

# **AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN THE MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE IN SCHOOLS**

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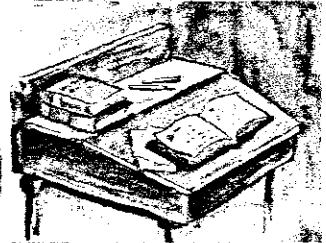
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Yours sincerely

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# Declaration

I, Thandi Petunia Makhanya, hereby declare that *"An Investigation into the Role of Principals in the Management and Implementation of Change in Schools"* represents my own work both in conception and execution and that all sources used or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

  
Thandi Petunia Makhanya

January 2006

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- Finally, my son Thabani, my daughter Thobeka and the entire family for the many sacrifices they made to accommodate this study.

# DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to:

My late father **Simon Dube** and my mother **Beatrice Dube** who provided me with a solid educational foundation that I could build on. I thank them for their constant encouragement throughout this study. I also thank them for the values that they instilled in me and the many contributions they made to my success.

# **Abstract**

The South African School's Act, No. 84 of 1996, calls for transformational leadership in schools. Principals are under obligation to comply with the stipulations of the act, which compel them to work in democratic and participative ways. School management and governance must be inclusive with roles and responsibilities defined for educators, parents and learners. Jointly they must ensure accountability, transparency in the delivery of quality public education.

This study reviewed literature on the role of principals as change managers in schools. The Department of Education (1999: 46-48) wishes to promote a culture of teaching and learning where respect is commanded through stature rather than status and the impetus of educational service delivery is about development rather than delivery of expertise. Principals are being called upon to manage and implement transformation that will embrace and give practical application to these ideals.

In order to test principals' commitment to and effectiveness in change management, an empirical investigation was conducted in schools in the Umbumbulu Circuit of the Ethekewini region of KwaZulu-Natal.

Findings of the study led to the following conclusions:

- principals are grappling to implement changes in schools;
- there is a lack of change management expertise in the ranks of principals;
- principals resist change instead of initiating and implementing change.

Several recommendations were drawn from the study. These included:

- The development of a greater number of workshops to capacitate principals to manage change.
- More concrete incentives are to be devised and implemented to motivate principals to accept change and implement policies that mandate change.
- Effective change management strategies must be made explicit and brought to the attention of principals as concrete measures that can be used to facilitate change.

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## Acronyms used in this study

<b>DSG</b>	Development Support Group
<b>IQMS</b>	Integrated Quality Management System
<b>PM</b>	Performance Measurement
<b>SASA</b>	South African Schools Act No 84 of 1996
<b>SDT</b>	School Development Team
<b>SEM</b>	Superintendent of Education (Management)
<b>SGB</b>	School Governing Body
<b>SMT</b>	School Management Team
<b>WSE</b>	Whole School Evaluation

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## **CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The democratisation of education in South Africa took concrete manifestation in the constitutional Bill of Rights and the South African Schools Act No. 84 of 1996 (SASA). The primary aim was to transform the apartheid-based educational system into an egalitarian one. Schools are no longer regarded the sole responsibility of the Department of Education and the educators that service them. Parents, learners and the community that hosts the school are now joint guardians of education and need to ensure the delivery of quality public education that is responsive and relevant to the needs of the service community.

Principals of the schools have become the custodians of change management. A new democratic or participative management style is called for. The Department of Education Task Team (1996: 29) states that: "passing a law will not, by itself, ensure that change will occur." Transformation requires that schools develop the ability and expertise to manage change. The focus of educational transformation is on democratisation, participation and inclusion, not on the authoritarian and top-down mode that was dominant prior the transformation era.

Chetty (1998: 27) notes that the remnants of the Apartheid regime persists in dictator-like and authoritarian school management styles. It is very important for the principals to move away from an authoritarian, bureaucratic mode of educational management. The Department of Education (1996: 19) tasks principals not only with supporting change, but also with developing action plans and management strategies to embrace changes holistically. Change management requires proactive thinking and implementation measures.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

Apartheid education, prior to 1994, was based on top-down management and leadership styles. Power and control were exercised from the top (Department of Education, 2002: 07). Principals worked in bureaucratic environments. The democratisation of education was given momentum by the adoption of the South African constitution and legally guaranteed by the passing of the SASA (1996). These initiatives prescribed a number of reforms that impacted on the organization of the schools in general and on managing and governing schools in particular.

The SASA liberalised the governance of schools devolving (in part) the power to manage and govern schools to the School Management Teams (SMTs) and School Governing Bodies (SGBs). The Department of Education (2002: 13) highlights that schools are expected to resonate constitutional values such as democracy, equality, human dignity, freedom and justice.

## **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Although policy documents such as the Policy Framework for Education and Training (1994: 33) and legal acts such as the SASA (1996: 28) prescribe and encourage participative and inclusive management and governance of schools, there are still some principals who employ autocratic management styles in running their schools. The researcher, currently serving as an educator and having a number of years of service, has observed first-hand how some principals resist change.

Some principals are not open to having staff, parents and learners involved at any level of managing schools. Caldwell and Spinks (1992: 18) argue that the devolution of power to institutions ought to be matched by the empowerment of people within the school. Therefore all education stakeholders are to be

empowered. Educators, SGB members, learners and managers will understand their roles and responsibilities better if they are empowered and developed.

#### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This study seeks to answer the following questions:

- Are principals adequately capacitated to implement change in schools?
- What strategies can principals adopt to manage and implement change in schools?
- What are the factors that hinder the effective implementation and management of change?

#### **1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aims of this study can be delineated as follows:

- To conduct a literature review on effective strategies to implement and manage change in schools.
- To investigate whether or not school principals are adopting effective and appropriate strategies to manage and implement change.
- To provide recommendations to principals on effective change management.

#### **1.6 ASSUMPTIONS**

The primary assumption of this study is that change management is collaborative. Principals who apply autocratic management styles isolate themselves and have less chance of becoming effective change managers. By

working collaboratively with all stakeholders, principals will be able to manage and implement change effectively.

## **1.7 PARAMETERS OF THE STUDY**

Although multiple structures such as the SGB and SMT have been tasked with being agents of change management in schools, this study focuses on the role of the principal in this process.

## **1.8 LIMITATIONS OF EMPIRICAL STUDY**

The study focuses almost exclusively on the role of the principal in the management and implementation of change in schools. The role of parents, learners and other educators are given peripheral attention.

## **1.9 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study is beneficial to those who are engaged in or have an interest in the management of schools. It will also be of interest to anyone who as a sociological interest in the evolution of democracy and its impact on educative forces.

## **1.10 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS**

For the sake of clarity, it is essential that certain relevant concepts used in the study be defined. The discussion below defines several key concepts.

### **1.10.1 ROLE**

According to Gray (1979: 76) 'role' is defined as a person's usual duty or activity. In this study role is defined as the duty or function of the school principal in managing and implementing change in schools.

### **1.10.2 PRINCIPAL**

Cawood and Gibbon (1980: 05) define 'principal' as an administrative and organizational and instructional leader of a school. In this study 'principal' refers to primary or secondary school heads.

### **1.10.3 MANAGEMENT**

'Management' is a noun derived from the verb 'manage' which means to be in charge of, keep in order and control. The Task Team on Educational Management and Development, (1996: 27) points out that 'management' is about doing things and working with people to make things happen. It is a process to which all can contribute and in which everyone in an organization ought to be involved.

The term management is used in this study, to describe "the pro-active process of defining strategy and goals for an organization and ensuring that an organization works towards these goals efficiently" (Fielder, Bowles and Hart, 1991: 10).

### **1.10.4 IMPLEMENTATION**

According to Chetty (1998: 29) 'implementation' refers to a process of putting policy into practice. This definition is adopted for purposes of this study.

### **1.10.5 SCHOOL**

According to the SASA 'school' refers a public school between grade zero and grade twelve. For the purpose of this study 'school' refers to 'public schools', which accommodate learners from grade R to grade 12.

### **1.10.6 EDUCATOR /TEACHER**

According to Mkhize (2000: 02), a 'teacher' is anyone who teaches or instructs, especially as an occupation. In this study 'educator' is used synonymously with 'teacher'.

### **1.11 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

A literature review on the role of principals in managing and implementing change in schools is conducted first. This forms the theoretical framework that underpins a survey which will be administered by questionnaire that aims at collecting data on change management from the principals of 43 schools in the Umbumbulu circuit. The aim of the empirical study is to investigate whether or not school principals are adopting effective and appropriate strategies to manage and implement change.

### **1.12 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH**

This study will be structured as follows:

- **Chapter one** is a general orientation to the study outlining key concepts and parameters of the study.
- **Chapter two** provides a literature review on the role of principals in the managing and implementing of change in schools and strategies consistent with this role.
- **Chapter three** provides the research methodology used to collect data from principals on change management strategies that they adopt.
- **Chapter four** presents an analysis and interpretation of data collected from principals.
- **Chapter five** presents a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.

### **1.13 CONCLUSION**

This chapter served as a general overview of the scope of the study, its aims and its significance. Key concepts and terms were introduced and the parameters of the study were defined.

The next chapter examines several seminal sources in search of workable strategies that principals can use to facilitate and manage change. It also attempts to provide a theoretical framework for understanding change drivers in education and how they are effectively negotiated here in South Africa and in other parts of the world.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter opens with a discussion of change drivers in South African education and juxtaposes the traditional autocratic style of school management with more democratic and participative management styles. This is done so as to provide insight into the evolving role of the principal as the administrative and organizational and instructional leader of a school.

Currently principals are cast as agents of change who have the positional power to ensure effective transformation of public schools into centres of learning and teaching excellence that are relevant and responsive to their service constituencies. Schools without good leaders do not operate well in a rapidly changing environment. Principals are increasingly facing the challenge of competing with other schools to attract top-performing learners, innovative educators and well-resourced funders. In addition, they are being held accountable for academic performance and school improvement (Brevis, Ngambi, Urba and Naicker, 2002: 294).

The discussion below juxtaposes traditional/autocratic management styles and democratic, participative management styles so as to sensitise observers to the leap that traditional principals must make in the face of fast-paced educational transformation.

### **2.2 THE TRADITIONAL / AUTOCRATIC STYLE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT**

According to Kreitner (1989: 278) the management emphasis in traditional organizations was on the flow of authority in the form of orders and rules. Kreitner (ibid), identifies the four principles of traditional management, viz.

- A well-defined hierarchy of authority.
- Unity of command.
- Equal authority and responsibility.
- Downward delegation of authority, but not responsibility.

In traditional / autocratic management styles, the principal was the single person, responsible for managing school. A top-down management and leadership style was adopted. The Department of Education (1999: 19) emphasizes that the old bureaucratic system operated like a pyramid. In the past, decisions were made at the top and then passed down through a clearly defined hierarchy. Kreitner (1989: 270) refers to this hierarchy of authority as the chain of command. This environment is not conducive to change.

Implementation of educational reforms has been precipitated by a desire to facilitate an Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). Measurement instruments have been developed to ensure quality of education. Several concepts such as a Development Appraisal System (DAS), Whole School Evaluation (WSE), Quality Assurance (QA) are now compelling principals to shift from traditional ways of doing things to a democratic model of managing schools.

South Africa stepped out of isolation and adopted a new democratic institution that guarantees the right to dignity, equality, freedom and security of all citizens.

### **2.3 TOWARD PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT**

The Department of Education (1999: 46-48), provides the following suggestions to shift from traditional-autocratic management styles to participatory-inclusive styles:

- Lead rather than prescribe
- Flatten the decision-making hierarchy

- Promote shared responsibility
- Embrace and promote empowerment
- Adopt a development approach to curriculum delivery
- Command respect through stature
- Emphasize effectiveness
- Create a culture of learning

### **2.3.1 LEAD RATHER THAN PRESCRIBE**

The Department of Education (1999: 46), states that the principal must be seen as leading learners and educators to achieve desired outcomes, rather prescribing change. Kreitner (1989: 529) recommends a participative leadership style where the principal consults constituencies, actively soliciting their suggestions and giving due consideration to those suggestions when making decisions.

### **2.3.2 FLATTEN THE DECISION-MAKING HIERARCHY**

According to Mthabela (1997: 19), a principal who permits his/her educators to share in the decision-making process even though he/she has no formal obligation to do so, is letting them to know that he/she values their judgement and recognises them as colleagues. If educators are involved in making decisions, they will be motivated to implement them. Responsibilities will be shared with ease.

The Department of Education (1999: 46) advises that the principal should try to produce flatter, more, open, more participative structures when implementing changes. By being personally and meaningfully involved, educators' motivation and performance levels are said to improve (Kreitner, 1989: 451). This will allow better information flow, and create an atmosphere in which all members feel a sense of ownership (Kreitner, *ibid*).

Albert and Motlatla (1998) in Mthabela (1997: 130), state that when important decisions are to be made, the principal can institute decision-making by consensus. They further state that this method is the most advantageous approach, as it stimulates the participation of members and increases their commitment.

### **2.3.3 SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

The Department of Education (1999: 12) states that the school leaders (principals) have the responsibility to involve parents and other members of the community in managing and implementing change in schools. Kreitner (1989: 514) observes that although leaders traditionally delegate a great deal of authority they seldom, if ever, delegate responsibility. Kreitner (ibid), further states that shared responsibility means that the work is divided and assigned on the basis of participatory decision-making. The principal has to encourage educators to work as a team in implementing changes and decision-making powers must be devolved.

### **2.3.4 EMBRACE AND PROMOTE EMPOWERMENT**

Shreuder et.al. (1993: 03), advise that principals must take a lead in creating a positive climate for professional development. The Department of Education (2002: 56) states that as leaders and managers they need to mentor others. Steyn and Van der Klerk (1999: 359), emphasize the power of educators. Creating a collaborative management structure requires that those in senior management (including principals) learn to define their leadership role as that of empowering others in an organization rather than controlling.

### **2.3.5 ADOPT A DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO CURRICULUM DELIVERY**

A development approach to curriculum delivery is essential in embracing the current reforms. Educator and learner developmental supervision is an important part of appraisal. Ndlovu (1997: 45), states that formative evaluation (appraisal) serves the purpose of professional development through which the improvement of the individual is envisaged. The principal must assist educators who experience problems in implementing changes by providing in-service training for them. Day, Whitaker and Wren (1987: 18) warn that professional development cannot be forced. It is up to the educator to take part actively and ensure the effective implementation of change.

### **2.3.6 COMMAND RESPECT THROUGH STATURE**

The Department of Education (1999: 48), recommends that principals command respect without using their status in a threatening way. Respect is achieved through the stature of the educator or principal. Misusing positional power can jeopardise the effective initiation and implementing of change.

### **2.3.7 PROMOTE A BALANCE BETWEEN EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY**

According to Kretitner (1989: 11), managers are responsible for balancing effectiveness and efficiency because too much emphasis in either direction leads to mismanagement of change. Effectiveness relates more especially to the management of human and material resources while efficiency relates to the management of time, money and processes (such as change). The balance between effectiveness and efficiency therefore lies in the hands of the school principal especially in the area of educational transformation.

### **2.3.8 CREATE A CULTURE OF LEARNING**

By focussing on teaching and learning as the goal of the school, educators and learners are being motivated (Department of Education, 1999: 43). The principal's role is to create and develop a culture that fosters commitment and enables educators and learners to do their work in a conducive learning and teaching environment. Principals need to motivate both educators and learners to do more than what is expected of them.

In order to manage and implement change effectively, principals need to take into consideration all of the above practical suggestions on ways to shift their schools from "top-down" to "participatory" management.

### **2.4 REFORM INITIATIVES IN SOUTH AFRICA**

At the heart of educational reform in South Africa are the following key initiatives:

- Outcomes-Based Education (and its current revisions as the Renewed National Curriculum Statement), and
- The Integrated Quality Management System.

These two initiatives are supported by structural reform of the educational sector as described in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and legally supported by the SASSA and National Education Policy Act (No 27 of 1996). The primary aims of the reforms are:

- to democratise the divided and unequal system of education perpetuated under Apartheid;
- to facilitate syllabus revision and subject rationalisation thereby laying the foundations for a single national core syllabus , and

- to improve education service delivery by ensuring accessibility, relevance, excellence, transparency and accountability.

The key initiatives described above are underpinned by several theoretical and practical policy revisions which need find articulation in schools. Principals are tasked with ensuring that an Integrated Quality Assurance System (IQMS) finds articulation in schools as part of the change management agenda. The IQMS and its underlying tenets and structures are discussed below with special reference to the role of the principal in its articulation.

#### **2.4.1 IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM (IQMS)**

The IQMS, in an educational context, is a collective concept that integrates three fundamental components of Whole School Development (WSD), namely the Developmental Appraisal System (DAS), the Performance Measurement (PM) and Whole School Evaluation (WSE). The aim of the IQMS is to ensure performance measurements for educators and schools that will help capitalise on strengths and create development support networks to eliminate weaknesses so that schools can operate as autonomous education centres of excellence. Before the school implements the IQMS, the principal has to establish the necessary structures that will be responsible for implementing the IQMS. The Staff Development Team (SDT) and Development Support Group (DSG) are two school-based resources that are indispensable in ensuring successful rollout of the IQMS.

##### **2.4.1.1 Staff Development Team (SDT)**

The principal must democratically elect a Staff Development Team (SDT). The principal will also be represented in this structure. The team will include some members of the SMTs as well as other educators. The principal together with the

team must ensure that all educators are trained in the procedures and processes of the IQMS. Trained educators should prepare and monitor the change management plan, initiate the implementation of change and monitor the effectiveness of the implementation (Department of Education, 2002: 67). The SDT needs to support the principal to implement and manage change.

#### **2.4.1.2 Development Support Group (DSG)**

The principal's role in the formation of the DSG is to ensure that the DSG is fairly constituted. The Department of Education (2003: 13), states that for each educator, the DSG consists of the educator's immediate learning area senior and a peer that serves in the same phase/learning area. The DSG will work co-operatively with the principal in supporting educators to implement change and develop professionally.

#### **2.4.1.3 Implementation of Whole School Evaluation (WSE)**

The final draft on the National Policy on WSE (2000), introduces the monitoring and evaluation systems which are vital to the improvement of performance standards in schools. All public schools are required to undertake an annual self-evaluation process as part of the implementation of WSE. The principal is primarily responsible planning for the implementation of the WSE in his/her school.

The role of the principal with regards to WSE, according to Department of Education (2002: 19), is to:

- Identify an evaluation co-ordinator who will liase with the evaluation team, that is, the external evaluators responsible for monitoring WSE.

- Be thoroughly acquainted with the reasons for the evaluation and be in the position to explain the process and answer questions from stakeholders.
- Encourage and motivate stakeholders, some of whom may be apprehensive, to ensure understanding and co-operation with the supervisors or external evaluators.
- Ensure that all the required documents are accurately prepared.
- List questions or areas of uncertainty for the team leader to respond to when he/she visits.
- Inform all stakeholders of the intended evaluation.

#### **2.4.1.4 Developmental Appraisal System**

The DAS mandates that teachers are to be appraised. The DAS is based on the premise of life-long learning and the principle that the school is a learning organization. It focuses primarily on the individuals, that is, it evaluates the development of individual educators (Department of Education, 2002: 04). Berth (1990: 56) states that the appraisal of educators is a powerful means of promoting professional growth.

According to the IQMS policy document (2003: 03), the purpose of developmental appraisal is to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner with a view to determine areas of strength and weaknesses and to draw up programmes for individual development.

According to Middlewood (1997: 173), the way in which an appraisal is managed is fundamental to staff management in any organization. The role of the principal with regard to the DAS is to offer professional advice to educators where necessary and to develop staff training programmes (Department of Education, 2002: 67).

To effectively manage the appraisal process, Middlewood (2001: 197-198) suggests that the principal consider the following:

- Ensuring that any system of performance review in the school is procedurally sound and consistently applied. This is fundamental to perceptions of fairness that staff have. The manager may begin by being appraised personally as the first member thereby demonstrating that there is nothing to be feared in the system.
- Establishing an agreed upon set of principles for carrying out appraisals. These will be specific to individual schools but will be framed within the national norms. This not only develops a sense of ownership but clarifies what manager and staff are committed to, for example, a commitment to appraisal for everyone including the principal.

#### **2.1.4.5 Performance Measurement (PM)**

The Performance Measurement (PM), as highlighted in the IQMS policy document (2003: 03) as an instrument used evaluate individual teachers for salary progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives.

Smith and Cronje (1992: 325), state that money as a reward can be used to reinforce positive job performance. Whilst incentives and rewards are indeed necessary to motivate teachers, these are secondary objectives in the IQMS instrument. The primary objective for measuring performance of educators is to ensure excellence in the quality of education delivered. According to the IQMS policy document (2003: 25), schools must inform educators of in-service training and other programmes that will be offered and make the necessary arrangements for educators to attend. The Department of Education (ibid) further

states that on-going mentoring must take place to assist educators to improve their performance.

## **2.5 PHASES OF A CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS**

According to Brevis et.al. (2002: 218) managing change is one of the most difficult challenges facing school management. Brevis et. al. (2002: 219) highlight that following an established change management processes will greatly assist principals fulfil their obligations as change management agents and will broker trust and confidence in the measures taken to facilitate change.

Kreitner (1986: 564), drawing on work done by Lewins (1947), recommends that the principal use a three-phased change management process to “*unfreeze*”, “*change*” and then “*refreeze*” the school social system. Each of these phases is discussed separately below.

### **2.5.1 STAGE 1 - UNFREEZING**

The unfreezing process is usually necessary before individuals are willing to change. This stage involves reducing the forces maintaining the system behaviour at the current level. This phase usually requires an education campaign which outlines the nature of the changes proposed (sharing knowledge) and highlighting the benefits of the changes (both institutional and individual). The latter exercise is aimed at getting acceptance of and support for the proposed changes. A pilot group can be used to demonstrate how the changes will be implemented and what the benefits thereof are.

Kreitner (1989: 564), states that unfreezing prepares the members for change and then helps neutralize initial resistance. At this stage the principal has to assess the situation and prescribe an appropriate change strategy. The next stage is “moving or changing”.

## **2.5.2 STAGE 2 – MOVING OR CHANGING**

This stage shifts the system to a higher level of group participation. Change must be managed as a gradual and deliberate process. Transition from the old to the new must be paced appropriately to lower anxiety and allow for participants to gradually release their hold on anchors in the old system and latch onto support structures and anchors in the system being migrated to.

Having a significant role clearly defined for you in the system being migrated to, assists immensely in combating insecurities and resistance to change. The principal as a change agent has to implement strategies to enhance collaboration and co-operation. Chetty (2003: 116) quotes Kreitner et al. (1999), who states that because change involves learning, this stage entails providing employees with new information, new behavioural models or new ways of looking at things. Chetty (ibid), further quotes Kreitner et. al. (1999), who claim that models, mentors, experts benchmarking results and training are useful mechanisms to facilitate the change. The next stage is the “freezing stage”.

## **2.5.3 STAGE 3 – FREEZING (ALSO CALLED REFREEZING)**

According to Gilgeous (1997: 139), anchoring changes firmly in the corporate culture, is known as the freezing stage. This stage stabilizes the system at a new state of quasi-stationary equilibrium (Orgland, 1997: 88).

The new attitude becomes part of the person. It is necessary to follow-up on problems, complaints, unanticipated side-effects and any lingering resistance. In this way the new behaviours are reinforced. Kreitner (1989: 576) states that there must be a careful monitored refreezing period to ensure lasting change. The principal should guard against any form of resistance from the staff.

Van Daventer (2003: 46) proposes a complementary model for successful change management. His model is attractive as it allows changes that have been

implemented to be evaluated and processes to be modified where necessary. The cyclic nature of the model ensures that there is no stagnation. The steps of the Van Daventer model are discussed in greater detail below.

## 2.6 THE VAN DAVENTER APPROACH TO CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The scientific approach described by Van Daventer (2003: 46), to successful manage change is graphically represented below.

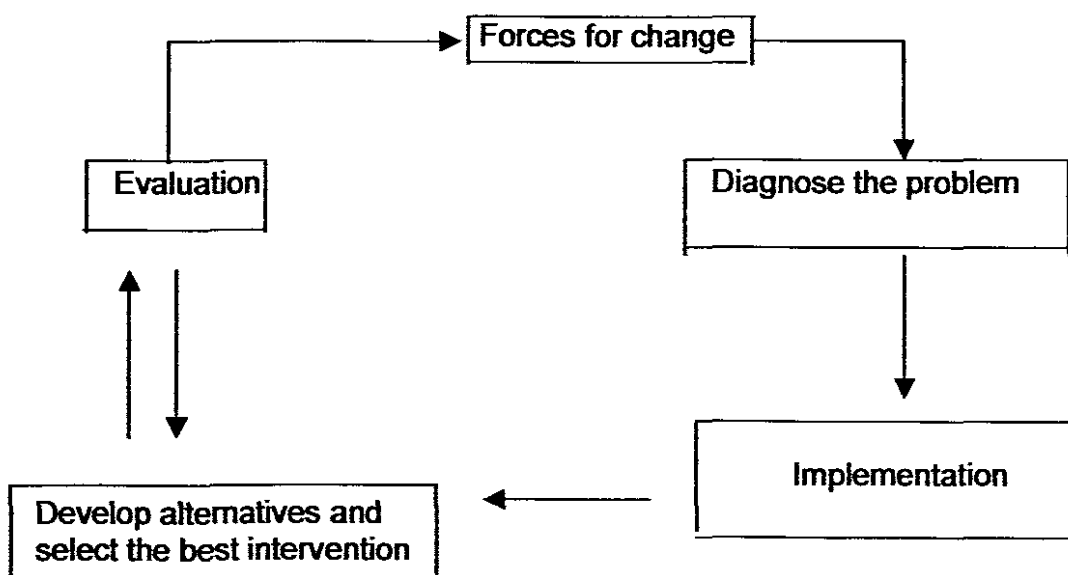


Figure 2.1: Essential steps for successful change management

### 2.6.1 STEP 1 – DIAGNOSE THE PROBLEM

This stage coincides with the '*unfreezing*' stage discussed in Lewins (1947) model. The unfreezing stage is facilitated by gathering, interpreting and presenting information so as to be able to diagnose the problem. After the problem has been diagnosed, the principal with the assistance of the SMT and SGB has to investigate and propose various solutions and alternatives to address the problem.

## **2.6.2 STEP 2 - DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES AND SELECT THE BEST INTERVENTION**

The choice of particular intervention will depend on the problem diagnosed. The principal has to determine the alternatives that will produce the desired outcomes and then implement the best intervention.

## **2.6.3 STEP 3 - IMPLEMENTATION**

Implementation corresponds to the "moving or changing" phase in the Lewins (1947) model and implies that the new structures are created, new rules and regulations stipulated, new outcomes set and intensive training is provided (Van Daventer and Kruger, 2003: 236).

The Department of Education (2002: 28) states that the implementation step is the moment of truth when the change is put into operation. The Department of Education (ibid) further states that successful implementation of change depends on how carefully the planning step was carried out. The next step will be evaluation.

## **2.6.4 STEP 4 - EVALUATION**

The evaluation phase must indicate the degree of success of the change process and the change itself. It is foolhardy to implement a significant change without monitoring and evaluating what happens after the change has been implemented (Department of Education, 2002: 30).

Now that the phases of change management have been outlined, attention is drawn to the strategies for the effective management and implementation of change.

## **2.7 STRATEGIES FOR THE EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE**

There are several strategies that principals can adopt to effectively manage and implement change. This section reviews proven strategies that will assist principals in fulfilling their mandate as change managers.

### **2.7.1 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS AND SGBS**

The Task Team on Education Management and Development (1996: 330) encourages decentralization of school governance and management. Singh and Manner (2000: 56), emphasise that without stakeholder involvement there is no commitment.

The principal is responsible for involving of all stakeholders in the running of the school. Involvement is one of the strategies of managing and implementing change in schools. Educators, parents, members of the SGB, learners as well as businesses and community need to be actively involved in school matters.

Bushel (1995:79), states that the successful functioning of the school is dependent on good relations between the principal and the SGB. The SGB needs to be treated with genuine respect and due recognition of their duties and powers.

Research conducted by Chetty (1998: 17), provides evidence that although schools have structures like SGBs, there is still very little participation from external stakeholders in the running of the school. Collaboration is supported by Buchel (1995: 78), who states that the principal has to establish professional relationship with members of the SGB, as they are the official link between parents and the school.

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The Task Team on Education Management and Development (1996: 47), states that: "people make education work. The quality of our school and of our education service depends on support staff, teachers, principals, school governors and administrators throughout the system."

The principal should develop practical activities to motivate parent involvement in the schools. The Department of Education (2003: 96) identifies the following activities that promote parent involvement:

- Monitoring learner progress and consulting with educators on performance improvement strategies.
- Involvement in classroom activities by way of being teacher assistants, relief teachers, volunteer teachers, learning material co-ordinators or portfolio administrators.
- Involvement in extra-curricular activities. Van Schalkwyk (1988: 18) and Wolfendale (1989: 5-6) identify supervising activities, running societies, coaching of sporting events, organising sports and cultural activities, transporting pupils and catering and fund raising as areas where parents can be particularly effective.
- Participation in open career days where parent speakers from different vocations deliver presentations.

## **2.7.2 INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATORS**

Kanter (1993: 41) states that: "change is always a threat when it is done to me, but it is an opportunity when it is done by me. The ultimate key to creating pleasure in the hard work of change... is to give people the autonomy to make their own contributions to change."

The democratic involvement of all educators in the management of change is the key to future success. Educators are to be involved in the discussion of change and the decision-making process.

Teachers, as individuals and as members of working groups, must feel that they own and are in control change. A school may aim at change consensus where entire staff feels that they can work together to change in structured and desirable ways. The involvement of educators increases their interest in and satisfaction with their job.

Evarard and Morris (1990) in Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 140), state that, for effective change management, educators must understand what change is, the reason for change and its sources. Schreuder et.al. (1993: 03), advise that, the principal must take a lead in creating a positive climate for professional development. Any change or improvement requires that individuals learn how to do something new. The implementation of school improvement requires on-going professional development activities within the school (Hopkins, 1987: 196). All educators must be encouraged and developed to become competent change managers and must take their lead in this regard from their principal.

Hopkins (1987) is supported by Van der Westhuizen (1990: 648), who states that: "it is important that change should take place on a continuous basis and that the organisation should not experience this process in the form of shock waves".

Hopkins, West and Ainscow (1996: 26) state that staff development is a central strategy for supporting educators to accept and implement change. Van der Westhuizen (1990: 65), states that man is able to learn and master his tasks, duties and responsibilities by means of training and development. This mastery gives him confidence and security.

### **2.7.3 STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Kreitner (1989: 141) defines planning as the process of preparing for change and coping with uncertainty by formulating future courses of action. He (1989: 151) goes on to say that strategic planning determines how best to pursue the organizations long-term goals with current and envisaged resources.

Planning, according to Musaazi (1982: 119), is a rational process of preparing and reflecting on a set of decisions for future actions directed at achieving goals and objectives by optimal means. Without strategic planning, implementation of change will be hampered. Dean (1987: 70) states that a major change will at some stage require a proper plan. According to Everard and Morris (1996: 254), strategic planning is a method which is being used more and more in education systems and schools throughout the world in order to strive towards ongoing renewal and quality.

According to Department of Education (1992: 02), strategic planning is given concrete manifestation in an organization's vision, mission, priority targets, action plans, implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms. The principal's role is critically important in all of the stages of strategic planning. Although the vision and mission of the school must be shared by all in the school, it must be primarily driven and reinforced by the principal. The principal is the one person who has a global view of all activities in the school and together with his deputies, SMT and SGB must formulate priority targets for integration into the school improvement plan (SIP). Human resource planning and defining roles and responsibilities as well as delivery timeframes must be agreed upon by all constituencies but again the principal serves as primary gatekeeper for these items. Implementation plans and evaluation mechanisms are also directly driven by the principal who will be assisted by his/her SMT and SGB.

#### **2.7.4 MOTIVATION**

Planning may not be enough to effectively implement and manage change. Principals need to engage in multiple strategies which include motivation of educators who are predominantly responsible for and affected by change.

According to Robbins (1993: 205), motivation is a willingness to exert a high level of effort towards achieving an organization's goals. This view is supported by Le Roux and De Beer (1999: 132), who state that motivation is an effort that an entrepreneur makes to inspire his/her employees so that they will voluntarily do their best to achieve the objectives of the enterprise.

The principal, as a leader, has a responsibility to influence educators to implement changes in schools. Mthabela (1997: 23) states that the principal is the focal point of staff motivation and responsible for boosting the morale of educators. Motivation and morale are intrinsically linked and collectively serve to enhance the professional ethos within the school. Le Roux and De Beer (1999: 132) state that motivation is required when an individual experiences tension because of an unsatisfied need. Le Roux and De Beer (ibid) further state that "motivation is a driving force that develops spontaneously in a person."

For the principal to be able to motivate educators successfully he/she must have profound knowledge of his educators' needs as well the holistic needs of the organization. The principal's ability to motivate educators will help him/her manage and implement change effectively. The principal must help people build the capacity to change.

#### **2.7.5 THE ROLE OF PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING CHANGE**

Squelch and Lemmer (1996: 136) state that change should be managed in such a way that it makes the school more effective and does not disrupt the educational process. Squelch and Lemmer (ibid), further point out that the

starting point for understanding change is having an extensive knowledge of policies, rules and procedures and how these impact on peoples attitudes, behaviour and performance. Knowledge of processes must necessarily be married with knowledge of people to create a shared and safe environment which embraces change as a force of progress rather than a force of bureaucratic control.

According to McNeil (1981: 144), the most effective projects are those in which the architects of change are involved at all stages including planning implementation, evaluation and adaptation. McNeil (ibid), further states that the success and failure in the implementation of change hinges largely on the role of the principal. The principal should show the ability to initiate, innovate and take the lead in making things happen at school.

The role of the principal according to Bayne-Jardine (1994: 14) is to create a vision which provides the criteria for all policy development. He has to assist the educators to understand the vision by highlighting values that underpin the vision.

Kotter (1996: 19) strongly argues that without vision, a transformation effort can easily dissolve into a list of confusing, incompatible and time-consuming projects. Schools cannot function effectively without a vision.

Everard and Morris (1996: 242) and Reitburg and Burello (1995: 40) maintain that in managing change principals should:

- Know clearly what they want to achieve,
- Interpret the proposed change not only from their point of view but also from that of others,
- Explain change by means of two-way communication,
- Involve educators in the management of change,

- Present change as a rational decision,
- Make change personally rewarding,
- Show that change is related to survival and development excellence,  
and
- Ensure that change is paced comfortably.

The Department of Education (2002: 62) stipulates that the principal, as the nerve centre of the organization, has the role of monitoring processes, disseminating information and being the spokesperson in for change in schools. Since principals are regarded as key figures in building successful educational organisations, it is thus imperative that they are aware of resistance to change and are able to investigate and determine the underlying reasons that precipitated the resistance. The discussion below aims at foregrounding resistance to change and providing some strategies to counter or negate them.

## **2.8 RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

*Resistance to change is a complex issue that may be a result of a mix of factors including:*

- Psychological make-up and scarring of those affected by change,
- Historical experiences of change,
- Perceptions of change,
- Motivational factors,
- Structural support for change,
- Pace of change implementation (deadlines and timeframes),
- Knowledge about the nature of the change and its rationale,
- Skills and competencies demanded by the change, and
- Power-relations between change architects, change agents and beneficiaries of change.

For ease of discussion the above factors are grouped and discussed under the following headings:

- Reasons for personal and psychological resistance to change, and
- Reasons for organizational resistance to change.

### **2.8.1 REASONS FOR PERSONAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

Van der Westhuizen (1997: 178) identifies the following factors that contribute to personal and psychological resistance to change:

- **Lack of the familiar and reliable:** As soon as any deviation from the familiar situation occurs or existing practices are discontinued, a feeling of insecurity is experienced that gives rise to resistance to change.
- **Loss of personal choice and values:** Familiar environment habits or practices provide trust and security, whereas change contributes to a lack of self-confidence.
- **Possible loss of authority:** Change can affect individuals in existing positions of authority. An unwillingness to surrender power may lead to fierce protection and defence of the status quo.
- **Not understanding the reason for change:** Insufficient information often results in a misreading of the significance of change or a complete misunderstanding of the rationale for change. Educators very often demand proof that their practices do not work before they will consider change.
- **Lack of skills and innovation:** Rather than admitting their lack of necessary skills to deal with change as the reason for resistance, educators often attribute their resistance to the nature of the proposed

change itself. Educators with low motivation, self-esteem or/and commitment to work are unlikely to be receptive to any form of change.

There are also organizational reasons for resistance to change. These are discussed below.

## **2.8.2 REASONS FOR ORGANISATIONAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

West-Burnham (1990: 95) identifies the following organisational reasons for resistance to change:

- **A lack of leadership skills** which results in an absence of explicit aims and effective delegation.
- **A lack of effective management skills** which results in insufficient infrastructure to translate principles into action or to use resources optimally.
- **A failure to recognise and accommodate individuality** and a failure to provide a socially and professionally conducive working environment.
- **Lack of transparency in allocations of roles and responsibilities.** Often roles and responsibilities are designated without due transparency. Power and political processes dictate assignments rather than a development impetus or recognition of competency and strength.
- **Socio-political fragmentation of staff.** Where the staff is not united, one often finds the promotion of hidden agendas, suspicion, obstructionist behaviour or just a general atmosphere of mistrust. It is very difficult to get support for change in such environments and often even more difficult to implement the changes.

- **Poor communication** often occurs in environments where there is a lack of information sharing, unidirectional (top-down) communication, miscommunication or fear of expression. This can serve as a huge stumbling block for change management.
- **A bias in favour of tradition and opposed to innovation** often results in stifled contributions and fear of participation. It will be difficult to embrace and implement change in such environments.

Van der Westhuizen (1997: 175), states that the intensity of educator resistance to change depends on what is being changed. It could also be argued that the methods employed in facilitating change will also impact on the intensity of the resistance to change. Properly managed change will be inclusive and win the co-operation of the majority of stakeholders whilst minimizing resistance of the detractors.

### **2.8.3 ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL IN MANAGING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

The principal has three primary roles to play in managing resistance to change. These are:

- An interpersonal role,
- An informational role, and
- A decisional role

#### **2.8.3.1 Interpersonal Role**

In managing change, principals have the authority and status to engage in a good deal of interpersonal contact with educators and other stakeholders. This role is of great importance in motivating people to get the work done and ensuring that every individual feels safe and comfortable in the transitional environment.

### **2.8.3.2 Informational Role**

Kreitner (1989: 19) states that the principal is the gatekeeper of information needed for the implementation of change. Information must be cascaded to the stakeholders, sifting for relevance and ensuring that the pace and amount of information is not overwhelming. Kreitner (ibid) makes it clear that the informational role of the principal make him/her the nerve centre; the disseminator of information and a spokesperson for change.

### **2.8.3.3 Decisional Roles**

The principal is an entrepreneur responsible for designing and initiating change within the organisation (Kreitner, 1989: 20). Although time must be taken to build consensus, decisions have to be made even if they are unpopular at times. Decisions must be made transparently and with sufficient consistency to be evaluated as fair. In managing organisational resistance to change, the principal as a change agent, needs to persuade people to change and then support them through the process of change (Department of Education, 2003: 42). The principal must keep a balance of pressure and support in implementing change. This will help the principal gauge the support still required to ensure acceptance of change.

## **2.8.4 STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**

Principals need to aware of strategies that may help them in managing resistance to change. Kreitner (1989: 558-559), Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 139) and the Task Team on Educational Management and Development (1996: 32) identify five strategies for overcoming resistance to change. These are listed here but discussed in greater detail below:

- Promote open communication on the nature and implications of change

- Encourage inclusive participation and involvement
- Build facilitation and support structures
- Facilitation through negotiation and agreement
- Use explicit and implicit coercion

**a. Strategy No. 1 – Promote Open Communication on the Nature and Implications of Change**

Communication comes in both words and deeds. Kotter (1996: 20) clarifies that nothing undermines change more, than a discord between what is said and what is done. Architects and agents of change must personify in their behaviour, attitudes and actions the changes that they desire in policy. The principal must as leader of the school exemplify and amplify desired attitudes, behaviours and actions.

*The principal must provide adequate information and make sure that the change is clearly communicated to those involved. Educators must be assisted to embrace not only the change but the rationale that prompted it as well. Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 139), state that the open channel of communication encourages confidence and trust and also avoids uncertainty, speculation and rumours. Steyn and De Klerk (1999: 155), state that members of staff at schools, pupils and parents should be fully informed of all relevant decisions taken. There should be no hidden agenda and all implications of the proposed change should be openly discussed and debated.*

**b. Strategy No. 2 – Encourage Inclusive Participation and Involvement**

The Department of Education (2002: 33), states that participation increases understanding of the change, allow employees to offer their own ideas in making

*it successful, and frequently improves the final outcome. People must be allowed to participate in the planning and implementation of a change.*

The SASA (1996) promotes partnership as an important component of the education system. The government is emphatic that is not the sole provider of education. Schools must form partnerships with businesses and non-government organisations for example and work together to implement and manage changes in schools. Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 11) state that the principal is not the only person who is responsible for school improvement. Change is collaborative and all stakeholders must be involved. Clearly defined roles and responsibilities must be negotiated, and deliverables and deadlines determined. Only structured participation and involvement will be truly effective.

### **c. Strategy No. 3 – Build Facilitation and Support Structures**

When fear and anxiety are responsible for resistance to doing things in new and different ways, support from management in the form of special training, job stress counselling and compensatory time off can be helpful (Kreitner, 1989: 559).

Facilitation and support involves providing the necessary resources that employees need to implement and manage change effectively. This may include decentralization of authority (Brevoseta, 2002: 226). The principal must ensure that structures such the SMT, DSG and SDT are operational and can be easily accessed. In addition, it may be useful to establish regular staff seminars, position papers and conferences on policy changes and its implications for teaching and learning. This will allow for uninhibited exploration of change in non-threatening peer environments. A best practices forum may also be established where educators in clusters can share what works and how change was successfully implemented.

#### **d. Strategy No. 4 – Facilitation through Negotiation and Agreement**

Building consensus for change is extremely important and must be diplomatically handled. The principal must be open to exploring multiple routes to achieve the same end (as required by the change). Sometimes it is better to approach change piecemeal than to undertake systemic revisions all at once. Pacing change is important in creating a non-threatening environment for implementation of the change.

Often a change in scenery helps alter perspective. It may be useful to have staff go on joint outings where changes can be discussed and negotiated. Sometimes negotiated agreements involve conceding something to other party in order to reduce resistance (Smit and Cronje, 2002: 226). Principals must be open to this possibility.

#### **e. Strategy No. 5 – Use Explicit and Implicit Coercion**

According to Kreitner (1989: 252), explicit and implicit coercion is the direct or indirect use of power to pressure detractors to conform. Orgland (1997: 99) cautions that coercion should be used sparingly and very carefully as no one has ever been able to change what was really important to people through force.

Strategies such as rewarding those who readily embrace and facilitate change and advertising why they were rewarded, may well serve to lower the resistance of detractors who also wish to be rewarded similarly. Incentive schemes may work in a similar way. The principal is in a position of power and can make these rewards and incentives a reality. If he/she is innovative enough he/she could get business to sponsor some of these incentives and rewards. A higher education or training centre may, for example, sponsor a short course.

"Sometimes manager find it useful to analyse the situation and consider appropriate options for overcoming resistance to change through the use of force-field analysis" (Kreitner, 1989: 254). Force-field analysis is a method that involves analysing the two types of forces that influence any proposed change. These forces have been identified as driving forces or restraining forces. Kreitner (ibid), define driving forces as those factors that pressure for a particular change whereas restraining forces are those factors that pressure against a change. The principal has to increase driving forces and decrease restraining forces.

Orgland (1997: 88) supports this methodology stating that: "the essence of this technique is to analyse the forces that are keeping quasi-stationary equilibrium in its present state, and from this diagnoses determine which driving forces and restraining forces need to be altered in order to unfreeze and move the system".

## **2.9 CONCLUSION**

It is clear from the above discussion that effective change management is a strategic, collaborative and phased effort. To be effective change management agents, principals must employ strategies to allay fears, provide consistent and unambiguous direction, involve and co-ordinate involvement of multiple stakeholders, and facilitate training and information sharing.

The next three chapters are dedicated to an empirical study that tests the extent to which principals are indeed employing these strategies. Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology used in soliciting and analysing educator responses to questions on their role as change agents and the strategies that they adopt to facilitate change.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter outlines the research methodology used to collect data from principals about their role in the management and implementation of change in schools and the strategies they use to fulfil their roles as change agents. The discussion focuses on the research instrument used, the sampling techniques engaged and the parameters of the study.

### **3.2 PREPARATION FOR THE RESEARCH**

#### **3.2.1 PERMISSION**

Chetty (1998: 125) quotes Best and Kahn (1986) who advise that if a research is to be conducted in public schools, it is essential that approval of the project be secured from the authority in charge of the schools concerned.

Heeding this advice, the researcher requested permission to undertake the study from the superintendent of education and management (SEM) of the Umbumbulu circuit (Appendix B). Permission was duly granted (Appendix C).

#### **3.2.2 SELECTION OF RESPONDENTS**

The sample for the study was drawn from the Umbumbulu circuit for three reasons, namely:

- The researcher is familiar with the area and currently serves as an educator in the area.
- Permission to conduct research in this area would be easy to obtain.
- Cost of accessing respondents would be low.

Principals of schools were targeted as respondents.

### **3.2.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLE SIZE**

The population of the study comprises all the people who can provide relevant and reliable information on the subject of study. The subset selected from the larger group (population) is called a sample and is used as the primary target for the study. The sample is representative of the population and large enough to make inferences from it that will hold true for the entire population.

According to information obtained from the Umbumbulu circuit office, the circuit is divided into four wards, namely:

- Folweni with 37 schools,
- Amanzimtoti with 35 schools,
- Mafa with 27 schools, and
- Umbumbulu central with 31 schools.

Umbumbulu circuit was chosen because it serves rural, urban and semi-urban schools. The researcher is also most familiar with this circuit.

Questionnaires were administered to a sample of respondents selected to represent the target group. The researcher requested a list containing the names of all schools in the target circuit. The list contained names of 130 schools distributed across the wards as indicated above. Systematic random sampling was applied whereby every third school was selected to be part of the sample. Bailey's (1987: 83) observations regarding correct sampling procedures to ensure reliability and validity were adhered to.

The rationale for selecting every 3rd school was to make sure that the whole district was represented. The sample therefore consisted of 43 schools. The table below reflects how the sample was constructed.

Table 3.1: Sample selection for the study

#### UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT

Ward	Number of schools per ward	Number of schools selected	Number of respondents
Folweni	37	13	13
Amanzimtoti	35	11	11
Mafa	27	09	09
Umbumbulu central	31	10	10
Total	130	43	43

### 3.3 THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

#### 3.3.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE AS RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Questionnaires were used as a method of gathering data for this study. Khathi (1994: 97) suggests that the questionnaire, if properly constructed and administered, remains the best available instrument for obtaining information from a wide spread of sources.

#### 3.3.2 ADVANTAGES OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The following advantages highlighted by Bailey (1987: 148-149) prompted the researcher to use the questionnaire as a research instrument:

- The questionnaire may be completed at the respondent's convenience.
- It provides greater assurance of anonymity since there is no interviewer present who can identify him or her later.

- It is time-saving as it can be administered to many people at the same time.
- The data provided by the questionnaires can be more easily analysed.

The researcher took note of the following disadvantages of the written questionnaire that Bailey (1987: 149) pointed out and tried to actively counter each one:

- Lack of flexibility. If the respondents misunderstand the question he/she cannot be corrected.
- Low response rate.
- People are generally better able to express their views verbally than in writing.
- Many questions may remain unanswered.
- Cannot record spontaneous answers.

The researcher included both closed-ended and open-ended questions in the questionnaire. The researcher also edited questions to ensure clarity. Questions were phrased in simple language. As the questionnaires were hand-delivered, *the researcher could personally clarify any questions and address any concerns.*

### **3.3.3 CONSTRUCTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Tuckman (1978: 200) distinguishes between two types of questions used in questionnaires:

- Open-ended questions, and
- Closed-ended questions.

Closed-ended questions offer a list of pre-constructed responses that respondents select from to indicate the option that most closely matches their own view. Open-ended questions do not offer responses and allow respondents to offer unfettered, free-form responses. In this study both types of questions were asked.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections, namely,

- **Section A** which solicited demographic information about the sample,
- **Section B** which solicited information about the management style of principals,
- **Section C** which posed questions on strategies used to manage and implement changes, and
- **Section D** which consisted of two open-ended questions.

### **3.3.3.1 Closed-ended Questions**

The questionnaire was comprised mainly of closed-ended questions. The rationale for this was found in Bailey's (1987: 162) view that closed-ended questions presented the following advantages:

- The responses are framed as pre-determined lists and therefore lend themselves to comparative analysis.
- Answers are much easier to code and analyse.
- This type of question is easier for respondents to answer as he/she merely needs to make a choice from an appropriate set of responses.

Respondents were expected to respond using a Likert scale. The Likert scale is a three-point scale that ensures consistency by expecting respondents to:

- Agree,
- Indicate uncertainty (Uncertain), or
- Disagree

### **3.3.3.2 Open-Ended Questions**

Two open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to allow respondents to offer unfettered, free-form responses. The researcher however shared Bailey's reservations concerning open-ended questions, namely, that they

- required more of respondents time and effort, and
- may engender a high refusal rate.

It is for these reasons that only two open-ended questions were used.

## **3.4 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

### **3.4.1 THE PILOT STUDY**

Van Dalen (1979: 153) suggests that if questions are to be used to measure variables in an investigation, they must be pre-tested, refined and subjected to criteria of validity, reliability and objectivity. Slavin (1984: 133) argues that a pilot study gives the researcher an idea of what the method will actually look like in operation.

Before the actual study was undertaken, the researcher administered the questionnaire to principals in seven schools as a pilot study. These principals were not part of the final research sample. The pilot study was used to reveal weaknesses in the research instrument and its administration, as well as serving as a test for validity and reliability of the data solicited. As stated before, the pilot study resulted in ambiguities being eliminated, some questions being reformulated and the questionnaire being shortened slightly.

### **3.4.2 THE ACTUAL STUDY**

The researcher personally delivered the questionnaires to the principal of each school in the sample. Respondents were given assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. Principals were not required to put their names on the completed questionnaires. Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (1972: 172) state that respondents must remain anonymous and must be assured that his/her response will be confidential. Upon arrival at each school, the researcher presented a letter (Appendix B) from the SEM which granted her permission to conduct the research.

Ary, Jacobs and Razavieh (ibid), state that a planned follow-up is necessary if one is to ensure the maximum number of returns. Principals were given five days to complete the questionnaire. A 100% return-rate was achieved by personally collecting the questionnaires from each school.

### **3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY**

Huysamen (1989) cited by Mdingi (1999: 29), highlights that validity and reliability are critical aspects of any social science research. Failure to understand and test research for validity and reliability can compromise the findings, conclusions and recommendations made by the study.

### **3.5.1 RELIABILITY**

Slavin (1984: 71) defines reliability as the degree to which a measure is consistent in producing the same readings when measuring the same things. Dane (1990: 256) confirms that reliability is concerned with the consistency of a measuring instruments but goes on to caution that it does not guarantee truthfulness. A questionnaire can be reliable but responses given by the respondents may not be a true reflection of their feelings.

The researcher considered the factors impinging on the reliability of the questionnaire. In designing the questionnaire, it was ensured that all the questions related to each other and to the study as a whole. Another measure used to increase the reliability of the questionnaire, was to state explicitly in the questionnaire and in personal consultation with principals that the data solicited would be held in the strictest confidentiality and that anonymity would be preserved and defended throughout.

### **3.5.2 VALIDITY**

According to Mulder (1989: 216) validity refers to the extent to which a measuring instrument measures what it is set up to measure. Van Rensberg, Landman and Bedenstein (1994: 560) distinguish between three types of validity commonly used in research:

- **Content validity** is the degree to which a test samples the content area which is to be measured.
- **Construct validity** is the extent to which a test reflects constructs presumed to underlie the test performance.
- **Criterion validity** refers to the relationship between the scores on a measuring instrument and an independent variable, that is, criterion

which is believed to measure directly the behaviour or characteristics under investigation.

All of these aspects of validity were taken into account formulating questions for the questionnaire and creating conditions for their administration.

### **3.6 DATA PROCESSING**

The collected data was manually processed. Data was summarised and collated in frequency tables. Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 65-76), stress that frequency tables are useful as they provide the following information:

- How many times a response occurs.
- The percentage of that response in relation to the total response.

In analysing open-ended questions, commonality in responses were observed and classified as "themes". The frequency with which each theme appeared was tabulated and discussed.

### **3.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The timing of the study presented a limitation in that schools were engaged in September trial examinations and principals were focussed on this effort. Completion of questionnaires was slow and the researcher had to telephone respondents to remind them to complete the questionnaire. It is possible that responses to the open-ended questions may have been more substantial were the study undertaken at a more suitable time of year. It was difficult to control or even assess the honesty of responses. All the researcher could do in this regard was to continue to reinforce the importance of the study and to highlight the fact that confidentiality and anonymity would be preserved.

### **3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The researcher ensured adherence to established ethical research practices at all times. Principals were informed about the study during the district principals meeting. Research intentions were communicated clearly and honestly. The integrity of responses, individuality, and the right of respondents to refuse to answer certain questions was respected. Respondents were not influenced to support any particular view and raw data was not manipulated. Established statistical procedures were used to collate, code and summarize data. Findings and recommendations were extrapolated with due consideration for objectivity.

### **3.9 CONCLUSION**

This chapter offered a detailed description of the method used in the empirical study. The research instrument used to collect data was described as well as sampling procedures followed and methods of data analysis employed. The following chapter interprets data gathered from the survey.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

A structured questionnaire with both open-ended as well as closed-ended questions was administered to 43 principals in order to solicit information from them about their role managing and implementing change in schools. This chapter collates and presents their responses, analyses the said responses and interprets them.

### 4.2 ANALYSIS OF SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

#### 4.2.1 GENDER OF PRINCIPALS

Table 4.1: Frequency distribution according to gender of principals

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	20	47
Female	23	53
Total	43	100

Table 4.1 reflects that 47% of the respondents were male while 53% of the respondents were female. This evidence confirms Reay and Dennison's (1990: 42) finding that most primary schools appoint female principals. Delamont (1987: 92) notes further that the majority of primary school teachers (77%) are women.

#### 4.2.2 AGE OF RESPONDENTS

Table 4.2: Frequency distribution according to the age of principals

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-30	0	0
31-40	21	49
41-50	19	44
Over 50	03	07
Total	43	100

Table 4.2 indicates that 49% of the respondents are aged between 31 and 40 years, while 44% respondents are between 41 and 50 years. None of the respondents were under 30 and only 7% were over 50.

The majority of principals fall into the age category of 31 to 40 years. As a result of their relative youth, these principals are active, energetic and productive. Therefore, they can be trained in managing and implementing change effectively.

Farrant (1968: 29) concurs that younger school principals may have more to offer in terms of time, energy and productivity. The fact that they hold such a high position so early in their careers is also positive since it could ensure long term stability and continuity.

Respondents who are over 50 years tend to feel at ease with the status quo and resist change if they can. People resist change because of a preference for tradition rather than experienced (West-Burnham 1990: 95). Smith and Cronje (1992: 297), state that people regard changes as threatening and prefer to cling to familiar systems.

#### 4.2.3 HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

Table 4.3: Frequency distribution according to highest qualification of principals

Qualification	Frequency	Percent
Lower than matric	0	0
Matric	0	0
College/University diploma	23	53
University Degree	20	47
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.3 indicates that 53% of the targeted principals hold a college or university diploma as highest qualification, whilst 47% have university degrees. The previous chapter highlighted that in order to manage and implement change effectively, principals as managers of the schools are to be developed professionally first. According to Chetty (1998: 149), self-improvement and professional development, equips the educator with confidence and skills to implement educational transformation. It is encouraging to note that most of the respondents have continued their initial studies and obtain further qualifications. This suggests that they are dynamic, knowledgeable about current thinking on teaching and learning and cognisant of the value of change.

#### 4.2.4 TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Table 4.4: Frequency distribution according to teaching experience

Years	Frequency	Percent
1-5	0	0
6-10	01	02
11-15	14	33
16-20	23	53
Over 20	05	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.4 indicates that two percent of principals have between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience. The majority of principals (53%) have between 16 to 20 years of teaching experience. Thirty-three principals have 11 to 15 years of teaching experience and twelve percent have in excess of 20 years of experience.

This finding confirms that principals in the Umbumbulu circuit have great depth of experience. Ninety-eight percent of principals have more than 10 years of experience. One could conclude that these principals are already seasoned change managers. De Witt (1993: 21), states that experience together with

adequate training is needed for the responsibilities and the demands imposed on educators in managerial position. The more experience and training principals have, the more confidence and expertise they will have acquired over the years as educational leaders.

#### 4.2.5 YEARS IN MANAGEMENT

Table 4.5: Frequency distribution according to years in management

Years	Frequency	Percent
1-5	06	14
6-10	21	49
11-15	13	30
16-20	02	05
Over 20	01	02
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.5 reflects that fourteen percent of the respondents have limited (between 1 to 5 years) school management experience. Forty-nine percent of respondents have 6 to 10 years of school management experience and a further 30% of respondents have between 11 and 15 years of experience. Five percent of respondents have between 16 and 20 years of management experience whilst only two percent have more than 20 years of management experience.

Inexperienced principals (14%) must be supported by training, workshops and mentorship programmes to prepare them to implement changes effectively. Principals with significant experience have experienced many changes and have no-doubt developed or have been exposed to many change management strategies. These can be shared at workshops for principals.

### 4.3 ANALYSIS OF SECTION B: MANAGEMENT STYLE

Table 4.6: Frequency distribution of response items rating the management style of principals

<b>Indicate whether you agree, disagree or are uncertain about the following statements</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>Total</b>
(a) Our school has a documented (written) school improvement plan	14 33%	29 67%	0 0%	43 100%
(b) The school includes the SGB in decision-making	30 70%	13 30%	0 0%	43 100%
(c) There is a whole school development committee in our school	40 93%	2 5%	1 2%	43 100%
(d) The school code of conduct has been generated through a democratic processes	17 40%	26 60%	0 0%	43 100%
(e) Educators are given a fair chance to air their views	41 95%	2 5%	0 0%	43 100%
(f) Educators are involved in the decision-making structures of the school	39 91%	4 9%	0 0%	43 100%
(g) Educators are involved in curriculum planning	43 100%	0 0%	0 0%	43 100%
(h) The principal establishes support committees for educators to perform their work well	35 81%	8 19%	0 0%	43 100%
(i) School policies are discussed with the staff	19 44%	24 56%	0 0%	43 100%
(j) The principal promotes networking with other schools	16 38%	27 62%	0 0%	43 100%
(k) Collaboration among staff members is encouraged	41 95%	2 5%	0 0%	43 100%
(l) Educators were involved in the development of the school mission statement	35 81%	8 19%	0 0%	43 100%
(m) Educators are sent to workshops to develop their expertise in teaching	31 72%	12 28%	0 0%	43 100%
(n) Department circulars are brought to the attention of all staff	19 44%	24 56%	0 0%	43 100%
(o) Partnership is encouraged between the staff and the governing body	17 42%	23 51%	3 7%	43 100%

**a) Our school has a documented (written) school improvement plan**

Thirty-three percent of respondents agree that their schools have a documented (written) school improvement plan and sixty-seven percent disagree. The data shows that the majority of the schools (67%) do not have the documented school improvement plans. Schools without improvement plans reveal a lack of capacity to managing and implementing change in their schools. Smith and Cronje (1992: 422), state that the school management team needs to design and develop the school structure, which will make the implementation of plans possible. The principal as a change agent must heed to what is said by Smit and Cronje (ibid) above.

**b) The school includes the SGB in decision-making**

Seventy percent of respondents indicated that they included the SGB in decision-making. This is in line with the SASA (1996), which calls for the involvement of the SGB in the management of change. Buchel (1995: 79) suggests that the involvement of the SGB and parents in decision-making is one of the strategies for managing and implementing change in schools. By ensuring that decision-making is inclusive, principals can effectively lower resistance to change.

It is discouraging to note that thirty percent of the respondents do not involve SGBs in decision-making. Pretorius (1998: 04), states that parents and guardians have the primary responsibility for education of their children and have the right to be consulted on matters pertaining to the education of their children.

**c) There is a whole school development (WSD) committee in our school**

Ninety-three percent of respondents agree that their schools have a WSD committee. Only five percent disagree and two percent were uncertain.

WSD committees are important in ensuring that everyone is informed of the need for change, understand the nature of change and are equipped to implement change effectively within published timeframes. It can be inferred that change is not being managed and implemented effectively in those schools where there are no WSD committees.

**d) The school code of conduct has been generated through a democratic process**

*Sixty percent of respondents do not involve other stakeholders in the formulation of the school code of conduct. Only four percent of respondents agree that the school code of conduct was generated through a democratic process.*

The SASA (1996) states that all schools must be democratically governed or managed. This means that educators, parents and learners must be involved in the decision-making and decision-making must be transparent. Respondents who excluded stakeholders from making a meaningful contribution to the code of conduct need recognize democratic participation as a strategy for the effective management and implementation of change.

**e) Educators are given a fair chance to air their views**

Bhengu (1996: 07) maintains that for any social structure to be successful, the viewpoints of all persons have to be listened to. This view is supported by most of the respondents. Ninety-five percent agree that educators are given a fair chance to air their views, five percent disagree. Steyn and Squelch (1997: 07) found in their research, that educators wanted a say in decisions and were not content to merely accept autocratic decisions of the principal.

Educators often experience frustration when management does not listen to them. Being autocratic has a significant impact on the management and implementation of change. Van der Westhuizen (1991: 190), states that the leader should offer opportunities for original and creative contributions by staff members. It is evident that some principals (5%) do not encourage participative management. Such autocratic management styles are inconsistent with the democratic principles of stakeholder participation.

**f) Educators are involved in the decision-making structures of the school**

Ninety-one percent of respondents agree that they involve educators in the decision-making structures of the school. Nine percent do not involve educators. The involvement of educators ensures empowerment and promotes co-operation. Failure to involve educators in decision-making fosters discord between management and staff and often induces reluctance to change even if the fruits of change may be desired. Lazarus (1997: 92), states that if we want to build a democratic school then we have to build democratic decision-making structures and procedures.

**g) Educators are involved in curriculum planning**

It is encouraging to note that all the respondents involve educators in curriculum planning. If educators are involved they are encouraged to make a valuable contribution. They will co-operate with decisions and show responsibility towards planning the curriculum. Educator involvement in curriculum planning allows educators to take ownership of curriculum changes have a vested interest in its successful delivery.

**h) The principal establishes support committees to assist educators to excel at their work**

It is encouraging to note that eighty one percent of the respondents established support committees to assist educators to excel at their work. Involvement in support committees encourages educators to work co-operatively, supporting each other and showing responsibility towards the implementation of change.

The remaining nineteen percent of respondents do not establish support committees. These principals are not doing enough to support educators to embrace change in schools. Developmental support structures ensure that the staff does not feel threatened. A developmental environment allows educators to try new things without fear of failure or punitive action resulting from failure.

**i) School policies are discussed with the staff**

Only forty-four percent of respondents discuss policies with the staff. Fifty-six percent of respondents suggest that staff is not party to discussions on school policy. It is difficult for educators to implement change if they are not involved in policy discussions and are unfamiliar with the school policies. The SASA (1996) mandates that educators, parents, learners and the community at large should

be involved defining and refining school policy. They all have stake in education. They thus have to be involved especially in the role of monitoring the impact of change.

**j) The principal promotes networking with other schools**

Thirty-eight percent of respondents promote networking with other schools. Stein (1993: 357) asserts that the improvement of what is offered in schools greatly depends on the effectiveness of the available human resources. By networking with other schools, principals can share their experiences and learn from each other about effective methods in managing and implementing change in schools.

It is discouraging to note that 62% of the schools do not promote networking with other schools. Principals who do not promote networking with other schools will not learn from others about the different strategies for managing and implementing change in schools.

**k) Collaboration among staff members is encouraged**

It is encouraging to note that ninety-five percent of principals agreed with the statement. Rudduck (1991: 31) suggests that educators must be partners in the planning of change. Lieberman (1991: 191) elaborates that teachers learn most from other teachers and good practitioners working together to effect change.

Five percent of principals do not encourage collaboration among the staff. These principals are doing their staff a disservice. Educators will adopt change more readily if they find that it promotes efficiencies or see it working successfully in

other environments. Collaboration among staff promotes sharing and can provide ready examples of successful change implementation.

**l) Educators were involved in the development of the school mission statement**

According to Charlon (1993: 06), a vision exists when everybody participated in the creation and maintenance of the school vision. It is encouraging to note that eighty-one percent of the respondents indicated that educators were involved in the development of the school mission statement.

Nineteen percent of the respondents suggest that educators were not involved in the development of the school mission. This leads to a dangerous situation where the educators may feel that their own views of the school's mission and the published version of the school mission are misaligned. In such cases educators may not feel obligated to realise the schools mission, may become apathetic toward it or even work to undermine the mission. For change to be effective, all stakeholders must work in unison in the direction of the change. The importance of a shared mission that facilitates this cannot be understated.

**m) Educators are sent to workshops to develop their expertise in teaching**

Seventy-two percent of respondents agree that educators are sent to workshops to develop their expertise in teaching. This finding is congruent with Hopkins' view (1987: 196), that the implementation of school improvement requires on-going professional development within the school.

A remarkable 28% of respondents stated that educators are not sent to development workshops. In such schools, effective management and implementation of change may be undermined. Educators in these schools may not be familiar with the rationale and philosophy that underpins the change. They also may not have the necessary skills to implement the change or the desire to embrace the change.

Hopkins, West and Ainscow (1996: 196) states that any change or improvement requires that individuals learn how to do something new. Acquiring new skills and understanding, is a difficult enterprise. The implementation of change requires on-going professional development, also within the school.

**n) Departmental circulars are brought to the attention of all staff**

The majority (56%) of respondents do not actively draw the attention of staff to the content of departmental circulars. It is impossible for educators to implement policies if they are not conversant with them. Management and implementation of policies will only be effective if the departmental circulars are given to educators and also discussed.

It is encouraging to note that forty-four percent of respondents indicated that departmental circulars are distributed to all educators or at very least circulated among them. This suggests that, in these schools, the communication channels are always kept clear and open.

The Department of Education (2002: 67) is emphatic that it is the duty and responsibility of the principal to ensure that departmental circulars and other information received which affect members of the staff are brought to their notice

as soon as possible and are stored in an accessible manner. However, evidence reveals that some principals (56%) are ineffective in managing departmental circulars.

**o) Partnership is encouraged between the staff and the SGB**

It is disappointing to note that fifty-three percent of respondents do not encourage partnership between the staff and the SGB. Whilst forty percent of respondents claimed to encourage partnership between the staff and the SGB, and seven percent of the respondents were non-committal on this point.

If partnership between the staff and the SGB is not encouraged, change cannot be managed and implemented effectively. The importance of partnership between the staff and SGB is supported by Jones (1987: 64) who believes that the principal and the governing body need to work in close and well-balanced partnership. Chetty (1998: 167) states that principals who do not encourage partnership between the staff and the SGB, reflect a lack of commitment to participative management.

#### 4.4 ANALYSIS OF SECTION C: IMPLEMENTING THE SASA (1996) - MANDATED POLICY CHANGES

Table 4.7: Frequency distribution according to items on implementing changes relevant to policy mandates as per the SASA (1996)

Parents participated in the following:	Agree	Disagree	Uncertain	Percent
(a) A code of conduct for learners	36 84%	7 16%	0 0%	43 100%
(b) An admission policy	21 48%	22 52%	0 0%	43 100%
(c) A language policy	40 93%	3 7%	0 0%	43 100%
(d) Staff selection	43 100%	0 0%	0 0%	43 100%
(e) Democratically election of the SGB	43 100%	0 0%	0 0%	43 100%
(f) Deciding the school budget	33 78%	10 22%	0 0%	43 100%

##### a) A code of conduct for learners

Eighty-four percent of respondents agree that parents participated in developing a code of conduct for learners. The remaining sixteen percent of respondents disagree. This response indicates that there are still principals who maintain the learner code of conduct is an educational issue reserved for exclusive consideration by the educators. Duke and Meckel (1980: 109) support the involvement of parents in the maintenance of school discipline. The SASA (1996) stipulates that, it is the function of the SGB to adopt a code of conduct for learners. This mandate is violated by principals who do not involve parents in discussions about the code of conduct. It is thus clear that some principals are ineffective in initiating changes mandated by policy.

**b) An admission policy**

Forty-eight percent of respondents agree that parents participated in developing an admission policy and fifty-two percent disagree. One of the aims of this study was to investigate whether or not principals are adopting effective and appropriate strategies to manage and implement change. Not encouraging parents to participate in formulating admission policy is contrary to the new approach to school management, which emphasizes the involvement of all stakeholders in school management.

**c) A language policy**

It is encouraging to note that ninety-three percent of respondents agree that parents are involved in developing a language policy. The Department of Education (2002: 77), states that the SGB and the school community also have views that are important. The principal needs to work with them and get their approval before any of the policies are finalised.

However, it is disconcerting to note that seven percent of respondents do not involve parents in developing a language policy. This response indicates that some principals are not implementing prescribed changes.

**d) Staff selection**

All respondents agree that governors are involved in staff selection. This finding indicates principals have been progressive in adopting this change.

**e) Democratic election of the SGB**

Ngcongco, Van Balkom and Steenbergh (1998: 143), state that effective schools practice a spirit of collaboration among staff, between staff and students, between the school and larger educational structures of the state, between the school and the community, especially parents. This view reinforces the observation that effective school management demands the participation of all stakeholders, including learners. It is encouraging to note that all the respondents agree that their SGBs were democratically elected.

**f) Deciding the school budget**

Seventy-eight percent of respondents agree that governors participated in deciding school budget. Van der Westhuizen (1991: 373), states that the budget is the primary business planning instrument in future school programmes. Therefore, the SGB should be involved in deciding the school budget. Responses to this question show that a significant number of school principals have made strides toward ensuring transparency and accountability in public school budgeting by involving SGBs in the accounting processes of the school.

Twenty-two percent of respondents indicated that they do not involve governors in deciding school budget. The SASA (1996) provides parents with legal authority to participate in decisions about all the items in Table 4.7. The exclusion of parents from decision-making on school policies in some schools suggests that some school principals are not embracing national policies like the National Constitution No. 108 of 1996 and the National Education Policy Act No. 27 of 1996 that give greater powers of control to parents in policy decisions. These principals are exposing themselves as ineffective change agents.

#### 4.5 ANALYSIS OF SECTION D: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Two open-ended questions formulated to solicit information on:

- Difficulties that the principals experienced in managing and implementing change in schools, and
- Suggestions on how to improve change management and implementation in schools

Responses were categorized thematically and presented in the frequency tables below.

Table 4.8: Difficulties that principals experience in managing and implementing change in schools

Themes	Frequency	Percent
Insufficient training for principals to manage and implement change	23	53
Lack of expertise in the management and implementation of change	12	28
Lack of interest in and support for change in the general community	39	90
Educators are not clear about the policies that mandate change	30	70
Educators resist change	28	65

##### a) Insufficient training for principals to manage and implement changes

The fact that the majority of respondents (53%) indicated that they have insufficient training means that they are grappling to implement changes effectively. Whilst the Department of Education does have workshops to train principals in respect of policy and curriculum changes, there are suggestions that training workshops are insufficient. If principals are to implement changes effectively, on-going training is imperative.

**b) Lack of expertise in the management and implementation of change**

The confession by some respondents (28%) about their lack of expertise in the management and implementation of change suggests that this could compromise changes proposed in recent education policies. According to McNeil (1981: 144), the success and failure in the implementation of change is largely determined by the principal. Support for these principals is essential. They would probably benefit from mentorship programmes.

**c) Lack of interest in and support for change in the general community**

Ninety percent of the respondents indicated that some parents do not want to co-operate with the school on issues that have to do with the management and implementation of change. Lack of co-operation affects the effective management and implementation of change. Parents and the community at large need to be motivated to work co-operatively with the school in implementing changes. If community members lack interest, it becomes difficult for principals to recruit parents to support the school.

Research conducted by Chetty (1998) revealed that even parents who serve in the SGB are often do not participate actively in supporting the principal to manage change. They are merely there to rubberstamp decisions made by some principals and to ensure compliance with the SASA (1996).

**d) Educators are not clear about the policies that mandate change**

Seventy percent of the respondents state that educators are not clear about the policies that mandate change. This finding indicates that educators are not capacitated in dealing with change. Principals must play a proactive role in disseminating information on policy changes and must actively engage educators

in training workshops that aim at promoting understanding and support for change.

**e) Educators resist change**

Sixty-five percent of the respondents indicated that educators resist change. The reasons for resistance to change and ways of managing resistance have been discussed in the previous chapter.

Responses to the previous question indicate that educators are not clear about the policies that mandate change. This is a key source of resistance. Plant (1987) in Mthabela (1997: 46), argues that levels of resistance are inevitably high if involvement and information are low. The less the educators know about the plan to change, the more they direct their energy into being counter-productive (ibid).

Table 4.9: Suggestions on how to improve change management and implementation in schools

<b>Themes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
The Department of Education should organize more in-service training.	39	90
Educators should be supported in implementing policy changes.	39	90
The governing body should be educated on policy changes.	39	90
There is a need for support from the District office.	35	81

**a) The Department of Education should organise more in-service training**

Most of the respondents (90%) wanted the Department of Education to organise more in-service training. This suggests that principals feel that information on policy changes must be more effectively communicated than in the current policy document and circular formats. Principals also have a desire to have their own change management skills enhanced. Seyfarth (1996: 129) states that professional growth is important because it provides opportunities for teachers to acquire new skills that can lead to effective management and implementation of change in schools. In-service training must be evaluated to ensure that these objectives are indeed being met by the training sessions.

**b) Educators should be supported in implementing policy changes**

Ninety percent of respondents mentioned that the educators need to be motivated and supported to implement changes as some of them have a negative attitude towards the policy implementation. Again principals seem to be looking to entities outside their own schools to assist in capacitating educators to embrace and facilitate change. Collaboration between schools in this regard may be a workable and practical strategy to address the problem.

**c) The governing body should be educated on policy changes**

Ninety-two percent of respondents have mentioned that there is a need for the SGB to be educated on policy changes and developed in terms of change management skills. This indicates that greater number of workshops needs to be developed within schools to assist SGBs in fulfilling their mandate to be co-managers and co-implementers of change.

The inclusion of parents in school governance should not be a debatable issue. SGBs have been granted powers to govern schools. They need to be informed about their powers and provided with the skills to effectively interact with schools in fostering and implementing change.

**d) There is a need for support from the District Office**

Eighty-one percent of the respondents indicated that there is a need for support from the District Office. Support from the District Office will enhance effective management and implementation of change. It should however be noted that the principal remains the primary (on-the-ground) agent for change. This responsibility should not be shifted to the District Office.

#### **4.6 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter data was statistically analysed and insights were formulated about role that principals play in managing and implementing change in schools. Recommendations, based on these findings, are made in the next chapter.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter evaluates the findings in the previous chapter critically in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations that will assist principals to effectively manage and implement change in schools.

### **5.2 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The following discussion represents a summary of the most salient findings of the empirical research conducted and conclusions drawn from them.

**a) There is a lack of open communication between school governors and educators**

The fact that 51% of respondents indicated that they do not encourage partnership between staff and the SGB shows that there is a lack of open communication. The majority of respondents also indicated that it is difficult to work with parents in implementing and managing change as most of them are illiterate.

**b) Principals are not fully capacitated to implement changes in schools**

Principals are aware of the changes that are taking place in education system but do not know how to implement those changes. Where changes were implemented, they were often but ineffective and did not result in the original aims of the change being fully realised. Table 4.6 for instance demonstrates how the principles of inclusively and participation are undermined - 60% of

respondents suggested that the school code of conduct was undemocratically constructed. It is apparent from the findings in the previous chapter that some principals do not adopt effective and appropriate strategies to manage and implement change. They thus, require great capacity to manage and implement change.

**c) There is lack of knowledge about managing and implementing change in schools**

Sixty-five percent of principals confessed that they lack expertise in managing and implementing change. Principals are aware of their role in managing and implementing change, however they lack capacity to implement their knowledge. Principals need to acquire skills on how to manage and implement change in schools. They often look to external entities like the Department of Education or District Office to assist in implementing change.

**d) Educators resist the implementation of changes**

Educators resist change when they have to implement it. They have not been fully capacitated to deal with change and were not motivated to accept change. Everard and Morris (1990) in Squelch and Lemmer (1994: 140) suggest that for effective change management, educators must understand what change is, the reason for change and its sources. Hitt, Middlemist and Mathis (1986: 436) emphasize that educators must be actively engaged in planning and implementing change so that they can take ownership of the change. Educators will support what they help create. Principals must understand the phases of change management and apply appropriate change management strategies to lower resistance to change. Educators must be able to draw readily on resources and skills that will assist them in implementing the change. The principal and his/her management team are responsible for ensuring that these resources and

skills are readily available to educators. The principal must also ensure high-motivation, low anxiety and a general sense of progress if change is to be effectively implemented. Issues of pace of implementation, timeframes and deadlines and roles and responsibilities must be carefully planned and clearly articulated.

### **5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

In the light of the above findings, the following recommendations are made:

**a) Principals should involve parents in managing and implementing change in schools**

Principals should create transparent, democratic structures with full participation of all stakeholders. Principals should make an effort to ensure that parents are involved in the school matters. Involvement of parents will ensure effective management and implementation of change. Parents should be well informed about their roles in managing and implementing change in schools.

**b) Principals should create opportunities for staff development**

Principals need to create opportunities for staff development. Educators must be motivated to fully embrace the changes. They can be motivated through staff development. Educators feel empowered if they are developed. They will be able to overcome problem areas and be able to implement changes expected of them. Marsh (1992: 88) states that continuous professional development is a prerequisite for leaders to keep up with the rapid pace of change in knowledge, advancement of technology and increasing demands on educational leaders.

There should be committees to facilitate staff development and motivate educators. These committees should be tasked with designing staff training programmes. Staff training should include discussion of policy documents and their implications for the school. Educators must be familiar with the policies that mandate change so as to enhance effective management of change.

- c) The Department of Education should organise on-going capacity building workshops to support school principals in managing and implementing change**

Professional development should be on-going. Courses on policy changes, leadership and management should be organised for school principals. Department Officials must be on hand to give expert guidance when required to do so.

- d) SGBs should be trained to support the principal to implement change**

SGB members must be equipped with the requisite change management skills and must be fully informed of policy mandates for change. The principal must commission training courses for SGB members. This can be facilitated by drawing on available school resources or by soliciting external assistance from the District Office or directly from the Department of Education. Training sessions must be timed for convenience and maximum participation. Weekends would probably suit most members best.

- e) A principals' association should be established to promote networking and co-ordinate change management efforts**

Principals of the same circuit should establish a principals' association where they will share and develop their management and leadership skills. External consultants can be invited to assist with particularly problematic areas of management.

- f) Department of Education sanctioned and accredited short courses on managing and implementing changes in schools could be offered**

Universities and colleges could offer short courses to develop change management skills. These courses could be offered over weekends and in school holidays teaching and learning time remain unaffected.

#### **5.4 CONCLUSION**

A key finding of this study is that many principals are struggling to keep pace with policy-mandated changes. Many have already lagged behind in implementing changes. A number of principals have made candid confessions about their lack of change management skills. Evidence gathered via the empirical study suggests that the implementation of change is often superficial rather than systemic.

In order to make real progress in capacitating principals to become effective change agents, the following areas need to be addressed with some urgency:

- Principals must be led to recognize that given the pace of change, only a collaborative, participative approach to change management and implementation will be effective and persistent,

- The timing and pace of change implementation must be re-evaluated as it is currently a source of anxiety for principals struggling to keep in lock-step with proposed changes;
- The mechanisms of information dissemination must be re-evaluated. Information must be made more “digestible”. The current format of publishing policy and change drivers in government gazettes, policy statements and Department circulars is ineffective since information needs to be “sifted” to prevent information overload. Information customized to “fit” different constituencies and must be made wholly relevant and accessible before dissemination.
- Short courses and workshops focussed on change management skills and strategies are urgently required;
- More support structures with a developmental impetus are required for change agents.

The researcher is confident that sufficient goodwill exists among principals to implement changes that democratise education. It is now incumbent upon all of us to ensure that appropriate strategies, skills and support structures to facilitate change are readily available.

It is the sincere hope of the researcher that this study has contributed to an understanding of the gaps in change management and that some of the strategies proposed to bridge these gaps will find practical application.

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**APPENDIX A**

**STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE ROLE OF PRINCIPALS IN THE  
MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE IN SCHOOLS**

**T.P MAKHANYA**

**(PTD; HDE; FDE; B.ED)**

**DEAR RESPONDENT**

Thank you for taking time to answer my questionnaire. The fact that you have been chosen as respondent is quite coincidental. The area in which you live as well as you have been selected randomly for the purpose of this survey.

I would like to assure you that all the information you provide will be regarded a strictly confidential. Thus to obtain reliable, scientific information it is necessary that you answer the questions as honestly as you can. **Your opinion is important.**

Please answer **ALL** questions in the following way:

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

**1. SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION****1.1 GENDER**

Male	
Female	

**1.2 AGE GROUP**

20-30	
31-40	
41-50	
Over 50	

**1.3 YOUR HIGHEST QUALIFICATIONS**

Lower than Matric	
Matric	
College/University diploma	
University degree e.g BA	
Other:	

**1.4 MY TEACHING EXPERIENCE IS:**

1-5 years	
6-10 years	
11-15 years	
16-20 years	
Over 20 years	

**1.5 YEARS IN MANAGEMENT**

1-5 years	
6-10 years	
11-15 years	
16-20 years	
Over 20	

## 1.6 SECTION B: MANAGEMENT STYLE

Indicate whether you agree, disagree or are uncertain about the following statements	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNCERTAIN
Our school has a documented (written) school improvement plan			
The school includes the SGB in decision making			
There is a whole school development committee in our school			
The school code of conduct has been generated through a democratic process			
Educators are given a fair chance to air their views			
Educators are involved in the decision-making structures of the school			
Educators are involved in curriculum planning			
The principal establishes support committees for educators to perform their work			
School policies are discussed with the staff			
The principal promotes networking with other schools			
Collaboration among staff members is encouraged			
Educators were involved in the development of the school mission statement			
Educators are sent to workshops to develop their expertise in teaching			
Department circulars are circularized to all educators			
Partnership is encouraged between the staff and the governing body			

**SECTION C: IMPLEMENTING CHANGES RELEVANT TO POLICY  
MANDATES AS PER SOUTH AFRICAN SCHOOLS ACT  
NO. 108 OF 1996**

<b>Parents participated in the following</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Uncertain</b>
A code of conduct for learners			
An admission policy			
A language policy			
Staff selection			
Democratically election of SGB			
Deciding school budget			

**SECTION: D**

Indicate what difficulties you experienced as a principal, in managing and implementing change in your school.

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## APPENDIX B

Z 1613 Umlazi Township  
P.O Umlazi  
4031  
14 June 2004

The Circuit Manager  
Folweni Circuit  
P.O. Umbumbulu  
4105

Sir

### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I am planning to embark research project aimed at investigating the role of principals in the management of schools. Permission is therefore requested to conduct such research in the schools under your control. This research is toward completion of my M.ED. degree and is being carried out under the supervision of Dr. M.K.K. Chetty at Durban Campus of the University of Zululand. The topic of my dissertation is: "*An Investigation into the Role of Principals in the Management and Implementation of Change in Schools.*"

For the purpose of this research a questionnaire will be developed which will be administered to educators located in Folweni Circuit. All the information elicited in this research will be treated in strict confidentiality and anonymity.

Information gathered in the research will provide invaluable assistance to the school management teams as well as the Department of Education in South Africa.

Thanking you in anticipation.



T.P. Makhanya



eTHEKWINI REGION

ISIFUNDA SASETHEKWINI

eTHEKWINI STREEK

UMLAZI DISTRICT

**UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT**

UMLAZI DISTRIK

Address	Next to Magistrate's Court	Private Bag	:X1022	Telephone	:(031) 9150036
Ikhele	UMBUMBULU	Isikhwama Seposi	:UMBUMBULU	Ucingo	9150001
Adres		Privaatsak	:4105	Telefoon	9150221 /2
				Fax	:(031) 9150189
Enquiries		Reference		Date	
Imibuzo	NGCOBO BDF	Inkomba	TP MAKHANYA	USUKU	: 14/06/2004
Navrae		Verwysing		Datum	

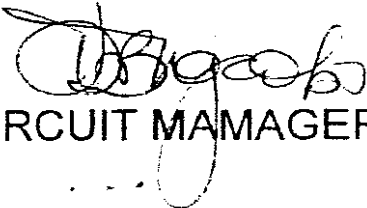
TO: Principals of Schools  
UMBUMBULU CIRCUIT

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 MAMAGER