it can be deduced that in a school climate where the principals believe in the abilities of the staff and learners and have positive expectations about them, the staff and learners will be encouraged to perform well in their work. Differences that they may have, however, cannot be overlooked and therefore the differences will be effectively managed.

2.3.1.7 *Managing a flexible curriculum*

One of the most serious barriers to learning and development can be found within the curriculum itself. This relates primarily to the inflexible nature of the curriculum, which prevents it from meeting diverse needs of learners (Wessels, 2002: 55). When learners' diverse needs are not catered for, the learners will not be able to access the curriculum and this will result in breaking down of learning. The nature of the curriculum at all phases of education involves a number of components that are all critical in facilitating or undermining effective learning. Key components of the curriculum include the style and tempo of the curriculum; the style and tempo of teaching and learning; what is taught; the way the classroom is managed and organised, and materials which are used in the learning and teaching process (Wessels, 2002: 55).

The principals, as members of the senior management teams, are responsible for taking a lead in putting the school's curriculum into practice and improving it (DoE, 2000b: 1). The principals should ensure that there is a culture of teaching and learning in the schools and the diverse needs for learners are managed well. The curriculum itself is planned to cater for the diverse talents and interests of learners.

2.4 PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIVERSITY

Thomas (1997: 96-106) identifies six practical strategies for managing diversity that are considered by the principals, namely;

- Phase 1: understanding issues relating to diversity.
- Phase 2: diversity research or school assessment.
- Phase 3: communicating to the stakeholders.
- Phase 4: educating stakeholders.
- Phase 5: reviewing systems and structures.
- Phase 6: monitoring and evaluating the diversity process.

2.4.1 Understanding issues relating to diversity

According to Thomas (1997: 98), this phase involves management awareness and commitment in making sure that educators, parents and learners understand what diversity involves and its possible implications for the school. They must know that it is a process to create an environment that allows everyone to give their best.

2.4.2 Diversity research

The goals of this phase are to:

- Identify positive and negative issues, which could hamper or promote the achievement of the vision of effectively managing diversity.
- Ensure that all stakeholders understand and participate in the process.
- Isolate those factors of school culture, which create barriers for individuals to fully contribute to the goals and progress of the school.

In the schools, the principals should ensure that stakeholders acquire a sense of involvement and commitment in identifying and analysing issues that need to be tackled, as well as possible obstacles to the process.

2.4.3 Communicating to the stakeholders

Communicating to the stakeholders has the dual purpose of explaining the change process to them and engaging them actively in the process (Thomas, 1997: 100). Communication is one way of developing a joint vision of the process with all who will be affected.

The principals should ensure that all stakeholders understand management of diversity and can participate in it appropriately.

2.4.4 Educating the stakeholders

The educational process provides an excellent opportunity for management to engage with the stakeholders in crystallising the values of the school (Thomas, 1997: 100). Initially this includes workshops that explain the difference between understanding differences and managing diversity. Thomas (1997: 100) further clarifies the role to be played by the principals as follows:

- To ensure that all staff and learners are exposed to an understanding of how to live and work with others who may differ from themselves.
- To ensure that all stakeholders are part of the change process.
- To promote the value of diversity within the school and hence the respect
- To develop skills and behaviour options necessary to form quality-working relationships.
- To develop participative systems, which will promote the understanding of managing diversity within the school.

According to Smit and Cronjé (2002: 267), the importance of diversity training is to retain talents and to foster learning and effectiveness in a school because there is an increase in the diverse learner population and educator population.

2.4.5 Reviewing systems and structures

Managing diversity is an integral component to managerial and supervisory evaluation and performance management (Thomas, 1997: 104). Reviewing ensures that the educators, parents and learners support the school vision. Without reviewing, the managing process will never be taken seriously in a school. According to Thomas (1997: 105) the principals manage diversity by making sure that the following goals are met:

- Ensuring that policies and systems support school vision of developing an all-inclusive work environment.

- Understanding how the school can work towards enhancing the work/life balance of its subordinates.
- Begin structuring the school to take full advantage of heterogeneity.

2.4.6 Monitoring and evaluating the diversity process

The process of managing diversity is monitored and evaluated by measuring the progress that the school has made. Duma (2001: 35-37) agrees with Thomas (1997: 96-106) on the strategies for managing diversity in the school. Duma identifies seven steps, as follows:

Step1: Examine the conditions and the needs in your school

The principal decides a way forward by knowing what the situation is in the school in relation to issues of diversity. The principal focuses on the school's population, relationships, quality of teaching and learning; participation of parents, discipline and security.

Step 2: Get the people to agree to the need for a diversity strategy in the school

The principal should meet all the stakeholders and reach a shared understanding of the issues of diversity that a school faces. He or she should raise the people's awareness about diversity, and to get them to buy into the idea of diversity as strength of the school rather than a weakness. Stakeholders could suggest what the different interest groups should be, for working towards a diversity strategy in the school.

Step 3: Set up a diversity-working group

The working group should be established to have representatives from all different interest groups that have been identified. The group thus established should see as being responsible for identifying the strategy and taking it forward.

Step 4: Draw up a diversity code of conduct

A diversity code of conduct identifies the basic behaviour, language, talents, culture, disability, race, gender, and religion to ensure that there is respect for everyone's differences. It should talk about action or outcome. For example, it must say what the consequences will be if someone does not show respect.

Step 5: Set goals for change

Goals need to be related to indicators of good practice in the field of diversity by identifying the ways of measuring how the school is managing diversity. According to the Department of Education, examples of indicators of good practice are:

- School policies that promote diversity.
- Schools that actively promote all languages that the learners speak as home languages.
- School events that celebrate diverse cultures.
- Schools that have a diversity strategy that all stakeholders know about (DoE, 2000a: 21).

The principals should advise on what kind of action to take, based on the observations and feedback from all members of the school.

Step 6: Decide how monitoring and report on progress will be done

Progress should be measured through the goals that have been set. Monitoring makes it easy for the principal to report back to all stakeholders about how the school is supporting and promoting diversity. It is important that reporting be done in writing or orally (DoE, 2000a: 22)

Step 7: Be prepared for obstacles

The principals are to be prepared for challenges and see challenges as opportunities to put forward ideas about diversity. The challenges depend on the current situation in the school and how much support is available from different stakeholders or interest groups, and what resources are available (Duma, 2001: 37). Common obstacles could include *dealing with conflict in managing diversity*.

2.5 DEALING WITH CONFLICT IN MANAGING DIVERSITY

Conflict management is a communication process for changing the destructive emotional state in a conflict to a constructive emotional state that allows working out a joint solution to conflict (Neil, et. al., 1993: 27). If the principals are to manage conflict, they may be able to prevent conflict from getting worse; motivate the school communities, and find creative solutions to problems.

It is impossible to manage diversity without encountering conflict along the way. According to the Department of Education, by managing conflict, the principal is able to:

- Prevent conflict from getting worse.
- Motivate the school community.
- Build consensus.
- Build trust.
- Stop resentment from building up.
- Find creative solutions to problems (DoE, 2000a: 26).

The principals work with other stakeholders to understand and resolve conflict among the individuals in the schools. Understanding the difference between positions and interests also helps the principals to deal with conflict that arises because of issues of diversity. Some guidelines for dealing with conflict are provided as follows (DoE, 2000a: 29):

- Look for early warning signals that indicate that there is an underlying cause that needs attention, while understanding and supporting people who are experiencing conflict. At other times, resentments and fears might need to be brought out into the open.
- Try to keep the focus on common vision by focusing on the interests of everyone.
- Support and promote diversity in the school, and fight prejudice and discrimination. Accept that there is conflict and that everyone should deal with it openly and honestly.

The principals could manage conflicts positively and effectively, if they follow the above-mentioned guidelines.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on literature review and discussed legislation and policies on management of diversity, strategies for managing diversity and the role of the school principals in managing diversity. The principals manage differences among educators and learners, establish quality interpersonal relationships, fully utilise human resources, respect and value individual differences, and create mutual respect among groups. The next chapter describes the method and procedures, which were followed in empirical investigating for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss methods that the researcher employed in order to obtain data from respondents about the role of primary school principals in managing diversity. The study entailed a survey where questionnaire-based data, both qualitative and quantitative, were gathered in a real-life setting. The discussion in this chapter includes research design used, population and sample, instrument, administration of the questionnaire and ethical consideration.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a descriptive research design. It looks at primary schools principals and educators as *functionaries in management of diversity* and examining their views on role of principals in diversity management. The researcher conducted the survey study by means of questionnaire.

3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING

The study was conducted within the Umbumbulu Circuit in KwaZulu-Natal because it was financially affordable, from the researcher's point of view. The population of the research sample comprised primary school educators and principals at Umbumbulu Circuit within Ethekwini Region. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to both principals and educators because the educators are the most important partners in supporting and promoting diversity in the school. The principals sometimes can give answers that favour themselves. The researcher's main focus was on the following wards: Mafa, Umbumbulu Central and Amanzimtoti. The researcher selected the above-

mentioned wards because they shared the same characteristics and were also geographically disadvantaged.

3.3.1 Sampling method used

The various methods of sampling that can be utilised to select a representative sample. These include simple random sampling, cluster sampling, systematic sampling and stratified sampling (Brewer and Hunter, 1989: 111). The researcher used simple random sampling as the method most suited to the study.

Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1990: 163) favour the random method of sampling for its simplicity, unbiased nature and its closeness to fulfilling or fitting the major assumption of probability, namely, that each element in the population stands an equal chance of being selected. No element of the population is either deliberately or inadvertently excluded from the selection except by chance. This principle fits the major assumption of probability, namely that each element in the population stands an equal chance of being selected.

3.3.2 Choice of sample

The researcher decided to conduct the research in the Umbumbulu Circuit because it is an area that the researcher is familiar with, as she works in Umbumbulu. The researcher targeted the educators, including the principals; of the primary schools of this area for the reason that they could best provide reliable information about the roles of principals in managing diversity. The researcher was also of the opinion that the principals were best equipped to provide insightful opinions about their own roles in managing diversity. It was also believed that the principals and the educators played interdependent rôles in implementing and executing policies relative to diversity.

3.3.3 Sample size

Babbie (1989: 181) conceptualises sampling as intended to select from the population a set of elements in such a way that descriptions of those elements accurately portray the characteristics of the total population. A properly drawn sample provides information appropriate for describing the elements of the population.

The Umbumbulu Circuit is divided into four (4) wards, namely: Mafa, Amanzimtoti, Imfume and Umbumbulu Central. The researcher decided to conduct the study within three (3) wards, namely; Mafa, Umbumbulu Central and Amanzimtoti. The researcher selected the following numbers of educators including principals as respondents: forty (40) respondents from Amanzimtoti, forty (40) from Mafa and forty (40) from Umbumbulu Central.

Simple random sampling was conducted in each ward by selecting the schools that would be used to collect data. The researcher randomly selected thirteen (13) primary schools in the Amanzimtoti Ward, eleven (11) in the Mafa Ward, and ten (10) in the Umbumbulu Central Ward.

The table below reflects the three (3) wards in the Umbumbulu Circuit, the number of schools selected per Circuit and the number of respondents per Ward.

Table 3.1: Sample selected for the study.

Wards	Number of Primary Schools selected	Number of respondents selected
<i>Amanzimtoti</i>	13	40
Mafa	10	40
Umbumbulu Central	11	40
3	34	120

3.4 INSTRUMENTATION

The researcher conducted a survey by means of questionnaire. This was given to samples of educators and principals of primary schools.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

According to Goddard and Melville (2001: 47) a questionnaire is a printed list of questions that respondents are asked to answer. It is also stressed that the effectiveness of a questionnaire requires pre-planning so as to ensure that the data collected through the questionnaire can be objectively analysed. The researcher used the questionnaire as a research tool because it saves time as it is given to many people simultaneously. Furthermore, the targeted population can be reached easily in this way.

Behr (1983: 155) defines the questionnaire as a document that is normally distributed to the respondents by the post or is personally delivered. The questionnaire permits the respondents a sufficient amount of time to consider answers before responding to the questions.

Cohen and Manion (1989: 97) refer to a survey as the gathering of data at a particular time with the aim of describing the nature of situations at different places, so that these places can be compared at a later stage by referring to the responses provided by respondents at those places. The survey was relevant to this study in that it provided a convenient means of obtaining data on the roles of principals in managing diversity at different schools, so that the schools could be compared with the view of arriving at certain conclusions.

The respondents completed the questionnaires in their own time. On many occasions, the respondents in some schools completed the questionnaires, while the researcher was waiting. In other schools the respondents completed the questionnaires and were collected the following day.

3.4.2 Content of the questionnaire

The first part of the questionnaire gave clear guidelines for its completion. As stated above, the respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality and had to respond as honestly as possible. The questionnaire comprised of three (3) sections, namely:

Section A: Biographical information

This section required information from the respondents about: Present Rank, Gender, Age, Teaching Experience, and Qualifications. The researcher believes that this is a crucial part of the questionnaire because it provides the researcher with an understanding of how diverse the respondents are. The information gave the researcher knowledge about her respondents.

Section B: Closed questions

The first sub-section required information about the management of diversity in the schools. This section comprised of eleven (11) questions. Baker (1999: 209) asserts that closed types of questions are preferable, because they represent forced choices, where the choice of response in one question does not trigger the response of another question. The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale:

Table 3.2: Management of diversity rating scale

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

The second sub-section of this section required information about whether the school developed policies in order to implement and manage diversity. A structured three-scale format was used. The scale is a type of composite measure of attitudes that involves the summation of scores on a set of statements to which respondents are asked to indicate their degrees of concern (Polit and Hungler, 1987: 439). The respondents were asked to rate their responses according to the following scale.

Table 3.3: Policy rating scale

Policy	Yes	No

The advantage of using closed questions is that it does not only facilitate responses but also makes data analysis very efficient and objective (Gall and Borg, 1991: 419).

Section C: Open questions

The researcher considered that this study also required open questions in order to allow respondents to air their opinions openly. Sudaman (1983: 150) regards the open questions as a valuable tool when the researcher is beginning work in the area of exploring all the aspects of an opinion.

The first question of this section required the respondents to list strategies that principals adopt in order to manage diversity. The second question required the respondents to write down some factors that impact on the effective management of diversity in the school.

3.4.3 Advantages and disadvantages of a questionnaires

According to Kidder and Judd (1986: 221), data can be gathered by means of a structured questionnaire in the following ways: a written questionnaire that is mailed, delivered or handed out personally; personal interviews and telephone interviews. Each aspect had

specific advantages and disadvantages, which the researcher needed to evaluate in terms of suitability to the research question and the specific target population being studied, as well as relative cost.

3.4.3.1 Advantages of the written questionnaires

The researcher used the written questionnaires as a research instrument, taking into consideration the following advantages (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997: 46):

- Written questionnaires preclude possible interviewer biases, such as the way in which the interviewer asks questions, or even the interviewer's general appearance or interaction, which may influence the respondents' answers. Such biases can be completely eliminated with a written questionnaire.
- A questionnaire permits anonymity. If the questionnaires were compiled in such a manner that responses are given anonymously, this would increase the researcher's chances of receiving responses that genuinely represent a person's beliefs, feelings, opinions and perceptions.
- Affordability is the primary advantage of written questionnaires because it is the least expensive means of data gathering.
- Questionnaires can be given to many people simultaneously, in this way a large sample of a target can be reached.
- Generally the data provided by means of a questionnaire can be more easily analysed and interpreted than the data obtained from verbal responses.

- Questionnaires can elicit information that cannot be obtained by other methods. This renders empirical research possible in different educational disciplines.

3.4.3.2 Disadvantages of the questionnaire

The researcher is also aware of the fact that the written questionnaire has important disadvantages. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1990: 190), as well as Kidder and Judd (1986: 223-224) stated the following disadvantages:

- Researchers are unable to control the context of question answering, and specifically, the presence of other people.
- Written questionnaires do not allow the researcher to correct misunderstandings or to answer questions that the respondents may have. Respondents might answer questions incorrectly or not at all, due to confusion or misinterpretation.
- Questions can be answered only when they are sufficiently easy and straightforward to be understood with the given instructions and definitions.
- People are generally better able to express their views verbally than in writing.
- Questionnaires do not provide the flexibility of interviews. In an interview an idea or comment can be explored. This makes it possible to gauge how people are interpreting the question. If respondents interpret questions asked differently, the validity of the information obtained is jeopardised.

3.4.4 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Validity is defined as the extent to which a measuring instrument satisfies the purpose for which it was constructed (Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein, 1994: 560). Validity is the quality of information that the information-gathering instrument or procedure provides and also refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure.

The researcher used the questionnaire as the indirect method to measure the role of the primary school principals in managing diversity. Looking at the interpretation of the results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions could be made, the researcher is, however, convinced that the questionnaire to a great extent, did measure that, which it was designed for.

Reliability is a statistical concept and related to consistency and dependability of obtaining the same relative answer when measuring phenomena that have not changed (Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein, 1994: 412). Dane (1990:256) concurs that a reliability-measuring instrument is one that, if repeated under similar conditions, would present the same result or a near approximation of the initial result. In essence, reliability of the question refers to consistency, but consistency does not guarantee truthfulness. Reliability of the question is not proof that the answers given reflect the respondent's true feeling.

The researcher believes that the questionnaires in this investigation were completed with the necessary honesty and sincerity required to render the maximum possible reliability. The researcher also have in mind that sometimes the investigation was constrained by a number of factors that might have influenced the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, namely:

- The sensitive nature of items in the questionnaire might have elicited false or misleading responses and therefore influenced the reliability of the results.
- To restrict the investigation to manageable proportions, the researcher limited the study to educators in schools, which the researcher thought knew better about the role played by principals in managing diversity. Unfortunately, some of the educators had no idea or a limited idea of what the role of the principal entailed and their lack of knowledge, as revealed in their responses, influenced the validity and reliability of the research.

3.5 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

3.5.1 Permission to conduct research

Van Dalen (1979: 154) suggests, in one of his principles, that before undertaking and administering research, the researcher should obtain permission from the highest authority in each unit. This is to be done before contacting prospective respondents. The researcher respected this principle.

A letter (Appendix B) was sent to the Circuit Manager of Umbumbulu to request for permission to conduct a research project. The researcher mentioned the following aspects of the research project in the letter: the purpose of the study, guarantee of confidentiality and guarantee of the anonymity of respondents. The Circuit Manager granted permission on 30 September 2004 (Appendix C). The researcher personally visited the schools and asked the permission from the principals to distribute questionnaires to the educators and principals. The researcher was granted verbal permission.

3.5.2 Pilot study

A pilot study is necessary for ensuring the validity and reliability of the instrument. According to Polit and Hungler, (1987: 442) it is necessary in the pilot stage to find out

the best means of identifying and accessing respondents for the purpose of working out potential problems before the main study started.

The researcher found it necessary to conduct the pilot study to ascertain whether respondents have the same understanding of the questions that the researcher intended it to have. The researcher gave out the questionnaires to two (2) schools. The responses that were received showed that there was nothing wrong with the formulation of the questions.

3.5.3 The distribution of the of the questionnaire

The questionnaires were distributed in October 2004. The researcher distributed the questionnaires personally. In all schools the researcher requested for permission from the principals to distribute the questionnaires to the respondents. The respondents answered the questionnaire while the researcher was waiting. In other schools, the researcher left the questionnaires with the principals and they were collected the next day. The questionnaire continues to be one of the best available instruments for obtaining data from widely spread sources, if properly constructed.

The respondents completed the questionnaires in their own time. On many occasions, the respondents in some schools completed the questionnaires while the researcher was waiting. In other schools the respondents completed the questionnaires and were collected the following day.

3.5.4 Return rate

The researcher did not get all the questionnaires back again. She received hundred-and-six (106) questionnaires instead of a hundred-and-twenty (120). The return percentage was eighty-eight (88) percent. The researcher attempted to collect the outstanding questionnaires but was unsuccessful because some respondents kept on postponing delivery. Other respondents said that they were busy writing examinations, which prevented them from completing the questionnaires.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Grim and Wozniak (1990: 245-246) assert that various disciplines and professional associations have written codes of ethics outlining the behavioural standards that researchers should follow as they conduct research. These ethical codes include a right to privacy, promise of confidentiality, anonymity of respondents and honesty in reporting.

The researcher was aware of the ethical aspects at all times and upheld them in all respects. Her intentions were communicated clearly and honestly in order to gain access to the school and to the respondents' trust and co-operation. Other ethical considerations that were taken into account were the right to privacy and non-participation; the right to remain anonymous, and the right to confidentiality. The researcher followed the correct protocol in requesting for permission to conduct research from the Circuit Manager of Umbumbulu.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a detailed description of the method, research instrument and procedures used in the research. The research instrument, which was used to collect data, is described. The chapter also outlines the relevant data collection and analysis procedures as well as some of the ethical issues that require consideration when conducting research in the educational context. The following chapter presents analysis and interpretation of data.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the role of the primary school principals in managing diversity in schools.

This chapter analyses and interprets data, which was collected by means of questionnaires from educators, including the principals. The responses to each question were categorised and recorded by means of frequency (F) and percentage (%) tables for analyses.

Firstly, the biographical data of the respondents was analysed, followed by the analysis of closed items, and finally, by content analysis of open items.

4.2 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.2.1 Biographical Data of Respondents

Table 4.1: Respondents according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Females	62	58
Males	44	42
Total	106	100

Table 4.1 reveals that 58% of respondents were females, while 42% were males. At the time of this study there were more females among the educators and principals at the primary schools than their male counterparts. This lends credence to the findings of

Reary and Dennison (1990: 42), namely, that most primary schools appoint females. The table also shows that the sample is a representative of both male and female educators.

Table 4.2: Respondents according to age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20—30	19	18
31—40	33	31
41—50	41	39
Over 50	13	12
Total	106	100

Table 4.2 reveals that the majority of respondents (49%) were between the ages of 20-and 40 and that 39% were between the ages of 41 and 50. Twelve percent of respondents were over the age of 50.

The age groups in the sample (between 20 and 50) represent a mature set of respondents that are still upgrading themselves to be up-to-date with educational changes. Younger educators may have more to offer in terms of time, energy and productivity in managing diversity. They may also continue to be educators for a longer period of time, which could ensure long-term stability, while their experience gained during a lengthy period of employment could further serve to support management of diversity (Ferrant, 1991: 29).

Table 4.3: Respondents according to qualifications

Qualifications	Frequency	Percentage
Primary teacher certificate	00	00
Teacher Diploma	65	61
Professional degree	22	21
Academic degree	19	18
Total	106	100

Table 4.3 reveals that the majority of the respondents (61%) had teaching diploma, whereas 21% had professional degrees. Only 18% held academic degrees. This shows that there were no under-qualified educators. A further positive aspect of this result is that, as the contents (curricula) of teaching diplomas tend to be more practical than theoretically orientated, teachers with teaching diplomas are more appropriately equipped for teaching younger primary school children (Griessel, Louw and Swart, 1993: 71).

Table 4.4: Respondents according to number of years in the present school

Years	Frequency	Percentage
Under 5	11	10
6-10	17	16
11-15	20	19
16-20	28	27
Over 20	30	28
Total	106	100

Table 4.4 shows that 10% of respondents have spent less than five years at their present schools, while 15% have spent between six and ten years at these schools. The table also reveals that 19% of the respondents have spent between eleven and fifteen years at their present schools, while 27% have spent between sixteen and twenty years at the present school. Only 28% of the respondents have spent over twenty years in the present school.

This is encouraging, as longer terms of employment at schools promote stability, especially in the climate of ongoing policy changes. Educators with long-standing experiences at a particular school can contribute significantly to inculcating a culture of inclusivity in schools.

Alternatively, such educators can secure for themselves a 'comfort-zone' as a reaction to change and demonstrate a reluctance to support diversity. Such a situation could hinder the role of the principal in managing diversity effectively.

4.2.2 *Management of Diversity*

Table 4.5: Respondents' views on management of diversity

Statement	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.5.1 Assembly is held in more than one religion	02	02	00	00	25	24	62	58	17	16	106	100
4.5.2 Staff members talk openly about issues of diversity	04	04	02	02	12	11	10	09	78	74	106	100
4.5.3 Gender equity is catered for in extra-mural activities	49	46	00	00	15	14	20	19	22	21	106	100
4.5.4 Different cultural festivals are acknowledged	09	08	08	08	00	00	10	09	79	75	106	100
4.5.5 The principal, staff and parents have a good relationship	60	57	05	05	15	14	14	13	12	11	106	100
4.5.6 The curriculum reflects the diverse cultures of our country	12	11	08	08	12	11	06	06	68	64	106	100
4.5.7 Diverse learning needs are addressed	25	24	10	09	00	00	08	08	63	59	106	100
4.5.8 Disabled learners are welcome	82	77	08	08	16	15	00	00	00	00	106	100
4.5.9 The governing body is willing to appoint educators from other race	75	71	12	11	05	05	09	08	05	05	106	100
4.5.10 Staff have a say in decision making	14	13	17	16	12	11	55	52	08	08	106	100
4.5.11 Assembly is held in more than one language	00	00	02	02	06	06	36	34	62	58	106	100

Table 4.5 is a consolidation of responses to items listed under A of the questionnaire.

- **Assembly is held in more than one religion**

Sub-table 4.5.1 indicated that 58% of the respondents disagreed that the assembly is held in more than one language. Twenty-four percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, whereas 16% strongly agreed. Only 2% indicated that they agreed.

It would seem that most schools do not hold assembly in more than one religion. Section 15 of the Constitution of South Africa (Act 101 of 1996), guarantees both personal freedom of conscience and religion and the right to conduct religious observances at state and state-aided institutions (RSA, 1996a: 8). The observances are to be conducted in accordance with rules and on an equitable basis. Attendance is free and voluntary (RSA, 1996b: 7).

It could be deduced that in most schools, religious observances are not adhered to on an equitable basis. Furthermore, it could be deduced that attendance is mostly not free and voluntary. In the absence of policy with regard to religious observances management and implementation of diversity could be problematic.

- **Staff members talk openly about issues of diversity**

Sub-table 4.5.2 reveals that the majority of the respondents (74%) strongly disagreed that staff talked openly about issues of diversity. Eleven percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed. Nine percent indicated that they disagreed, while 4% indicated that they strongly agreed. Two percent indicated that they agreed.

Managing diversity extends, amongst other things, to participatory management approach (Flederman, 1996: 4). Participatory management involves open discussion. It could be deduced that the role of the principals in managing diversity is affected by lack of open discussions about diversity itself.

- **Gender equity is catered for in extra-mural activities**

According to sub-table 4.5.3, 46% of the respondents agreed that gender equity is catered for in extra-mural activities. Twenty-one percent indicated that they strongly disagreed, whereas 19% disagreed. Fourteen percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. It is apparent from sub-table 4.5.3 that in some schools gender equity is catered for in extra-mural activities.

It is critical that both sexes be incorporated into a school's extra-mural activities so that the talents of boys and girls are equally catered for. However, diversity does not refer exclusively to gender equity. The extramural programmes also should incorporate learners who are differently disabled, such as the blind, deaf or restricted in other ways.

According to the Department of Education (DoE, 2000a: 18), schools must avoid stereotyping in sports and cultural activities as we live in a diverse society. Some schools have extra-mural activity policies, which provide for management and implementation of diversity in sports, while others do not have such policies.

- **Different cultural festivals are acknowledged**

Sub-table 4.5.4 reveals that the majority of the respondents (75%) strongly disagreed that different cultural festivals are acknowledged, whereas 9% disagreed. Eight percent strongly agreed, while another 8% agreed.

According to De Beer (1998: 55), management of diversity requires the acknowledgement and acceptance of the unique characteristics of the individuals from different cultures. Looking at the percentages shown in sub-table 4.5.4, it could be deduced that most schools do not provide for cultural diversity by way of celebrating and acknowledging relevant festivals.

▪ **The principal, staff and parents have a good relationship**

Sub-table 4.5.5 reveals that more than half of the respondents (57%) strongly agreed that the principal, staff and parents enjoyed a good relationship. Fourteen percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed, 13% disagreed and 11% strongly disagreed on good relationship. Five percent indicated that they agreed.

It should be deduced from sub-table 4.5.5 that in most schools there are good relationships amongst stakeholders. According to Steyn (1999: 61), the principal should make it her/his business to cultivate sound interpersonal relations. The significant majority responses suggest that principals play their role in managing sound relationship. In some schools where the respondents disagreed or neither agreed nor disagreed such principals do not show dedication to creating sound relationship and, as such, do not contribute to effective management of diversity.

▪ **The curriculum reflects the diverse cultures of our country**

Sub-table 4.5.6 reveals that the majority of the respondents (64%) strongly disagreed that the curriculum reflects the diverse cultures of our country. Six percent indicated that they disagreed. Eleven percent agreed whilst 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. Eighty percent indicate that they strongly agreed. One of the most serious barriers to learning and development can be found within the curriculum itself. This problem relates primarily to the inflexible nature of the curriculum that prevents it from meeting the diverse needs of the learners (Wessels 2002: 55).

In those schools where the curriculum does not reflect diversity, it can be deduced that the principals are not vigilant in ensuring that diversity is incorporated into the curriculum. It could thus be inferred that these principals are ineffective in managing and implementing diversity with regard to curriculum.

▪ **Diverse learning needs are addressed**

Sub-table 4.5.7 shows that more than half of the respondents (59%) strongly disagreed that the diverse learning needs are addressed. Six percent indicated that they disagreed. About a quarter of the respondents (24%) strongly agreed. Nine percent indicated that they agreed. Eighty percent indicated that they disagreed.

Engelbrecht, et. al. (1999: 46) state that respecting diversity within a learner population means acknowledging and supporting the rights of all learners to fully participation in the learning and teaching process. In those schools where the learning needs are not addressed, it could be deduced that the principals are ineffective in managing the needs of individual learners.

▪ **Disabled learners are welcome**

Sub-table 4.5.8 reveals that the majority of the respondents (77%) strongly agreed that disabled learners are welcome in their schools. Eighty percent indicated that they agreed. Fifteen percent indicated that they neither agreed nor disagreed.

Although it could not been established from the data if disabled learners were indeed enrolled at the schools where this survey took place, the researcher went as far as gauging the attitude of staff towards the acceptance of disabled learners.

The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 states clearly that everyone has the right to basic education (RSA, 1996a: 9). In those schools where disabled learners were welcome, it can be deduced that the principals were positive towards inclusive education and were not discriminating on the grounds of disablement. In those schools where 15% of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed on inclusion of disabled learners, it could be inferred that their admission policies either did not state anything about the admission of disabled learners or that respondents were not involved in drafting the admission

policy. In schools where disabled learners are discriminated against, one could infer that the principals do not support the policy of inclusiveness.

- **The governing body is willing to appoint educators from other races**

Sub-table 4.5.9 reveals that 71% (which make the majority) of the respondents agreed that the governing bodies of their schools were willing to appoint educators from other race groups. Eight percent disagreed. Five percent indicated that they strongly disagreed. Five percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed. It can be deduced that the selection committees of the 71% of schools who were willing to appoint people from other races did not discriminate when candidates were selected.

According to Steyn (1999: 38), democracy involves freedom, equity, justice and the recognition of human dignity of the stakeholders, irrespective of race or gender, thereby freeing mankind of injustices, discrimination and humiliation. It could be inferred that the principals in these schools are playing their role in managing and implementing racial diversity.

It could be deduced that the schools where respondents indicated the governing bodies are not willing to appoint educators from other race groups, did not provide for diversity of personnel. By promoting such attitude the governing bodies retained the status quo of the school and subsequently ensured that their schools remained stagnant. Such schools could be considered unprogressive and a hindrance rather than help to the implementation of diversity in schools.

- **Staff have a say in decision making**

Sub-table 4.5.10 reveals that more than half of the respondents (52%) disagreed that the staff in their schools had a say in decision-making. Sixteen percent indicated that they agreed; 13% strongly agreed and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. Eight percent indicated that they strongly disagreed.

Decision-making processes relate directly to issues of power, control and responsibility. That 52% of respondent disagreed with the statement was indicative of inadequate co-operation and transparency in the functioning of the principals in their schools and of lack of involvement of all staff in decision-making. Failure to involve all members in decision-making reveals the absence of participatory democracy at the hands of the principals. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997: 92) states that if we want to build a democratic school then we have to build democratic decision-making structures and procedures.

Flederman (1996: 4) states that the process of managing diversity entails involvement of different stakeholders in decision-making. It could be deduced that the principals in non-democratic schools are ineffective in managing diversity. With regard to the 5% of respondents that neither agreed nor disagreed, it could be deduced that the principals of such schools applied an authoritarian leadership style, which means top-down decision-making strategies, thus making it impossible for them to encourage diverse input from, and participation of, their personnel.

- **Assembly is held in more than one language**

Sub-table 4.5.11 reveals that 58% of the respondents strongly disagreed that assembly is held in more than one language. Thirty-four percent indicated that they disagreed and six percent neither agreed nor disagreed. Two percent agreed.

The duty of the principal is to make sure that different cultural groups are invited to school to talk to the learners and educators, explaining about their religions (Landau, 2004: 202). It can be deduced that some principals are not putting into practice the policies regarding language and religious practices, which provide for the management and implementation of diversity.

Table 4.6: Responses on the existence of school policy

Policies	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.6.1 Religious policy	20	19	86	81	106	100
4.6.2 Learners' code of conduct	106	100	00	00	106	100
4.6.3 Gender policy	19	18	87	82	106	100
4.6.4 Language policy	106	100	00	00	106	100
4.6.5 Human resource development policy	95	90	11	10	106	100
4.6.6 Inclusive education policy	02	02	104	98	106	100
4.6.7 Educators' code of conduct	106	100	00	00	106	100

Table 4.6 is the consolidation responses to items listed under B of the questionnaire.

- **Religious policy**

According to the sub-table 4.6.1 the majority of the responses (81%) shows there is no religious policy in their schools. Nineteen percent indicated that there was religious policy. It can be deduced that in certain schools where 19% of the respondents agreed on the existence of the religious policy, the diverse religions of individuals are taken into consideration.

Section 15 of the Constitution of South Africa guarantees both personal freedom of conscience and religion, as well as the right to conduct religious observances at state and state aided institutions, provided that these observances are conducted in accordance with rules (RSA, 1996a: 8). Therefore religious policy, which provide for management and implementation of diversity is taken into consideration.

Eighty-one percent of the respondents indicated that there is no religious policy in place in their schools. This means that in such schools religious diversity is not managed and implemented by the principal, as it is impossible to do so without a policy.

- **Learners' code of conduct**

Sub-table 4.6.2 shows that all respondents (100%) indicated that a code of conduct for learners existed at their schools. The code of conduct for learners aims at establishing a disciplined and purposeful school environment that is dedicated to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of the learning process (RSA, 1996b: 35). The formulation of policies involves all staff and parents. It can be deduced that these schools all have learners' codes of conduct policies that mandate management and implementation of diversity among learners.

- **Gender policy**

Sub-table 4.6.3 reveals that according to 82% of the respondents indicated no gender policy in place at their schools. Eighteen percent indicated that there is gender policy. It could also be inferred that in schools where gender policy did not exist, there would be no gender equity in such schools. Democracy involves freedom, equity, justice and the recognition of human dignity for all stakeholders, irrespective of race or gender. This involves freeing mankind from injustice, discrimination, domination and humiliation (Steyn, 1999: 38).

- **Language policy**

Sub-table 4.6.4 reveals that all respondents (100%) confirmed the existence of a language policy at school. This encourages multilingualism and reaffirms an individual's right to choose his or her language of teaching and learning. It can be deduced from the responses that all the schools in the study have language policies in place.

- **Human resource development policy**

Sub-table 4.6.5 reveals that majority of respondents (90%) indicated that there was a human resource development policy at their schools. Ten percent indicated that they had no human resource development policies at their schools. It could therefore be deduced that the diverse needs of staff are taken into consideration in the great majority of schools.

The Department of Education emphasises the importance of human resource development policy that looks at how staff is selected, encouraged to develop and grow, and how the SMT and SGB are composed (DoE, 2000a: 18). Without the human resource development policy the school falls out of touch with educational trends and staff members soon lose the sense of renewal and inspiration

In those schools where there is no human resource development policy, staff members may not be capacitated to work with learners from diverse backgrounds.

- **Inclusive education policy**

Sub-table 4.6.6 reveals that the majority of the respondents (98%) had no inclusive education policy at their schools. Two percent indicated that they had inclusive education policies. According to Engelbrecht, et. al. (1999: 46), the ultimate goal of building an inclusive school is to contribute towards the development of an inclusive society, where all members are able to fulfill their potentials and are able to participate optimally.

Inclusive schools are marked by a respect for diversity and an ethos of placing a high value on diversity in the context of active social integration based on an inclusive education policy. It could be deduced that principals in the majority (98%) of schools there is lack of an inclusive education policy, which provide for the management, and implementation of diversity.

▪ **Educators' code of conduct**

Sub-table 4.6.7 reveals that all respondents (100%) had an educators' code of conduct policy in place at their schools. According to the South African Council of Educators Act (Act 31 of 2000), every school should draw up an educators' code of conduct. It could be deduced that the schools covered in the study have drawn up codes of conduct in deference to the afore-mentioned act and in the interest of maintaining discipline among educators. The policy deals with infringement of the dignity and other rights of persons involved in the school, and intolerant behaviour, including racism, sexism, use of hate speech and verbal abuse of others. The educators, therefore, have to comply with practices reflective of non-discrimination and non-sexism (RSA, 2000:17).

4.2.3 *Strategies and factors associated with diversity management*

This section consisted of two open items which aimed at giving the respondents an opportunity to express their own views on the strategies adopted by principals in order to manage diversity and on the factors that impact on effective management of diversity in their schools.

Out of one-hundred-and-six (106) respondents who had responded to the questionnaire, only fifty-one (51) remarked on the strategies adopted by principals in order to manage diversity, while fifty-five (55) indicated that they don't know about the strategies the principals adopt to manage diversity. Perhaps the respondents didn't know about the strategies because of the hierarchy of authority in the schools. Perhaps the principals were autocratic and did not always liaise with educators about the strategies on how to

implement diversity. Also 'diversity' may not be a concept that is consciously considered by principals and educators when planning whole school development.

Also nine (9) respondents out of 106 responded that they don't know the factors that impact on the effective management of diversity, while 97 responded to the factors which impact on effective management of diversity in their schools. The researcher deduced that perhaps the hierarchy of authority is present in these schools and there is also a possibility that the respondents are not familiar with the concept 'diversity'.

The researcher concluded that those who indicated that they don't know to the open items may perhaps have been uncertain about what management of diversity entails. Alternatively, the principals do not manage diversity and respondents were reluctant to divulge this information.

Table 4.7: Strategies the principal adopt to manage diversity.

Item	Frequency
4.7.1 Sharing of ideas about diversity	30
4.7.2 An open door policy to discuss about diversity	20
4.7.3 Involve stakeholders in managing diversity	16
4.7.4 Participatory management	13

Table 4.7 is the consolidation of responses to items listed under C of the questionnaire.

▪ **Sharing of ideas about diversity**

Sub-table 4.7.1 reveals that 30 respondents indicated that there was a sharing of ideas about diversity in their schools. According to Duma (2001: 35), the principal should meet all the stakeholders in order to discuss and reach a shared understanding of issues relating to the diversities that the school has to face. It could be inferred that educators have information about diversity, which they are willing to share with their principals.

Therefore, it becomes the role of the principals to solicit such ideas from teachers in order to secure a reservoir of information that can be utilised in schools to effectively implement and manage diversity.

- **An open door policy to discuss about diversity**

Sub-table 4.7.2 shows that 20 respondents indicated that the principals made use of an open door policy in managing diversity. With regard to management of diversity, Thomas (1997: 96) indicates that as far as the stakeholders are concerned, communication is one of the most important strategies in the phases involved in managing diversity. In this situation the principal needs to invite ideas from other people.

- **Involve stakeholders in managing diversity**

According to sub-table 4.7.3 reveals that 16 respondents indicated that the principals in their schools involved the stakeholders. According to Flederman (1996: 4), one of the characteristics of managing diversity is the involvement of the stakeholders. One of the strategies of managing diversity is to ensure that all stakeholders understand and participate in managing and implementing the process of diversity. If this strategy is seen to work effectively in a school, one may safely deduce that the principal is managing diversity effectively.

- **Participatory management**

Sub-table 4.7.4 reveals that 13 respondents indicated that their principals used participatory management as a strategy of managing diversity in their school. In managing diversity, school leadership is needed in order to distinguish between what is important and what is not. This also requires a consultative and participatory management approach (DoE, 2000a: 2). It should be evident that in some schools principals use democracy as a strategy of managing diversity.

Table 4.8: Factors that impact on effective management of diversity in their schools.

Item	Frequency
4.8.1 Poor communication	46
4.8.2 No workshops	42
4.8.3 Little knowledge of various	27
4.8.4 Poor management	22
4.8.5 Discrimination	10

Table 4.8 is the consolidation of responses to items listed under section C of the questionnaire.

Sub-table 4.8.1 reveals that 46 respondents cited poor communication as a factor that impacted negatively on management of diversity. Communication encourages *participatory management* and builds trust and support (DoE, 2000a: 12). This indicates that communication is important for the effective management of schools. It could, therefore, be deduced that the principals need to strengthen the channels of communication, so that the stakeholders can be actively involved in the process of managing diversity.

▪ No workshops

Sub-table 4.8.2 reveals that 42 respondents indicated that there are no workshops on management of diversity in schools. According to Losoncy (1995: 5), researchers have found training in skills is necessary for managing diversity, because it improves performance; enhances self-esteem, and this results in empowerment. According to the responses on sub-table 4.8.2, it would appear that principals and teachers were not capacitated. They needed to attend workshops in order to manage diversity effectively.

- **Little knowledge of various cultures**

Sub-table 4.8.3 reveals that 27 respondents identified limited knowledge of various cultures to have a negative impact on effective management of diversity. According to De Beer (1998: 58), managing diversity promotes a culture of value tolerance between different cultural groups. The principals need to know and understand different cultures so that they can encourage learner, staff and parents to promote and celebrate these different cultures.

- **Poor management of conflict**

Sub-table 4.8.4 reveals that twenty-two respondents mentioned conflict as a factor that impacted negatively on the effective management of diversity. According to the Department of Education, it is not possible to manage diversity without encountering conflict along the way (DoE, 2000a: 26). The principal needs to resolve conflict. Conflict resolution is a communication process for managing conflict and negotiations (Neil, Kartz and Lawyer, 1993: 27). It could be deduced that the principals need to be capacitated in order to manage conflict as well as diversity effectively.

- **Discrimination**

According to sub-table 4.8.5 10 respondents stated that discrimination was the most important negative factor that impacted on effective management of diversity in schools. According to the Department of Education, schools need to fight against discrimination and prejudice in order to manage diversity and promote equity (DoE, 2000a: 8). Discrimination is a strong term, because when people discriminate against others, they turn prejudice into action. All principals need to play their role in subverting discrimination inside and outside of their schools.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigated the role of primary school principals in managing diversity in the Umbumbulu Circuit. The study explored different strategies employed and challenges encountered in managing diversity. It also evaluates effectiveness of principals in the management of diversity within their schools.

This chapter provides the summary of the study, findings and recommendations emanating from literature review and empirical investigation pertaining to effective management of diversity. Recommendations are there-upon made which may help the principals and other role players in education to develop and sustain effective approaches in managing diversity.

5.2 FINDINGS

The summary of findings with regard to the role of primary school principals in managing diversity is discussed.

5.2.1 Findings from literature study

5.2.1.1 Policies that provide for implementation and management of diversity.

The literature study highlighted national policies that mandate the implementation and management of diversity, such as the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, and the South African School's Act, Act 84 of 1996. It also highlighted the

institutional policies that inform diversity such as learner's code of conduct, educator's code of conduct, language policy, gender policy, human resource development policy

5.2.1.2 The role of Principals in managing diversity

In the study, the role of the principals in managing diversity was revealed. Since managing diversity is a process, the components of diversity management which the principals use were highlighted, such as creation and management of a diverse workforce; establishment of quality; interpersonal relationships; full utilisation of human resources; understanding and valuing differences; mutual respect among groups; creating an environment appropriate for full utilisation of staff and managing a flexible curriculum.

5.2.1.3 Strategies for effective implementation of diversity

Literature study revealed practical strategies for effective implementation of diversity. The strategies that were noted are understanding issues relating to diversity; diversity research; communicating to the stakeholders; educating stakeholders; reviewing systems and structures, and monitoring and evaluating the diversity process. The study highlighted the seven steps that need to be followed for effective monitoring and evaluation of diversity.

5.2.1.4 Dealing with conflict in managing diversity

In the study it was noted that it is not possible to manage diversity without encountering conflict in the process. The principals need to prevent conflict from getting worse, motivate the school community; build trust; stop resentments from building up, and find creative solutions to problems.

5.2.2 Findings from empirical study

5.2.2.1 Some schools do not have policies to manage diversity

The study revealed that some schools do not have policies to manage diversity. There are few schools that have inclusive education policies, gender policies and religious policies. This poses a challenge for principals to draw policies for their schools, which would clearly present a guide on managing diversity.

It becomes difficult for schools to operate without policies, which are specifically designed to implement and manage diversity in schools. Without guiding principles on diversity management, teachers may become complacent and the concept of diversity may not materialise into action plans for implementation (see paragraph 2.2.2)

5.2.2.2 Some principals do not involve staff in decision-making

The study found that some principals involve staff in decision-making and others do not (see sub-table 4.7.10). It should be evident that staff involvement does not exist at some schools. Diversity cannot be managed effectively if the staff is not involved in decision making about diversity.

5.2.2.3 Inclusive education is not yet embraced

The study revealed that few schools embrace inclusive education (see sub-table 4.6.6). Only few schools had inclusive education policy. Policies in support for learners should be based on the levels of needs for overcoming individual barriers to learning and on development rather than categorisation of learners according to their abilities or disabilities.

5.2.2.4 Most principals do not adopt the effective strategies for managing diversity in their schools

The study revealed that most principals do not adopt effective strategies for managing diversity because a significant numbers of educators did not know about the strategies. Practical strategies for the effective implementation of diversity are outlined in section 2.4. The study has indicated that most schools are not managing diversity well.

5.2.2.5 There is poor communication, which impacts negatively on the management of diversity

The study found that poor communication impacts negatively on the implementation of diversity. This indicates that some principals are not communicating effectively. Diversity cannot be effectively managed if there is poor communication.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the findings of this study, the researcher suggests the following recommendations:

5.3.1 Every principal should be trained adequately to manage diversity in the school

Building programmes to empower principals need to be developed in terms of knowledge about, and understanding of diversity and inclusive policies. The principal's skills need to be developed. In this respect, in-service training becomes imperative. Furthermore, the attitudes of principals towards diversity should reflect tolerance, non-discrimination, non-sexism and non-racialism. The circuit-based capacity building programmes should be developed to empower principals. These programmes should be incorporated into the circuit year plan. Towards this and the circuit-based education officers should have

sufficient time to familiarise themselves with relevant policy documents and capacity building initiatives.

Once the school policy is formulated, it should not be regarded as an end in itself. Proactive steps need to be taken by the principal to ensure that every one is familiar with the content of an inclusive policy; is comfortable with the new vision, and receives sufficient guidance and support in understanding the new initiatives.

It is acknowledged that there are some capacity-building courses for principals that are sponsored by the KwaZulu Department of Education. Yet there is no follow-up after the workshops. It is recommended that the Department of Education provide more support in keeping the principals informed about any changes to national and provincial policies related to diversity.

5.3.2 The Department of Education should support the principals' efforts in managing diversity

The District and Circuit offices should keep the principals informed about any changes to policies. These offices should also share with the principals as to how other schools in the District or Circuit are doing concerning implementation and management of diversity. The offices should facilitate contact between principals and other schools. When conflicts arise, the principals should be able to turn to the Circuit or District Office for advice and support.

Principals should form a partnership with the Circuit or District Office staff so that they come to understand what diversity means. The District or Circuit should be prepared to support principals in their efforts to promote diversity in their schools.

5.3.3 Principals should develop and familiarise themselves with policies that manage and motivate educators to implement these policies

There is a need for capacity building programmes for principals so as to equip them to fully understand the policies they need to have in their schools. The principals, as the key role players in schools, should see to it that the national policies are understood and implemented correctly. It is the principals who have to provide guidance to educators and provide clarification with regard to certain concepts, which are found in the policy documents.

It is recommended that the Department of Education organise workshops for the principals in order to facilitate a clearer understanding of the policies for managing diversity.

5.3.4 Principals should involve educators in promoting diversity

The educators are the most important partners in supporting and promoting diversity in schools. The most significant interactions in the school take place in the classroom.

Principals should help the staff to embrace the idea of diversity. For the staff to function successfully in a diverse school environment, there needs to be a common vision for a school that is united and strong because of the diversity within it. The principals can achieve this through staff development programmes on diversity, by bringing about changes in management in order to address conflict; to celebrate different cultural days, and to integrate religious education into the curriculum.

5.3.5 The principals should involve the SGBs

Governance in a school is the responsibility of the school governing body. Principals need to work together with the school governing body to support and promote diversity.

The school governing body should support the school management team to develop and advance policies that provide the right environment for implementing diversity.

The school governing body members are critical co-partners in monitoring the quality of public education in South Africa. The principals should make sure that the members of the SGB are capacitated.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This study investigated the role of primary schools principals in managing diversity within a demarcated area. It sought to find out if the principals were managing diversity effectively. Whilst the findings indicate that the principals are struggling in managing diversity effectively, it is the researcher's view that with effective training of principals and other stakeholders, coupled to the provision of appropriate infrastructure by Department of Education, diversity can be managed effectively in the schools.

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APPENDIX A

DEAR RESPONDENT

Thank you for taking time to answer my questionnaire. The fact that you have been chosen as a respondent is quite coincidental.

I would like to assure you that all the information you provide will be regarded as strictly confidential. Please answer all the questions as honestly as you can. Your opinion is crucial.

Please answer ALL questions in the following way:

1. Put a cross under the correct answers, e.g. X
2. Where a question requires comments, write in the space provided.

SECTION A

1. Demographic Information

1.1

Present Rank	
Principal	
Deputy Principal	
Head of Department	
Teacher	

1.2.

Gender	
Male	
Female	

1.3.

Age Group	
20-30	
31-40	
41-50	
Over 50	

1.4

My Highest Qualification	
Primary Teacher certificate	
Teacher Diploma	
Professional Degree	
Academic Degree	

1.5

Number of years teaching in present school	
Under 5	
6-10	
11-15	
16-20	
Over 20	

SECTION B

A.

In our school...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Assembly is held in more than one religion					
Staff members talk openly about issues of diversity					
Gender equity is catered for in extra-mural activities					
Different cultural festivals are acknowledged					
The Principal, staff and parents have a good relationship					
The curriculum reflects the diverse cultures of our country					
Diverse learning needs are addressed					
Disabled learners are welcome					
The governing body is willing to appoint educators from other race groups					
Staff has a say in decision making					
Assembly is held in more than one language					

B. Please, could you tell me whether your school has developed the following policies?

Policies	Yes	No
Religious policy		
Learners' code of conduct		
Gender Policy		
Inclusive education policy		
Language policy		
Human resource development policy		
Educators' code of conduct policy		

SECTION C

1. Please, could you list some of the strategies that the principal adopts to manage diversity.

2. What are some of the factors that impact on the effective management of diversity in your school?

APPENDIX B

AA 985
P.O Umlazi Township
Umlazi
4031
30 September 2004

The Circuit Manager
The Department of Education and Culture
Private Bag X1022
Umbumbulu
4105

Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

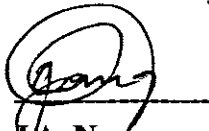
I kindly seek your permission to disseminate questionnaires to the principals and educators, from randomly selected primary schools in your circuit.

I am an educator at Kusakusa J.P.School. I am a second year M. Ed student at the University of Zululand. My dissertation topic is '**An investigation of the role of the primary school principals in managing diversity.**'

It will be greatly appreciated if my request is taken into consideration. On completion of my project I will share, at your invitation, a summary of the findings.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Yours Faithfully



J.A. Ngema

APPENDIX C



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATAL
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

eTHEKWINI REGION

ISIFUNDA SASETHEKWINI

eTHEKWINI STREEK

UMLAZI DISTRICT

UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT

UMLAZI DISTRIK

Address Next to Magistrate's Court
Ikheji UMBUMBULU
Adres

Private Bag :X1022
Isikhwama Seposi :UMBUMBULU
Privaatsak :4105

Telephone :(031) 9150036
Ucingo 9150001
Telefoon 9150221 /2
Fax :(031) 9150189
Date
USUKU : 30/09/2004
Datum

Enquiries
Imibuzo NGCOBO BDF
Navrae

Reference
Inkomba : NGEMA JA
Verwysing

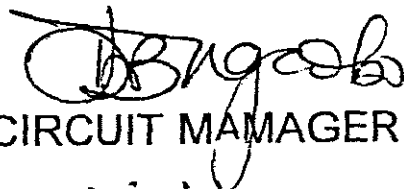
TO: Principals of Schools
UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT

The above-named educator has approached this office for assistance to conduct a research that will benefit not only our schools but also the entire education system.

Kindly assist her with the necessary information that will assist in achieving the desired goal.

Note, however, that time accorded to her should take into account the instructional time.

Your assistance in this regard will be much appreciated


CIRCUIT MANAGER