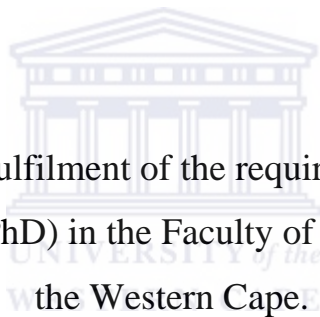


**INVESTIGATING IN-SERVICE
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN
NAMIBIA**

JOHANNES MUSHAANDJA

The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building with columns and a pediment, with the text "UNIVERSITY of the Western Cape" overlaid.

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
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Supervisor: Prof. H. D. Herman

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KEY WORDS/TERMS

Namibia

Omusati Region

Secondary school principals

Leadership

Management

Professional development

Professional development needs

Professional development strategies

Professional developers

Professional development model



ABSTRACT

INVESTIGATING IN-SERVICE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN NAMIBIA

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Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) thesis, Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape.

The Namibian education system was affected by a number of changes and challenges. These changes and challenges emanated from new political, financial and socio-economic trends in Namibia and the global village. Due to their strategic positions as educational leaders-cum-managers, principals were expected to lead and manage schools to overcome the challenges and meet increasing expectations of varied stakeholders. However, many secondary school principals especially those in rural areas could not cope with the changes and challenges. Rural secondary school principals did not have what it takes to manage and lead their schools effectively and efficiently. This study investigated the professional development of Namibian secondary school principals with special focus on rural secondary school principals in the Omusati Region, a region in north central of Namibia. Specifically, the study attempted to answer the following questions: What are the core professional development needs of secondary school principals? What do secondary school principals do in order to meet their professional development needs? What help is available for them in order to develop? What suggestions can be made for improving in-service professional development of secondary school principals?

It was an in-depth study. The sample comprised of seven information-rich respondents: three secondary school principals from the Omusati Region and four professional developers of principals. The research instruments were interviews, non-participant observations, and documentary analysis. The results show that the main challenge of the principals who partook in the study was the effective management and leadership of human resources.

There was no structured programme designed for serving secondary school principals. The principals that partook in the study did not undergo pre-service professional development for principalship, and did not receive induction when they were first time principals. Their common development approaches were self-development and informal people-assisted development, although some formal people-assisted development also took place. Most of the formal professional development of the principals focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills. The area of actions and behaviours was the least catered for.

This study made a number of suggestions and recommendations. Two them are: principals should be provided with an enabling learning environment, and the professional development of principals should focus more on learning how to put into practice what they learn. Finally, the study suggested a model for developing the principals who participated in this study and other principals whose contexts are similar to those of the three principals.

November 2006

DECLARATION

I declare that *Investigating In-service Professional Development of Secondary School Principals in Namibia* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged as complete references.

Name: Johannes Mushaandja

Signed:



Date: November 2006

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- The management of the University of Namibia for granting me study leave to pursue my study.
- The respondents for their enthusiastic co-operation, time and generous sharing of their witty opinions and wonderful ideas.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
B Ed	Bachelor of Education
BSc	Bachelor of Science
CNN	Council of Churches in Namibia
Ed.D	Doctor of Education
ELCIN	Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia
ETSIP	Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
HIGCSE	Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRM	Human Resources Management
IECD	Institute for Educational Career Development
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education
LDP	Leadership Development Programme
MBESC	Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
MEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MEd	Master of Education
MIB	Ministry of Information and Broadcasting
MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIED	National Institute for Educational Development
NPC	National Planning Commission
NUFU	Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Higher Education
PCECT	Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RCC	Roman Catholic Church

SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
UK	United Kingdom
UNAM	University of Namibia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America



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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCING THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Educational leadership is perceived as one of the crucial factors in school improvement and effectiveness (Kitavi & Van der Westhuizen, 1997; Pashiardis, 1997; Twale & Kochan, 1999; Johansson, 2001; Harris, 2002; Kantema, 2002; Sibeya, 2002; Bush and Jackson, 2002; Muijs & Harris, 2003; Wale, 2003; MoE, 2006). Bush (as quoted by Ng, 2001, p. 73) goes a step further to conclude that "... it has become received wisdom that the quality of the [school] head is the single most important variable in school effectiveness." To put it differently, it is widely recognized that successful schools are those that are led by successful leaders. O'Brien and Draper (2001, p. 112) contend that all organisations, including schools, depend on their leaders to bring about improvement:

The performance of any organization, large or small is crucially dependant on the quality of its leadership. Schools be they nursery, primary, special or secondary, are no different from other organizations in that respect. Good headteachers [principals] can help schools rise to the challenge of curricular change and transform teaching and learning conditions whilst ineffective heads can block improvement and stifle initiative.

However, this crucial role of principals is complicated, elusive and difficult, mainly due to turbulent and radical changes facing schools (Twale and Kochan, 1999; Kapp, 2000; Davidoff and Lazarus, 2002; Mestry and Grobler, 2004). Schools need to change if they are to improve, because there is no improvement without change. Namibian schools have experienced significant changes since independence in 1990, changes that are intended to facilitate paradigm shifts in

terms of education governance, quality, equity and international comparability (MEC, 1993; Education Act, 2001). In other words, secondary school principals, for example, have to embrace participatory leadership; and see to it that learners graduating from their schools have acquired saleable skills that enable them to secure employment in the job market. Various stakeholders have various expectations from schools, sometimes expectations that are too high for schools to meet, given their challenges. One of the challenges facing schools today is the inability of the principals to lead and manage those schools according to expectations.

Twale and Kochan (1999) indicate that there is a strong conviction that today's principals face different and more difficult challenges, and need different skills and knowledge than those needed in the past. These challenges necessitate continuous and improved in-service professional development for principals (Ng, 2001; Kennedy, 2005; Stroud, 2005). A strong belief pertains that most of the professional development of principals has to take place on the job (Murphy & Hallinger, 1989; McCay, 2001). In other words, principals learn more through continuous in-service professional development. Moreover, it is an established belief that professional development of principals should be sensitive to both time and place (Dadey and Olaniyan, 1992). That is to say, the professional development that works effectively in one context may not be effective in another context, or a previous successful programme for professional development for principals may be irrelevant to today's principals.

1.2 Problem statement

It is in the light of the above-stated working hypotheses that concerted efforts are being made in many countries to offer continuous in-service professional development to serving principals (Kapp, 2000; Bush & Jackson, 2002; Mestry & Grobler 2002). Namibia is no exception to this (MoE, 2006). The country is

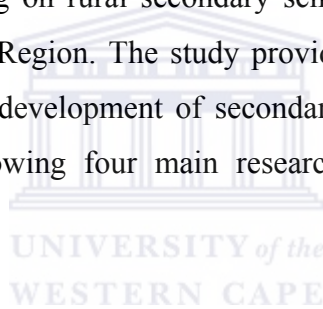
developing its serving corps of principals. Namibian principals attended a number of workshops to acquire educational management knowledge and skills, and many of them improved their academic and professional qualifications by studying with institutions of higher learning. Notwithstanding these efforts, reports about poor school leadership and management in Namibian schools are still coming in, indicating that many principals in Namibia have become increasingly ineffective in managing teaching and learning (Hope, 1993; Mushaandja, 1996; PCECT, 1999; Kantema, 2002; Sibeya, 2002; MoE, 2006).

I observed that the situation in rural secondary schools in Namibia was worse than that of urban schools. Rural secondary school principals fall short in bringing about effective learning and teaching, and the extent to which they facilitate the implementation of educational policies leaves much to be desired. Of the four major educational goals (access, equity, quality, and democracy) (MEC, 1993) Namibia has committed itself to immediately after independence in 1990, only access to primary education – getting more learners into classrooms – is progressively being achieved (Mutorwa, 2004). This means that there are some improvements in primary education. The provision of quality education, in particular, is the main concern in secondary schools. The Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP) (MoE, 2006, p. 13) sums up the challenge and its implications as follows:

Challenge: Namibia has achieved a 92% Net Enrolment Ratio at primary level but still faces challenges in the provision of secondary education. The lack of senior secondary education has negative implications on job creation, self-employment and results in lack of skilled labour. The lack of capacity is especially acute in senior secondary [grades 11 & 12] as evidenced by the low transition rate. Only 47% of learners proceed from grade 10 to grade 11 each year ...

Consequently, one of ETSIP priority strategic objectives for 2006 – 2011 is to improve management competencies (MoE, 2006).

Improving management competencies requires research evidence to inform its implementation. Although some Namibian scholars (such as Mushaandja, 1996; Kantema, 2002) question the effectiveness of the current in-service professional development of principals in Namibia, they fall short in investigating it. Thus, a large gap exists in our theory and practice of how Namibian principals should be developed. This gap calls for academic inquiry. Given the working hypotheses I have outlined thus far, the purpose of this study is to investigate how rural Namibian secondary school principals develop. In other words, the purpose of this study is to gain profound understanding of how Namibian secondary school principals develop, focusing on rural secondary school principals in one of the rural regions, the Omusati Region. The study provides a detailed description of the in-service professional development of secondary school principals. To this end, it addresses the following four main research questions and subsidiary questions:



1.2.1 What are the core professional development needs of secondary school principals?

- What are the real sources of difficult conditions they face in leading and managing schools?
- Where do the greatest needs for improvement lie?
- What are the local professional development needs?
- What are the leadership and management knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes, and values do they need?
- What do secondary school principals need to be good at?

1.2.2 What do secondary school principals do in order to meet their core professional development needs?

- How do the principals acquire management and leadership knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes, and values they need?
- How do they improve their school leadership and management?
- Why do they develop themselves the way they do?
- To what extent do they develop themselves?

1.2.3 What help is available for them in order to develop?

- Who are the facilitators (developers) of their professional development?
- What support do they receive from their developers?
- Why do the developers develop them in the way they do?
- To what extent does the support help them to meet their development needs?

1.2.4 What suggestions can be made for improving in-service professional development of secondary school principals?

- What are the weaknesses and strengths of their development, and how can the strengths be reinforced and the weaknesses improved?
- What suggestions can be made with regard to improving the way they develop themselves?
- What suggestions can be made with regard to improving the support they receive from the developers?
- What model on continuous in-service professional development of secondary school principals can be suggested?

1.3 Significance of the study

This study was needed because there was a dearth of empirical data on the professional development of secondary school principals in Namibia, especially at that time when the service of these site-based leaders-cum-managers was more

crucial than ever. As I will point out later in this chapter, there were some critical challenges necessitating effective secondary school principalship. Thus, unless these strategic school managers and leaders were equipped with responsive leadership and management skills, knowledge, behaviours, actions, attitudes and values in order to offer school leadership that made a difference, learner performance and education standards were unlikely to improve.

I have previously observed poor secondary school leadership and management practiced in some secondary schools in rural areas, and I developed an intense desire to help improve the professional development of these leaders-cum-managers. I was eager to learn from the rural secondary school principals and from the existing body of knowledge which variables informed in-service professional development of secondary school principals. And as a developer of secondary school leaders in both pre-service and in-service development programmes, I intended to keep myself abreast of how principals could develop and what support could be given to them.

The study also attempts to inform policymakers, policy implementers, institutions responsible for developing principals, and the principals themselves of some potential variables related to effective continuous in-service professional development of secondary school principals. There is a strong conviction that the research community should produce validated research evidence to inform educational policy and practice (Levačić & Glatter, 2003; Wale, 2003). Furthermore, the study was an attempt to add information that might aid the practical implementation of Education and Training Improvement Programme (ETSIP).

It was hoped that the study would also prompt researchers to engage in research studies about the professional development of school principals. Therefore, the study intended to make some working hypotheses available for further research.

There is no final knowledge, the conclusions I have reached in this study are tentative and lend themselves to more investigations as necessitated by ever-changing time and space. In short, the rationale for this study was to formulate some working hypotheses about continuous in-service professional development for secondary school principals, which may be valuable knowledge in the hands of secondary school principals, developers of secondary school principals, policymakers and researchers in the area of professional development of secondary school principals.

1.4 Research design and methods

Given the nature of the research problem, namely the in-depth investigation of in-service professional development of secondary school principals, I found the qualitative research design to be appropriate.

The sample was comprised of three information-rich secondary school principals and four professional developers of principals. It was a purposeful sample selected carefully so that the findings collected from the sample could be “transferable” (Patton, 2002, p. 581) to those principals whose contexts were similar to those of the respondents. I used a combination of document analysis, interviews and observations as data collection instruments. Previous research studies on the same topic have found the combination of these instruments to be effective (Robertson, 1999; Wale, 2003).

The actual data collection required me to shadow the principals, while they were doing their work at their respective schools and while they were attending workshops and courses aimed at their in-service professional development. After every observation, I had individual reflective interviews with them. In the course of the data collection period, I subjected the principals to standardised open-ended interviews; and throughout the data collection time, I have analysed as many relevant documents as I could obtain. The data analysis involved selecting,

categorizing, comparing, synthesizing, and interpreting data to provide explanations for the professional development of the principals as per research questions.

In the process of analysing data made available by the principals, I realised the need to interview their developers. I selected four information-rich developers to constitute the additional sample, which provided additional data, particularly regarding the last two research questions.

1.5 New conceptualisation of the role of principals

The role of principals has become more complex, difficult and demanding, requiring improved and sophisticated professional development of principals (Richard, 2000; Richard, 2001; Grogan & Andrews, 2002; Mestry & Grobler, 2002). Principals are now faced with many new challenges consequent on advances in technology and higher expectations of education, *inter alia*. The principals are expected to play expanded roles such as managing the use of information technology to support learning and teaching; monitoring learning and teaching; advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture or climate conducive to learning and teaching; guiding staff members; planning for effective staff development; fostering parental involvement and community support; being visionaries; ensuring widely distributed leadership among their subordinates; acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and understanding, responding to, and influencing, the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996; Yee, 1997; Richard, 2000; Wong, 2001; Bush & Jackson, 2002; Mestry & Grobler, 2002).

The above roles and many more require the principals to do things differently than in prior years. The principals are now expected to focus more attention on educational leadership. Gone are the days when the principals were just expected

to perform age-old managerial tasks such as handling discipline, attending events, and coordinating work of others (Richard, 2000). Strong instructional leaders give curricula and teaching the highest priority, rally and mobilise resources to enable effective learner learning, and create a climate of high expectations for high academic achievement. Witziers, Bosker and Kruger (2003) identify three dimensions of educational leadership and management *videlicet* defining the school mission, managing the instructional programme, and promoting a positive school climate for efficacious learning and teaching. Focusing more attention on leadership does not imply discarding management. Mushaandja (2000) states that one of the differences between leaders and managers is that the former aim at initiating the necessary change and improvement in teaching and learning, whilst the latter focus on administering and maintaining the change and improvement.

After Namibian independence, numerous changes had to be introduced in schools in Namibia, hence the need for more leadership. However, when a change is introduced, it has to be administered and maintained. Thus, schools need both leadership and management, but they need more of the former than the latter during educational reform. Thus, principals should play the role of leader-cum-manager.


Principals, as instructional leaders, are not only expected to transform, restructure and redefine the physical learning environment of their schools, but also to pay substantial heed to transformational leadership, that is, to transform the people they work with – staff members, learners, other educational leaders, parents and community members, and even their superiors (Leithwood & Janzi, 2000; Bezzina, 2001; Villet, 2001). Muncey and McQuillan (as cited in Villet, 2001) contend that efforts to reform and improve teaching in a school are far more difficult than what policymakers and educational theorists realise. Educational leadership requires educational leaders to cultivate collegiality, cooperation, and shared commitments among all stakeholders in education.

In a nutshell, it has become difficult and demanding for the principals to transform the stakeholders to contribute voluntarily to the main business of the schools, namely improved learning of learners. For the principals to be able to play this role effectively, improved, sophisticated and continuous professional development of principals is a *sine qua non*.

1.6 Frameworks of the study

This section discusses the frameworks informing this study. First, the theoretical framework is outlined, and second the context in which the professional development of the principals took place is described.

1.6.1 Theoretical framework



Before I outline the theoretical framework informing this study, two critical and pertinent points must be made. Firstly, qualitative inquiries are informed by a number of theories. Due to this variety, "... one cannot reasonably ask which theoretical framework is right, best, or most useful. It depends on what one wants to do and which assumptions one shares" (Patton, 2002, p. 134 - 135). In other words, qualitative research recognises multiple truths informed by multiple theoretical frameworks. Consequently, researchers are at liberty to choose the theoretical frameworks they subscribe to at the time. Secondly, in qualitative research, theories are considered as preliminary and relative versions through which the world is perceived. The versions undergo continuous revision, evaluation, construction and reconstruction (Flick, 2002). Thus, qualitative research studies are informed by various theoretical frameworks, which are viewed as preliminary and relative.

There is a considerable amount of literature (e.g., Barnett, 1989; Murphy and Hallinger, 1989; Danzig, 1997; Restine, 1997; Evans and Mohr, 1999; Grogan and Andrews, 2002; Peterson, 2002) suggesting that the appropriate theoretical framework for professional development for principals is constructivist learning theory. “Constructivism” has become the latest catchword in educational circles. It has roots in philosophy, psychology, sociology, and education, to mention but some disciplines.

Although many people hail constructivism as a new theory, it doesn't really offer completely new ideas. Its core ideas are basically those pronounced by renowned thinkers such as Dewey, Piaget and Vigotsky. It informs professional development and learning of “all learners,” young and old (Hoover, 2005, p. 1). The fact that constructivism is informed by many disciplines makes it a better theory than others to rely on. For that reason, as will become evident in the next chapter, most of the professional development of principals is or should be approached through a constructivist orientation, a trend which suggests the trustworthiness and soundness of the theory.

Constructivists make a number of assumptions about learning and development (Bruner, 1996). I am not going to attempt to discuss the assumptions here. What I am going to do is to outline some of them and show how they have implications for the professional development of practising principals. The central postulation of constructivism is that human learning is constructed. This means that human beings, individually or socially, construct knowledge and meanings. This idea counteracts the Platonic realistic view, which deems knowledge to be “out there” independent of the knower. The crucial action of constructing meanings and knowledge takes place in the mind (Hein, 1996). This implies that principals should be encouraged to work out knowledge for themselves, and to reflect individually or in groups on the existing knowledge. As explained in detail in Chapter two, these two strategies enable principals to meet professional

development needs resulting from inadequate knowledge and skills. The strategies also allow principals to harmonise their attitude and values that are incompatible with the attitude and values suggested by the new knowledge (Ng, 2001).

If principals have to construct their own knowledge, it follows that they have to be active rather than passive in their professional development. They are active consciously or unconsciously: they test the applicability of new knowledge, judge the consistency of new knowledge and prior knowledge, and, based on that judgment, can modify their prior knowledge. According to Piaget there are two mechanisms according to which new ideas are accommodated and assimilated - integration and substitution (Kolb, 1984). Kolb (ibid.) recommends integration of new ideas into the old ones as this ensures stable conception. However, when new ideas are accommodated through substitution of old ideas with new ones, there is always a possibility of reversion to old ideas. The role of the developer, therefore, is not to take the role of the “sage on the stage,” but to act as a “guide on the side” (Hoover, 2005, p. 1) who provides principals with environments that exploit inconsistencies between their current understanding and the new knowledge, reflect on the new knowledge, and modify their current knowledge by integrating needed new knowledge (or selected elements of new knowledge) into their current knowledge. Furthermore, active participation in the professional development means that principals try new knowledge in practice and thereby learn how to put it into action. This is one strategy of learning that can be applied in order to meet the professional development needs emanating from the inability to put “good” knowledge into practice (action and behaviour) Ng (2001).

In constructing new knowledge, human beings use what they already know (Bruner, 1996; Hoover, 2005). When people actively construct knowledge, they do so by relating incoming information to a previously acquired frame of reference. Practising principals have gathered a reservoir of germane knowledge upon which new knowledge is built. This suggests that professional developers

should not consider principals as *tabulae rasae*, on which they inscribe new knowledge. Every principal comes to the development situation with more or less articulate ideas of the topic under discussion, that is, they have some experiences (Ng, 2001). Thus, principals' prior knowledge influences what new or modified (not necessarily "correct") knowledge they construct from new development experience. Of course, some of the established ideas need modification because they are inconsistent with the new ideas (not because they are "incorrect"). Moreover, in most cases, resistance to new ideas results from the incompatibility between the new ideas and the old ideas. The function of the developers of principals, therefore, is not only to facilitate the construction of new ideas but also to work out a plan to influence (not to manipulate) principals to dispose or modify existing ideas that might be incongruent with, and resistant to, new ideas.

Constructivists contend that knowledge is both personal and social construction. The implication is that for individual principals, some knowledge is public (knowledge that can be acquired from other people) while other knowledge is personal (personalising public knowledge or learning from experience) (Eraut, 1997). Principals learn personal knowledge most effectively while in groups (Evans and Mohr, 1999). Having realised the effectiveness of group learning, developers are devising strategies whereby principals learn in groups. Some schools have become learning communities, where everybody, including the principal, learns. The other example of group learning strategy is the peer-assisted leadership programme, whereby principals develop through peer observation and feedback (Barnett, 1989; Robertson, 1999).

As implied above, knowledge is continuously derived from and tested out in experience. Experience is mediated by culture. Hence, all knowledge is only, to use Cobb's (as quoted by Fosnot, 1996, p. 24) terminology, "taken-as-shared." This implies that the culture and social environments are important and need to be considered in any professional development of principals. This view is based on

dialectical constructivism of Vygotsky, a Russian theorist. Vygotsky emphasizes the importance of social interaction between competent and less competent members of society; and the transaction between internal characteristics and external circumstances, and between personal knowledge and social knowledge. Thus, individual development of principals is shaped by the cultural system of social knowledge (Kolb, 1984; Byrnes, 1996).

In addition, human learning is contextual. This point proposes that principals do not learn isolated facts and theories in some abstract ethereal land of the mind separate from the rest of their lives. They link the new knowledge to their prior knowledge, what they believe in, their prejudices and their fears. This point is a corollary to the idea that learning is active and social. Principals cannot ever divorce their development from their lives. (This point is going to be discussed in detail in the next subsection).

This subsection sketched out constructivist learning theory, a theoretical framework informing this study. Constructivism assumes that human beings, individually and socially, construct knowledge and meanings using their prior knowledge and experiences as frames of references. The function of the developers of principals, therefore, is to facilitate the construction of new knowledge; modification of old knowledge; and implementation of new knowledge.

1.6.2 Contextual framework: The Omusati Region

This study was conducted in the Omusati Region in the north central area of Namibia. In this section I describe the geographical, demographical, cultural, historical, political, and socio-economical contexts of the region that interrelate with and have an effect on education and, therefore, directly or indirectly have

impact on in-service professional development of secondary school principals in that region.

Lightfoot (as quoted by Patton, 2002, p. 63) describes the rationale behind understanding of the context when documenting human experience:

By context, I mean the setting – physical, geographic, temporal, historical, cultural, aesthetic – within which action takes place. Context becomes the framework, the reference point, the map, the ecological sphere; it is used to place people and action in time and space and a resource for understanding what they say and do. The context is rich in clues for interpreting the experience of the actors in the setting ...

The setting in which the principals worked was so immense and complex that it cannot be expounded on sufficiently in a few pages. Therefore, what I have described in the following pages represents a précis of the physical, geographical, historical, traditional, religious, and socio-economical contexts that had an impact on the professional development of the principals in one way or another.

1.6.2.1 Location

The Omusati Region (area 26 573 km²) is one of the 13 regions of Namibia and it is one of the most rural (NPC, 2003) and poorest (MoE, 2006) regions. It has the second highest population. The region is part of the former Owambo, situated in the north central area of the country. It is comprised of the following tribes:

Ombalantu¹, Uukolonkadhi, Ombandja, Ongandjera², Uukwaluudhi³, and small areas of Uukwambi and Uukwanyama. It is bordered by Angola to the north, and the Ohangwena and Oshana regions to the east. To the west and south, the region borders the Kunene Region. The region comprises of twelve constituencies: Anamulenge, Etayi, Otamanzi, Onesi, Tsandi, Okalongo, Oshikuku, Elimu, Okahao, Ogongo, Outapi, and Ruacana.

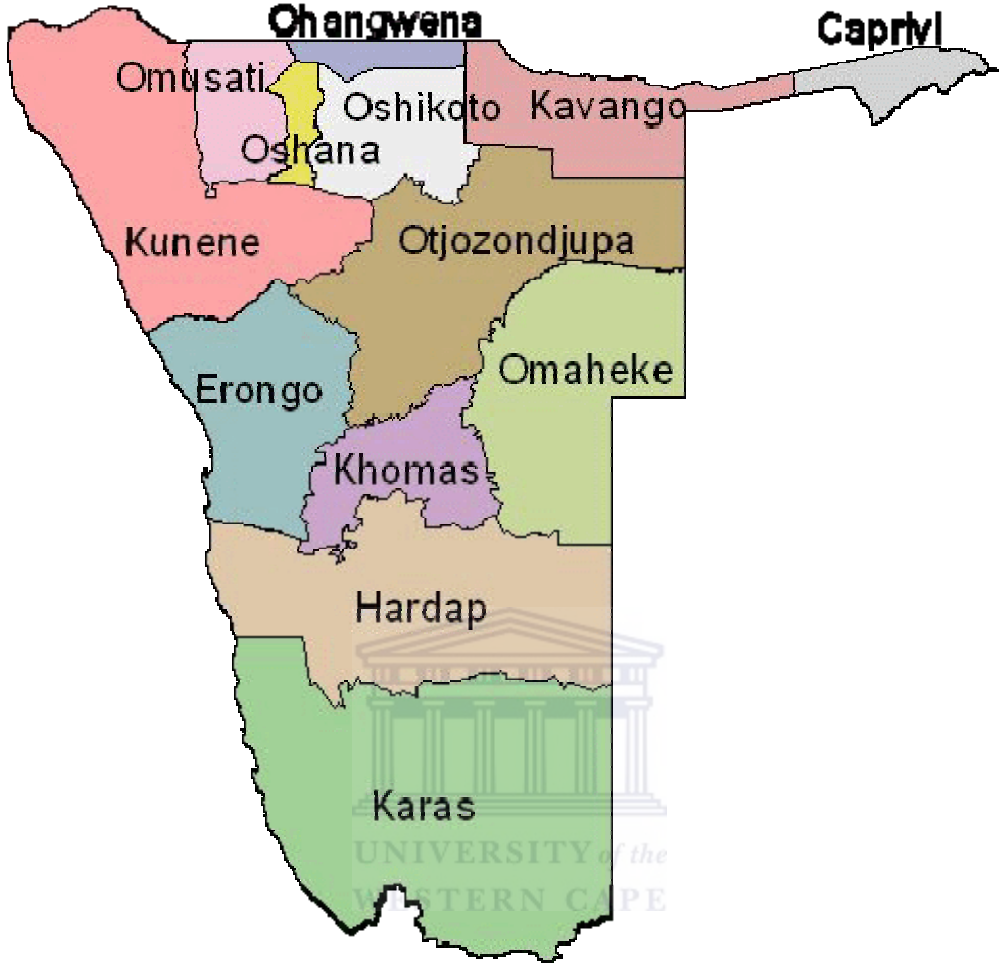


¹ The name Ombalantu has a historical and political meaning. The word is derived from two words “ombala” (kingdom) and “yaantu” (of the people). As a kingdom before colonization, the place did not have centralized authority like other kingdoms. For a long time the Ombalantu people enjoyed what they called “the people’s democracy” (Williams, 1991, p.135). This evinces the existence of democratic principles in the area since time immemorial. Outapi, the capital of the Omusati Region, is in Ombalantu.

² “... Ongandjera was a mighty tribe, whose chiefs held some kind of supremacy over the other tribes ...” (Tuupainen, 1970, p. 12).

³ When the Uukwaluudhi people trekked in the present day Uukwaluudhi, there were no other inhabitants. When they realized that they were all from the same stock (ancestors), they decided to call their area Uukwaluudhi, meaning “the country of the people from the same stock” (Williams, 1991, p.137). In Oshiwambo culture, reference to common ancestors signifies unity. As I will explain later in this section and in Chapter 4, the Aawambo people are characterised by unity and, therefore, sharing (including knowledge).

Figure 1: Map of Namibia showing the regions



(Source: NPC, 2003, p. 3)

1.6.2.2 Some historical and political dynamics

Namibia was a victim of German (1884 – 1915) and South African (1915 – 1989) imperialism and colonialism for more than a century. Initially, the colonizers allowed the northern areas (former Owambo) outside the Police Zone⁴ to develop according to tribal and ethnic conditions. They controlled the Aawambo through the local chiefs. They were of the view that indirect control was the easier way of governing the northerners. This required that many chiefs had to collaborate with the colonial authorities, a development that made them unpopular among their subjects. The rebellious chiefs risked to being deposed or even killed by the colonial authorities. A case in point was the defiant Uukwambi king, Iipumbu jaTshilongo⁵, who was deposed and banished from his tribe (Tötemeyer, 1978).

However, later the colonizers developed an interest in the labour potential north of the Police Zone. Young and able-bodied men from the former Owambo were contracted to work in economic projects in the Police Zone, such as railway and road construction, mines, farms, factories and domestic work. The working conditions were terribly bad – meagre salaries, no sick leave, no annual bonus, and long working hours without overtime pay. The contract could be as long as

⁴ The ‘Police Zone’ came into existence from 1906 under German rule. It comprised the central and southern areas of Namibia and it was prohibited from trading in guns, horses and alcohol beyond its northern border, meaning to the former Owambo people. The Police Zone was under direct colonial rule and whites were permitted to settle there. Under South African martial law, Proclamation 15 of 1919 decreed that no person could cross the line marking the Police Zone without official permission and this became known as the Red Line (Silvester, Wallace & Hayes, 1998). The Red Line still exists, but its function has changed. It is now used as an animal disease control point.

⁵ In 1932, king Iipumbu refused to pay tax and surrender all his guns to the South African colonial government. The South African military aircraft bombarded his royal court. He was replaced with a council of headmen who collaborated with the colonial government. As a consequence of this, councils of headmen were also appointed for some other tribes in the Omusati Region. Today, only Uukwaluudhi and Ongandjera have chiefs, and the whole region is divided into villages headed by headmen and headwomen. Iipumbu is one of Namibia’s heroes and heroines, who sacrificed themselves for the independence of Namibia, and whose names are engraved in the Heroes’ Acre in the capital, Windhoek.

two years without the employees being allowed to visit their relatives in Owambo, and their relatives were not allowed to visit them. Nujoma⁶ (2001, p. 27) describes the working conditions as “near-slave” labour. Today, however, although contract labour has been abolished, a number of young people from rural regions such as the Omusati Region, especially school leavers and drop-outs, still flock to towns in the south of the country in search of employment opportunities.

The South African colonial government placed Namibia under one of the most severe colonial rules in Africa (Mutorwa, 2004): it operated on the basis of separate development (apartheid), based not only on race or skin colour but also on ethnicity, tribe and language. Indigenous people were forced to live in the Bantustans⁷. Since the Omusati Region was part of the Owambo, it fell under the former Owambo Bantustan. Thus, to this day, the population of the region is comprised predominantly of Oshiwambo-speaking people.

The other aspect worth mentioning here is the colonial education that was offered to Namibians, including people in the Omusati Region. Auala (1989, p. 67) summarises the aims of the German education as follows:

We [the Germans] cannot carry out settlement without the labor. This must be provided by the natives [indigenous Namibians] and we shall train them for it. We shall make people [indigenous Namibians] realize that we Germans are the masters of this country [Namibia] and the natives the servants.

In other words, the main aim of the German education system was to train indigenous Namibians to become “servants” (e.g., manual labourers) and the

⁶ Sam Nujoma is the founding president of the Republic of Namibia. He is originally from the Omusati Region. He worked as a labourer in the Police Zone.

⁷ A territory within the country designated as a homeland for a black ethnic grouping during the apartheid era in Namibia and South Africa. The term is coined from two terms: Bantu (people) and -stan (land of).

Whites to become “masters” (e.g., managers). To this end, the Germans introduced separate education systems, one for Blacks and the other for Whites. Today, there are some people in the Omusati Region who can speak German. In other words, remnants of German culture are prevalent in the Omusati Region.

The South African education system was also based on apartheid policy. The South African government introduced Bantu Education for the Blacks. Dr. Hendrik Verwoerd, a Dutch-born South African Prime Minister (1958 – 1966), and a man who was responsible for much of the apartheid legislation, made the aim of Bantu Education quite clear:

There is no place for the native in the European community, above the level of certain forms of labor ... Until now he has been subjected to a school system [presumably referring to missionary education] which drew him away from his own community and misled him by showing him the green pastures of European society in which he was not allowed to graze ... When I have control of native education I will reform it so that the natives will be taught from childhood to realize that equality with Europeans is not for them ... People who believe in equality are not desirable teachers for the natives (Auala, 1989, p. 72).

It is noteworthy that the legacy of apartheid is still felt in Namibia today. Nyathi (2005, p. 6) observes that

... the problem with the majority of us [indigenous Namibians] is that we are still subconsciously haunted by a subdued sense of self-belief and self-confidence. As we know, part of the apartheid ideology was to train us not to believe in our abilities to produce anything of quality. In fact, growing up under the apartheid system allowed for a hidden curriculum of subliminal inferiority complex among the blacks.

The medium of instruction for government and some private schools during the South African colonial era was Afrikaans, which was the official language, along with English. Afrikaans has the largest number of speakers and is the *lingua franca* in Namibia even today (Harlech-Jones, 1990). Many teachers, principals and parents in the Omusati Region were educated and trained under South African apartheid education and can speak Afrikaans. Thus, they are products of Bantu Education.

Contract labour, apartheid, Bantustan, and Bantu Education were just some of factors that caused unhappiness among the Namibian indigenous people, including the Omusati community. This unhappiness led to a number of instances:

- The battle at Ongulumbashe. The South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) engaged for the first time with the South African forces at Ongulumbashe in the Omusati Region on 26 August 1966. This date is popularly accepted as marking the opening of the overt, national struggle (Silvester, Wallace & Hayes, 1998). Currently, this day is a public holiday known as Heroes' Day. Nujoma (2002, p. 1) has this to say about this day:

The day has been specifically reserved as a national holiday for the remembrance of our heroes and heroines ... who have sacrificed their precious lives for the protection and defence of the motherland and for the noble cause of fighting for our national liberation, freedom and independence.

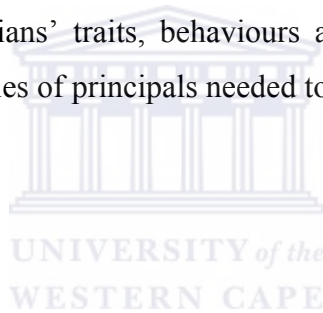
- The strike of the Aawambo workers in many towns in the south of the country in 1971. The workers were immediately repatriated to the Owambo. The sudden return of these workers caused labour unrest everywhere in the country and aroused popular feelings of solidarity (Tötemeyer, 1978). Thereafter, many people, including people from the Omusati Region, went into exile to join SWAPO in Zambia, Angola and other neighbouring countries.

- Concurrently with the strikes by the Aawambo workers, learners in the former Owambo boycotted schools; and the school boycotts spread to other regions. Learners demonstrated against Bantu Education and the use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction, and many of them crossed the border into Angola to join SWAPO. The strikes were repeated occasionally until Namibia got its independence in 1990.

In conclusion, there is one point worth emphasising. The Omusati Region, the region that gave birth to Namibia's liberation struggle, was politically unstable. Like many other principals in other regions, secondary school principals in the Omusati Region were products of Bantu Education, an inferior education that was designed for indigenous Namibians. Thus, secondary school principals grew up under colonial oppression and discrimination that, as Nyathi (2005) argue, have negative impact on Namibians' traits, behaviours and qualities. The negative traits, behaviours and qualities of principals needed to be investigated.

1.6.2.3 Some cultural dynamics

This subsection provides a brief discussion of some cultural beliefs and traditional education of the Omusati Region. One cannot talk about the culture of the Omusati Region without making reference to the total culture of all tribes in the former Owambo. For example, although each tribe in the Omusati Region has its dialect, the majority of the schools in the Omusati Region use Oshindonga (a dialect predominantly spoken in the Oshana Region) as their mother language and the rest use Oshikwanyama (a dialect predominantly spoken in the Ohangwena Region). The dialects of Owambo are similar in many respects with just minor differences usually in accentuations. Thus, the region is exposed to sub-cultures of other regions in the country.



The cultural aspects that were of most interest to this study were the philosophical beliefs of the Aawambo people, which are the philosophical beliefs of the people in the Omusati Region as well. Some of these cultural aspects are as follows:

- Communalism (as opposed to individualism). Group benefits are more important than individual benefits for the sake of, among others, survival and cohesiveness. The Aawambo people do things together. For example, they drink together from an *ondjupa* (calabash) or an *oshiyuma* (clay pot), or even from the same *ompamba* (scooping calabash). They work together in all *omapyra* (corn fields) belonging to the households of a village. This philosophy of sharing serves as a cornerstone of teamwork. This explains why they educate or develop “green” (inexperienced) members of the community together;
- Preparedness. Every member of the community is or should be prepared to serve the community. For example, the Aawambo bring children up to become useful and productive members of the community. Thus, any professional development should be a shared responsibility;
- Uprightness/goodness and maintaining of status quo. The Aawambo believe that there are right/best ways of doing things that should be maintained. Therefore, secondary school principals might cling to some old management strategies, a behavioural trait that might not be helpful in today’s world of rapid change; and
- Strong belief in *Kalunga* (Supreme Spirit). They believe in the magico-religious Supreme Spirit that takes the form of a human being and moves invisibly among them. The spirit has the power to punish those who commit evils; hence they have to live an upright life. Maybe this is the reason why some people observed that Aawambo people are “... law-abiding, peaceful people” (Töttemeyer, 1978, p. 45). As Aawambo people believing in *Kalunga*, secondary school principals might not entertain those leadership and management strategies that are seen to be in onflict

with their religious principles.

Underpinned by the above philosophical beliefs is the traditional education of the Aawambo people. Traditional education has been practised in the Omusati Region since time immemorial. It is a life-long process of learning, whereby an elder or expert teaches the youth or inexperienced members of the community skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviours considered useful in the community. At times, traditional education happens accidentally or employs informal techniques. However, there are times when the experts intentionally teach the inexperienced through stories, riddles, games, and so on. Thus, the necessary skills, knowledge, attitudes, values and behaviours are transmitted to the inexperienced by the word of mouth and not written text. The teaching techniques are largely the “lecture method”, demonstration and role modelling. In this world of sophisticated advancement, reliance on traditional education alone is not very helpful. However, traditional education is meaningful in at least three respects. First, compared to Western types of education the region has seen, traditional education distinguishes itself in that the learning process is more directly related to the specific pattern of work in the community. Second, it is a lifelong type of education. Every member of the community, young or old, is always in the learning process. Finally, traditional education is context-bound. Therefore, the “curricula” of Oshiwambo speaking people differ from community to community, although there are many aspects that are more or less the same. To sum up, traditional education offered in the Omusati Region is relevant, informal, lifelong and context-bound.

The above cultural dynamics are significant to the professional development of principals in many ways. Here are just some of them: First, as Bajunid (1996) states when new ideas are introduced to principals that are in line with their cultural values, such ideas are acquired quickly without unnecessary cognitive dissonance. For example, based on their cultural value of preparedness, principals in the Omusati Region are likely to be willingly prepared to acquire new

knowledge pertaining to their development. This argument is in line with what Kolb (1984) recommends that in order to ensure stable conception, new ideas should not substitute old ideas, but should be integrated into old ideas. Second, not all cultural values and beliefs are conducive to promoting professional development of principals. For example, the belief in maintaining the status quo and the “best” ways of doing things might not be very helpful in the professional development of principals in this world of rapid change. Thus, there are cultural beliefs and values that may impede their professional development and should be modified.

Third, developers of principals should be people who know the ins and outs of, and are sensitive to, the principals’ local culture. The implications for this knowledge are twofold. Firstly, knowledge of the culture of the principals helps the developers to be aware of explicit or implicit reasons for principals’ cognitive dissonance between their culture and the new knowledge and do something to modify the culture or to bring the new knowledge in line with the culture. Secondly, and more importantly, developers can derive suitable development approaches and strategies from cultural values. For example, if the principals who partook in this study came from a community where communalism is the norm, then perchance better development strategies for them would be those that require them to share ideas. Coincidentally, sharing is a favoured strategy in today’s professional development of principals, whereby principals have to learn from each other (Barnett, 1989; Martin, 2000; Ng, 2001) and even from family and community members (Bezzina, 2002). Thus, professional development for principals might be effective when it is a shared responsibility. Another learning strategy characterizing Aawambo traditional education is informal learning. Thus, secondary school principals in the Omusati Region are likely to learn better in an informal learning environment. In short, principals are likely to learn better when their professional development is compatible with their culture. However, developers of principals should also help principals to modify cultural values that impede their professional development.

1.6.2.4 Some religious dynamics

Many people in the Omusati community are Christians. They welcome Christianity, maybe because it ties in very well with their philosophical belief in *Kalunga*, which is the same title they accord to God. The Church has made significant impact on the values, attitudes and behaviours of many people in the region. It has played a vital role in many aspects of their life. The Church in Namibia sided with the indigenous people in fighting against apartheid, oppression and unjust treatment. It also supported them in their quest for peaceful attainment of Namibian independence and freedom. Moreover, the Church established and ran schools and clinics. Today, there are some education institutions and clinics run by the Church in the Omusati Region. The dominant denominations are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN), and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), the two religions that have the largest following in Namibia. It is worth noting that the current Bishop of ELCIN and the Archbishop of RCC in Namibia are originally from the Omusati Region. In short, the Church has shaped the values, beliefs and behaviours of people in the Omusati Region. Therefore, as Christians, principals are likely to acquire with easy educational management knowledge, which is compatible with Christian values.

1.6.2.5 An overview of the present situation

The table below shows the current picture regarding demography, climate, sectoral development, physical infrastructure, and socio-economic development in the Omusati Region.

Table 1: Some statistical data of the Omusati Region

Demography: Population size	228 842
Population Density	8.6 persons per km ²
In urban areas	1%
In rural areas	99%
Climate: Rainfall	Southern part 79 – 587mm Northern part 255 – 710 mm
Temperatures	Annual mean 23°C Mean maximum 32°C Mean minimum 9°C
Sectoral development: Fishing	Subsistence freshwater fishing from seasonal stream
Agricultural	Total number of livestock: 100 000 cattle. Small number of goats, sheep, horses, donkeys, pigs and poultry are also found. Cultivate millets, sorghum, and groundnuts.
Physical Infrastructure: Main centres	Tsandi, Elimu, Oshikuku, Okalongo, Ruacana and Outapi(Capital)
Water resources	Rivers, wells, man-made canal, boreholes, and piped water
Social infrastructure: Education	Schools/Training facilities 259 Early childhood centres 38 Primary (Junior) 132 Combined (Primary & junior secondary) 79 Secondary 9 Technikons 0 Agricultural colleges 1 Teachers' Training Colleges 0 Universities 0 Special Schools 0 Teacher/Pupil Ratio 36.2 Literacy rate, 15 + years 83%
Health facilities	Oshikuku, Uukwaluudhi, Okahao, Kamhaku Clinics. Health Care Centres 4 Beds/ 100 population 4.2
Households main income	Subsistence farming 46% Wages & salaries 16% Cash remittance 6% Business, non-farming 8% Pension 22%

(Sources of data: NPC: 2001 Population and Housing Census: Omusati Region, 2003, p. 4; and Namibia Regional Resources Manual Special Edition, 1994, p. 19.)

Table 1 shows that the Omusati Region is overwhelmingly rural, with only 1% of the population living in an urban area. The region's physical infrastructure is generally poorly developed. A road network, an electricity supply and telecommunications are sorely. Institutional facilities such as schools, hospitals and clinics are partly developed and partly neglected (Namibia Regional Resources Manual, 1993).

The other challenge facing the region was the HIV and AIDS prevalence. A daily newspaper in Namibia (The Namibian, "Aids ravaging the Omusati Region," 2002, p. 5) reported that

... HIV infections in the region [the Omusati Region] have been on the increase ... HIV/ AIDS is the number one killer of people in the age group between 18 and 49 in the Omusati Region. ... all Namibians [should] ... educate the youth about the danger of HIV/AIDS as well to change their behaviour, and not to discriminate against people living with the virus.

The HIV/AIDS pandemic affects the socio-economic development of the region, including education. Sick principals, teachers and learners, for instance, cannot deliver to the best of their ability.

The regional government at the regional capital, Outapi, has a directorate of education. The directorate's schools are divided into eight inspection circuits (districts). At the head of each inspection circuit is the school inspector. The main functions of inspectors are to monitor and evaluate the quality of education offered in schools according to government regulations and guidelines. Inspectors also advise principals on how to manage schools better and organise and/or run professional development of school principals (Mushaandja, 1996).

Each inspection circuit is divided into a number of clusters of schools. Each school cluster is comprised of a small number of schools, with one of the schools being the cluster centre and the principal of the cluster centre being the cluster centre head. The school with better physical facilities is selected as the cluster centre. Obviously, since secondary schools have better physical facilities than combined and primary schools, all nine secondary schools in the Omusati Region are cluster centres and all secondary school principals are cluster centre principals. Cluster centre principals organise and/or run professional development of teachers and other cluster principals. Each secondary school has a school board constituting of representatives of parents, teachers and learners. The functions of the school boards are to administer the affairs of and promote the development of schools.

The Omusati Region is one of the areas, which receives the highest rainfall, hence it is categorised as one of the mixed farming agricultural zones⁸ (north-central) (Namibia: A Direct United Nations Responsibility, 1987), where there is some crop and livestock production for family consumption (that is, subsistence farming). Every household member has to work on the subsistence farm for the survival of the family since non-agricultural employment opportunities are very much limited. Thus, virtually all teachers and principals own subsistence farms, and all learners had to help their parents to work the farms.

In summary, the analysis of the context suggests a number of factors that impact directly or indirectly on the professional development of principals. Some of the factors are the following: First, the Omusati Region is a relatively poor region in a middle-income country, thus, any developer involved in professional development that has to be designed for principals in the Omusati Region should take into

⁸ The other two agricultural zones are: the large stock zone (central, north and north-eastern) which specialize in beef production; and the small stock zone (south) where karakul and other sheep as well as goats are mainly found.

account the economic situation of the region and that of the country. Second, the people of the region attach importance to cultural values, religious values and traditional knowledge, which influence in some ways the choice of knowledge principals want to learn and how to learn it. Three, the legacy of colonial education and its hidden curriculum still haunt the region. For example, as Nyathi (2005) observed the majority of indigenous Namibians are still haunted by lack of self-belief and self-confidence and inferiority complex, which are some of the important attributes of instructional leaders. Thus, any professional development of principals should be preceded by thorough analysis of the context of the principals.

1.7 Thesis outline

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the study and outlines its focus. The introduction covers the background to the study, statement of the problem and research questions, and the significance of the study. The first chapter also discusses the new conceptualisation of the role of principals, and theoretical and contextual frameworks informing this study.

The review of germane literature is covered in the second chapter. The chapter shows how the scholarship review (pertinent literature review) contributes to the development of the research problem, and shows how the research problem constitutes a gap in academic knowledge of development of school principals. Furthermore, the accepted and recent empirical findings from the relevant literature are reviewed and used to form the basis for the development of the study. Chapter 2 also identifies research instrumentation of past research that has proven validity and reliability.

Chapter 3 discusses the research design and methodology employed. The chapter discusses the plan and structure of the investigation used to obtain data to answer the research questions. Specifically, the chapter discusses the research design used in this study, research population and sampling procedures, and research instruments. The chapter concludes with the discussion of the research limitations.

In Chapter 4, data collection, analysis, discussions and interpretations are discussed. Inductive analysis was used, whereby the main trends, patterns, recurring meanings, topics, categories and subcategories and connections emerging from the data are discussed.

The final chapter collates the salient strands of the preceding chapters. It looks at what has evolved with respect to the professional development of secondary school principals. The chapter also addresses issues of relevance and practicality, *inter alia*. Suggestions are made for possible implementation and policy formulation. The chapter ends with recommendations for further research.

1.8 Summary

Chapter 1 served as an introduction to the study. In this chapter, I gave a brief background to the problem, articulated the problem, and stated the research questions. Further, I discussed the rationale of the study, that is to say, the reasons for conducting this study. I also outlined the research methodology I employed to collect the data, and the frameworks that inform the study. I concluded the chapter with the outline of the chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 2

SCHOLARSHIP REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the professional development of secondary school principals in Namibia. The reasons for conducting this scholarship review were multiple: First, to make the research problem clearer. Second, to determine what has already been done in the area of professional development of secondary school principals, so as to identify gaps and controversies in the existing corpus of knowledge of professional development of these leaders, and avoid unnecessary replication. Third, this review also identified research strategies and procedures that were useful in investigating similar problems. Finally, this literature review reflected on the complexity of the problem and illuminated and explained the variables. Nevertheless, this literature review was selective, systematically organized, and structured so that important information about the research problem might not be lost in the vastness of the literature.

Very little is written about the professional development of principals in Namibia. The professional development of these school leaders appears to have been overlooked by the Namibian research fraternity. The Namibian literature search did not reveal any major study of the topic. A few Namibian studies (e.g., Villet, 2001; Kantema, 2002; Sibeya, 2002), which focus on the role of principals and the need for managerial competences, do only mention school principal training and professional development. Thus, although the professional development of principals is a very important area, its investigation has unfortunately been overlooked in Namibia.

Most of the pertinent literature I reviewed is on the professional development of principals in other countries, especially developed countries, where professional

development of principals has been in existence for some time. Nonetheless, learning from developed countries does not mean that developing countries like Namibia should borrow from developed countries without taking cognisance of the context in which their school leaders function. Many African scholars (e.g., Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Herman & Botes, 2005) caution that principal development programmes for principals developed and implemented in developed countries should not be transferred and implemented in developing countries without modification to suit the local needs.

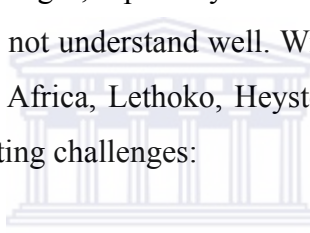
This scholarship review is organized in four sections. The first section gives a brief account of changes and challenges facing schools particularly secondary schools. The second section classifies the professional development needs of school principals into three categories. The section further explains the importance of linking professional development programmes to identify professional development needs. If principals are to develop, their development should be guided and directed by identified professional development needs. The third, fourth and fifth sections discuss the process of professional development of principals, focusing on the approaches to developing principals. Finally, the last section concludes the chapter. It summarizes and draws together the important strands of the chapter.

2.2 Some new changes and challenges

Schools are facing many new changes and challenges. These changes and challenges confuse, frustrate and overwhelm principals (Fullan, 1991; Kapp, 2000; Lethoko, Heystek and Maree, 2001; Davidoff and Lazarus, 2002). Fullan (1991, p. 144) is of the view that "... the role of the principal has in fact become dramatically more complex, overloaded, and unclear over the past decade." According to Angula (1999), changes in the Namibian education system include change of educational ethos, administrative reform, curriculum renewal, change

of language of instruction, reorientation of pedagogy, new approaches to examinations, teacher education reform, professional development opportunities and greater dissemination of information, and inclusion of more individuals in the decision-making process. These and many more changes were induced, *inter alia*, by legislation and reports that include the following: The Constitution of the Republic of Namibia (MIB, 1990); education policy documents especially *Toward Education for All: A Development Brief for Education, Culture, and Training* (MEC, 1993); the report of the Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (PCECT) (1999); and the Education Act (MBESC, 2001c).

A well-intended change does not guarantee good or desired results. Change, by its very nature, is risky, and this is one of the main reasons why many principals are sceptical of implementing changes, especially radical changes, externally initiated changes, or changes they do not understand well. Writing on the changes in some secondary schools in South Africa, Lethoko, Heystek and Maree (2001, p. 311) enumerate some of the resulting challenges:



One of the crucial changes and challenges, that the post-apartheid South African democracy faces, is to construct, against many odds, a society and an education system that will create excellent conditions for teaching and learning ... Yet schools in South Africa, especially black schools, are still characterised by poor Grade 12 results, high absenteeism, pupils being late for classes, and irregular attendance of classes by both teachers and students... The issue of the absence of a culture of learning, teaching and services ... in South African schools, especially in black secondary schools, is a major concern ...

This section discusses some of the changes and challenges facing Namibian secondary school principals and the impact these changes and challenges have on the management of secondary education.

2.2.1 Managing the use of limited resources

In Africa, primary education is no longer an end in itself, but a means to an end (Vos & Brits, 1990). In many developing countries, the expansion of primary education results in more primary school graduates entering secondary schools. The growing number of secondary school learners puts pressure on secondary education authorities to put its house in order (Vos & Brits, 1990; MEC, 1993; Olatunji, 1997; UNESCO, 1999a). In Namibia, many rural secondary schools do not have sufficient resources, such as reading and writing material and laboratory equipments (MBESC, 2001a). In many of these schools, learners have to share learning materials such as textbooks. Despite significant annual national budget allocated to education since independence, the basic education necessities remain inadequate in many rural secondary schools (MBESC, 2001a; Mutorwa, 2003; Mutorwa, 2004).

The Presidential Commission on Education, Culture and Training (PCECT) (1999, p. 72) suggests a solution, namely that secondary education for all should be financed by all:

If the provisions of the Constitution⁹ are to be taken seriously, there will be little alternative but to move public resources down towards the primary level (Grades 1 – 7) to improve quality and equity while keeping private costs low and enrolment rates high. This will mean demanding greater private contributions at junior secondary (Grades 8 – 10) [and] senior secondary (Grades 11 – 12) ... Realistically, such changes can only take place over a period of years so that sudden shocks are avoided.

⁹ Article 20 of the Constitution of Namibia stipulates that “(p)rimarily education shall be compulsory and the State shall provide reasonable facilities to render effective this right for every resident within Namibia, by establishing and maintaining State schools at which primary education will be provided free of charge.”

This means that other stakeholders such as parents will be expected to make more financial contributions to secondary education. If implemented, the recommendation is likely to upset many people, and rural parents are not likely to be able to afford to make significant financial contributions, because of their poor financial standing. Thus, the resources are likely to remain more or less the same (that is, limited) and principals should learn how to manage schools with limited resources. The reality is that it will take years for this trend to be reversed. Therefore, school principals should be equipped with at least two sets of skills, namely the ability to influence the behaviours of stakeholders (people leadership) to make financial contributions willingly, and the ability to manage finances effectively.

2.2.2 Leading people

Potter (as quoted by Moloi, 2005, p. 95) succinctly states that “people love change, but they don’t like to be changed.” The complexity and the need for change have made leadership to “become significant and permeates almost every other aspect of the principals’ roles and responsibilities” (Cranston, 2002, p.3). Reports indicate that despite efforts to have them improve their conducts, many teachers and learners in Namibia remain difficult to lead (MEC, 1992; Hope, 1993; MEC, 1995; Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997; PCECT, 1999). Some examples of their persistent and unbecoming behaviours are: absenteeism without valid reasons, class-cutting and truancy, and laziness. Indiscipline of both teachers and learners appears to be the main challenge facing secondary school principals. Hope (1993, p. 124) quotes the Minister of education as saying “... indiscipline bordering on anarchy is slowly but surely creeping into many schools ... the nation is doomed to backwardness, ignorance, economic stagnation and misery.”

There is a feeling in some sections of Namibian society that the abolition of corporal punishment in 1990 resulted in increased learner indiscipline in schools, especially in secondary schools (Hope, 1993; Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997).

Learner indiscipline has made teaching and learning virtually impossible. In desperation, many parents and even some learners call for the reintroduction of corporal punishment (Zimba, Auala & Scott, 1997), a disciplinary measure that is both unconstitutional and autocratic in nature. The proponents of corporal punishment put pressure on principals to reintroduce corporal punishment in schools, something the principals cannot do as they would contradict directly the country's supreme law, the constitution. In short, learner indiscipline in some Namibian secondary schools is such that it has an adverse impact on teaching and learning.

Principals are expected to change the unbecoming conducts of both teachers and learners. According to the directive *1995 The Year for the Improvement of Quality of Educational Outcomes* (MEC, 1995) principals are expected to act as educational leaders and managers of schools, whose main obligations must include the submission of term reports on teacher absenteeism and annual reports on learner absenteeism, truancy and class-cutting. The directive states that undisciplined teachers and learners should be dealt with severely. Severe disciplinary actions that can be taken against the culprits include charging them with misconduct, suspension, and expulsion (MBESC, 2001c). The directive may succeed in getting teachers and learners to stay at school because of fear of punishment (autocratic measure), but the crucial question is whether the mere presence at school is a guarantee that quality teaching and learning are taking place. Furthermore, principals are expected to be supportive, not punitive; and when dealing with learner indiscipline, they are expected to enable learners to develop self-disciplined (MEC, 1993). All these are new measures that were introduced at independence in 1990. The principals still have to learn how to apply these measures practically.

2.2.3 Managing participatory management

Closely related to people leadership is participatory management. Unlike before independence, when autocratic management was customary in many Namibian schools, post-independence education has to be managed in accordance with democratic principles (MIB, 1990; MEC, 1993; MBESC, 2001c). Learners, teachers, parents and other stakeholders have the right to partake in decision-making processes. Principals are expected to use democratic management principles to manage schools. In fact, one of the nation's main educational goals is democracy (MEC, 1993). Democratic management of schools is based on what Olatunji (1997, p.314) refers to as the "grass roots approach to politics" in education. This means, for example, that Namibian secondary school principals should involve stakeholders in decision-making (MEC, 1993). Parents, teachers and even learners should be represented in the governing bodies of secondary schools such as school boards (MBESC, 2001c).

Thus, school principals have the daunting task of overseeing the involvement of stakeholders in devolved decision-making processes and of making decisions with them, not for them. This is not an easy task, especially if the principals have to work with uninformed stakeholders, who may want to push for decisions that are either contrary to the education policy, in conflict with the scientifically proven theory of education, or not in the best interest of some other stakeholders. Principals have to develop teachers to play a role of effective teachers-as-managers. All in all, as accounting officers in their schools, principals have to ensure efficacious participatory school management, a management style that is new to both the principals themselves and their co-managers (representatives of stakeholders).

2.2.4 Meeting diverse expectations

Secondary education has become increasingly important to learners, parents and communities, because it makes significant and indispensable contributions to the development of the youth and to the socio-economic development of countries. Nowadays, secondary school learners are at the crossroads and secondary education is expected to prepare them for various eventualities. It should equip them with stronger academic knowledge in order to compete successfully for admission to internationally recognised institutions of higher learning, furnish them with saleable skills needed in demanding labour market, and prepare them for social life in societies (MEC, 1993; UNESCO, 1999a; UNESCO, 1999b). Upon completing grade 12, for those who are admitted at the institutions of higher learning in Namibia or abroad, their secondary education background should be able to help them to cope with challenges of higher learning. Only a handful of learners from rural secondary schools qualify for admission to higher education (MoE, 2006). The majority of grade 10 and 12 (the two secondary school grades where standardized examinations are taken) school leavers find themselves out of the education system seeking for employment opportunities. Therefore, secondary education is expected to prepare them for work and skills training. They are expected to partake in what is commonly known in Namibia as the second liberation struggle – socio-economic development (MBESC, 2001b). Unfortunately, on its front page the daily newspaper *New Era* (Ngavirue, “Skills Anorexia Dogs Namibia,” July 14, 2006, p. 1) writes “... Namibia’s socio-political stability was threatened by the ever-growing ranks of urbanised, poorly educated unemployed youth.” Referring to the need for skills development in secondary school learners in the USA, Lewis (2004, p. 1) recommends:

We need to discover the means to enhance the skills of our work force, especially those workers lower on the skill ladder. That effort needs to begin in kindergarten, ... But it is critical for high schools [secondary schools] ...

Furthermore, secondary education is expected to develop cultural values, positive attitudes and knowledge needed for good citizenship in the youth. This integrative function is imperative to Namibia at this point in time when the country is still grappling with undoing the legacy of apartheid era. Secondary education helps nurture, among other important values to Namibia, equality, equity, democracy and national reconciliation.

Moreover, secondary education should help adolescents to overcome social problems facing them, such as teenage pregnancies and the HIV/AIDS pandemic. In short, according to UNESCO (1999a), secondary education should foster responsible citizenship and prepare the 13 to 17 year-olds for work, higher education and life in general. In order for secondary education to achieve all these multi functions successfully and to the satisfaction of all stakeholders, secondary school principals should play a catalytic role, namely instructional leadership.

2.2.5 Managing learning organisations

Changes and challenges facing schools call for well-developed change agents, namely, principals and teachers. A substantial amount of literature (e.g., Hord, 1997; Sterling and Davidoff, 2000; Leonard, 2002; Davidoff and Lazarus, 2002; Guskey, 2003; Lewis, 2004; Schmoker, 2004; Moloï, 2005) suggests the need for the establishment of learning communities/organisations (learning teams) in schools. A learning community means having personnel and principals reciprocally engaged in learning (Hord, 1997). In other words, the suggestion is that principals, along with their staff members, especially teachers, should be learners, questioning, investigating, and seeking solutions for school improvement. The traditional pattern that teachers teach, learners learn, and principals manage is completely altered. Learning communities are built around collaborative exchange, in which, for example, teachers plan lessons together, reflect on their work, exchange ideas, and share teaching strategies. Hord (1997) has found that teachers who feel supported in their own ongoing professional

development are more committed and effective than those who are not. In short, effective learning communities are likely to enhance learner learning.

Contrary to the trend in Namibia, where most of the professional development of teachers takes place in workshops, the literature suggests school-based learning communities or organisations, and Schmoker (2004, p.6) argues emphatically for learning communities:

... ongoing improvement of instruction ... can be acquired only in learning teams. Workshops ... will not work. They [workshops] do not permit the application of and experimentation with ... ideas in real classrooms, and sharing that experience with other colleagues in a team effort.

Because professional development through learning communities is school-based, it has become an added management responsibility for principals. One of the challenges comes with this is to identify the professional development needs of staff members. Guskey (2003) has found that the analysis of learner learning data, such as assessment results, especially those from standardised examinations, is a reliable tool to reveal the professional development needs of teachers. Guskey (ibid.) found that greater variation exists between classrooms within a school than between schools or regions. In other words, within a school context there are teachers who can help learners learn better. Thus, the task of the principal is to organise teachers to share their teaching strategies. Organising teachers requires the principals to overcome some barriers, two of which are the competitive nature and individualism of some teachers. The principals should be able to build a spirit of co-operation, teamwork and trust among the teachers (Bambino, 2002; Leonard, 2002). There are some preconditions for direct, honest and productive conversations among teachers. First, teachers cannot be forced to share, but they should be persuaded. Second, principals should be able to involve teachers in decision-making regarding matters related to their learning communities. Third, principals should exercise sympathetic and supportive leadership. Learning is

difficult; therefore, if the facilitator of learning is not sympathetic and supportive, teachers are likely to become frustrated and withdraw from learning.

As Schmoker (2004, p. 1) puts it "... the most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community, [unfortunately] learning communities are extremely rare." This is another new development, which requires the principals to be able to establish and manage effective learning communities in their schools.

In sum, although it commands the critical years of a young person's development, post primary education "... is perhaps the weakest link in the education system" (UNESCO, 1999a, p. 1). New political, financial and socio-economic trends in Namibia challenge secondary education. Due to their strategic positions as school leaders, principals stand a better chance than others of helping schools overcome the challenges emanating from the above-outlined changes. In order for these site-based leaders and managers to perform this task better, they need improved professional development. As already stated, for a professional development programme to be effective, it has to be preceded by proper identification of professional development needs, and to this I now turn.

2.3 Areas of professional development needs

Ng (2001) indicates that there are three types of areas of the professional development of principals, namely, skills and knowledge (competence), attitudes and values, and actions and behaviours (practice). It follows that there should be three areas of professional development needs of principals. This section discusses these areas. The section further underscores that proper identification and thorough analysis of the specific professional development needs of principals should precede any professional development.

2.3.1 Knowledge and skills (competence)

Competence-based development needs are the generic needs, a cluster of knowledge and skills needs, which should be satisfied in order for principals to be able to perform certain tasks as expected in a particular context. The importance accorded to competence development makes it a predominant area of development in many development programmes for principals (Ng, 2001). Principals have to develop capabilities of using relevant skills and knowledge effectively and appropriately.

Researchers have discovered different competencies essential for principals, but their lists of competences differ so much that it is difficult to say with certainty which specific competences are generic. According to Cave and Wilkinson (1991) there is common assent on the main areas of knowledge required by principals in the UK: professional knowledge of educational principles and practices; knowledge of theories and models of managerial processes; and knowledge of social, political and legal contexts. Furthermore, Cave and Wilkinson (ibid.) are of the view that there are discrete interpersonal skills necessary for effective principalship: persuading, bargaining, explaining, listening, reporting, informing, counselling, appraising, chairing, interviewing and team building, to mention some. Reporting about development needs of principals from the same country namely the UK, but in a different context, Ouston (1997) says that there are four competences needed by educational leaders: the management of policy, learning, people, and resources. Mestry and Grobler (2002) found that educational leaders from various post levels in the three regions of Gauteng Province, South Africa should be competent in the following four key functions in order to manage schools effectively: management of the curriculum, management of the organizational structures, management of financial and physical resources, and management of educators. Further, Mestry and Grobler (ibid.) found that in

managing educators, principals should be competent in the following areas: First, personnel provisioning, which includes recruiting, selecting and placing educators so that the goals of the school can be achieved. Second, human relations, which mean that principals should have the necessary skills to motivate educators, build effective teams, and manage conflicts, stress and cultural diversity. They should liaise and build good relations with teacher organizations and non-governmental organizations. Finally, principals should be able to appraise and develop staff members so that educators can achieve their own objectives as well as the aims and objectives of the school. In sum, the competence-based development needs of principals differ from context to context; hence there can be no talk of universal or even national competence-based development needs.

Pashiardis (1997) and Dadey and Olaniyan (1992) conducted studies on the professional development needs of secondary school principals in Cyprus and Namibia respectively. Pashiardis (1997) found that although the Cypriot secondary school principals lacked competences in all management areas, the greatest needs existed in the following areas: programme and curriculum renewal and management, special education administration, school improvement, and the use of developmental evaluation techniques.

Dadey and Olaniyan (1992) conducted a similar study in Namibia. Unfortunately, no secondary school principal from the Omusati Region was included in the sample. The findings reveal that, by and large, Namibian secondary school principals were incompetent in leadership. Moreover, the study found that secondary school principals were incompetent in human resources management, management of change, finance and resources, and external relations management. Management functions that were aimed at ensuring smooth running of the school machinery such as planning, implementing, supervising and evaluating were found to be moderately difficult. The study indicated that secondary school principals were finding the following functions easy: managing

learners, managing meetings, and routine administration. However, the study found that there were some difficult aspects in the easy tasks as well.

Although the above-cited studies suggest some clusters of generic competences that enhance a secondary school educational leader's chance of success, they were both in agreement that there was no conclusive evidence, nor research findings available which shows that the possession of certain qualities or competences will guarantee effective principalship. Whatever good competences of principals referred to above should not be seen as sufficient or necessary conditions but desirable qualities for principals for a particular situation.

Furthermore, making principals competent is not that easy and even describing a competent principal is difficult. Referring to this dilemma of making principals competent leaders, Cave and Wilkinson (1997, p. 147) state that "... you know who they are but you don't know why they are," and that competent leadership is "... something that we can know more than we can tell."

Ouston (1997) and Cave and Wilkinson (1997) cite some factors that make the identification of clusters of generic development needs problematic. First, the purpose of effective educational leadership is to be able to create, maintain, review and develop the conditions that enable teachers and learners to achieve effective teaching and learning. The question that is not yet answered here is what effective or competent leadership means. What is clear, though, is that competence is not the same in all schools and to all principals.

The second problem is that the competence approach seems to underestimate educational management. Education managers have to be able to do many things at once, using different competences in different combinations, according to context. An educational manager could perform all the competences, but not in

every day environment. Similarly, an educational manager could perform excellently in one school, but completely incompetently in another. This raises the whole question of context. The needs are consequent on political, economic, social and cultural ambience of a community, which play an important part in influencing the leadership of principals (Dadey & Olaniyan, 1992; Bezzina, 2002). Thus, "... there is no single 'one size fits all' solution ..." to all management problems in all schools (Glatter and Kydd, 2003, p. 238). This is so because a manager is a product of his or her functional relations to specific individuals in a specific situation (Musaazi, 1982). The situation is one of important variables forming the managerial practice.

Third, a competence-based approach is extremely individualised. Effective leaders need not to be know-it-alls. They have to empower their subordinates to be able to perform certain tasks, and in this way, they can groom leaders through coaching, guiding and so on. They should not do everything themselves. They have to delegate tasks and authority to people with relevant expertise. The management team as a whole, rather than each individual, has to have the required competences.

Finally, lists of competences are based on past best practices. In an era of rapid change, the lists of best practices reflect what good managers could do well in the past, rather than what they can do well in the present situation or in the future. Moreover, because of rapid change, principals may find themselves concerned with the current force, an attitude of short-termism and coping with immediate practicalities rather than long-term development issues (Cave and Wilkinson, 1997). Thus, for example, the professional development needs of secondary school principals in Namibia identified by the Dadey and Olaniyan study in 1992, immediately after Namibian independence in 1990, may be outdated. The competences identified might have been significantly altered by the fermenting state of education. Therefore, the competence-based development needs of

Namibian secondary school principals may have changed over time, for better or worse. In short, professional development needs are as sensitive to time as they are to place. As the knowledge and skills of principals change with time, the way they manage their schools should also change.

The technical aspect of competence is neither the sole nor the most important dimension of principal development (Morgan, 1997; Bennett, 1997; Ng, 2001). There are some other areas of professional development needs of principals. The following subsections look into two other areas of professional development needs of school principals.

2.3.2. Attitudes and values

In addition to competences (knowledge and skills), there are two more areas of professional development needs. One of the areas concerns professional attitudes and values. Values are described as a broad inclination to give preference to a certain state of affairs. Values involve feelings and emotions that are regarded as good or bad. While Ng (2001) presents values and attitudes just as one area of development, Uys (1990) explains that values do not predict behaviour in a certain situation reliably. Attitudes, on the other hand, are relatively stable emotional tendencies that cause reaction in a certain way. Attitude is a primary force that determines whether a person succeeds or fails. It determines performance (Uys, 1990; Maxwell, 1993). The report of PCECT (1999, p. 22) implies an attitude problem in the Namibian education sector when it remarks that one of the main problems "... is a lack of urgency and responsibility, or commitment to take decisions and solve problems immediately at the lowest possible level, as is required in today's fast-moving world". Mushaandja (2000, p. 2) was more specific when he was addressing teachers and principals in a workshop in the former Ondangwa West Education Region (Omusati and Oshana regions). He said:

The main problem in our education, as I see it, is not that our teachers are not ready to teach, neither is it that our learners are not ready to learn, but the [main] problem is how to make principals want to lead and teachers want to teach effectively and to the best of their ability. Our [main] problem is that of negative attitude.

Attitudes and values are important ingredients in the professional development of principals. Hodgkinson (as quoted by Ng, 2001, p. 77) contends that "... values, morals, and ethics are the very stuff of leadership and administrative life." And Sergiovanni (as quoted by Ng, 2001 p. 77) refers to these qualities as "... the heart of leadership." Therefore, in addition to leadership knowledge and skills, effective educational leaders should have qualities such as integrity, upholding their beliefs, being morally upright, being committed to education, caring for teachers and learners, and so on (Ng, 2001). The approach of developing principals in the United States of America has come under attack for overlooking human, moral, social and political aspects (Cooper & Shute, 1988). Foster (as quoted by Cooper & Shute, 1988, p. 24) raises an intriguing point by arguing that administration is a moral science:

When administration is considered as a moral science, administrators must deal with moral dilemmas. Each decision carries moral rather than technical implications. This realization distinguishes the administrator from the technocrat. Each administrative decision carries with it a restructuring of a human life; this is why administration at its heart is the resolution of moral dilemmas ...

Young (cited by Bennett, 1997) found that principals' actions are influenced by what is called their 'assumptive world.' This denotes principals' values about how

things actually happen and what they ought to do in particular settings. In any given situation, principals create an understanding of what is happening and how they fit into it by turning to their knowledge of similar circumstances (experience) and their personal attitudes and values, which cause them to regard certain elements of the situation as more important than others. This determines what decision they take and what they do. For instance, a principal who feels powerless to confront her or his school inspector may decide to agree with the inspector's advice even though the principal knows the advice will not work out in her or his school situation. Moreover, this personal set of beliefs might be different from, and might conflict with, the public's values and expectations. Therefore, principals have to learn how to strike a balance between the two.

Bennett (ibid.) argues that if the principals' practice is a reflection of their understanding of a circumstance and their perceptions of what their job involves, it follows that they can only improve what they are doing if they are clear about that understanding and prepared to put it under review – 'double loop learning.' Double loop learning calls for learning by reflecting not only on what they do but also considering the reasons why they do what they do, and allow for the possibility that those assumptions about their practice may need to be revised.

It is worth noting, and learning, from the Scottish Qualification for Headship Programme, which contains what is referred to as "professional values" (O'Brien & Draper, 2001; Reeves et al., 2001). According to O'Brien & Draper (2001) the development of professional values in Scottish principals aims at developing commitments to critical reflection, extending knowledge and understanding of educational values. In short, it appears that there is little argument on whether values and attitudes should form part of the development programme for principals, but the bone of contention is what values and attributes should be inculcated in principals and how (Ng, 2001).

2.3.3. Actions and behaviours

The other area of professional development aims at enabling principals to turn into action what they learn. The main aim for principal development is for them to be able to influence teaching and learning (Ng, 2001). Knowledge, skills, professional attitudes and values are of little value if the principals are unable to bring about improved learner performance. Action is considered as "... more important than knowledge" (Ng, 2001, p. 78) and "... the most complex, the most worrisome, and often the most exhilarating" (Donaldson and Marnik, 1995, p. 49). Therefore, "... it is not difficult to know but difficult to act." Action and knowledge are inseparable as "... knowledge is the direction for action and the action the effort of knowledge, and that knowledge is the beginning of action and action the completion of knowledge" (Yang-ming, as quoted by Ng, 2001, p. 78). There should be correspondence between knowledge and action. And action requires courage, self-confidence, dedication, a sense of responsibility and morality (Ng, 2001). These too are leadership and management values that principals may lack, and therefore, they cannot put into practice what they learn. In sum, the ultimate aim of professional development is to bring about improvement in learner performance; therefore, principals should be able to put into action the learned knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

Any successful professional development should start with the identification of the missing desirable knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, action and behaviour. Those who lead schools are in a better position to know and identify what their development needs are (Cave & Wilkinson, 1997). Therefore, the principals, not the developers, should identify their needs, of course with the help of the developers. In short, development starts with the principals identifying their development needs before devising strategies to meet them.

Whilst most of the professional development needs or symptoms thereof might be known, can be identified or assumed, often there is a gap between the needs and the actions taken to meet them. Consequently, the professional development offered is seldom properly designed to the known needs. The professional development needs should be used as a starting point for the professional development of principals. Development needs give clues of what should be done in order to meet those needs (Cave & Wilkinson, 1997). It is only when the problems that principals are experiencing are understood, and the leadership areas in which principals fall short are known, that their development can be meaningfully planned to meet their needs. De Villiers (1990) and Sherman, Bohlander & Snell (1996) are of the opinion that the type of development given to managers should be dictated by the professional development needs identified. Unfortunately, as Davis (2001) notes professional development for school principals (in Australia) is a proliferation of courses framed around what developers know which increasingly is not what principals need to know. Davis (ibid.) is of the view that professional development exists because developers want to teach courses, not because principals want to learn. Such a professional development is likely to be irrelevant.

This section has raised four points. First, there are three areas of professional development needs for principals, namely competence (skills and knowledge), attitudes and values, and action and behaviour needs. Second, all professional development efforts should be geared to improving all areas of professional development. Third, the needs are never static. They change with time and place. To date, there is no conclusive evidence, nor research findings available, which show that the possession of certain qualities or competences will guarantee effective principalship. Hence, no leadership skills and knowledge, values and attitudes, and action and behaviour that are seen as sufficient or necessary conditions, but just as desirable qualities for principals for a particular situation. Fourth, and more importantly to this study, there is a growing conviction that

those who lead schools are in the better position to identify what their needs may be.

2.4 Some approaches to professional development of principals

In this section, I discuss three approaches of developing principals, namely off-the-job (university-based), on-the-job, and whole school development approaches. The section shows the strengths and weaknesses of each. It ends by suggesting that the approaches should complement each other.

2.4.1 University-based professional development

Many people in Namibia believe that the best way to learn is to attend courses at institutions of higher learning such as universities. One of the main reasons for this belief is the personal gains attached to university-based learning. At the end of university-based learning, students acquire qualifications they need for salary increases and prestige (personal gains). Moreover, people consider institutions of higher learning as the custodians of all wisdom. Therefore, many principals also prefer to learn at institutions of higher learning, mainly because of personal gains. However, there are a number of problems associated with university-based principal development (Murphy and Hallinger, 1989; Hallinger and Murphy, 1991; Johnson, 1991; Haller, Brent and McNamara, 1997; Olson, 2000; Ng, 2001; Brundrett, 2001).

Firstly, there are problems related to the content. Generally, university-based development lacks coherence, rigour and standards, and principals who complete it are ill-prepared for principalship. University-based development often consists of packages of unrelated courses that fail to reveal any overarching design or consistent purpose. Furthermore, the content covered does not reflect the realities

that await the principals upon completion of their studies. Instead of connecting development to the needs of principals and the realities of principals' workplace, professors of Educational Management prefer to be theoretical, whereas the management of schools tends to be less theoretical (Brundrett, 2001). According to Johnson (1991) and Yee (1997), a number of Educational Management curricula have remained relatively unchanged for decades, because university departments responsible for principal development are, by nature, conservative and resistant to change. Therefore, the theory taught to principals is not only irrelevant but also outdated. Johnson (1991) recommends that Educational Management curricula should be reviewed periodically. Recommendations by prominent writers in the field, practitioners in the profession, survey of student opinions, and comments by professional and academic experts about the relevance of the contents of curricula are informative in reviewing the content. In sum, there is a strong feeling that university content used to develop principals is generally outdated and decoupled from realities that principals will confront on the job and is unlikely to prepare them adequately. There is, therefore, a need for development programme content to be reviewed periodically.

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Secondly, university development seems to have little or no positive effects on the performance of principals. Haller, Brent and McNamara (1997) argue that it is not manifestly obvious that American schools (where principals are required to take substantial amounts of graduate training in order to become principals) are better managed and led than those of Germany, Italy, France, Japan, and others – countries in which little or no formal training of principals is required. Therefore, the efficacy of university development of principals should be investigated empirically to determine the correlation between university-based principal development and effectiveness of principals.

Thirdly, according to Haller, Brent and McNamara (1997), one of the common complaints about university professional development is that it is expensive for the individual who undergoes it, for the institution that provides it, and for the

society that requires it. As a developing country, Namibia cannot afford to waste its limited resources on programmes that are not beneficial. Thus, if the quality of university-based development is questionable and if it has no significant influence on the effectiveness of principals, then it is not worth spending the limited resources on.

Fourthly, there are some problems related to the dual purpose of principal development programme of universities, namely development and assessing or licensing. Developing the principals is welcome (Ng, 2001), but it becomes a bone of contention when it is linked to assessing or licensing in order to screen those principals that are suitable and those that are not suitable for principalship. Supporters of this link think that the developer, who is an expert and is familiar with the capacity of principals, should be involved in licensing. While opponents argue that role ambiguity and conflict would result if the developer acts simultaneously as a developer and as an assessor. In other words, as Ng (2001) puts it, there is a danger of goal displacement, that is, assessment rather than professional development would be the prime objective. Principals may be more interested in obtaining a qualification for personal gains, irrespective of whether the knowledge they have acquired will improve their performance. Therefore, if developers are to act as developers-cum-assessors, they should be able to strike a balance between development and assessment.

Fifthly, the delivery modes for principals' development are designed for failure (Hallinger & Murphy, 1991; Ng, 2001). The most preferred instructional modes of delivery of university professors worldwide are lectures and discussions. Unfortunately, these methods are theoretical, authoritarian and developer-centred (Ng, 2001). These methods might affect the quality of learning, unless other methods such as questioning and problem-solving are incorporated into these methods. Evans and Mohr (1999, p. 531) believe that "... teaching principals how to lead schools by giving them predigested 'in-basket' training hardly leads to

new thinking about leadership, teaching, or learning.” This belief fits in well with Freire’s (1970) disapproval of what he refers to as “banking education”, that is, the development whereby the developers see themselves as depositing knowledge in the empty vaults of students’ minds. Freire recommends “dialogue”. “Dialogue” is similar to learner-centred education (or in this case, principal-centred professional development), in that both approaches advocate for more principal participation. All in all, the literature suggests that principals learn more and better when they partake more in the professional development process.

The provider-centred development approach’s downside becomes explicit when it is considered in relation to the main function of principals nowadays, that is, instructional leadership (MEC, 1993; Olson, 2000; Villet, 2001). University development pays little attention to the manner in which principals influence curriculum and teaching. Instructional leadership receives little or no attention at all (Olson, 2000). If the main function of principals is to bring about improvement in learning and teaching (instructional leadership), and maybe that is why in many countries principals are appointed from excellent classroom teachers, then their professional development should focus more on instructional leadership than on educational management or non-instructional matters such as budgeting and external relations.

Mentioning the drawbacks of lectures and discussions should not be interpreted as meaning that the two methods have no place in the development of principals. They help principals to learn basic facts, laws, and the basic information that every principal should master and which make the job of the principal more effective. For instance, principals should know the laid-down procedures for managing learners, teachers, curriculum, resource material, physical facilities and others (Brookfield, 1990). Lecturers should be, among other basic requirements for effective lecturing, clear about why they had to lecture and should fully understand the culture, concerns and interests of those they lecture (Brookfield,

1990). With a good lecture, one can deliver substantial amounts of theories, ideas and facts to a large number of principals within a short space of time, provided that the lecture is carefully planned, structured and presented (Nel & Haasbroek, 1998). Through lecturing, current information that is not yet documented could be made available to principals. Therefore, lecturing still has a role to play in the professional development of principals, that is, to impart technical skills and knowledge (competences) especially to novice or beginner principals, but it falls short of developing values and attitudes and action and behaviour (Ng, 2001).

In short, professional development involves learning new knowledge and skills, values and attitudes, and actions and behaviours (Mumford, 1993; Ng, 2001); and there are institutions established in many nations for learning purposes. There is a strong belief that if principals are to learn effectively, they should enrol in institutions of higher education such as universities. Yet there is evidence in literature suggesting that university-based learning is not entirely effective. Opponents of university-based development suggest that principals should learn while working so as to learn by doing and from experience.

Most principals do not fully understand the job until they are in the midst of it. One principal remarked: “You don’t learn to be a principal until you are one” (McCay, 2001, p. 75). This implies that principal development should take place on-the-job, and this kind of development will now be discussed.

2.4.2 On-the-job professional development

On the job professional development is just what it says – principals grow on the job while simultaneously leading their schools (McCay, 2001). The current trend in school-based development is towards a higher level of participant involvement in programme planning, implementation and evaluation than is found in a university-based development approach (Murphy & Hallinger, 1989). Hallinger & Murphy (1991, p. 517) describe school-based development vis-à-vis university-based preparation as follows:

A notable trend emerging from the increased diversity of providers is the greater involvement of administrators in the governance and planning of programs. Although governance structures vary widely from centre to centre, most programs no longer view administrators as passive recipients. Many, though certainly not all, staff development programs now seek the active participation of practicing administrators in defining needs, planning programs, delivering instruction, and providing coaching and support. In this way staff development programs contrast sharply with initial preparation programs provided by university departments of educational administration, which generally limit the involvement of practitioners in program development and implementation.

The point here is that principals should take more responsibility for their development. If problems and challenges facing principals are always in a fermenting state and if the knowledge and skills, attitudes and values, and actions and behaviours needed to respond to those problems and challenges are always relative, then principals should never stop learning. Also, if the development is to bring about effective teaching and learning in school contexts, and if real development takes place in the complicated realities of each school, then school site-based development, catering for differing contextual (school, regional or national contexts) development needs, is required.

2.4.2.1 Induction

If experienced principals find their job stressful and exhausting, one might ask how the beginning principals find it. The newly appointed principals are overwhelmed, as they have to make quick decisions in their new working environment (Schwartz & Hravey 1991; Lashway, 2003). They experience similar school dilemmas as those faced by experienced principals. Challenges in schools do not discriminate. They face each and every principal equally and with the same magnitude. As I already mentioned, many principals in many countries do not receive pre-service preparation for principalship when they are appointed; and many rookie principals do not undergo proper induction (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Kantema, 2002; Lashway, 2003). They are left to sink or swim (Hallinger & Murphy, 1991; Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Lashway, 2003). However, recent literature (e.g., Lashway, 2003; Martin & Robertson, 2003) strongly suggests that first-time principals should be suitably inducted, because it is assumed that appointment to the first principal's position represents a significant transition point in a school leader's career. Hence, induction would be significantly helpful. This subsection reviews literature on the induction of beginning principals.

Kitavi and van der Westhuizen (1997) define induction of beginning principals as a well-structured comprehensive professional development programme with concisely articulated goals designed for the purpose of developing first-time principals to carry out their work effectively. An induction programme is intended to meet both the principals' needs and the needs of the educational system. A newcomer should be helped to overcome the trauma of transition from a different job. Thus, induction is intended to identify gaps in the knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, actions and behaviours of first-time principals and to do something about reducing them.

There are some specific challenges facing beginning principals that make induction crucial. Immediate challenges facing first-time principals include unrelenting stress as they adjust their textbook understanding of leadership (for those who underwent some kind of pre-service development) to the real world of practice; a feeling of overloading; the need for quick assimilation into a new culture of not only “... how things are done ...,” but “... how things are done here ...” in the messy realities of each school (Lashway, 2003, p. 2); a disconcerting feeling of dealing with teachers as supervisors rather than peers; and a strong sense of isolation, especially if they receive little feedback from their supervisors (Schwartz & Harvey, 1991; Lashway, 2003), as is the case in rural regions in Namibia (Mushaandja, 1996; Kantema, 2002). Those challenges and many more make the work of the first-time principals highly stressful.

In order for the novice principals to provide effective leadership as soon as possible, they should be guided, especially in how things are done here. Kitavi and van der Westhuizen (1997) caution that an induction programme developed and implemented in one country should not be transferred and implemented in another country without modification to suit the local needs. Hence, for the induction to be fully effective, it should be embedded in the culture of the school or region (Lashway, 2003). Induction can be carried out through, for example, organizing short conferences, study groups, or visits to other schools. Schwartz & Harvey (1991) suggest that even the outgoing principal can play a role in the induction of the incoming principal. The outgoing principal can write information on the school system and its internal and external procedures for the incoming principal, especially if the new principal is from outside the school or is new in school management. A simple thing like writing a list of whom to call for particular kinds of information could also be useful to a first-time principal. Thus, induction is a *sine qua non*, and it can be simple and inexpensive.

Furthermore, Mushaandja (1996, p. 29) cautions that induction programmes should not be “provided”, but should be negotiated and shared with those involved. Self-induction is more effective than having a programme laid on, which in itself could be patronizing and deskilling. Schwartz and Harvey (1991) and Lashway (2003) suggest a number of strategies, depending on the needs of the first-time principals and the induction contents. Some of the strategies are study groups, leadership academies, peer coaching, workshops, and retreats. Bush and Jackson (2002) observed that a variety of strategies were employed in inducting beginning principals in leadership centres such as New South Wales (in Australia), the Ohio Principal Leadership Academy, and the Chicago Leadership Academies (in the USA). Thus, there are many strategies for inducting first-time principals.

A major unresolved issue about induction is whether participation in induction programmes should be mandatory or voluntary. According to Hallinger and Murphy (1991) mandatory programmes, regardless of quality, send a mixed message. On the one hand mandated participation in induction appears to signal the importance of professional growth. On the other hand, mandated growth ignores individual needs. The trend in the USA is that mandatory participation in induction has become more and more prevalent (Hallinger & Murphy, 1991). The saying “You can lead a horse to water but you cannot make it drink” is at play here. Thus, first-time principals should not only be provided with induction, but, very importantly, they should be made to want to learn.

Induction is almost synonymous with mentoring, because mentoring has come to be considered as the panacea for many problems facing beginning principals (Kitavi & van der Westhuizen, 1997; Low, 2001; Bush & Jackson, 2002; Lashway, 2003). According to Bush and Jackson (2002), there are mixed views about the notion of mentoring. Mentoring is conceptualised in a number of ways, including peer support, internship, counselling, socialising and coaching. In some

education systems, it has two or more of those features, but in most education systems, mentoring means coaching (Low, 2001; Bush & Jackson, 2002).

Neophyte principals need veteran principals to mentor them, and the benefits of mentoring are varied. Veteran principals provide assistance in technical skills, rules, procedures and expectations so that novice principals can be more effective, professional, confident, better equipped, better informed and better prepared. Mentoring offers the opportunity for protégés to have experienced professionals in whom they can confide, seek advice and discuss problems and concerns to assist them (Kitavi and van der Westhuizen, 1997; Low, 2001). In addition, Kitavi and van der Westhuizen (1997) are of the opinion that in view of lack of sufficient funds for running development programmes for new principals in developing countries, mentoring can be a better option, as it is more effective and cost-effective.

Furthermore, Low (2001) indicates that there are two more important benefits of induction: First, since learning is reciprocal, mentors would also become more effective and knowledgeable in their work, and second, protégés help mentors to broaden their knowledge by sharing with them their latest theoretical knowledge. According to Low (ibid.), mentors feel that while the protégés are upgrading, mentors are updated. Also, those selected to be mentors enjoy considerable prestige and high visibility in the eyes of their peers and teachers. Mentors believe that being selected improves their professional image. This serves as a motivation to the mentors. The other benefit is that mentoring programmes ensure that experienced, effective principals leave behind in the education system some of the knowledge they have learned over the years for others to develop further. Thus, “what works” is left behind when the veterans retire.

According to Lashway (2003) mentors render three forms of assistance to new principals: they provide instructional support by keeping the newcomers’

attention focused on learning issues and offer models of successful practice; they provide administrative and managerial support, not just by giving practical tips but also by helping their protégés set priorities; and they provide emotional support by listening carefully and being present at stressful moments.

The benefits of mentoring outlined in preceding paragraphs are not automatic. A crucial aspect of the mentoring process is the identification and selection of suitable mentors (Lashway, 2003). Some of the key considerations in selecting mentors are: careful matching of mentors and protégés; clear expectations and guidelines for protégés; adequate time for mentoring; and selection of mentors who have a record of success and who are committed, reflective, compassionate, good listeners, good communicators, and able to speak the “hard truth”. In short, effective mentors help new principals improve or develop the necessary skills and knowledge, values and attitudes, and actions and behaviours to operate effectively. Another important factor is that the mentor and protégé should relate well to each other (Earthman, 1991; Ng, 2001).

However, some elements in mentoring appear to be controversial or likely to limit its effectiveness. Firstly, according to Lashway (2003), mentors may present only a narrow perspective on the newcomer’s situation, may become too controlling or overprotective, or may try to shape their protégés into clones of themselves. In other words, mentoring, although valuable, tends to move towards a like-producing-like system (Malone, 2001), a systematic reproduction rather than a systematic renewal (Low, 2001). Protégés may learn old ways of leading schools that might be irrelevant for the current and ever-changing circumstances. What works for the mentors, and which they pass on to the protégés, might not work for the protégés in vastly different environments. Referring to the same problem, Martin and Robertson (2003) caution that if mentoring focuses on tasks to be done, rather than on the conceptual development of principals through reflection,

the mentoring programme would run a risk of producing yesterday's principals instead of today's and tomorrow's educational leaders.

Related to this is the question of who should go to whose school, the mentor to the protégé's or the protégé to the mentor's. The context determines the leadership style a leader should learn to employ. For this reason, it might be suggested that beginning principals should be coached in schools they are going to lead so that they can construct leadership styles congruent with the contexts of their work (Martin and Robertson, 2003). This suggestion, though, may serve the beginning principals only, but not the mentors, because effective mentors are normally situational, and if they are put in a different situation they may be ineffective. As adult learners, principals want to combine what they learn with practical knowledge in a specific situation. According to Martin and Robertson (2003), there is a symbiotic relationship between professional development and school improvement; therefore, coaching should be planned so that first-time principals can develop their knowledge and skills, values and attitudes, and actions and behaviours through the implementation of initiatives aligned to school improvement in their own schools. Hallinger and Murphy (1991) advise that coaching should take into account the realities of the novice principal's working conditions. On the other hand, as already stated, concentrating on one's school alone may produce principals with a limited view of education.

Secondly, in selecting mentors those principals whose schools' academic performance was good are selected as coaches (Low, 2001). However, the academic results of one's school, good or bad, have nothing to do with being an effective coach. Being effective instructional leaders does not necessarily mean that they are good coaches. Furthermore, some principals might not want to be coaches but consent because their supervisors have selected them, and they might do the task unwillingly and, therefore, not invest time and energy in the exercise.

Maybe, the question that needs investigation is: Who should select mentors and what criteria should be used?

Thirdly, there appears to be some disagreement as to whether mentoring should be part of pre-service preparation or in-service development or both, and whether it should be a one-off event or ongoing. In England and Wales, mentoring is part of the induction programme for new principals and it only applies in the first year of headship, but in Singapore, mentoring is part of the pre-service development for aspiring principals (Low, 2001). In New Zealand, however, peer coaching (peer mentoring) of principals is ongoing (Martin & Robertson, 2003).

Fourthly, mentoring requires protégés to shadow and even to share offices with their mentors (Low, 2001). This might be a good opportunity for the protégés to listen in and also observe at close range how mentors handle issues/problems and how they relate to their staff as well as to visitors. However, the presence of the protégé may hinder some clients' interactions with the mentor, especially if the clients have to discuss sensitive issues, whose resolutions the protégé need to learn from. Therefore, the conversation between the mentor and client might be superficial, and consequently what the protégé learns would also be superficial.

Bush and Jackson (2002) have found that while mentoring is included in many development programmes in many development centres and is seen as worthwhile, there is only limited evidence about its effectiveness in promoting leadership development. Lashway (2003) contends that formal induction programmes are too new to have generated a significant body of empirical data, but there is a burgeoning literature that articulates a rationale for such programmes, describes the efforts of nurturing new leaders, and provides early testimony that induction efforts were well-received and welcomed, especially by beginners.

In sum, this subsection looked into the induction of first-time principals. Current literature shows that the best approach to inducting new principals is mentoring. Mentoring upgrades protégés and updates mentors. Some shortcomings of induction have also been highlighted.

2.4.2.2 Ongoing in-service professional development

To ensure all-round professional development, principals need pre-service preparation, induction and continuous in-service development. Generally, both pre-service preparation and induction are one-off programmes. However, problems and challenges facing principals are always in a fermenting state, and consequently their professional development should be ongoing. They should develop throughout their careers. Just as teachers and learners are expected to keep on learning, principals too should not stagnate. There are many ways in which principals grow on the job. Some of the most influential and commonly recommended include self-study (reading and reflection on experience at work), peer-assisted learning (peer-assisted development and case studies), and whole-school professional development programmes (learning communities) (Robertson, 1999; Martin, 2000; McCay, 2001; O'Brien and Draper, 2001; Peterson, 2002). The least influential ones include tutor support, reading of national documents, and learning from "best practice," to mention a few. Despite those merits and demerits of the above-mentioned development strategies, there seems to be no "best" strategy. A strategy is only "best" if it can help principals to develop to the best of their ability (Peterson, 2002).

(a) Self-development

Two of the common self-development strategies are reading and reflection. Principals need to read information pertaining to their work (Coombe & White, 1994; McCay, 2001). McCay (2001) believes that principals need to read about information and ideas that challenge their beliefs. They cannot change simply by acquiring new knowledge and skills; they also need to be made to reconsider their beliefs. McCay (ibid.) found that principals tend to read only what they need to know to keep up with the practice in their schools, are inclined to read what they agree with, or have a fear that visibly engaging in reading in order to learn is an admission of imperfection.

The other problem with reading is that principals might have difficulty in bridging the gap between theories and practice. The problem may be compounded by the fact that many authors have a tendency of using complicated language in writing, thereby discourage principals from reading. Nevertheless, reading is one of the best ways of self-study. Knowledge acquired through reading serves as food for thought as the principals reflect on their experience.

Another strategy whereby principals can develop themselves is to take time to reflect on what they do. According to McCay (2001), principals need opportunities to examine assumptions, assess their responses to challenges, and work through problems. They need to devise new strategies and try them out. In other words, they learn by experimenting and through trial and error (Kantema, 2002). As in the case of reading, principals find it difficult to make time to learn through reflection because of work pressure. Instead of assessing their responses, analysing problems and devising appropriate and new strategies, principals may continue to employ old strategies that have proved ineffective. Earthman (1991) found that reflection on individual experience is one of the learning activities that improve principals' skills, knowledge and attitudes.

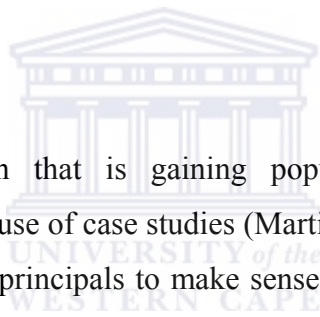
There is a growing body of literature (Barnett, 1989; Murphy & Hallinger, 1989; Dussault, 1995; Robertson, 1999) suggesting that the professionally isolated lives of principals hinder self-development. Principals need the support of their peers or mentors, as they develop themselves. Therefore, McCay (2001) concludes that principals need to reflect on their work away from work and with peers through discussion and writing. Thus, self-development is probably the best strategy principals can use to develop themselves.

(b) Peer-assisted learning

Evans and Mohr (1999) believe that principals' learning is personal and yet takes place most effectively while working in groups. Working in groups reinforces the value of building on one another's thinking and enables one to let go of earlier thinking that did not work. Latest literature (e.g., Robertson, 1999; Martin, 2000; Ng, 2001) suggests that there is a significant relationship between the interactions of principals and their learning. The most common and effective strategies used to reduce isolation are peer-assisted development and case-study strategies (Barnett, 1989; Robertson, 1999; Martin, 2000; Ng, 2001).

Both Barnett (1989) and Robertson (1999) conducted studies about peer-assisted development. They underscore the importance of this kind of principal development. There is only one principal per school, and this arrangement makes it difficult for principals to interact with each other. Therefore, principals live isolated lives. Even when they interact, their discussions revolve around bureaucratic and managerial matters such as budgeting, transportation and scheduling. They seldom find time to discuss issues concerning their main business –instructional leadership (Barnett, 1989).

Principals need to stand back from the demands of their schools and think about their own practices as they observe and/or interview their peers. This interaction helps them to attain deeper understanding of their own professional development needs and to develop critical thinking abilities. Thus, interaction removes or minimises the isolation that hinders principals' ability to learn (Robertson, 1999; McCay, 2001). Because of the support and affirmation gained by working closely with peers, they lose the feeling of isolation and gain strength. They become open to new ideas and growth, which lead to further critical reflection on their actions. Each principal develops new solutions to new problems, using other principals' solutions as the basis. Martin and Robertson (2003) advise that interactions should be ongoing, through, for example, emails, so that principals continue supporting each other. Learning never stops. In this way, each principal takes greater responsibility for self-development through the assistance and support of other principals.



Another learning approach that is gaining popularity and momentum in developing principals is the use of case studies (Martin, 2000; Ng, 2001). The aim of case studies is to enable principals to make sense of what they do. Live case-study material is a means to become able problem-solvers. The role of tutors and peers is to facilitate the process of learning, not to prescribe the so-called "best ways" of solving problems.

Principals prepare and present case studies of particular management predicaments of real concern to them in their schools. As a result of the presentations to the group, each principal acquires necessary insights and understanding from which effective courses of action can be generated. Together, the principals think the predicaments through and devise possible solutions based on their experiences. Out of a pool of suggestions, the presenters construct (but do not copy) the possible solutions that they would try out in their schools. The principals do not only help each other find the possible solutions to their

predicaments, but as “critical friends,” they also challenge each other’s beliefs, actions and behaviours. In other words, case studies help principals to acquire all-round development.

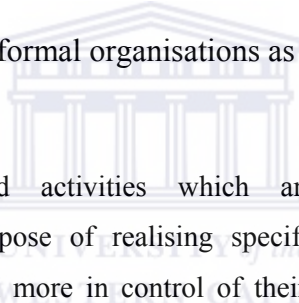
To summarise, both the peer-assisted and case studies learning approaches take into account many qualities of effective principal development. First, while development is personal, it is more effective while principals work in a group. In a group, principals build on each other’s ideas, and they support and challenge each other in the process of creating knowledge. Second, there should be a strong link between school improvement and principal development. Principals learn from presenting and reflecting on the unique problems they encounter while they develop their schools. Third, principals develop reflective skills. The aim is not only to resolve the predicaments they face presently, but also to develop reflective thinking ability that will enable them to resolve many predicaments in the future. Fourth, peer-assisted development and case studies are work-based learning (Reeves et al., 2001). Principals learn better by presenting real problems they face in their schools. Fifth, peer-assisted learning and case studies are problem-based (Ng, 2001). Problem-based learning emphasizes learning around problems rather than presenting knowledge in unconnected course segments separated from the reality of school contexts. Problem-based learning is able to embrace knowledge holistically and enhance the relevance of development. Sixth, there is a need for a facilitator. The facilitator’s role is not to convey to principals the so-called body of “true knowledge”, but to organise an environment in which learning can take place. The facilitator guides, encourages, mediates, catalyses, challenges and coaches. In other words, a facilitator’s job is not to play but to coach the players; and, thereby, mediate learning. Thus, it is worth emphasising that research has found that when principals learn in groups they build on each other’s thinking and are willing to let go of their earlier thinking (beliefs and values) which did not work.

2.4.2.3 Learning organisations

A new approach of school-based professional development that is increasingly coming to the fore is to view the school as a learning organisation (Sterling and Davidoff, 2000; Davidoff and Lazarus, 2002; Wills, 2002; Holloway, 2003; Mloi, 2005). This section explores this new approach of developing school staff members, including principals. The central argument is that effective principal development should be linked to what Sterling and Davidoff (2000) refer to as whole school development.

(a) What is an organisation?

Musaazi (1982, p. 4) defines formal organisations as



...consciously planned activities which are deliberately structured for the purpose of realising specific goals. Such organisations are much more in control of their destinies than social groups like friendship groups.

Mloi (2005) states that there are no two organisations that are exactly alike. This means that, as organisations, schools differ in many ways although they share some common features.

(b) What is a learning organisation?

A learning organisation can be described as a group of people learning from their experience and best practices (Mloi, 2005). In other words, a learning organisation is comprised of the principal and other people in the organisation,

especially teachers, who are committed to personal and professional development. A learning organisation involves staff members teaching each other (Hord, 1997; Schmoker, 2004). A learning organisation pursues learning goals, most of which are unique to that organisation (in this case, the school). As adult learners, staff members' learning is self-directed. They are responsible for their learning. They identify their learning needs, formulate their learning goals, and use their appropriate learning strategies to achieve their goals.

(c) The purpose of learning organisations

The importance of learning organisations cannot be overemphasised. Learning organisations focus on the development of the whole school rather than on the development of individuals (Sterling and Davidoff, 2000) "... because the local school site provides the best context for effective staff development" (DuFour and Eaker, 1998, p.268). The work of individuals is closely interdependent and impact positively or negatively on the total performance of the whole school. In an organisation like a school, the success of one individual can be affected by the incompetence of another. The school of a well-trained principal, for example, is likely to perform poorly if its teachers are incompetent. Thus, to ensure whole school development and, therefore, improved learner learning, schools need to be learning organisations. Professional development of learning organisations should not be judged by how many teachers and principals partake in it, "... but by whether it [professional development] alters instructional behaviour in a way that benefits students" (DuFour and Eaker, 1998, p. 261).

In carrying out his or her work, each staff member needs the assistance of other staff members. It is a matter of two heads being better than one. A school that taps from the total wisdom of its workforce is likely to acquire more learning than a school where individualism is practised. Organisational learning makes it easier for staff members to engage in ongoing professional development by tapping at

any time from the readily available and appropriate expertise, experience and best practices.

(d) The role of principals in learning organisations

Organisational learning is not automatic; it needs an enabling environment. By virtue of their position in school organisations, principals are expected to play the role of enablers of learning.

Ultimately, what we would like to create is an environment at school which is **enabling** (sic) – which supports teachers in a lifelong process of personal and professional development. This in turn will create a supportive environment within which students can learn and develop – developing their own potential for the benefit of society as a whole. These are, indeed, the central goals of education (Davidoff and Lazarus, 2002, p. xv).

Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) state that what happens in and outside the school can deeply affect schools. Earlier on in this chapter, some challenges facing Namibian teachers and learners, namely undisciplined learners, low morale among teachers, and lack of vision were identified (PCECT, 1999; Kantema, 2001). Principals need to identify and address those challenges that impede learning and thereby create an enabling learning environment.

DuFour and Eaker (1998, p. 184 – 186) summarise the following characteristics of leaders of learning organisations:

Principals of professional learning communities [organisations]
lead through shared vision and values rather than through rules

and procedures ... Principals of professional learning communities involve faculty [staff] members in the school's decision-making processes and empower individuals to act ... Principals of professional learning communities provide staff with the information, training, and parameters they need to make good decisions.

(e) Whole school development

The main task of a learning organisation is to improve learner performance. It is a joint venture, which requires all staff members to be effective. On the basis of this, whole school development is preferable over individual development. Thus, as DuFour and Eaker (1998, p. 268) contend "... professional development is most effective when it engages the staff of a particular school in an effort to achieve incremental improvements related to a set of common objectives ...", and the appropriate context for effective professional development is at the workplace (school). Thus, it is a matter of all staff members learning while working.

Moloi (2005) is of the opinion that learning in learning organisations should take place at four levels: individual, team, organisation and society. These types of learning complement each other, therefore, the school must initiate learning at all levels. The way schools are structured favours team learning. A school is comprised of units called management team, departments, committees and sections, where collaborative learning can take place.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) argue that it is ironic that there is a mismatch between the way learners are taught and the way staff members are taught (developed). While learners are expected to participate actively in learning, active participation in learning is usually absent in the learning afforded to staff members. Both DuFour and Eaker (1998) and Moloi (2005) are of the view that reflection,

coaching, dialogue and discussion are some of the important learning strategies for staff members. DuFour and Eaker (1998) state that staff development should be designed to develop thoughtful professionals who have the ability to assess and revise their own actions in order to improve their likelihood of success for their learners; therefore, they should be afforded opportunity to reflect on what they do and how they can do it. They are immensely capable, provided that their learning environment is made enabling.

Moloi (2005) contends that there should be time for dialogue and discussions in the process of staff development. Dialogue and discussion don't mean the same thing. In dialogue, learning team members

... explore complex issues creatively. They listen to [with the aim to understand, and not necessary to agree with] each other with deep regard and suspend their own views to better hear those of others (Moloi, 2005, p. 63).

The main aim of dialogue is to have access to all the varied views (including opposing ones) in the minds of the team members. Team members think together. Only after dialogue can discussions come in, when "... the views are presented and defended and the team searches for the best view to support decisions" (Moloi, 2005, p. 63). Thus, both dialogue and discussions are essential in the process of professional development, and learning teams should differentiate between the two. The two complement each other. Team members reflect, conduct dialogue and discuss in the spirit of teamwork and collegiality, any issue they view may contribute to the betterment of their work. Dialogue and discussions, as explicated earlier on in this chapter, focus more on developing the areas of values and attitudes.

DuFour and Eaker (1998) are of the view that the content of staff development should be based on research evidence. Challenges facing schools are complex and require thorough investigations by means of empirical research methods such as action research. Issues such as undisciplined learners, teacher low morale, and even staff development warrant empirical action research studies.

However, learning organisations are not without drawbacks. One of them is the limited resources in rural schools. Many rural schools suffer from “brain drain” as many capable personnel transfer to urban centres. Furthermore, many rural school libraries are so poorly stocked that school personnel are unlikely to be able to update their knowledge. Without adequate resources, school personnel are likely to develop parochial thinking.

In sum, the concept of a learning organisation is a relatively new. Its central postulation is that professional development of staff members, including principals, is more effective when it is school-based and all-inclusive. The argument is that since the work of staff members is interdependent, the development of all staff is more beneficial than is individual development. Organisational learning depends largely on an enabling environment being provided by the principal. Team spirit and commitment to shared vision and values are some of the essential values of a learning organisation. Units such as management team, departments, committees, and sections can serve as learning teams reflecting on and conducting dialogue and discussing issues and challenges facing them, and come up with workable solutions. Coaching is also viewed as one of the important strategies, as Showers, Joyce and Bennett (as quoted by DuFour and Eaker, 1998, p. 265) note: “Until alternatives are developed, coaching or its equivalent appears to be essential if the investment in [teacher] training is not to be lost.”

2.4.3 Combining out- and on-the-job professional development

The launch of university-based professional development for principals in Namibia has come at the time when university-based professional development is receiving critical attention. As outlined above, off-the-job professional development has a number of shortcomings. Therefore, in some countries, such as the USA, where principals are expected to undergo pre-service training and to be certified before they are appointed, the effectiveness of university-based preparation programmes has been seriously questioned (Olson, 2000; Grogan & Andrews, 2002). As I explained above, on-the-job professional development has its drawbacks too. This subsection reviews some literature that suggests that university-based and on-the-job development should complement each other.

Universities' shortcomings in principal development prompts Grogan and Andrews (2002) to make a radical suggestion that America can have good schools for all America's children by disconnecting the preparation of principals from university-based programmes. Olson (2000) predicts that if university programmes do not change over the next years, alternative training sectors will take over from them. Grogan and Andrews (2002) suggest that, as scholars, Educational Management professors should rather engage in rigorous research and produce useful knowledge; they can also provide a safe, productive environment within which critical, reflective practitioners can develop. They also suggest that perhaps the notion of coursework, as it is known today, should be abandoned. Preparation of principals should take an integrative approach and focus on the acquisition of competencies, instead of being a collection of courses. Principals should be exposed to practical tasks and daily routines first, and then they can be provided with relevant research findings that help them to expand and critique their assumptions. Therefore, instead of teaching courses, Grogan and Andrews (2002) advise that professors of Educational Management should spend more time in schools and educational regions shadowing school principals and

sitting in parent conferences, student disciplinary hearings, educational forums, and so on. Those professors who can, should take sabbaticals or study leave to fill leadership positions in educational regions, whether as interim or as regular educational leaders.

In response to the question of bridging the gap between theory and practice during induction, Wilson and Macintosh (1991) advocate the division of labour in the development of principals. They argue that universities should not be the sole organizations responsible for the development of principals. There are possible partners: for example, consultants, experienced principals, and other educational leadership practitioners. Each category of partners has a role to play. The role of bridging the gap between theory and practice is not the responsibility of universities, as Wilson and Macintosh (1991) argue. It is the role of educational practitioners in the field to give newcomers some kind of induction. The university departments cannot produce a microcosm of a workplace for bridging the gap between theory and practice. According to Wilson and Macintosh (1991, p. 238), the core function of the university in the development of principals is “the creation and transmission of general, systematic knowledge relevant to the profession” and the development of a thoughtful reflective person, and not the bridging of gaps between theoretical frameworks offered in university programmes and the practical situations in the workplace. Furthermore, Wilson and Macintosh (1991) argue that in order for the principals to become effective they have to gather experiences, and experiences are not gathered in the university theatres, but in the workplace. Wilson and Macintosh (1991) argue that if the division of labour works very well in other practitioners’ professional development fields, for example, in law and medicine, it should be able to work in the development of principals as well. Wilson and Macintosh arguments imply that most development of principals should take place on-the-job, under the guidance of Educational Management practitioners. In short, there is an agreement that Educational Management professors should create new knowledge through research. There is also an agreement that most or some of the professional

development of principals should take place on-the-job, but as brought to light by the arguments of Grogan and Andrews (2002) and Wilson and Macintosh (1991), there is disagreement about who should guide principals when studying on-the-job and bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Some other authorities in educational management (e.g., Johnson, 1991) imply the bridging of gaps between theory and practice is a shared responsibility between the practitioners and the professors. Johnson (ibid.) contends that the division of labour of developing principals cannot be clear-cut, as partners in the development of principals have to work hand in hand and sometime jointly. Principal internship, for instance, has to be supervised by both university professors and educational leadership practitioners. Pye (as quoted by Johnson, 1991, p. 282) reveals that supervised experience on the job is regarded by many executives as "... the best form of training any manager can have." Thus, as Grogan and Andrews (2002) rightly advise, professors of Educational Management should take sabbaticals or study leave to fill leadership positions in educational regions. In the field, professors of Educational Management would play a role of narrowing the gap between theory and practice, a role Wilson and Macintosh (1991) say is not that of professors. In addition, working in the field would give the professors of Educational Management opportunity to conduct research on the subject of Educational Management, and thereby create new knowledge which they can share with the principals.

2.5 Summary

Not much has been written on the professional development of secondary school principals in Namibia; therefore most of the literature I reviewed is on principal development in other countries, especially developed countries. New professional development needs were facing post-primary education requiring new ways of developing school leaders. Professional development needs can be classified in

skills and knowledge, attitudes and values, and actions and behaviours. There are no generic development needs. Professional development needs should be seen as peculiar to individual principals, schools, regions, or countries. Therefore, individual principals or group of principals need different development strategies to address their unique needs. Hence, professional development of principals should be tailored to the needs of individual or a group of principals. As professional development needs are always in a fermenting state; they become more and more complex. Thus, principal development should be ongoing and systemic. Serving principals should be given induction and ongoing in-service development.

Principals need to be involved in the planning and implementation of their professional development programmes. The programme should make provision for self-development. The main function of the developers is to facilitate learning by creating an environment conducive to learning. A principal needs other principals or staff members to share ideas. Principal development should be a collaborative endeavour, where a number of developers should be involved employing varied professional development strategies.

Since the research design of this study is qualitative, this scholarship review represents a preliminary literature review to propose the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997), and more literature will be reviewed in the next chapter as well. Unlike in a quantitative study, additional literature review in a qualitative study is done during data collection and analysis. Qualitative researchers do continuing literature review as the research focus and questions evolve as the research progresses. To that end, some of the literature review is done in the next chapter as well.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to gain in-depth understanding of the in-service professional development of secondary school principals in Namibia, with special focus on the Omusati Region. The study was to provide a “thick” (i.e. detailed) description of the perceptions on the professional development of these educational leaders-cum-managers. In this chapter, I discuss the research design and methods I used to collect and analyse data in order to provide explanations to the above-sated research problem.

3.2 Research design

According to Durrheim (1999, p. 32), a design is “a strategic framework, a plan that guides research activity to ensure that sound conclusions are reached.” In other words, the purpose of a research design is “to provide the most valid, accurate answers possible to research questions” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 34). The nature of the research purpose and the research questions, as stated in the first chapter, called for a qualitative multiple case study design.

The review of literature in the preceding chapter has shown that the professional development of principals is a social phenomenon, and social phenomena are studied better using qualitative research inquiry. A substantial number of recent studies (e.g., Robertson, 1999; Martin, 2000; Ng, 2001; Wale, 2003) suggest the effectiveness of qualitative research design in investigating professional

development of principals. In this world of rapid social change and complexity, dependence on quantitative research, with theories as a starting point is not helpful (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997) as some of the social changes are so new that there are no theoretical models against which they can be tested (Flick, 2002). Unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is naturalistic, in that it studies real-world situations as they unfold naturally; non-manipulative, unobtrusive and non-controlling; and is open to whatever research outcomes emerge. Hence, the design of this study is emergent, in that the decisions taken during the data collection process were depended on prior information. Underscoring this point, McMillan & Schumacher (1997, p. 393) assert:

The emergent design, in reality, may seem circular, as processes of purposeful sampling, data collection, and partial data analysis are simultaneous and interactive rather than discrete sequential steps.

In addition to its naturalistic nature, qualitative research is holistic and context-bound. It seeks to understand the whole phenomenon under study; the phenomenon is not reduced to variables of cause-effect relationships as in quantitative research. Moreover, the understanding of social phenomena is context bound, as the social phenomena are interpreted differently in different social contexts, hence the talk of “multiple realities” (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997, p. 554) or the “pluralisation of life world” (Flick, 2002, p. 2) in qualitative research. Therefore, in the case of this study it was a question of studying “knowledge and practice ... as local knowledge and practice” (Flick, 2002, p. 2) of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region.

On the basis of this line of reasoning, quantitative research is viewed as failing researchers; there is a trend in the research fraternity towards qualitative research (ibid.). It is a trend of moving away from using deductive methodologies to

investigate social phenomena; instead, inductive methodologies are employed. However, contrary to misunderstanding in some quarters, inductive methodologies are influenced, to some extent, by previous theoretical knowledge. New qualitative research theories emerge from the “bottom up” and are referred to as grounded theories. That is, new theory is built from data or grounded in the data (Neuman, 2003).

Another remarkable quality of the design of this study is that most descriptions and interpretations are portrayed with words rather than numbers, although numerical data are used to elaborate the findings (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). Descriptions and interpretations are important qualities in qualitative research as explained by Neuman (2003, p. 148):

Qualitative researcher interprets data by giving them meaning, translating them, or making them understandable. However, the meaning he or she gives begins with the point of view of the people being studied ... As Geertz (1979, p. 228) remarked, ‘The trick is to figure out what the devil they think they are up to’.

In short, because of its naturalistic, holistic, inductive qualities, I found the qualitative research inquiry to be appropriate for this study.

Although the focus was on the understanding of the single phenomenon, that is, the professional development of rural secondary school principals, using a qualitative inquiry, the data were collected from various respondents at various sites. In other words, the design was comprised of multiple case studies. Multiple case studies make use of multiple sources of evidence. This means I collected data from “...different persons in different contexts at various times” (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997, p.443) using different methods. Multiple strategies enabled me to triangulate data obtained by using different research strategies and to

triangulate data of one respondent to those of other respondents. Triangulation assures that the patterns in the data were not unduly contaminated by my own subjectivity. Furthermore, I used triangulation, verbatim accounts and participant language, and prolonged fieldwork to ensure that the data I collected were the data that I intended to collect (strategies to enhance validity). In short, with qualitative multiple case study design, I was able to understand the professional development of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region by analysing many contexts of the principals and by narrating and triangulating respondents' meanings (beliefs, ideals, thoughts, actions, etc.) and documentary data.

3.3 Research methods

The term “research methods” refers to the strategies I used to collect and analyse the data. This section discusses the research strategies I used to collect and analyse the data.

3.3.1 Sampling

I knew it was impossible and indeed not necessary for me to study everything about the professional development of secondary school principals in Namibia. I had to choose whom to study and the where, when, about what and why of the professional development of principals. In other words, I had to sample. In contrast to the probabilistic sampling of quantitative research, a qualitative research sample comprises of a few but information-rich respondents studied in their context and in-depth.

The sample of this study was a purposeful sample (Patton, 2002). It was comprised of information-rich respondents. The respondents were experienced people who were in possession of more firsthand information concerning the professional development of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region.

Further, the sample was both homogeneous and heterogeneous. The homogeneity was evidenced by the fact the sample was comprised of principals who were facing unique professional development needs peculiar to rural secondary school principals in the Omusati Region. They also participated in unique regionally organised workshops and courses. However, each participating principals was a unique individual, leading a unique school, and has developed unique management and leadership style. Therefore, the sample displayed what Patton (2002) refers to as variation (heterogeneity). These similarities and diversity were useful in yielding two kinds of data, namely, high-quality detailed descriptions of each case, which were useful for documenting uniqueness; and the important shared patterns that cut across cases.

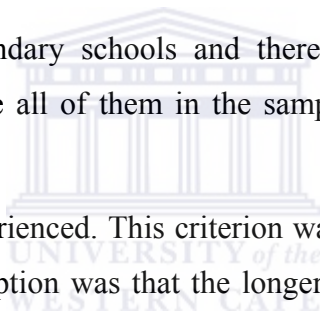
The sample was also opportunistic. I used the opportunistic nature of the sample for practical reasons (Patton, 2002; Wale, 2003). For almost two decades (1982 – 1999), I served as an education practitioner in rural schools in northern Namibian, including the Omusati Region. I knew all secondary school principals in that region personally. Some were my fellow students, others were my former colleagues, and yet others were my former students. Furthermore, there was a good working relationship between the education regional office of the Omusati Region and the University of Namibia (UNAM), where I was working. The region's educational management has invited UNAM's Faculty of Education staff members several times to facilitate the regional workshops and training courses for secondary school teachers and principals. I participated in the workshops as a facilitator for the in-service professional development of secondary school principals. Therefore, a good working relationship and prior knowledge of the participants formed a valuable basis of establishing rapport with the respondents.

Furthermore, the opportunistic nature of the sample made it possible for me to make some decisions while I was collecting data. Patton (2002, p. 240) states:

Unlike experimental designs, emergent qualitative designs can include the option of adding to a sample to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities after fieldwork has begun. Being open to follow wherever the data lead is a primary strength of qualitative strategies ... Decisions must be made [during fieldwork] about what activities to observe, which people to observe and interview, and when to collect data. These decisions cannot all be made in advance.

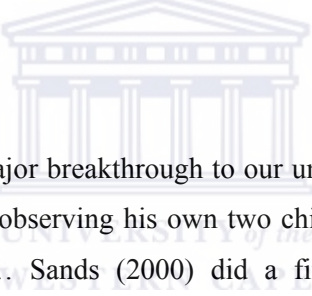
Therefore, while I was in the field, I made the following decisions: when and at what time to interview and observe the respondents, which documents to analyse, and added four professional developers to the initial sample of three principals.

The region had nine secondary schools and therefore nine secondary school principals. I did not include all of them in the sample. I selected three of them using the following criteria:

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- (a) Those who were more experienced. This criterion was guided by the experiential learning theory. The assumption was that the longer the principals have been in the service, the more they were experienced as school principals and the more professional development activities they have participated in (It was compulsory for school principals to attend professional development workshops and courses), and therefore the more information-rich respondents they were; and
 - (b) Those who have proven to be more effective than others. I did not seek for extreme cases, principals who, for example, exhibited outstanding success. “Extreme ... cases may be so unusual as to distort the manifestation of the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002, p. 234), in this case, the professional development of secondary school principals. I selected principals who manifested the effect of professional development intensely (intensity sample), but not extremely. I didn’t select the best performing principals, but I selected above

average principals, principals whose schools had performed better in grade 10 and 12 external examinations over the last five academic years than other schools.

If considered with a quantitatively orientated mind, the sample appears to be small. However, for an interpretive research study, the sample served the purpose. I have already stated that a qualitative research sample is generally smaller compared to a quantitative research sample (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997; Stake, 2000; Patton, 2002). However, the question that is generally asked is: “How small?” To this question, Patton (2002, p. 244) answers: “It depends.” To add to the uncertainty he (ibid.) adds: “There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry” (emphasis added) (ibid.). Arguing for the effectiveness of using small samples, Patton (2002, p. 245) cites two famous small-sampled studies, one by a renowned Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, and the other an Ed.D thesis by G. Sands:



Piaget contributed a major breakthrough to our understanding of how children think by observing his own two children at length and in great depth. ... Sands (2000) did a fine dissertation studying a single school principal, describing the leadership of a female leader who entered a challenging school situation and brought about constructive change.

I determined the sample size based on the purpose of my study, the data collection strategies I employed, and the limited resources that were at my disposal (energy, time and finance) (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997; Patton, 2002). In order for me to arrive at deep understanding of the in-service professional development, I had to make thorough and comprehensive observations, conduct interviews, and do extensive document analysis over a long period of time. Over and above these, I had to write a meticulous thick (detailed) description of the professional development of rural secondary school principals. It was a trade-off between

breadth and depth (Patton, 2002). I preferred more depth. Thus, with limited resources I managed to investigate the experiences of a small number of respondents.

In short, I employed a purposeful sample in that it was small, homogeneous, varied, intense and opportunistic. The sample was comprised of three information-rich secondary school principals and four professional developers of principals in the Omusati Region.

3.3.2 Generalizability

A quantitatively oriented researchers structure a probability sample in such a way that what is described in the sample can be generalised to the population from which the sample is selected (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). In contrast, the qualitatively oriented researchers have, until recently, disregarded the issue of generalisation as “unimportant, unachievable, or both” (Schofield, 1993, p. 92). Denzig (as quoted by Schofield (1993, p. 92), one of the qualitatively oriented researchers who rejects generalisation, argues:

The interpretivist rejects generalization as a goal and never aims to draw randomly selected samples of human experience. For the interpretivist every instance of social interaction, if thickly described ... represents a slice from the life world that is the proper subject matter for interpretive inquiry ... Every topic ... must be seen as carrying its own logic, sense of order, structure, and meaning.

However, in the circle of qualitative researchers (e.g., Schofield, 1993; Flick, 2002; Patton, 2002) interest is increasingly developing to generalise findings of

carefully selected purposeful samples. In recognition of this new development, I chose to generalise my findings to all secondary school principals in the Omusati Region and those in other contexts where the situations are similar to those of the secondary school principals who participated in this study. In other words, the findings of this study are “transferable” (Patton, 2002, p. 581). The fact that there were some variations in the sample and the sample comprised of information-rich respondents, lent the findings to generalisability.

Although qualitative researchers use various terms to describe the concept of generalisability, for example, “fittingness”, “comparability”, “translatability”, “naturalistic generalisation” (Schofield, 1993, p. 97), “extrapolations” and “transferability” (Patton, 2002, p. 581), they all are in agreement at least in three respects as to what generalisability entails. First, when they generalise, there is no intention to produce laws that apply universally, because there is no phenomenon that is either time- or context-free. Each phenomenon is mediated by the time and/or context in which it occurs. Second, qualitative researchers are in agreement that the rejection of universal laws does not imply that qualitative researchers cannot use findings of a study of one situation to speak to or to help make judgement about other situations, meaning transferring findings. Last, there should be thick (detailed) descriptions of the site in which the study is conducted and the site to which the findings have to be generalised. It is because of detailed descriptions that made it possible that the findings of this study can be generalised as working hypothesis (not generalisation according to quantitative research conception) to those contexts that are fitting/comparable to the Omusati Region.

3.3.3 Data collection instruments.

As I stated in Chapter 1, the main function of principals is to create environment conducive to learning and teaching in their respective schools. The extent to which principals can influence learning and teaching depends on the extent to

which they have developed. In other words, the nature of instructional leadership of principals is a manifestation of what they know, are able to do and believe in. Therefore, if one wants to understand how principals develop, one asks them (Appendix A), observes them while managing their schools and partaking in development activities (Appendix B), and reads about how they develop. Thus, professional development derives meaning from those who attribute a special essence to it – in this case, the three principals in the Omusati Region. Recent literature (e.g., Robertson, 1999; Wale, 2003) I reviewed suggests that appropriate data collection instruments for studies on professional development for principals are document analysis, interviews and observations. On the basis of this established credibility, I decided to use these three instruments to collect the data. With document analysis, interviews and observations I was able to read, hear and see the what, how and why of the principals' professional development.

I analysed documents such as relevant official papers (e.g., circulars and policies), artefacts (e.g., vision statements and mottos of the schools) and workshop and course materials. Patton (2002, p. 307) summarises the importance of document analysis as follows:

Document ... analysis provides a behind-the-scene look at the program that may not be directly observable and about which the interviewer might not ask appropriate questions without the leads provided through documents.

McMillan & Schumacher (1997) and Patton (2002) are of the view that document analysis is more effective if used together with other data collection instruments. Writing from experience, Patton (2002) stresses the importance of combining document analysis with interviews and observations:

But the documentation would not have made sense without the interviews, and the focus of the interviews came from the field

observations. Taken together, these diverse sources of information and data gave me a complete picture ... (p. 307).

I employed observations to study the respondents in their naturally occurring and non-contrived situations. I used non-participant observations, meaning that I recorded their actions and behaviours without being involved in what they were doing. Observations enabled me to experience the professional development of the principals at firsthand and this gave me better insight when I interpreted the data (White, 2000).

I used interviews to examine those things I could not directly observe such as values, thoughts and intentions. Moreover, I also employed interviews to collect data on the respondents' behaviours and actions that took place some time ago. I used a combination of standardised open-ended interviews and informal conversational interviews (unstructured interview). The standardised open-ended interviews required that I had to prepare, in advance, an interview schedule (Appendix A) comprised of carefully worded open-ended questions. The aim of standardised open-ended interviews was to make sure that I asked each interviewee the same questions in the same order. A standardised open-ended interview ensured consistency across the interviewees, reduces interviewer bias, and facilitates comparability during data analysis and, therefore, generalisability (Patton, 2002). Informal conversational interview was based on the practice that "... the interviewer is free to go where the data and the respondents lead" (Patton, 2002, p. 343). This means that I did not prepare informal conversational interview questions beforehand. The questions for informal conversational interviews emerged in the course of the data collection process. For example, when I probed and followed up observed behaviours and actions, and responses to standardised open-ended interviews. Thus, the strength of the unstructured interview is the opportunities for flexibility, spontaneity, and responsiveness it provides.

Interviews proved to be advantageous in some ways. I could motivate the interviewees to tell more about their experiences. The interviewees were motivated to share with me their opinions, experiences and views. This is one of the reasons why interviews result in a much higher response than questionnaires (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997; White, 2000). Moreover, combining the two interview approaches offered me the opportunity to ask the prepared questions, and the flexibility to probe and determine when it was appropriate to investigate certain ideas in greater depth, and to pose questions about new ideas which I did not anticipate when I prepared the standardised open-ended interview schedule (Patton, 2002).

However, interviews and observations have their shortcomings too, such as the potential for subjectivity, bias, their time-consuming nature and their lack of anonymity (McMillan and Schumacher, 1997). To encounter and defuse these drawbacks, I put in place some strategies, namely, as I indicated earlier on, I used multi sources of data; sampled fewer respondents than could be obtained with a questionnaire; spent extended time in the field; and established rapport with interviewees so that they could tell what they meant and not what they thought I needed to hear, based, for example, on social desirability.

In summary, I employed three data collection instruments, namely, document analysis, interviews and observations in order to collect data for this study. The use of multiple data collection instruments facilitated triangulation. The use of mixed data collection strategies was based on pragmatism. I could build on the strength of each type of data collection instrument while minimizing the weaknesses of any single instrument (Patton, 2002).

3.3.4 Pilot testing the instruments

Before I embarked on data collection, I conducted a pilot study. I selected the sample for the pilot study using the same selection criteria as those I was going to use to choose the sample for the study proper. I selected two secondary school principals. I employed similar research methods and research procedures as those I was going to use for the main study.

The rationale for the pilot study was to identify possible gaps, loopholes and oversights in the data collection instruments, and in the research process as a whole, before I conducted the main study. Specifically, the reasons for conducting the pilot study were to:

- Test the comprehensiveness of the research questions;
- Test the adequacy of the research instruments;
- Collect preliminary data; and
- Assess the proposed data collection and analysis techniques so as to discover potential problems and opportunities for further expansion.

The main results of the pilot study were:

- (a) The core professional development needs:
- Interpersonal relationship. The principals were submissive.
 - Situational leadership. The principals needed to have the knowledge of local knowledge that affected their leadership and the skills to harmonise the local knowledge and conventional knowledge of leadership.

(b) Professional development strategies:

- Peer-assisted development. A group of principals (secondary and primary school principals) met occasionally to discuss problems they were facing in their schools. They referred to this strategy as the *Olupale*¹⁰.

(c) Suggestions for improving the professional development:

- Professional development by various developers should be properly coordinated; and
- Strategies for developing principals should focus on helping principals to discover their professional development needs and develop themselves with the support of other people. For example, *Olupale*, if well coordinated and supported, could be a more effective approach to help principals to develop better interpersonal relationships and situational leadership.

(d) Recommendations for the main study

- The respondents of the pilot study were not comfortable with the question: “What are your professional development needs?” They interpreted it as meaning: “What are your weaknesses?” They felt offended. Instead, they were comfortable with the phrase: “What are your challenges?” The former question was, therefore, replaced with the later question in the interview schedule for the main study, but the meaning remained the same;

¹⁰ The *Olupale* is a word in the local language which means a place in the *Oshiwambo* homestead where people spend the evenings chatting and telling each other stories, parables and traditional riddles. The chats, stories, riddles and parables are designed for the people of the homestead to educate each other. Children benefit from this home education. Before the introduction of the European school education, *Olupale* was the centre of traditional education in the *Oshiwambo* homestead. In this context, the *Olupale* was seen as an association for principals, which was modeled on traditional homestead education. The aim was for the principals to share ideas and to educate each other.

- The participants were more open when they spoke about the behaviours of other people. For example, they revealed more data when they complained about the non-support of the senior education officials and the lack of cooperation of their subordinates. For the main study, I allowed them to talk more about the behaviours of other stakeholders, and thereby revealing indirectly their professional development needs.

3.3.5 Data collection procedures

I wrote a letter to the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Education (MoE) seeking permission to collect data in the Omusati Region (Appendix C). The Permanent Secretary granted me the necessary permission (Appendix D). Before I started with the fieldwork, I had to drop a line to the Education Regional Director for the Omusati Region giving him a general overview of the study and requesting him to facilitate the selection of the respondents. The Deputy Regional Director phoned the selected respondents requesting them to give me the necessary cooperation and to participate in the study. I divided my data collection procedures at each site (school) into four phases as follows:

3.3.5.1 Phase 1: Preliminary visits

I paid preliminary visits to the sites in order to:

- Ask the selected principals to participate in the study. Their willingness would form the basis for their commitment to participate in the study and share their experiences voluntarily. Fortunately, all three principals were keen to participate in the study;
- Brief them about the format and procedure of the interviews and observations. I was particularly tactful in explaining that non-participant observation through

shadowing was not intended to look for mistakes, but to understand their professional development from their own points of view. Knowing that they were following a busy schedule, I arranged with them that all the interviews would only take place in the afternoons;

- Obtain the schedule of their professional development activities that were taking place in the last half of 2004. I noted that each principal was organising a one-day workshop for his cluster principals and school boards. I attended all three workshops. I also learned that the regional office was organising a two-week workshop for all principals in the Omusati Region. This workshop did not coincide with my schedule for data collection. I had to go back into the field in order to attend the workshop; after all, that is how qualitative data collection is done – going back into the field several times when necessary (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997; Patton, 2002);
- Establish rapport and trust with principals and allow them chance to become used to my presence. Our past good working relationships as colleagues in MoE; my meticulous explanations of the rationale of study; our informal talks about the study; and their self-confidence due to, among others, their vast experience, were some of the factors that enhanced the establishment of rapport. Further, I hanged around (preliminary observations) in meetings the principals organized and/or run, such as meetings with teachers and parents. I also attended other school activities with all staff members, such as extracurricular activities. I collected preliminary data, which assisted me to formulate preliminary working hypotheses, which I had to verify with the principals at a later stage;
- Offer them incentives to encourage them to participate in the study. I emphasised the request of the MoE (Appendix D) that the findings of the study would be shared with the MoE, and that copies of the final report would be available for them in the library at regional office;

- Assure them of the anonymity of their responses; that I would use aliases, not their real names, in the final report; and
- Deliver covering letters (Appendix E).

By the end of the first phase, the principals made me feel welcome to their schools. They started to invite me when they had meetings with various stakeholders such as parents, teachers and learners. Each respondent offered me a space to sit when I was reviewing official documents. The first phase lasted for three weeks (one week per school).

3.3.5.2 Phase 2: Basic data collection

The second phase, which lasted for two weeks per school, involved data collection *per se* when I observed and interviewed the principals.

(a) Conducting observations and reflective interviews

Each principal followed a busy daily schedule. They had much work to do, therefore there was much for me to observe. I observed them when they were doing class visits; chairing meetings; attending to visitors; disciplining learners; delegating work to their subordinates; resolving conflicts; interviewing applicants for vacancies in the schools; “managing by walking around”, a management style whereby managers walked around within their schools to see whether there was anything that requires their attention; and many other activities.

As I already explained above, I employed non-participant observation. When I observed the principals doing their work, I always found myself a seat a short distance away from them, so that I could hear clearly what they were saying and see well what they were doing. I scribbled notes on what they did. I also took notes on their body languages. When they had something to say, I tape-recorded them. After each observation session, I engaged the principals in what Robertson (1999) calls reflective interview, on a one to one basis. Reflective interviewing is a questioning technique that provides opportunities for the respondents to reflect on what they say or do not say or do or do not do (Patton, 2002). I jotted down what they did, and tape-recorded what they had to say. The principals reflected on their management knowledge, behaviour, skills, attitudes and values. They judged the management areas in which they fell short. In other words, I prompted them to give meanings to their professional development needs. Thus, observing the respondents while doing their work and the consequent reflective interviews aimed at answering the first research question.

During the professional development activities such as workshops, my data collection procedures – observations and reflective interviews – were more or less the same as I explained in the preceding paragraph. I took notes on how the respondents learned and how they were assisted to learn what they did not know before. I conducted reflective interviews in the afternoons, immediately after hours. During the workshop, which was organised by the regional office, I had ample time to observe and interview the principals several times for two weeks. These observations and their accompanying reflective interviews catered for the second and third research questions.

(b) Conducting standardised open-ended interviews

The standardised open-ended interviews sought data to answer all research questions. I asked the respondents the questions, in the same order so as to reduce bias (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997).

I made sure that the following logistics were in place: First, in order to avoid that the principals became bored and lose concentration, I had two interview sessions with each principal. The first session covered the first two sections of the interview schedule, and the second session covered the last section. Second, to avoid that principals were being distracted by routine work, we agreed to have the interviews in other venues and not in their offices and use of the micro cassette tape recorder to record what they had to say. Third, to ensure non-interference in their routine work, interviews were conducted in the afternoons. Finally, I planned that part of the functions of the first questions was to break the ice, that is, to ease the respondent tension and to reinforce rapport.

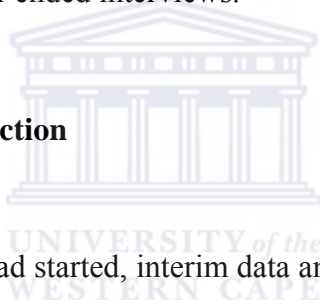
During the interviews, I employed a number of interviewing strategies. Some of them were: Firstly, I asked clear open-ended questions (Appendix A). When I posed a question I paused to listen; and it was time for them to reflect on the question and to speak as much as they could. If they misunderstood the question, I rephrased it for them to understand more clearly.

Secondly, I listened actively. Active listening was critical for me to collect accurate and reliable data. Some of the methods I employed to listen as actively as possible were: reflecting on, and paraphrasing or summarising, important things the respondents said to see whether I understood correctly; minimising and limiting my verbal responses to pausing sounds such as “yes” and “h’m”, or to non-verbal language such as nodding; and tape recording the interviews rather

than scribbling notes. Also, I repeated the main research questions several times in the course of the interview sessions to ensure full understanding of what I wanted to find out.

Thirdly, I probed to seek for clarifications through, for example, challenging them to give more information or examples; giving them genuine complements to encourage them to carry on speaking; asking further or focused questions; deliberately contradicting their views; showing confusion on my face to indicate that I needed further elaboration; and nodding to encourage them to continue speaking. I also observed their body language. When the body language seemed to be incongruent with the spoken response, I probed to reconcile the two. In short, I used a number of interviewing strategies to collect accurate and reliable data using standardised open-ended interviews.

3.3.5.3 Phase 3: Closing data collection



As soon as data collection had started, interim data analysis also began to assist in making decisions about further data collection and identifying emerging topics and recurring meanings. Every day after data collection activities, I analysed the facts and ideas I collected. I triangulated verbal descriptions and explanations of respondents, my observation notes and summarised document analysis. I also triangulated the data I collected from one respondent with the data I collected from other respondents. I shared with the respondents working hypotheses that emerged during interim data analysis for their reactions, such as affirmation, refutation, elaboration or modification. In other words, as I was analysing, I noted gaps in the data that required me to go back to the respondents for clarity and more information. The search for respondent reactions and verification of data called for continual data collection. In short, phase three involved interim data analysis in the field and going back to the respondents for more data collection. This phase took three a week.

3.3.5.4 Phase 4: Completion

This is the phase when I started leaving the field. I continued with interim data analysis, looking for emerging topics and recurring patterns, and concentrated on triangulating data and going back to the participants for verification. The last phase lasted for a week.

3.3.6 Interviewing the additional sample

One of the emerging working hypotheses I needed clarity on was the contributions of the professional developers that were involved in the professional development of principals. I was keen to gain more and deeper understanding of how the developers developed the principals and what new plans were in place for improving the professional development of secondary school principals. Thus, I needed supplementary data for the third and fourth research questions. I selected four developers to constitute the additional sample: two education inspectors, who were immediate supervisors of the three principals; one head office educational official; and a director of an NGO that was involved in the professional development of principals. All four developers were deeply involved in the professional development of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region in one way or another.

I prepared an interview guide for the additional sample (Appendix F) and fixed appointments with them to ask them to partake in the study. Fortunately, all of them agreed to be interviewed. The procedures of interviewing the developers were more or less the same as those of the principals described above. Interviewing the developers lasted for a week.

3.3.7 Data analysis strategies

Data analysis involved selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing, and interpreting data to provide explanations to the professional development of the Omusati secondary school principals according to the research questions. Detailed data analysis is dealt with in the next chapter.

3.3.8 Limitations of the research design and methods

The design may have been limited in two ways. First, the design investigated how the three rural secondary school principals developed. This was not a representative sample of rural schools in Namibia, therefore the findings cannot be generalized across the rural secondary school principals in Namibia. However, the findings can be transferred (qualitative generalisability) to those contexts that are fitting/comparable to that of the Omusati Region. Second, although I took extra care to defuse inherent shortcomings of the instruments I used, the innate pitfalls of the instruments may have placed certain limits and constrains upon the effectiveness of the research methods.

3.4 Summary

This chapter discussed research design and methods I employed to collect the data. Given the nature of the research problem and research questions, the appropriate research design was the qualitative multiple case studies. The sample was comprised of seven information-rich respondents: three rural secondary school principals who were studied in their context and in-depth and four professional developers of principals. It was a purposeful sample selected carefully so that the findings could be “transferable” (Patton, 2002, p. 581) to those contexts where the conditions are similar to those of the Omusati Region. I used a combination of document analysis, interviews and observations as research instruments.

The actual data collection took sixteen weeks. The data analysis involved selecting, categorizing, comparing, synthesizing, and interpreting data to provide explanations. The chapter concludes with the statement of limitations that might have placed constraints on the effectiveness of the research design and methods of the study.



CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

Although I did interim data analysis while in the field, I had to do most of data analysis when I left the field. I used the type of data analysis recommended by McMillan & Schumacher (1997). I analysed the data using inductive analysis whereby categories and patterns emerged from data rather than being imposed on data prior to data collection.

4.2 Transition between data collection and data analysis

The data were voluminous, therefore they needed to be organised. I organised the data in four units of analysis. The first unit is “layered or nested” (Patton, 2002, p. 447) in that I organised the data according to individual cases of the three principals. Each case focuses on the analysis, discussions and interpretations of individual case data. The second unit concerns the analysis, discussions and interpretations of documentary data. The third unit focuses on the analysis, discussions and interpretations of data provided by the additional sample. The last unit triangulates individual principals’ case data with each other and with documentary and the additional sample’s data.

I read through all the raw data several times, trying to gain a sense of the whole and, at the same time, jotting down what de Vos (2002, p. 343) terms as “memos” (ideas, short phrases, words and concepts) that occurred to me as I was reading. Those memos later formed the basis of coding, a process by which data were sorted into topics. Thereafter, I developed topics into relatively discrete categories with subcategories. Initially, categories and subcategories were preliminary and tentative. In other words, they were flexible and open for change and modification

in the course of data analysis. In the final data analysis process, I sought for patterns/themes (relationship between categories) using triangulation. The type of data analysis I used was the one that McMillan and Schumacher (1997, p. 533) term as theme analysis and interpretation, which

... describes the specific and distinctive recurring qualities, characteristics, subjects of discourse, or concerns expressed. The researcher selectively analyses aspects of human actions and events that illustrate recurring themes. The complexity and interrelationships of the events and the human lives are emphasized. The analysis often identifies the themes by individual cases (people or incidents) and then synthesizes the themes across cases. The themes provide an explanation of the situation(s). The study contributes to knowledge by providing an understanding of the phenomena studied. This type of study also enables others to anticipate, but not predict, what may occur in similar situations.

4.3 Analysis of data of individual principals

In this unit of data analysis I focus on the analysis, discussions and interpretations of the case data of the three principals according to the research questions.

4.3.1 Mr Shikongo

I discuss the profile of Mr Shikongo (an alias) in this section. At the time of his appointment, Mr Shikongo met the basic requirements for secondary school principalship. His academic qualification was grade 12 and his professional qualification was a 4-year Diploma in Education. He had 16 years of teaching experience prior to his appointment. However, he had never served in any school management capacity, for example, as a head of department, before he was appointed principal. Thus, a certain level of teacher training and longevity of

teaching experience were the two important requirements for his appointment. The literature I reviewed in Chapter 2 reveals that the two requirements were not sufficient pre-service preparation for secondary school principalship.

At the time of data gathering, he had been a principal for eight years and, in between, he served as a regional education planner. Thus, he had gathered a reservoir of experience in the area of educational management. In 2003, he was assigned an added responsibility of supervising and leading a school cluster as a cluster centre head. The cluster comprised of six schools, including his. His school was the only secondary school in the cluster. The satellite schools consisted of 3 primary and 2 combined schools.

His school, Etameko Secondary School (an alias), is a rural school in the Omusati Region. The school was established in 1980. It had poorly stocked library and laboratory; overcrowded classrooms; and insufficient learning and teaching material such as textbooks, teaching and learning aids and stationery. The buildings of the school have been in existence for quite a long time and needed renovation. In 2004, Etameko Secondary School was a house for 15 labourers, 780 learners in its grades 8 to 12, and 20 teaching staff, including 5 members of the management team (the principal, three heads of departments, and hostel superintendent). The school did not have a deputy principal. The teacher/learner ratio stood at 39 learners per teacher. Many of the learners were accommodated in the hostel. Thus, Mr Shikongo was managing a big secondary school and a number of satellite schools using inadequate resources. This was just one challenge. The next subunit deals specifically with challenges that were facing Mr Shikongo at the time of data gathering.

4.3.1.1 Professional development needs of Mr Shikongo

In this subunit I analyse, discuss and interpret data pertaining to the challenges Mr Shikongo was facing at the time of data gathering. Further, I categorised the challenges in management areas and in areas of professional development.

(a) Managing and leading learners

Many learners at Etameko Secondary School were extremely undisciplined. They were seldom on time and absented themselves frequently from classes. I observed some learners arriving late by up to 40 minutes, missing the first lessons. Most of the teachers allowed them to enter classes after they warned the latecomers not to be late again. Nevertheless, learners kept on repeating the misdemeanour.

Some learners enjoyed sunbathing or playing outside during periods. Mr Shikongo had to put some control mechanisms in place to make sure that all learners were in classes. One of the mechanisms was the “management by walking around”. I observed him walking around the schoolyard chasing learners to classes. He explained briefly and proudly, “My physical presence makes a difference.” The sunbathers evidenced this. Every time he caught them, they would run back swiftly to their classes. Also, if a noisy class noted him passing by their class, every noisemaker stopped suddenly.

Another control mechanism was the “cards” he gave to the class monitors (class captains) to be given to every learner that had to leave the classroom with the permission of the class monitor. If Mr Shikongo found learners outside without “cards,” he punished them. One day, he caught some learners who were playing outside during class time. He punished them by making them clean the schoolyard after school.

The other challenge posed by learners was a lack of seriousness with learning. The control mechanisms described above forced learners to stay in the classrooms, but I observed that often being in classes did not guarantee learning. Some classes were ever noisy during study time or when there were no teachers in the classes. Learners seemed not to be clear about the main purpose of controlling them. Controlling them seemed not to create in learners a sense of self-discipline. In other words, learners seemed to behave well out of fear of being punished. They did not seem to behave because they had realised that it was a good thing to do.

In addressing learners, individually or in groups, Mr Shikongo demonstrated excellent skills in communicating. I observed him taking pains to explain to learners the importance of abiding by school rules and the need to take learning seriously. Many undisciplined learners did not resist openly. They listened quietly but did not take his advice or carry out his instructions, as evidenced by their repeating the same misdemeanours.

Mr Shikongo indicated that he was not getting the support of the parents. He stressed the fact that parents were reluctant to help with the discipline of learners, because they argued that the government had abolished corporal punishment that “works”. To many parents, reintroduction of corporal punishment was the solution, and if the government did not want to do that, “let it come up with a better remedy,” they said. Here Mr Shikongo was quoting the parents’ common argument.

In short, Mr Shikongo was faced with a challenge of managing learners. He had a feeling that he was not receiving the necessary support from the stakeholders, namely the parents. He had put in place some control mechanisms to make sure that learners attended classes and learned. He also explained to the learners the importance of abiding by the school rules and taking learning seriously. He

indicated that the control mechanisms were, regrettably, not always successful and his explanations seemed to have fallen on deaf ears.

(b) Managing and leading personnel

Similarly, some staff members, too, were causing problems for him. Some of them were seldom on time for their classes. They wasted a lot of teaching time. Mr Shikongo indicated that some teachers did not arrive for their classes:

Some of them may be absent from school; others may be present in the school but do not go to classes. Some teachers cut classes. Obviously, if the teachers are not in classes, then teaching does not take place and learners are likely to make noise and play around.

Thus, learners were making noise due to, in part, teacher truancy and late coming. Conversely, teachers seemed to be demotivated because of learner indiscipline.

Mr Shikongo has put in place a control mechanism to curb or minimise teacher absence from classes. In order to monitor teachers' class attendance, there were "weekly class record forms" in all classes, to be signed by the subject teachers. The teachers signed the forms to indicate that they were present in classes. In case a teacher did not turn up, the class monitor recorded his or her absence with a "NO" on the "weekly class record form". If a teacher missed a class, the class monitor marked it with "CC", and if a teacher came late, the class monitor recorded this with "LC". The class monitors had to submit the forms to Mr Shikongo's office every Friday. The main objective of this control mechanism was to "control the attendance of teachers in classes," he emphasised. As in the case of learner control, this control mechanism succeeded in compelling many teachers to be in classes, but did not oblige them to give quality teaching. What was needed was a mechanism to make teachers want to attend classes and to teach.

Mr Shikongo's "management by walking around" and administrative work took up most of his time so that he could not give as much time to instructional leadership as he wanted. Every time I entered his office, I found him busy: on the phone, writing another memo or report, reading his mail, talking to a visitor who just dropped in, consulting with a member of the management, or attending to a learner with disciplinary problems (the list is endless). Responding to my question regarding his busy schedule, he said, "Being a secondary school principal is like being a fire brigade. You have to attend to every thing that crops up." Attending to "everything that crops up", whether important or not, took up most of his time so that he did not have enough time to do class visits. Even when he visited classes, he did not have enough time for post-conference analysis (giving feedback after a class visit) and for follow-ups.

The other category of staff members Mr Shikongo was finding difficult to work with was the labourers. Mr Shikongo explained that it was somewhat easier to work with the professionals because of their level of understanding, but it was very difficult to manage the labourers. It was hard for the labourers to accept change. They had no respect, no commitment, and some were insubordinate, uncooperative and abused alcohol. The problem was partly historical. Before independence, disrespect of authority and shunning of work were encouraged as strategies for fighting the colonial authorities. After independence, the labourers needed to change their attitude towards authority and work. The problem was compounded by the fact that independence has brought with it freedoms and human rights, which were very much misunderstood and abused, especially among the labourers, whose knowledge and understanding were limited. Mr Shikongo related an incident when he called in one of the labourers to reprimand him. Instead of the worker listening to him, he just walked out of the office. Later, Mr Shikongo learned that the worker was drunk. On another occasion, he called him in again. The worker refused to come.

In short, Mr Shikongo had been facing challenges in managing some of his staff members. Despite the above control mechanisms, he indicated that there was little improvement in addressing the undesired behaviour of the staff members. Thus, the control mechanisms were less effective. Mr Shikongo seemed to subscribe, wittingly or unwittingly, to the famous Theory X of McGregor (Gorton, 1987). Thus, he believed that people should be controlled in order for them to do the work. He has been using those control mechanisms for some time, but they have been yielding few results.

(c) Creating environment conducive to teaching and learning

The material resources of the school were in short supply. Classrooms were overcrowded, with not less 39 learners in a class. The national staffing norm required a secondary school to have a ratio of 30 learners per teacher. Thus, Etameko Secondary School had more learners per teacher than the required number.

Mr Shikongo indicated that the situation was exacerbated by the shortage of textbooks, stationery and teaching and learning aids. Learners had to share textbooks. The shortage of material resources was likely to demotivate both teachers and learners. Consequently, learners were likely to be undisciplined and this could discourage teachers further. Undoubtedly, this situation was not conducive to teaching and learning. Mr Shikongo indicated that he was expected to see to it that quality teaching and learning were taking place amid those shortages, for there were no indications that the situation was going to improve in the near future. Thus, his challenge was to acquire knowledge and skills to devise strategies to stimulate and secure an environment conducive to quality teaching and learning despite the above shortages. As he said, “I have to do more with fewer resources at my disposal.”

(d) Securing support of superordinates

In addition to managing his subordinates, Mr Shikongo had some problems in securing the support of his superordinates. He stated that there were times when secondary school principals had good ideas, but convincing the seniors to support the ideas was just not easy. Using an example, he substantiated the difficulty involved in gaining the support of the superordinates:

For example, it took many years for secondary school principals to convince the seniors to allow senior secondary schools (grades 11 – 12) to phase in junior secondary phase (grades 8 – 10). Secondary school principals were arguing that poor performance at grade 12 level could be attributed chiefly to the poor educational background of learners they admitted in grade 11 from combined schools (grades 1 – 10), where material resources were extremely inadequate.

Equally, according to Mr Shikongo, the superordinates had a tendency to be prescriptive instead of acting in an advisory capacity. He cited an example of the custom of the regional office to instruct secondary school principals to admit grade 11 learners who could not be admitted elsewhere, irrespective of whether a school had already exceeded its carrying capacity. Perhaps, such instruction giving should be attributed, wholly or in part, to the fact that education in Namibia “is managed along centralized lines” (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002, p. 4), despite commitment to participatory democracy (MEC, 1993). MBESC/Raison/GTZ (2002, p. 21) advise that “senior education managers have to be bold to actually relinquish some of their authority to lower levels.” The senior education managers were unlikely to consider this advice because, as the saying goes in the Omusati community, “power is sweet.”

Mr Shikongo appeared not to have enough skills in how to negotiate to gain support from the superordinates. In his interactions with his superordinates, his behaviour was characterized largely by differences or acquiescence. He seldom sought for co-operation, the “mutual benefit in all human interactions,” to borrow a phrase from Covey (1989, p. 207). In sum, he knew little about how a subordinate can influence the behaviour and activities of the superordinates. This was so because usually what he learned was related to a top-down management. He seldom learned issues related to bottom-up management. In other words, he could not imagine leading his leaders.

(e) Organising and coordinating professional development

Mr Shikongo’s other crucial challenge as a cluster centre principal was to organise, coordinate and facilitate professional development of human resources in his school cluster. Mr Shikongo indicated that the need for professional development of teachers, school managers and school boards in his cluster was of paramount importance. The realisation of the provision of quality education requires, first and foremost, quality teachers, and participatory leadership requires well-informed school boards and school management. Thus, professional development of these stakeholders was a *sine qua non*.

Mr Shikongo indicated that many teachers, school managers, and school board members in his cluster needed in-service professional development. Obviously, the undesired behaviour of some teachers and the indiscipline of many learners, outlined above, are but two of the factors manifesting the need for the professional development of teachers. He argued that teachers played a pivotal role in bringing about improved learner learning. Moreover, teachers, if well developed, stand a better chance than the principals to instil in learners much-needed intrinsic discipline, thereby minimising learner indiscipline and lack of seriousness.

Not only the teachers but also the school board members played a crucial role in the schools. If they were to deliver to the satisfaction of all concerned, they also needed professional development. The school board is comprised of representatives of parents and teachers (with principals as ex officio members), and in the case of secondary schools, learners are also represented. My observation of the Etameko Secondary School board in action and the subsequent reflective interview with Mr Shikongo revealed that some of the school board members, especially the learners and the majority of parents, lacked substantive knowledge and skills related to their work. When I attended one of Etameko Secondary School's board meetings, I noted that parents' and learners' representatives had too many questions to ask regarding how they were expected to carry out their work. They needed too much guidance from Mr Shikongo and the teachers' representatives. This was an indication that they needed to learn more about their work.

I attended a one-day training session that Mr Shikongo organised for school board members, including principals in his cluster. The training took place at the cluster centre, that is, Mr Shikongo's school. The main aim of the training was for the school board members to learn more about their functions. It was one of the cascade training series of the MoE. The cluster centre principal and a member of his school board had attended training previously on the same topic. In this session, the two were to pass on the training they had received to the other members of the school boards in the cluster. Mr Shikongo did most of the presentation, employing a lecturing method. In his view, lecturing facilitated what appeared to be his personal motto, namely helping people to gain "deep understanding"¹¹. In this case his aim was for the school board members to gain deep understanding of what was expected of them. He presented in English with intermittent explanations in the local language. He demonstrated book knowledge of the functions of the school board.

¹¹ When Mr Shikongo addressed his subordinates, he repeatedly said: "I want you to have a deep understanding." He explained that his favourite saying aimed at putting emphasis on the important "knowledge" he shared with them.

Throughout much of the training session, the majority of the participants were passive, concentrating only on taking notes on what he was conveying to them. However, they became active towards the end when they were expressing their views about the challenges facing the cluster. A number of the participants suggested that they were eager to see the cluster centre principal visiting satellite schools to see how the satellite schools were performing, giving them the necessary support and morale, supervising them, and making follow-ups on what they learned previously. Responding to my reflective questions on the passivity of participants in the first part of the training and possible reasons for their complaints towards the end of the training, Mr Shikongo said:

Maybe one of the reasons for their passivity was lack of knowledge of what we were talking about. ... They are right I don't visit their schools regularly. I cannot drive my car to a school that is 40 km away using my own petrol. If the government can provide us with petrol allowance or official transport, then everything will be ok.

In sum, because the professional development of teachers, cluster principals and school boards has been provided in the framework of the cluster system, which was relatively new to Mr Shikongo, what he needed most was the “deep understanding” (knowledge and skills) of how it should be coordinated, organised and facilitated.

(f) Managing school-community relations

The other category of professional development needs for Mr Shikongo was how to manage the influence of cultural values. Etameko Secondary School was in the remote rural area, where the community expected that school education should be compatible with their cultural values, customs and beliefs.

In the wake of the increase in HIV and AIDS related problems in the community, Mr Shikongo was faced with alien challenges. He said:

Death is prevalent in the region due to the killer disease AIDS. The Omusati Region is one of the regions in Namibia that is the hardest hit by HIV and AIDS. Many staff members and learners constantly seek my permission to be absent from classes [absenteeism]. Two of the main reasons for this are that they are going to attend to the sick or to attend funerals almost on a daily basis. Their requests should be understood on the basis of the local cultural values.

As Africans, the community believed in the philosophy of *ubuntu* and the notion of communalism. The philosophy of *ubuntu* is clearly described by Mbiti (as cited by Higgs, 2002, p. 31):

Whatever happens to the individual happens to the whole group, and whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: 'I am, because we are; and since we are, therefore I am.'

This means that members of the community stand solidly by each other in times of difficulties: they visit the sick together and come in big number to “share grief” (mourning), to cite the literal translation of the Oshiwambo proverb. At times this harmony was interfering with the normal functioning of the school.

There was another dimension that strengthened this solidarity among the Aawambo. The atrocities committed against them by the colonial governments in the past reinforced their solidarity. The slogan: “An injury to one is an injury to all” was still cherished in that part of the country that was part of the war zone. As part of the community, a former freedom fighter during Namibia’s liberation struggle and a traditional leader heading a village, Mr Shikongo upheld the same

cultural values as his community. Those values were sometimes in conflict (although not wrong) with the professional values. I captured this conflict when he said:

Now I have a conflict of culture and education. Here I have learners who have to be taught and pass the examinations. But if I refuse the teachers permission to attend the funerals of their family members, people would see me as not respecting the cultural values of my community. Culture and education are now at friction.

Two aspects revealed by this quote need to be explained. One, the phrase “family members” refer to all one’s relatives. In Oshiwambo culture, the notion of extended family does not exist because all relatives belong to the big nuclear family. Thus, an Oshiwambo family is extremely big. This kind of family set-up coupled to high level of commitment to a cultural value of “an injury to one is an injury to all”, provides the potential for absenteeism and class cutting, as already discussed, especially in the light of higher rates of social problems such as deaths in the community due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Two, sometimes Mr Shikongo had intrapersonal conflicts (conflicting beliefs within himself), which influenced his actions and behaviour. Thus, the challenge was how to strike the balance between the cultural values and his professional values.

While the problem in the preceding scenario was that of an inability to strike the balance between succumbing to cultural values and upholding professional values due to conflicting beliefs, Mr Shikongo indicated that sometimes cultural values and beliefs mattered more to him. Again, the example of dealing with HIV and AIDS related problems illustrated this challenge very well. One of the MoE’s priorities for 2001 – 2006 was to help minimise the spread of HIV and AIDS (MBESC, 2001b). Mr Shikongo was not in favour of distributing condoms in his school, one of the two widely recommended options to the youth (the other one being abstinence). When I asked him whether his learners had access to condoms,

Mr Shikongo said with firm and unequivocal emphasis, “There are no condoms in my school.” What he recommended to his learners was abstinence. His attitude was based on the cultural beliefs and Christian values that children should not indulge in sex before marriage. (This analysis will be pursued in more detail in the fourth unit).

In conclusion, the challenges for Mr Shikongo made the following revelations. One, he was of the view that management matters more than leadership. This view can be understood from the background that Namibian education was managed along centralized lines (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002). Most of the crucial decisions were taken at the head quarters of the education authorities. What was expected of the school principals was to see to it that these decisions handed down to them were implemented in their schools. This is more of a management function. He needed to be good at managing. Two, by implication, he was of the view that the management areas that secondary school principals needed to be good at were knowledge and skills. This revelation can be understood if it is linked to the first revelation. If one of the main functions of the principals was to manage the implementation of the decisions of the education authorities, then principals have to be competent. In other words, they should be knowledgeable about the decisions and policies of the education authorities and they should be skilled in implementing them. Three, Mr Shikongo’s school was in the rural area where cultural values were stronger, so that the impact of the values could be felt in the school. Because of this, his management style was expected to be compatible with the cultural values. Finally, most of his challenges were concerned with human resources management. This could be interpreted as indicating that human resources management is a pressing challenge. Human beings are more difficult to manage than physical facilities. This is so because of their intellectual power to reason. That is why some authorities in the area of leadership contend that human beings should be led, that is, influenced and inspired; only non-living things and animals have to be managed or controlled (Effective Living: “What is Leadership”, 2003).

4.3.1.2 Professional development strategies of Mr Shikongo

Given the fact that Mr Shikongo did not receive any pre-service preparation, was never inducted and was facing many challenges, he relied on in-service professional development to cater for his professional development needs. In this subunit I analyse, discuss and interpret data pertaining to his various development strategies, and the extent to which his professional development needs were catered for.

(a) Self-development strategies

Self-development refers to strategies the principal used to develop himself. The common self-development strategies for Mr Shikongo were independent reading and learning from experience.

(i) Independent reading

Upon entering Mr Shikongo's office, I noted some documents on government policies and regulations, such as the Education Act, Public Service Staff Rules, The Cluster System in Namibia and a few personal books on educational management on his table. I also detected two manuals he received from previous workshops he attended. He indicated that he read extensively about education policies because, as he emphasised, "I need to do things in line with the policies." In the course of our interviews, he demonstrated conversance with the education policies.

His quest for knowledge through independent reading was hampered by a number of factors. There were no journals or books on educational management in his school library. Because of his inaccessibility to journals he had no access to the latest espoused theory in the field of educational management. Knowledge is

never static; it is always in fermenting state. Recent espoused theory discovered through scientific research is mostly published in journals. Further, his school had no access to the Internet, which is another vital source of knowledge in this era of technology. Over and above these, he had little time to read. He followed a busy schedule virtually every school day. He had classes to teach; teachers, learners and labourers to supervise; administrative work to attend to; meetings to attend; and visitors to attend to; apart from other duties. Thus, despite his eagerness to learn through reading, his inaccessibility to relevant reading material and the unavailability of time to read hindered this good intention. However, reading improved, to some extent, his management knowledge and skills, especially in understanding of relevant government policies.

(ii) Practical experience

As a practising principal, Mr Shikongo learned consciously or unconsciously from doing his work. When he engaged in a new management task, he acquired new management strategies. He applied the same strategies in similar situations. “As a matter of fact that is what experience is all about – gaining more and better knowledge and skills through doing your work,” he argued. However, when he failed to do the work, he reflected on and modified the learned strategies. For example, he unsuccessfully reprimanded one of his labourers. As he was cross, he shouted at the labourer. The labourer declined to listen to him. Thereafter, he cogitated on the possible reasons for his failure. He realised that “the only solution was to talk to him in a polite manner and in private.” The labourer was cooperative and even apologised for his improper conduct in the first encounter.

Mr Shikongo’s two self-development strategies complemented each other. Developing through gaining more experience could be directed and improved by independent reading; and the theory he gained from reading could be tested for its practicability and feasibility by applying it in a real work situation. In other words, through doing his work, he could bridge the gap between theory and

practice. For this complementarity to be strengthened, Mr Shikongo should be able to read more extensively about espoused theory in the area of educational management; and should test consciously espoused theory in practice.

To summarize, in order to develop himself, Mr Shikongo utilized two strategies, namely independent reading and learning from experience. The two strategies complemented each other.

(b) People-assisted professional development strategies

In addition to self-development, Mr Shikongo also developed with the assistance of other people. Some of the people-assisted development activities were informal while others were formal.

(i) Informal professional development

In some cases, Mr Shikongo needed the assistance of other people, namely teachers, learners and parents, to carry out some of his official work. In the process, these people served as his informal development facilitators. They shared ideas and experiences with him and they challenged his ideas and views. For example, in the course of the interviews his school board conducted, Mr Shikongo was inquisitive about how the interviews could be better conducted. The other school board members were willing to share their experiences with him. I noted that Mr Shikongo transcended his pride as a principal and exposed his ignorance honestly and openly to people most of whom were his subordinates (teachers and learners), so that he could learn from them. He knew that if he needed to learn, the starting point was to honestly and openly admit his ignorance. "I am not a cherub. I want them to know that I don't know everything. If there are things other people know which I don't know, what prevents me from learning from them?" he said rhetorically and emphatically.

In his view, his informal learning from the experiences of other people was advantageous in some ways. One, he made optimum utilization and exploitation of the readily available experiences. Among his school board members were some people who have been in the education system for a longer period of time and who have gathered more experiences than him. For example, there was a retired principal, and some of the teachers have been in the teaching profession or have taught at Etameko Secondary School for longer than he has. In other words, some of these informal professional development facilitators have accumulated more experience than he has. Thus, he benefited from the readily available experience. Two, informal learning was cheap in terms of money and time. It only required good working rapport with other people. Three, the experience available in his school board was unique to his school. In other words, it was a body of theory-in-use, that is, pragmatic knowledge and locally tested skills. Finally, shared experience is immediately tested for its workability and feasibility.

However, this impromptu learning from other people's experiences has its drawbacks, too. One of them is the possibility of relying on flawed experience and outdated knowledge. In order to make informed decisions, local knowledge was useful, but recent espoused theory was a *sine qua non*. Other development strategies such as independent reading could serve as source of recent documented theory.

Mr Shikongo also learned from visitors and education officials who paid casual or unofficial visits to his school. He pointed out that he learned a lot through sharing experiences with people from outside his school. Often, the ideas and views of people from outside were wholly new to him. They made him reconsider his local knowledge and the way he was doing things (actions and behaviours). For example, towards the end of the interviews with me, he made the following remark: "To me your interviews were a learning experience. Your questions were educative. They made me reconsider how I do things here."

His remark was reminiscent of what Fisher and Sharp (1998) emphasise regarding the importance of asking real (not lead) questions. These authors are of strong conviction that telling people what to do when one is not their boss is unlikely to have any significant impact, because they perceive telling as an accusation. Asking them well-thought out questions is one of the effective strategies to make them reconsider their behaviour. By their very nature of being well-crafted questions, interview questions are likely to make interviewees to reflect on how they do things and how they can do those things differently.

Furthermore, Mr Shikongo explained that he reflected every time he was engaged in discussions about his work. He said it was almost a daily learning strategy he engaged in spontaneously. He said:

Even when parents complain about my work or when they blame me and even when the education officials reprimand me, I take it as an opportunity to learn. Usually parents complain when they feel that their children are not treated fairly. Education officials are in most cases concerned with doing things in line with the laid-down government procedures and regulations.

Thus, as a principal working in the remote rural school where opportunities for formal in-service professional development were in short supply, Mr Shikongo capitalised on informal professional development opportunities. Informal professional development enabled him to improve, to some extent, his management actions and behaviours, and attitudes and values. In other words, informal developers focused intentionally or unintentionally on helping him improve his management actions and behaviours, and attitudes and values. They were seldom interested in improving his management knowledge and skills.

(ii) Formal professional development of Mr Shikongo

In addition to learning from experiences of others in informal and unplanned ways, Mr Shikongo also attended workshops both at cluster and regional levels. Most of formal professional development for principals took place at the cluster level. The cluster workshop described above is a case in point. Mr Shikongo, who was the only presenter, presented a talk about the impact of policy issues on the functions of school boards. He was well prepared. To a large extent, he demonstrated book knowledge of the subject he was presenting. After the workshop, he explained to me that the “cluster-based workshops helped him to learn” in two ways. One, when he prepared for a workshop, he read widely and thereby learned. Two, the discussions concerning what he prepared reinforced and broadened his knowledge.

Mr Shikongo also participated in regionally organised workshops. One such a workshop focused on sexual health, HIV and AIDS. Specific objectives for the workshop included preparing principals to transfer information on HIV and AIDS to learners, teachers and communities, and to manage the impact of HIV and AIDS on their schools. It was a two-week workshop that took place during the school recess. The participants were all principals in the region. The attendance was compulsory, and there was an attendance register. As the number of principals was so big, the facilitators split them into groups, and each group had its facilitators. The workshop addressed, among other matters, Mr Shikongo’s professional development need of how to deal with the conflict between cultural values and professional values.

The facilitators were regional education officials and circuit inspectors who were the supervisors of principals. Mushaandja (1996) is of the view that the workshop participants might be reluctant to expose their professional development needs if the workshop facilitators are their supervisors. The participants could possibly think that their supervisors might interpret exposure of needs as a sign of

weakness indicating that they cannot do the job and therefore should be punished. This means that supervisors are unlikely to be efficacious assessors of professional development needs.

The facilitators had attended training session before, and they had to pass the training on to the principals, a process known as cascade training. The predominant presentation methods were lectures with some discussions and demonstrations in between. The lectures went well and there were some handouts for later independent reading. At times the facilitators spoke in the local language to ensure comprehensive understanding on the part of the participants. On the basis of this, one would conclude that the participants acquired the necessary knowledge – what HIV and AIDS are, how HIV spreads, what should be done to prevent its spread, and what principals should do to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS on their schools. However, the discussions gave birth to some questions that were more health related and medical in nature. Not enough justice was done to these questions because both the facilitators and the participants were from the education sector, and the questions called for the expertise of health or medical practitioners. This was a manifestation of the need for partnership in the professional development of principals.

Despite some successes in the acquisition of knowledge, the facilitators were not that successful in attitude and value modification. For instance, towards the end of the workshop, Mr Shikongo spoke against (attitude and value) condom use arguing that

Condom use promotes satanic activities. It is contrary to our cultural and Christian values. Abstinence should be the way to go. Our children should be encouraged to abstain from sex before marriage. They should be encouraged to respect their virginity. If we, when we were children, could abstain, why nowadays children want to engage in promiscuity? After all, condom use is not 100% effective.

These sentiments, which were shared by the majority of the participants, revealed Mr Shikongo's strong belief in cultural and Christian values, which perhaps undermined one of the main aims of the workshop, that of transferring the knowledge to his school and community. When I asked him to comment on these sentiments after the workshop, Mr Shikongo emphatically said:

There is no way that I will distribute condoms to the learners. If I do that I will give them conflicting messages. On the one hand I want them to behave, while on the other I give them the license [give them condoms] to practice sex. You give them condoms to do what, to make sex, of course.

... I will not speak about taboo words with the learners. Maybe [this word showed a possibility of change of attitude] if I have to talk to them about sex, then I will use learner centred education approach, whereby you lead the learners to discover for themselves. If I speak about taboo words, and these children go back home and tell their parents that I taught them things like penis and vagina, what will their parents think of me? [He raised his voice, an indication that he was adamant in his opinions.]

The second paragraph of the above quote arose from the exercise the participants were requested to do. The exercise was about translating some taboo words from English into the local language. These were words that were seldom spoken in the local language, especially in public. The words were easier said in English, but not everybody in schools and communities understood English. The words were deemed embarrassing and sensitive when spoken in the local language. The aim was to accustom the participants to the use of taboo words so that they would comfortably and clearly convey the message in the local language to the learners and the communities in such a way that there would be no ambiguity and misunderstanding. When they were doing the exercise, one could see many participants frowning when some of them mentioned some of the taboo words in

the local language. Younger male principals were freer when doing the translations. One of the participants challenged one of the facilitators to help translate the word “penis”. The facilitator hesitated for a while and gave a coined word “okapipi,” which literally means “small pipe.” This was an indication that even the facilitator was embarrassed and sensitive to translate the taboo words.

Some participants refused to participate in the exercises all together. For example, an elderly male principal refused to demonstrate how to wear a condom using an artificial penis. There was a traditional dimension to the demonstration. The demonstrators had to be blindfolded because, as the facilitator said, “those things are done in the dark”. Applying a condom in the dark is risky as it can be damaged or not worn properly.

In conclusion, it came across clearly that Mr Shikongo was of the attitude that some of the strategies that were suggested in the workshop for helping curb the spread of HIV were in conflict with his cultural and Christian values and, therefore, were unacceptable to him. Despite having acquired the knowledge, he could seldom implement the suggested strategies because of his attitude and opposing values. It follows, therefore, that the development strategies used were not really effective in making him reconsider and, if necessary, modify his values and attitudes.

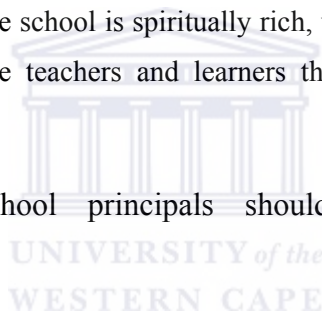
4.3.1.3 Suggestions by Mr Shikongo

- (a) The cluster centre library at his schools should be equipped with books and journals on educational management, and there should be interlibrary loans between the cluster centre library and the regional teacher resource centre and other libraries in the country. “Reading various books will give you food for thought. You will only be able to share with others if you are informed; and if you are ill-informed, you will ill-inform others,” he concluded. The cluster centre library should have computers connected to the Internet.

- (b) Secondary school principals should visit each other's schools and "learn from each other's successes". He said there were successful secondary schools in other regions, such as Oshigambo High School in the neighbouring Oshikoto Region, which despite being in a rural area, had been performing very well. In 2003, it managed to finish second on the national rank order in the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education (HIGCSE) examinations. (A total of 107 schools wrote the IGCSE and HIGCSE examinations in 2003.) The daily newspaper *The Namibian* (Angula, "Proper Management Key to Success," February 3, 2004, p. 9), quoted the minister of education as saying:

Surely, Oshigambo is not the richest school in material and financial terms. But the school is spiritually rich, well organised, well managed and the teachers and learners there work very hard.

- (c) Successful secondary school principals should mentor less successful counterparts.



4.3.2 Mr Iipumbu

This section discusses the profile of Mr Iipumbu (an alias). Of the three respondents, Mr Iipumbu, a 52-year old education veteran, was the oldest and most experienced principal. He had been a principal since before independence. Like his counterpart, Mr Shikongo, his academic qualification was standard 10 (grade 12) and his professional qualification was a four-year teaching diploma. He is a holder of diploma in educational management. He obtained the diploma after completing a two-year programme with the Institute for Educational Career Development (IECD), an NGO that was aimed at offering leadership skills to serving principals in Namibia. He did not get the chance to be in school management before he was appointed as a principal. He had accumulated four

years of teaching experience and five years of organising regional school sports prior to his appointment as a principal. For five years, he acted as an inspector of education. At the time of data gathering, he had been heading Uusiku Secondary School (an alias) for 19 years. Thus, like his counterpart, Mr Shikongo, he met the basic requirements when he was appointed as a principal, that is, many years of teaching experience and sound teaching qualification.

He was of the belief that the successes he achieved in managing regional school sports could have influenced his former supervisors to pick him for the position of a principal:

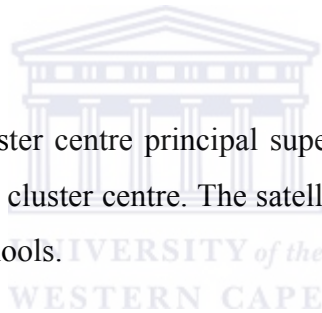
My appointment was interesting and maybe unique in the whole of Namibia. My former Regional Director just came to me and handed me the keys of the brand new secondary school. I compare my appointment with the appointment of a new Priest I witnessed. One day I accompanied the Rural Dean of our Church Deanery and the Deacon to a new parish. When we arrived, we said the prayer, and thereafter the Dean told the Deacon: 'from today on you preach the gospel of God in this parish.' Later I learned that the new Priest was succeeding in his new work. I was appointed to run the school without any prior preparation, whatsoever. I had to swim or else sink.

A close look at this quote reveals one vital aspect pertaining to Mr Iipumbu's professional development. He was not given pre-service preparation for principalship. Because of this, he was concerned that he would flounder. Thus, the transition from one post to another created in him the eagerness to develop so that he would not fail but would succeed like the new Priest. Mr Iipumbu indicated that his eagerness to learn reached its highest point when he was a new principal. That was why in the absence of a well-organised on-the-job professional development programme, he learned "how to lead the school through leading it" (self-development). Thus, his eagerness to learn during the earlier

stage of principalship was an opportune chance worth exploiting by his developers.

Mr Iipumbu was a principal of Uusiku Secondary School, a school in one of rural settlements in the Omusati Region. The school was established in 1985. It is a complete secondary school (grades 8 to 12). At the time of data gathering, the school community was comprised of 26 labourers, 435 learners and 14 teaching staff, including 3 members of the school management team (principal, head of department, and hostel superintendent). There were 31 learners per teacher. Most of the learners were boarders in the school hostel. There were 5 vacancies, two for the teaching staff and 3 for the labourers. The library and the lab were ill-equipped, and the teaching and learning materials were in short supply. The physical facilities were damaged and needed renovation. The school fence has been vandalised.

Mr Iipumbu was also a cluster centre principal supervising 5 schools, including his own. His school was the cluster centre. The satellite schools comprised of one combined and 3 primary schools.



4.3.2.1 Professional development needs of Mr Iipumbu

In this subunit I analyse, discuss and interpret data on the development needs of Mr Iipumbu, with which he was struggling at the time of data gathering. His specific professional development needs are categorised in management areas that needed development.

(a) Managing finances

As the man at the helm of the school, Mr Iipumbu was accountable for the management of state and school finances generated by his school. Unfortunately, as he revealed: "... this is not an easy task as it sounds, particularly because

money is the root of all evils.” His main task was to oversee that state funds were generated and handled “according to treasury directives” and school development funds were managed “in accordance with the laid-down regulations”.

There was some kind of distributed financial management in the school. Teachers were responsible for collecting state revenue (such as hostel fees and examination fees) and school development funds (money used to develop the school). The hostel superintendent acted as the receiver of the state revenue in the school and was responsible for recording, banking and reporting thereof. Mr Iipumbu’s problem was the management of school development funds. The school’s master budget had to be drawn and presented to the school board for approval, money had to be allocated to departments according to the needs of each department, both the main school budget and the departmental budgets had to be controlled, and the expenditures had to be reported to the school board on regular basis. Moreover, parents had to be convinced to make contributions to the school development funds.

As a head of the school, Mr Iipumbu was answerable to internal and external audit for the state revenue and school development funds, irrespective of whether he delegated part of this task to staff members. He summed up his challenge and foresaw some more challenges in the future when he said:

You see, sometimes I find myself doing the work of a bursar or supervising somebody who does that work. I am not a bursar; I am a principal. If I have to act as a bursar, then I have to be trained for that. I am talking about serious training, not these short courses we usually attend ... In some countries principals are given money by their governments to run their schools, paying the salaries of teachers, and what have you. As we are moving into the direction of decentralisation, we may find ourselves running our own budgets, but without the necessary skills, principals will pick up some problems there.

In sum, Mr Iipumbu's main challenge in managing the school finances was mainly a lack of knowledge and skills.

(b) Implementing educational policies

Mr Iipumbu was finding it difficult to implement educational policies. He felt that there was a need for the developers to focus more attention on how principals could best put the policies into action. He said:

For example, in the wake of rapid spread of HIV and AIDS pandemic, principals should be able to devise strategies to implement both the Policy on Teenage Pregnancy, and HIV and AIDS Policy in schools. Likewise, in this era when inclusive education is encouraged, principals should be prepared to play an effective supervisory role in the support of learners with special needs [Policy on Disability].

Mr Iipumbu believed that educational policies should be reviewed and amended frequently if the situation in the schools so dictated. For example, while the Language Policy directs that the medium of instruction in secondary schools is English, Mr Iipumbu saw nothing wrong with a teacher explaining a complicated concept in the language (vernacular) the learners understand better. His argument was in line with Harlech-Jones' (1990, p. 203) finding that

... significant support was given to a bilingual policy in the schools, and to the differentiated use and introduction of mediums of instruction. Such policies have not been formally applied in schools in Namibia, although there was substantial evidence from the survey that the teachers informally employed bilingual instruction ...

He said, in many cases, suggestions of reviewing policies were not entertained by many policymakers (his superordinates), especially if the policy sounded good on paper. Mr Iipumbu seemed to have gathered a great deal of experience, and he felt

he could make a significant contribution to the formulation or reformulation of policies to make them more workable.

Summarising, Mr Iipumbu has gained knowledge of, and the ability (skills) to apply, the policies, but sometimes in the process (actions) of implementing the policies, he failed. Therefore, his development should focus more on how he could implement the policies practically.

(c) Securing support of superordinates

In addition to his inability to influence the policymakers to amend the policies when the situation on the ground so dictated, there were some other instances when he failed to convince the superordinates to, as he put it, “put their priorities right”. According to the MBESC (2001b, p.10), one of the eight priority areas was “to provide and maintain an appropriate infrastructure and environment that supports teaching, learning and development of skills”. However, according to Mr Iipumbu, for many years, his requests for the renovation of his school “have fallen on deaf ears”. I observed the extent to which the school was damaged when he invited me one morning to join him, in what he called “walking the school.” The idea was for him to familiarise himself with the situation in the school before he embarked on the daily routine. The hostel blocks were very much dilapidated. It was pathetic. There was a sewerage blockage and sewerage water was running behind the hostels. Virtually all the windows were broken, and some water basins were damaged. He reminded me that some of the damages dated back to before independence, when learners used to vandalize, damage and even burn down schools as “a weapon for fighting Bantu Education”. The classrooms too were in a pathetic state, with some roofs leaking and broken windows. The school had never seen any major renovation since its establishment, 19 years ago.

The school was able to repair some minor damages such as replacing some broken windows. However, this effort was hampered by lack of funds. The school depended on school development funds, the main source of which was the contributions made by parents. However, as I pointed out in Chapter 1, the Omusati community was too poor that not all parents could afford to make significant financial contributions to the education of their children. Moreover, according the Education Act (MBESC, 2001c), the payment of school development fund is not compulsory. At the beginning of 2005 academic year, the MoE issued an Urgent Public Notice to Parents/Guardians and Principals of Schools (MBESC, 2005) reiterating the government policy of, among others, not turning away learners who cannot afford to pay school development fund at the reopening of the school. The notice further requests parents:

... to approach schools in case they have difficulties or are unable to pay the prescribed school development fund/hostel fee so that their status can be understood and exemption procedures can be made (p.1).

On the basis of these government regulations, Mr Iipumbu relied on the MoE to repair damages to government property in his school. Frequently, the reply from the MoE regional office was that there were no funds available. He used the metaphor to explain his feeling (attitude) about this reply from his superordinates: “Now, when the father [superordinate] has spoken [that there was no money], you fold your arms.” This attitude of Mr Iipumbu had a significant impact on his behaviour towards his superordinates. The superordinate was equated with the “father.” In Oshiwambo culture, the word “father” connotes awe (feeling of respect combined with fear). That is why when the “father” has spoken, he had to fold his arms. Pease (1997, p. 88) explains the folding-arms body language:

Research conducted into the folding-arms position has shown some interesting results ... By folding one or both arms across

the chest, a barrier is formed that is, in essence, an attempt to block out the impending threat or undesirable circumstances. One thing is certain, when a person has a nervous, negative or defensive attitude, he [or she] will fold his [or her] arms firmly on his [or her] chest, a strong signal that he [or she] feels threatened.

Thus, Mr Iipumbu felt threatened and did not have the courage to press for his school's needs to be met. The argument advanced here is not that Mr Iipumbu should have obtained what he wanted, but the contention is that his attitude of awe limited his behaviour and action to press for the priorities to be put right, to paraphrase his own words. He failed to understand his superordinates' goals, strengths and weaknesses and see how to develop and manage a working relationship in which he, his superordinates and his school could benefit. He was not knowledgeable about upward management of working relationship.

(d) Influencing and inspiring learners and personnel

Leading the subordinates to achieve the desired goals was a challenge that Mr Iipumbu has grappled with for a long time. The unacceptable behaviours of some his learners and staff members directly affected learner learning adversely.

Poor time management among learners and teachers was the order of the day. I observed that some learners and teachers were late for almost all their learning-teaching activities. For example, some learners and teachers took excessive time to get to classes in the morning when the periods commenced or after breaks in the course of the day. Often, the principal was seen going around rushing the learners to classes (management by walking around). In the afternoons, I observed teachers, delegated by the principal, rushing the learners to their classes for a 60-minute study session. Teachers chased them into classrooms and made sure that there was silence. The teachers felt they have done their part, assuming that silence meant learning.

When the learners were in classrooms, one could see that some of them were not concentrating on learning. In many classrooms there were always some disturbances of some kind. For instance, some “bad elements” (as the principal referred to the troublemakers) were inclined to move around disturbing those who were trying to learn by, for example, cracking unnecessary jokes. Thus, for some learners the classroom environment was not conducive to learning. All in all, Mr Iipumbu was finding it difficult to influence a substantial number of learners and teachers not to waste too much teaching and learning time.

Further, Mr Iipumbu was finding it difficult to have some learners take care of school facilities. Some learners vandalised school property. As I described earlier on, hostel blocks were vandalised and dirty and sewerage system damaged. According to Mr Iipumbu, learners threw hard items such as pieces of soap, papers and bits of plastic into the sewerage system. These items blocked the system. The boys’ hostels were dirtier and more vandalised than the girls’ hostels. The principal’s challenge was more of what actions to take and how to behave to instil self-discipline in learners.

Likewise, inspiring staff members was also a problem for Mr Iipumbu. He needed to develop strategies to inspire his staff members to be able to control themselves. In addition to some staff members being poor time managers, some lacked work ethics. He cited an example of some labourers at the kitchen who stole food. He was quick to add:

I know I have to report them to the police, but that is extrinsic discipline. What I want is to instil in them intrinsic discipline so that they do not think of stealing in the first place.

Comparing the behaviour of his staff members to that of their counterparts in urban centres, he was of the opinion that there was a difference in terms of work ethics. Mr Iipumbu observed that teachers and labourers in urban schools were

more committed to their work than their counterparts in rural schools were. He said:

These people [teachers and labourers] have cucashops [small businesses] to run, *mahangu* (millet) fields to cultivate ... To them working here is a secondary employment. You should know that these people are part and parcel of the community set-up here. They all are subsistence farmers.

The behaviour of staff members Mr Iipumbu described was in conflict with the Public Service Act (1995). This type of behaviour is punishable by law. Article 17 (1) (a) and (b) of The Public Service Act (1995, p. 19) stipulates that:

Unless it is otherwise provided for in his or her conditions of service, every staff member or member of the services shall place the whole of his or her time at the disposal of the Government; and no staff member or member of the services shall perform or engage himself or herself to perform remunerative work at any time outside his or her employment in the Public Service.

Mr Iipumbu was not in favour of taking frequent disciplinary actions against his staff members (attitude). He was of the opinion that serving the subordinates with warning letters and charging them with misconduct could not serve his purpose very well. He was of the view that those disciplinary measures provoke hatred and hatred is not conducive to improving productivity and teamwork. He thought that taking disciplinary measures should be the last resort when all other alternatives have been exhausted. He wanted to develop intrinsic motivation in the subordinates, so that they could have the inner drive to do the work without anybody else pushing them. He wanted them to behave like people who didn't need the principal to be there:

Mr Mushaandja, I want to be able to inspire them so that at the end of the day they don't need me ... They should be people who would say we do this thing, because it is a good thing for us [intrinsic motivation], not because it is a good thing for the principal [extrinsic motivation].

In a nutshell, he needed to act and behave in such a way that he would influence the behaviours and activities of his subordinates to do what was expected of them without being forced. In so doing, he would be developing intrinsic discipline.

(e) Organising and coordinating professional development

As a cluster centre head, Mr Iipumbu was responsible for, among other things, organising and coordinating workshops for various staff members in his cluster. His main concern was the professional development of teachers. "Teachers are the key people", he stated, "who perform the actual business of education, namely to improve learner learning." He felt that some teachers in his cluster needed to improve their subject knowledge, administration of their subjects (drafting good schemes of work, lesson plans), teaching skills and, more importantly, class management.

Mr Iipumbu observed that because of new developments in school management and their low level of education, some cluster principals and school boards could not cope. They needed comprehensive in-service professional development. He argued that some stakeholders expected more from the principals, but they did little to help the principals grow:

You cannot reap where you did not sow. If you need competent people, train them. I strongly believe that as the principal grows, the school also grows. The training of principals is crucial. They need to be trained on regular basis.

In view of the above challenges, Mr Iipumbu viewed the professional development at the cluster level as ideal, but since the work of coordinating and organising professional development was new to him, he felt that he needed to learn more about how to do it. In his opening remarks at the grade 6 Mathematics subject management workshop held at his school, Mr Iipumbu revealed that when the school cluster was established in 2003, he did not have any idea whatsoever of what he was supposed to do as a cluster centre principal. He further disclosed that he still had a lot to learn about his new job. His strategy was that of “people helping each other to develop”, which implied collaborative professional development. Collaborative professional development could be the ideal strategy in the Omusati Region as it is in line with the community’s philosophy of *ubuntu* and the notion of communalism discussed earlier on.

On the question whether there was improvement in learner performance in his school cluster since the launch of his cluster, Mr Iipumbu was of the view that clustering was a change that was introduced in the education system, and that people tended to resist change. People, especially teachers, had to be made to understand what was needed because they were the implementers. If the implementers did not accept change willingly, improvement was unlikely. His challenge was how to make them accept change without forcing them. “Change comes gradually; it does not happen overnight, and it should never be imposed on the people,” he argued. He added that every school was unique. Each school in the cluster had to develop at its unique pace, using its unique strategies. Thus, the leadership strategies workable to one school may not be applicable to the other.

In summary, Mr Iipumbu has just assumed the additional and new work of coordinating and organising professional development of the school cluster. He needed to be able to plan, organise and coordinate appropriate and effective professional development for teachers, school boards and school managers in his cluster; and to develop professional developers among teachers and school

managers. Coupled to this was that he needed to be able to make them want to develop.

(f) Stress management

Mr Iipumbu followed a busy schedule. In addition to his role of coordinating the activities of the cluster, he had to manage his school and he had teaching responsibilities. He put great efforts into leading the cluster:

Leading school clusters is a competition nationwide, regionwide and circuitwide. People want to see improvements in the school clusters especially in the satellite schools. So, cluster centre heads pay more attention to the leadership of the satellite schools.

He was concerned that he might neglect his school because of the more attention he had to pay to the leadership of the satellite schools. He had 14 periods per week. One of the two subjects he was teaching was History at grade 10. He expressed concern that he might not be able to cover the whole syllabus for this class that had to sit for the external examinations at the end of the year. Because of the heavy workload, he had what he referred to as “daily plan” (his daily goals), prioritising the activities he had to do and allocating time to each activity. However, he indicated that he could not ignore those many urgent problems (whether important or not) that cropped up. Therefore, his workload remained heavy, consequently, he expressed concern that secondary school principalship had a potential to cause stress. I know that a significant number of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region have transferred to primary and combined schools because of many reasons; one of them was that they could not cope with work pressure in secondary schools. Mr Iipumbu alluded to the possibility that he might follow suit. In a nutshell, he needed knowledge and skills of self-management, including stress management.

4.3.2.2 Professional development strategies of Mr Iipumbu

Mr Iipumbu was engaged in professional development in many ways. Like his counterpart, Mr Shikongo, he did not undergo any pre-service preparation and did not receive any induction. This necessitated on-the-job professional development even more. In this subunit I discuss, analyse and interpret data on his professional development strategies.

(a) Self-development strategies

Mr Iipumbu employed the following self-development strategies: practical experience, quasi-action research and independent reading.

(i) Practical experience

Like his counterpart, Mr Shilongo, Mr Iipumbu also developed through doing his work, and thereby learned what actions and behaviours were more effective and which actions and behaviours needed improvement.

Mr Iipumbu demonstrated an interesting aspect of learning from experience. He learned how to tap from previous work experience. As I indicated earlier on, before he was appointed as a principal, he was a regional sport organiser and served also as an acting school inspector. He modified the experience he learned from these two positions and applied it in the school situation. Two of the important management skills he learned from his previous work experience were organising and team building. He demonstrated good organising skills. He was

good at delegating work and authority to his subordinates and determining the goals of his school.

Furthermore, he did all kinds of things to build good team spirit in his school. I noted that the mission statement of the school and that of the MoE were displayed on the notice boards in many places in his school. I further observed that the school has crafted a melodious school anthem, which was sung at the morning assembly on Fridays. The second stanza and the chorus express everything the school means to its members:

Uusiku [alias] educate,
Train and prepare
Your sons and daughters
For a better future
Give us your light and knowledge

Chorus:
We are happy to enjoy the shade
Of your ever green trees
We love you; we are for you
We have respect for you

I was completely gripped by the singing of the school anthem from start to finish. When learners and teachers sang it, they stood at attention and had their right hands on the left sides of their chests. Mr Iipumbu proudly explained that the main aim of the school anthem, school motto and school mission statement (see next unit) were designed to foster team building and to develop a sense of belonging to Uusiku Secondary School:

When we sing the school anthem, we see ourselves as part of the school. It binds us together. This is one of the achievements I am proud of. For this achievement I received a certificate of appreciation from my regional office.

The school anthem discloses some important aspects of team spirit. One, the school is named after a famous local traditional leader, Uusiku (alias).

Metaphorically, then, when they sing the school anthem, they are requesting the traditional leader (who is seen as omnipotently powerful) to “educate, train and prepare (the leader’s) sons and daughters for the future.” The Aawambo communities identify themselves with some of their charismatic traditional leaders. These leaders serve as unifying figures. Thus, to this school, Uusiku (traditional leader) is considered to be a traditional leader behind whom they all rally (team building). Two, in the anthem, the school shows appreciation of the nature of their region (regionalism), Omusati Region, in which the school is situated. The region is named after the mopane trees (*Copaifera mopane*), because it has more of these trees than other regions. Literally, these trees provide shades to the community, including Uusiku Secondary School learners and teachers. Thus, team spirit seemed to be one of Mr Iipumbu’s strong non-technical qualities. As stated earlier on, Mr Iipumbu was more experienced than the other two principals. His skills of team building could be a model for developing other principals.

(ii) Quasi-action research studies

Frequently, Mr Iipumbu investigated some problems using simple research methods. The focus was on finding solutions to school problems; therefore, rigorous research methods were not needed. For example, when he observed teachers teaching, he generated “useful information” (data). He analysed the data. His analysis was twofold. On the one hand, he crafted solutions to the problems at hand; and, on the other hand, he learned some of the best solutions for solving similar problems in the future. For example, effective teaching methods he observed were useful tools for him as an instructional leader. The best lessons he learned here were management knowledge and skills and actions and behaviours. In other words, he learned the best theory-in-use, what actions to take and how to behave to achieve the desired goals.

(iii) Independent reading

The other strategy for Mr Iipumbu's independent learning is reading. He had a significant number of personal books in his office. He bought some when he was studying in Europe. He had a well-stocked book nook in his office, strategically placed behind his chair. He could pull a book easily from his book nook while seated. Although there were some old books, most of them were recent and relevant. Thus, he was exposed to relatively recent knowledge in the area of educational management. When I was interviewing him, I noted that he demonstrated a reservoir of book knowledge. He used educational management concepts impressively.

(b) People-assisted professional development strategies

Like his counterpart, Mr Shikongo, Mr Iipumbu also learned from other people. He needed the assistance of other people inside and outside the school.

(i) Informal professional development

As a member of the community leaders (heading what the community considered as a community school), he participated in community meetings, where he learned cultural values and beliefs. One day, traditional leaders under the leadership of the *omukwaniilwa* (tribal king) organised a meeting for all community leaders. In this meeting, the community deliberated on a number of issues that were of interest to the community and values that had to be upheld by all community members. The *omukwaniilwa* reminded the community leaders of the traditional values of the Aawambo people. Two of the values that have relevance to this study are summarized and analysed here.

First, all members of the community were expected to be productive in their various professions. The Aawambo people are characterised by efforts to work

hard and to prepare the children¹² to be useful and productive community members. Therefore, the *omukwaniilwa* cautioned the community leaders to train children to be productive members of the community. Obviously, Mr Iipumbu, too, was expected to be a productive (effective and efficient) principal of his school. Also, as an “elder” among the other principals, he was expected to help the inexperienced principals to be productive.

Second, the *omukwaniilwa* gave the community leaders a public lecture on the value of caring for others. After the lecture, Mr Iipumbu said that the main lesson he learned from the lecture was that he had to care for other community members, especially the less fortunate. Caring is a traditional value in the Aawambo people. As I pointed out, the Omusati community is characterised by communal solidarity and togetherness.

These values could serve as useful underpinnings for the professional development of principals. Principals, driven by the cultural values of caring and community solidarity, might be prepared and ready to help each other develop and to develop together (togetherness) so that they could be productive. All in all, what Mr Iipumbu learned in the meeting of community leaders was the cultural values and beliefs.

The other arena where Mr Iipumbu learned issues related to values and behaviours was the church in which he was actively involved. He was a member of the elders of his congregation and was responsible for giving youth advice on educational matters and career guidance and so on. By virtue of his leadership position in the church, he attended training workshops designed for church

¹² In Oshiwambo culture, the word “child” does not only refer to somebody who has not yet reached full physical development; it also refers to somebody who is inexperienced and who has to learn from the experienced elders (those born earlier). This explains why a son, for example, remains a “child” of his parents and elders in the community (note: even the “child” is communally owned) throughout his life. These “inexperienced children” regard the elders as depositories of knowledge, to whom they turn for knowledge acquisition.

leaders. In one of these workshops, he learned that leaders should have their personal vision statements. He crafted his personal vision: “To strives to instil discipline in school, so that we can work as a team in order to succeed.” He explained that the catchwords are: discipline, teamwork and success.

To the Aawambo people, religion does not only refer to Christianity. Since before the arrival of the Christian church, the Aawambo people have believed in a supreme spirit, known as Kalunga kaNangombe (God of the ancestors). This spirit is believed to take the form of a man and move invisibly among the people. Therefore, because of this magico-religious belief, the Aawambo speaking people were and still are, to a certain extent, inclined to uphold the virtues of uprightness and goodness. Mr Iipumbu has instilled the religious values in his staff and learners. This explains why learners had to say a prayer every morning before the commencement of classes. He explained that instilling religious principles was important to maintain discipline in the school. He argued that one of the reasons why the new Priest (in the scenario narrated above) could easily succeed in his new work was because he was working with people who were inspired with the religious principles. Furthermore, his reluctance to support the idea of distributing condoms among his learners should be explained by his religious background. The Archbishop of the Catholic Church in Namibia, who is originally from the Omusati Region, was quoted (Dentlinger, *The Namibian*, December 9, 2004, p. 9) as reiterating that:

...the Catholic Church will continue to advocate faithfulness among married couples and abstinence to the youth ... it is morally unacceptable that people are told to use condoms as a solution to the spread of AIDS ... sex is a gift from God. It is not to satisfy one's desires.

Like the cultural values, Christian values are also to be accepted as they are, in the opinion of Mr Iipumbu. “You don’t put up your hand in church to ask a question, you only say amen [to express strong agreement],” argued the church leader-cum-principal.

In addition to informal professional development, Mr Iipumbu also received formal professional development. I devote the last part of this subunit to analysing, discussing and interpreting data concerning the assistance Mr Iipumbu received from formal developers and the extent to which these developers contributed to his professional development.

(ii) Formal professional development

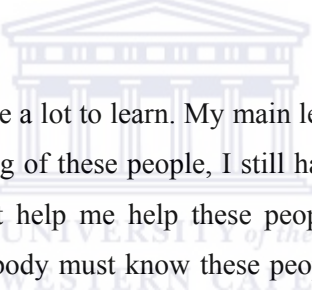
Mr Iipumbu attended cluster-based and regionally organised workshops and courses. One of such workshops was on sexual health, HIV and AIDS. It was the same workshop Mr Shikongo attended. Mr Iipumbu described the workshop as too theoretical.

As in the case of Mr Shikongo, the workshop fell short of meeting Mr Iipumbu’s professional development in the areas of attitudes and values. Although efforts were made to convey certain values and attitudes to the participants, not enough time was devoted to the critical reflections on how Mr Iipumbu’s (and other participants’) attitudes and values could be modified when necessary. Thus, the workshop did not help Mr Iipumbu to reconsider his values and attitudes.

As a cluster centre principal he was responsible for organising cluster-based professional development for principals in his cluster. Once he, together with his cluster principals, identified conflict management as a professional development need for which they needed a workshop. Mr Iipumbu organised the workshop. He

invited a resource person, a principal from a neighbouring school cluster, to present a paper on conflict management. The resource person has gathered experience. He had been a principal of a senior secondary school. He was then heading a junior secondary school, which ranked number one in learner performance in the region the previous year (2003). He is a university graduate.

The resource person presented his paper. The presentation was followed by discussions. Only a few participants engaged in the discussions. The passivity, according to Mr Iipumbu, could be attributed to the scholarly nature of the paper. Mr Iipumbu felt that the presentation was too theoretical in that the presentation was divorced from the realities on the ground. To the reflective question as to what he benefited from the workshop he said that as far as content was concerned, he had benefited very little. Then he explained his main lesson:



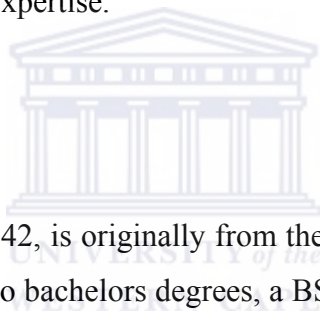
I learned that I still have a lot to learn. My main lesson is that, as a coordinator of training of these people, I still have a long way to go. Somebody must help me help these people [his cluster principals]. That somebody must know these people... that they are reserved by nature, too dependent, less critical and so on and so forth. This is a colonial hangover. In those days [colonial era] critical and independent thinking was discouraged. And many principals do not want to participate lest they expose their ignorance, something many of them do not want to do.

This was about learning the “first things first,” to borrow a phrase from Covey (1989, p. 145). What he learned was the knowledge of the attitude of his cluster principals with regard to their professional development. Thus, if he was to help them improve, this would be his starting point, that is, helping them change their attitude first.

4.3.2.3 Suggestions by Mr Iipumbu

- (a) There should be thorough planning of professional development of principals;
- (b) “Professional development for principals should concentrate more on how to put the learned knowledge into actions,” stated Mr Iipumbu. He needed to learn how to develop his unique situational leadership, based on pragmatic perspective;
- (c) Newly appointed secondary school principals should be inducted;
- (d) Self-development strategies should be encouraged and supported. Principals should be taught how to learn independently. “Teach the man how to catch fish rather than giving him fish,” he stated; and
- (e) Professional development of principals should be a partnership of developers with diverse and necessary expertise.

4.3.3 Mr Angula



Mr Angula (an alias), aged 42, is originally from the neighbouring Ohangwena Region. He is a holder of two bachelors degrees, a BSc and B Ed (postgraduate) and a postgraduate teaching diploma. He took a course in Educational Management in his B Ed (postgraduate). He served as a senior personnel office in the Ministry of Mines and Energy before joining the teaching profession. He accumulated five years of teaching experience prior to his appointment as a principal. He had not gathered experience in school management before his appointment as a principal.

He was appointed in 1997 as a principal of Okavandje Secondary School (an alias). No formal induction was given to him. At the time of data collection, he had gathered seven years of experience as a secondary school principal. Like his counterparts, he was a cluster centre head, heading seven schools, including his.

Compared to the other two schools, Okavandje Secondary School was in the remotest rural area. It was established in 1995; thus in 2004, it was a relatively new school. At the time of data gathering, there were 28 labourers, 512 learners in the school's grades 8 to 12, and 20 teaching staff, including 3 members of the management team (principal, head of department and hostel superintendent). The teacher/learner ratio was 1: 26. The ratio was slightly below the national staffing norm for secondary schools of 30 learners per teacher. Most of the learners were accommodated in the hostel. There was a vacancy of a head of department. The schoolyard was very clean and the fence was still intact. The school physical facilities were still relatively new and well cared for. The school library, although small in size, was comparatively well stocked. The laboratories were relatively well equipped. I was astonished to watch the CNN International news in one of the science laboratories of the school. The school had access to the Internet. Thus, although Okavandje Secondary School was in the remotest rural, it was far more developed than the other two schools.

4.3.3.1 Professional development needs of Mr Angula

His fundamental professional development needs at the time of data gathering were managing learners, managing personnel, managing finances, securing support of the superordinates, coordinating and organising professional development for the cluster; creating environment conducive to teaching and learning, relating to communities and interacting with subordinates. The first six professional development needs were similar to those of his counterparts, Messrs Shikongo and Ipumbu. Therefore, in order to avoid unneeded repetition, I will not discuss them here. I will only consider the last two.

(a) Managing school-community relations

The main source of Mr Angula's difficulties was how to establish sound school-community relations. According to MBESC/Raison/GTZ (2002, p. 25), one of the duties of the cluster centre principals in the MoE is to

... promote community participation [in school activities] by ensuring ... that community members value schooling and that communities respond to discipline problems at their schools.

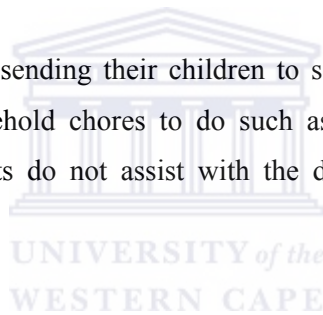
This task called for Mr Angula, as cluster centre principal, to go out and talk to community in his cluster about the role they had to play in the running of schools. He believed that the community might have had a hostile attitude towards him maybe because "I am not originally from this area". He became discouraged because "I have to talk to people who do not want to listen to me" (attitude). He said he tried several times but in vain. He felt that what he learned about school-community relations did not help him very much in dealing with the community of his cluster and he was on the verge of losing hope:

... you can give me courses on how to relate to the people here, I cannot apply them. I cannot go out and try to relate or try to foster good relationship with these people. If it were in Ongandjera [rural place] or maybe in Oshakati [urban centre], for example, it would not be a problem. But the environment in which I am operating is not conducive to me to go out there. I wish to do that, to reach out, but doing that will cause me a lot of problems. People do not want to accept me. The good thing is that my learners [in his own school] are not only from this community. Some are from far a field. I have not only to deal with people from within this immediate community. There was a

time when I had a school board constituted of people from the immediate community only. I was about to leave the school.

The quote provides some interesting revelations. One, in Mr Angula's opinion, all the knowledge had learned about school-community relations was not applicable to his community. The knowledge did not work, and if it did not work, it was not knowledge to him. This revelation provides evidence for the weakness of universal knowledge, and confirms the need for local knowledge. To the follow-up question of who, in his view, would teach him the strategies of working with his community, he said, "that expert should be from this community." Thus, he needed local knowledge. Two, giving up did not aid him either. The work that he was supposed to do remained undone. This was evident when he said:

You find parents not sending their children to schools; instead they give them household chores to do such as looking after cattle etc., and parents do not assist with the development of schools.



So, as a cluster centre head, and given the fact that many of the other cluster principals could "not even do the basics," he could not evade the task of mobilising parents to participate in the activities of the schools. He suggested the intervention of other officials such as the regional councillors and the regional director of education. Yet, these partners needed to be persuaded to give a helping hand, presumably on a short-term basis.

Three, due to the differences he had with some people in the community, he "was about to leave the school." This attitude demonstrates the extent of the challenge he was facing. It was overwhelming. Obviously, this state of frustration and lack of courage influenced the behaviours and actions of the respondent. Thus, while knowledge and skills were useful tools for Mr Angula to be able to work with the

community in his cluster, the important areas that needed to be addressed in this regard were concerning attitudes, actions and behaviours.

Mr Angula was aware of the need to relate well to stakeholders, parents in particular. He indicated that schools are joint ventures, and virtually whatever principals do, they need the cooperation of other stakeholders to ensure success. “In fact, in order for school leaders to be successful, they need people. They are people-oriented,” he stated.

(b) Managing interpersonal relationships

The last challenge was related to labour relations within his school. A school is a social institution where people interact, not only subordinates interacting with the principal but also subordinates interacting among themselves. In their interactions, conflicts (usually difference in opinions) are inevitable. These differences are sometimes coupled with hostility.

Mr Angula has been faced with this challenge since his appointment. For example, when he was a new principal, he became unpopular with some teachers and community members when he replaced unqualified and under-qualified teachers he found at the school. He said:

... to replace them was not easy. People complained that I was dismissing teachers I found here. Yet I was working within the framework of the education policy. Under-qualified teachers belong to primary schools, while unqualified teachers do not have any place in the education system. Even those people who were conversant with the policy were accusing me of dismissing teachers.

As with the other respondents, at the time of data gathering, Mr Angula was in constant interaction with many people. Even when I had appointments with him, many people visited his office. The labourers came in consulting about issues such as their working conditions. Teachers visited him for, among other reasons, instructional leadership. Members of the school management, such as the head of department, superintendent and heads of sections came in to consult about administrative and management issues. Learners came in for several reasons, especially disciplinary problems. The education officials made phone calls in connection with, *inter alia*, government policy implementation. And the parents paid visits or made phone calls about the learning progress and well-being of their children. In all these interactions, conflicts (differences in opinions) were likely. For example, the school had a policy that whoever damages a school property, such as breaking a window, must pay for its replacement. Not all learners and parents wanted to comply with this regulation. As a result, they differed with the principal. Also, conflicts erupted among his subordinates. For example, a teacher refused to do hostel supervision because there was a group of learners who were not cooperative. The principal had to intervene. Mr Angula summed up the need for knowledge and skills in labour relations when he said: “We principals are taught a lot of things, but the topic on labour relations is hardly touched.”

4.3.3.2 Professional development strategies of Mr Angula

Mr Angula had a strong conviction that the starting point for developing is the will to develop. As the other two principals, he developed himself and was assisted by other people to develop. Some of his strategies of development were more or less the same as those of the other two principals, Messrs Shikongo and Ipumbu. Therefore in the discussions of Mr Angula’s development strategies I will only make reference to other respondents’ strategies in order to avoid unnecessary repetitions.

(a) Self-development strategies

His self-development strategies were reading (written and Internet-based material) and reflection on experience.

(i) Independent reading

Like his counterparts, he read especially the MoE policy documents and directives such as circulars and the acts of parliament related to education in order to ensure that the decisions he took were in line with the government regulations. He used to spend most of his school holidays in urban centres. When he was there he got access to more reading material and did more reading on educational management.

(ii) Internet-based professional development

Unlike his counterparts, Mr Angula did not only depend on printed material for his professional development through reading. His school had access to the Internet. He had a computer in his office. This facility did not only help him to get access to the World Wide Web and read but it also helped him share ideas through emails with his counterparts, particularly those in urban centres.

(iii) Practical experience

The last self-development strategy for Mr Angula was through doing his work and reflecting about what he did. However, he felt strongly that, in most cases, it was not a reliable strategy of learning for some of his functions. Using the learning of financial management as an example he argued that “learning by doing involves

making mistakes. It is ridiculous and unacceptable to lose money and tell your boss that you were learning”.

(b) People-assisted professional development

His people-assisted development strategies can also be classified into informal and formal development strategies.

(i) Informal professional development

Mr Angula appeared to be inquisitive and creative. He relied on several people for his informal development. He indicated that he always asked advice of other people who he thought were *au fait* with whatever he wanted to know. He said that when he was a new principal, he relied heavily on his school management, the school board, the circuit inspector and the regional director to provide guidance on whatever he needed to know. In other words, even if he was never given any formal induction, there were people who oriented him informally. He depended largely on the advice of his counterparts in urban centres. He said:

I was in constant contact with some secondary school principals in Windhoek. Any time there was something I want to know from them, I just emailed or called them. Especially when there was something I struggled to do, I asked them for their recipe or formula. Principals in Windhoek were more knowledgeable than us here in remote areas. They were in a learning environment. There are libraries there, they interact with many educated people ... and when I go to Windhoek I contact them personally.

The quotation makes some significant points. One, Mr Angula preferred to learn from other secondary school principals. This indicated that there was little he could learn from his counterparts in the cluster, as all of them were either primary or combined school principals. Two, he preferred to learn from secondary school principals in Windhoek (urban centre) because they were “more knowledgeable.” This explains why his school had some features of an urban school – it was comparatively clean; its school facilities were relatively well taken care of; and more importantly, of the three schools Okavandje Secondary School was the most technologically advanced, despite the fact that it was in the remotest rural area compared to the other two schools. In other words, his school was comparable to affluent urban schools.

(ii) Formal professional development

The courses and workshops organised by the MoE and NGOs such as the IECD represented his formal people-assisted professional development. As cluster centre principal, he organised some workshops. One such a workshop was for school board members. What he learned from this workshop was more or less the same as what Mr Ipumbu learned from his cluster workshop. However, Mr Angula’s workshop was conducted in the local language throughout, and more participants participated discussions. He also attended workshops and courses organised by the MoE and IECD. What he learned there was more or less the same as what Messrs Shikongo and Ipumbu learned.

4.3.3.3 Suggestions by Mr Angula

- (a) Professional development of principals should be a joint venture. He observed that professional development offered by MoE and NGO’s lacked this element:

Often you find that some (MoE) officials only attend the opening of the workshop and vanish only to reappear when the workshop is closing. They are nowhere to be seen in the course of the workshop. The poor consultants hired to facilitate the workshop cannot answer some of the administrative questions.

- (b) Resource people should be carefully selected. He cautioned that the use of retired education officials had many of drawbacks, one of the most serious being the tendency of retired officials to shape principals using the past experiences, which might be outdated;
- (c) There should be follow-ups to see whether principals are trying the new knowledge they have learned;
- (d) There should be different types of professional development programmes for various types of principals, for example, secondary school principals, primary school principals, combined school principals, cluster centre principals, experienced principals, inexperienced principals, and so on.

4.4 Analysis of documentary data

I analysed some documents or parts of documents in the first unit of data analysis. This unit caters for thorough documentary analysis. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1997) the analysis of documents is concerned with, *inter alia*, answering the questions: who uses the documents, how are the documents used, and what is the purpose of using the documents.

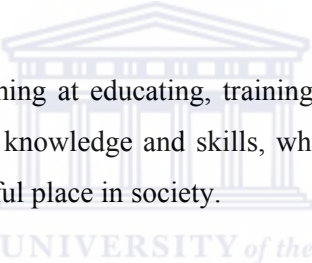
4.4.1 Current professional development of principals in Namibia: An overview

In this subunit the focus is on the analysis of documents or parts thereof dealing with the current state of professional development of principals in Namibia.

4.4.1.1 Principals' professional development and schools' *raison d'être*

None of the three schools had a vision statement. However, all three schools had mission statements. The Ministry of Education expected each state school in Namibia to have a mission statement. Generally, the mission statement articulates in a single sentence the reason for the school's existence. The mission statement refers to what the school is involved in and represents a general plan of how the school aims to achieve its objectives. Thus, the mission statement is crucial, because it is the starting point of all activities in which the school is involved. The mission statements of the three schools read as follows:

Mission statement of Uusiku Secondary School:



We, at Uusiku, are aiming at educating, training and preparing learners with adequate knowledge and skills, which will enable them to take their rightful place in society.

Mission statement of Okavandje Secondary School:

The mission of Okavandje Senior Secondary School is to produce graduates with the highest possible results in IGCSE through cohesive efforts of the school authorities and learners.

Mission statement of Etameko Secondary School:

Our institution, together with all its stakeholders in education, endeavour to give quality education to learners through cooperation, hard work and inspiration. Discipline shall be the pillar of the institution to sustain our culture in order to develop the

abilities of learners so that they can become responsible citizens in their lifetimes.

Although the mission statements of the three schools mirror the mission statement of the Ministry of Education,¹³ there were two fundamental differences that were of interest to this study. One, while the mission statement of the MoE focused on educating “... Namibian residents ...” including principals, the three schools aimed at “... educating ... learners [Uusiku children] ...” or “producing ... graduates [Okavandje children] with the highest results in IGCSE ...” or “giving quality education to learners [Etameko children] ...” Thus, according to the schools’ mission statements the focus was on the education of children and, by implication, excluded the education (professional development) of staff members, including principals. Two, unlike the MoE’s mission statement, the three schools’ mission statements were silent about the modification of the non-technical aspects of human beings namely values and attitudes, despite the fact that all three principals were faced with challenges related to values and attitudes. It can, therefore, be concluded that the mission statements of the three schools seem not to be the *raison d’être* of the professional development of staff members, including the principals.

In addition to the school mission statement, I acquired the following two key documents at Mr Iipumbu’s school: the principal’s personal vision (sense of direction/ “dream”/picture of the desired future) and the school anthem. I have already analysed the school anthem in the previous unit and I need not repeat it here. In its introduction the personal vision reads: “I strongly believe that if we are disciplined, we will be able to work as a team and that our collective efforts will lead to success.” The emphasis is added on the three underlined words, which Mr Iipumbu considered to be the catchwords. Thus, his personal dream was to

¹³ **Mission statement of MoE:** We, in partnership with our stakeholders are committed to providing all Namibian residents with equitable access to quality education and culture programmes to develop the abilities of individuals, understanding skills, values and attitudes required throughout their lifetimes.

have a successful school, which was self-disciplined and worked as a team. It can be interpreted that his personal vision was born of one of his challenges, namely, lack of discipline in his school. However, like his school's mission statement, his personal vision did not give direction to his own education (professional development).

In sum, although there was apparent evidence suggesting the need for principals to engage in learning and professional development, the three schools' mission statements (the *raison d'être*/ the reasons for the existence) and Mr Lipumbu's personal vision did not articulate or imply the professional development of principals.

4.4.1.2 Professional development by UNAM and IECD

The respondents made reference to the opportunities available to principals to study with the University of Namibia (UNAM) or the Institute for Educational Career Development (IECD). The two organisations were increasingly involved in the professional development of school principals. While UNAM's professional development programmes for principals are more theory-driven, IECD's is more practice-oriented.

The University of Namibia (2006) offers, among others, the programmes and subject courses taken by student teachers intending to study educational management. One, the Faculty of Education offers a compulsory semester course in Educational Management to all undergraduate student teachers studying towards B Ed (undergraduate), a programme that trains students for secondary school teaching. The course aims at introducing student teachers to school leadership and management concepts. The fact that the course is compulsory suggests the importance UNAM attaches to the course. Findings in the previous

unit suggest that human resources management has become a difficult task, and this undergraduate course in Educational Management aims at, *inter alia*, preparing student teachers for that difficult task.

The Faculty of Education also offers postgraduate programmes, namely an MEd and PhD in Educational Management. Both programmes are comprised of two cycles – course-work and a thesis. I observed that only a handful of students enrol for these two postgraduate programmes each year. Most of the students enrolling for MEd and PhD are people in the senior management positions in the MoE and NGOs. Further, the Faculty of Education launched, in 2004, a one-year Specialized Diploma in Educational Management and Leadership. Its curriculum is comprised of course-work and a project. The Diploma is designed to cater for both aspiring and serving principals of primary and secondary schools. In 2004, the programme managed to attract only 2 students. Consequently, since 2006, the programme has also been offered on distance in order to reach more principals, who, because of the nature of their work, cannot study full time. As I explain below, the Ministry of Education encourages teachers and principals who intended to improve their qualifications to do so through the open learning/distance modes.

All in all, university-based professional development is characterised by more focus on course-work, and development strategies are mostly lecturing and discussions, and assessment. As I explained in Chapter 2, these development strategies are more effective in improving knowledge and skills of principals, but fall short of improving their management actions and behaviours.

The other organisation involved widely in the professional development of principals is the IECD, a non-governmental organisation. Founded in 1996, the IECD's two main aims are to present its ongoing Leadership Development

Programme (LDP) and to write of LDP training manuals (IECD, n.d.). The LDP programme is as follows:

- The LDP is a two-year programme for the professional development of Principals;
- It monitors the level of leadership. This it does by supervising a minimum of 12 projects over 2 years each principal has to engage himself [or herself] in;
- As a direct consequence of the programme the school communities under the leadership of the principals enter a programme of a Whole School Development;
- Certification by the Regional Director and the IECD takes place after two years and is based on the joint evaluation and consequent recommendation of the Circuit Inspector and the IECD Facilitator; and
- All certification is monitored and has the approval of the National Steering Group ... (IECD, n.d., p. 3).

The quotation provides noteworthy insights. One, the programme focuses strongly on improving the area of actions and behaviours. Two, the programme encourages a partnership in developing principals. Three, the programme is a step in the direction of developing learning communities in schools. Finally, IECD produced a significant number of manuals for independent reading.

4.4.1.3 Professional development by the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education, through its Directorate of National Institute for Educational Development (NIED), is responsible for much of the in-service professional development of school principals. The MoE has produced a number of documents. NIED uses these manuals to train principals, and most principals use the manuals for independent reading. During my data collection, I noted that the much-talked about and/or commonly available documents are the following: *Circular: Formal Education 10/2003* (MBESC, 2003), *Guidelines for School Principals* (MoE, 2005), and *The School Cluster System in Namibia* (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002).

A three-page *Circular: Formal Education 10/2003* (MBESC, 2003) was displayed on notice boards in the principals' offices and in teachers' staff rooms. The circular aims at outlining procedures to be followed by teachers and principals who intend to further their studies. The Ministry of Education issued the circular following an escalation in the number of teachers and principals studying "purely for salary purposes" (p. 1). The circular further stipulates that the

... decision of who should qualify for or embark on a Further Diploma rests with the Ministry. The Ministry from now on will require all teachers who are interested in enrolling in Further Diploma to apply to the Ministry for permission to enrol (p. 2).

The circular further lists priority areas for further studies. Educational management is one of them. However, the circular stipulates certain conditions:

Admission to the Further Diploma in Educational Management will be restricted to teachers who are in the management positions, e.g. Heads of Department, Deputy Principals and Principals. ... The Ministry would prefer that teachers [and principals] who undertake Further Diploma studies do so through the open learning/distance modes, in order to ensure minimal disruption to school programmes (p. 3).

Wittingly or unwittingly, the circular addresses the much-criticised but still more preferred university-based professional development. In Chapter 2, I explained that its theoretical orientation seems to be contentious; therefore, the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 suggests that university lecturers involved in the professional development of principals should work in partnership with other developers of principals in the field. Also, principals studying at universities

should be equipped with the necessary skills to enable them to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

“*Guidelines for School Principals* is like a bible to a principal in Namibia. Each principal is expected to have a copy”, said Mr Iipumbu, a veteran secondary school principal. The foreword by the Minister of Education captures the purpose of the manual:

... The manual *Guidelines for School Principals* has been developed as a practical tool for School Principals assisting and equipping them to become effective and efficient administrators at school level. This is a prerequisite for managing schools, which can help to fully develop the potentials of Namibia’s learners. *Guidelines for School Principals* has been written by a team of education specialists from all education regions of Namibia, and the content of the publication is truly representative of the concerns and needs of schools throughout the country.

It is my belief that School Principals, whether newly appointed or with long standing experience, will find useful practical help and that the Guidelines will assist them in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities (MoE, 2005, p. iii).

The manual teaches principals theoretically how to manage and administer human resources, finances, curriculum, physical facilities, school equipment and materials. The manual focuses on administration and management and is silent about leadership. Although some people use these three concepts interchangeably, they differ:

Van der Westhuisen (1991, p. 34, 55) describes administration and management as follows:

Administration is a social process concerned with creating, maintaining, stimulating, controlling and unifying, formally and informally, the organized human and material energy within a unified system designed to accomplish predetermined (educational) objectives.

Management is type of work in education which comprises of those regulative tasks or actions executed by a person or a body in a position of authority in a specific field or area of regulation, so as to allow formative education to take place.

Cole (1996, p. 51) defines leadership as

... a dynamic process in a group whereby one individual [the leader] influences the others to contribute voluntarily to the achievement of group tasks in a given situation.

As I will suggest in my concluding chapter (Chapter 5), at this time of transition and drastic reform in education, Namibian principals should be made better leaders who can make things happen. The manual also hints on the school cluster system, which I will now discuss.

Most of the professional development of principals takes place at the cluster level, and is guided by the document *The School Cluster System in Namibia* (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002). The document is a product of the Ministry of Education and two NGOs. It is a step in the direction of partnership in the process of developing principals. The document states that

... the cluster system provides a framework through which a more comprehensive and coordinated programme of training can be delivered efficiently at each cluster centre. Training needs can also be assessed cluster by cluster, rather than having a uniform programme for the whole region (ibid., p. 16).

The School Cluster System in Namibia (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002) is a document born out of the realisation of the benefits of collaboration among schools and thereby improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and the management of education. The document stipulates, among others, the functions of the cluster centre heads:

Cluster centre principals co-ordinate and promote activities in the cluster in collaboration with other principals in the cluster. The cluster centre principals also form the link between schools and the circuit and regional education office. Where needed, training should be provided to cluster centre principals in such aspects as management and leadership, office administration, financial management, and education planning (MBESC/Raison/GTZ, 2002, p. 24).

The document suggests a cascade training, whereby cluster centre principals are given the training and pass it on to the other cluster principals, who, in turn, have to pass on the training to their staff members. Arguably, the training strategy might be efficient in passing on of information and facts, but might fall short of bridging the gap between theory and practice and modifying values and beliefs.

Finally, the document indicates that the clusters now operate somewhat “informally” in Namibia and recommends that incentives for cluster centre principals should be worked out (p. 38). In the next subunit I will focus on, among

others, future plans for improving some of the current conditions in the professional development of secondary school principals.

4.4.2 Future prospects for developing principals: A bird's-eye view

Currently, the two guiding official documents in the education sector are *Namibia Vision 2030* (2004) and *Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP)* (MoE, 2006). *Namibia Vision 2030* sets an ambitious target: that by 2030, Namibia should be one of the high income countries that afford their citizens a quality of life that is comparable to that of the developed world. One of the objectives of the vision is to “develop a diversified, competent and highly productive human resources and institutions ...” (p. 41). *Namibia Vision 2030* (2004, p. 89) recognises that currently the

... training of workers is provided by a number of NGOs and there is no provision by government. There are many opportunities for life-long learning provided by government, parastatal companies, private companies and non-governmental organisations.

Responding to the call of *Namibia Vision 2030*, the Ministry of Education (MoE) developed a programme document called *Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP)* (MoE, 2006). ETSIP underscores, *inter alia*, the need for secondary education. Secondary education has many positive consequences, for example, improved health, reduced infant mortality and better family planning, HIV and AIDS prevention and enhanced social participation. ETSIP recognises that the “school academic performance is highly correlated with the abilities of the school manager” (p. 15). It further indicates that the performance of secondary school learners in the northern regions, including the Omusati Region, is poorer compared to that of other secondary school learners in

the rest of the country. Therefore, it can be argued that the professional development of secondary school principals in the northern regions, including the Omusati Region, should be a priority as those principals in the northern regions have a more difficult and demanding task than the other principals in the rest of the country. Unfortunately,

at present, opportunities for professional staff development of [school] managers are insufficient, [although] principals have expressed a strong demand for professional development and training that would enable them to manage school affairs, lead others, promote achievement of the school's mission and targets, assess the school's effectiveness, provide advice and guidance to professional staff on educational matters and develop efficient use of resources. ... [Therefore,] based on a training needs analysis for school managers and regional officials, a management development programme will be prepared and implemented starting in 2008 (ibid., p. 15).

According to ETSIP (MoE, 2006), professional development of teachers and principals at cluster level will be strengthened. A national policy on the school cluster system has been drafted and will be finalised in 2006. The cluster centres will be upgraded

... through (i) the provision of teaching and learning resources/facilities ... (ii) development and implementation of a training programme for 1320 satellite school principals, 250 cluster centre principals ... (p. 10).

To sum up, ETSIP recognises the need to develop principals. Secondary school principals in the northern regions, including the Omusati Region, have a more daunting task and therefore need urgent and more professional development.

Plans are in place to improve the professional development of secondary school principals focusing on improving the school cluster system.

4.5 Analysis of data of the additional sample

In this unit, I analyse, discuss and interpret supplementary data provided by the additional sample. I decided while in the field to interview 4 professional developers of secondary school principals. The aim was to collect data from the developers' perspectives. The additional sample comprised of two inspectors of education (aliases: inspector X and Y) in the Omusati Region, an education officer at the Head Office of the MoE, and a regular consultant of MoE. The two inspectors were immediate supervisors of the three principals, and part of their work was to organise, facilitate and coordinate professional development of principals in the Omusati Region. The MoE education officer is a former secondary school principal and was involved in the professional development of secondary school principals. The consultant has been developing principals countrywide. In short, the four developers have gathered many years of experience in the professional development of principals in Namibia.

4.5.1 Core professional development challenges

The developers were of the view that the performance of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region was below the expectations. The two inspectors were more specific about the core professional development needs of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region: not doing things in line with the policies of the government, lack of commitment, lack of planning skills, inability to develop staff members, lack of financial management, inability to manage teaching and learning, and fear of making mistakes. Explicating the last challenge, inspector X said:

They are afraid to fail. In one of our end of the month meetings, I gave them a short training [*ad hoc* training] on how to implement a circular. But when they went back to their schools, one of the secondary school principals called me to go and help explain to his staff how to implement the circular. He thought if teachers asked him questions, he would not provide sufficient answers. They want to work without mistakes ... The fear and lack of self-confidence are brought about by little knowledge and lack of trust among our teachers and principals.

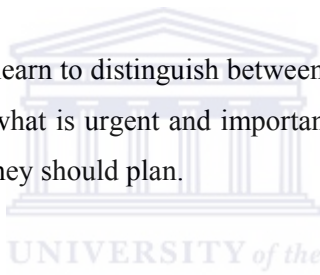
The observed fear manifested lack of leadership quality in the principals. However, the absence of fear, as implied by inspector X, is not a human nature. A famous South African charismatic leadership icon Nelson Mandela (as quoted by Ebersohn, Succeed, April 2006, p. 11) cautions and advises that “the brave man [or woman] is not he [or she] who does not feel afraid, but he [or she] who conquers that fear.” This implies that principals should be assisted to conquer fear through, among other things, learning through taking calculated risks.

On the other hand, the consultant and the MoE officer singled out lack of implementation skills as the single most crucial professional development need of secondary school principals. “The crucial need of principals is to implement what they learn,” summarised the MoE officer. The consultant added some more challenges:

Professionalism is lacking. Many of our people [implying rural people] live in two worlds – traditional and modern. Some values of the two worlds are in conflict. For example, traditional obedience is in conflict with professional values ... Social problems have impact on professional development of principals. How can you be successful in developing a principal who is worried about his or her positive HIV status? ... They live a lonely

life. That is why they commit suicide ... And there is a lack of commitment in our principals.

The developers, especially the consultant, emphasised that inadequate resources (material, human and time) in rural secondary schools posed a major threat to successful professional development of the men and women leading and managing these institutions. Furthermore, they were of the perception that these men and women were too much engaged in administrative and bureaucratic work and had little time to attend to the real business of their schools, namely, managing and leading teaching and learning. While agreeing that school principals had a great deal of administrative work to do, inspector Y contended that:



Our principals should learn to distinguish between what is urgent but unimportant, and what is urgent and important. They should be able to prioritise. They should plan.

In short, although the developers made different lists of challenges that were facing secondary school principals in the Omusati Region, they were all in agreement that the crucial challenge was the inability of the principals to implement what they learned, be it planning, developing their staff members, financial management and so on. Furthermore, they were in agreement that there was a high degree of lack of commitment on the part of the principals partly because of limited resources at their disposal and lack of ongoing professional support.

4.5.2 Suggestions by the additional sample

The developers confirmed some of the findings by the principals. One, secondary school principals in the Omusati Region were not given induction. Two,

workshops and courses provided at regional and national levels were done on an *ad hoc* basis. Professional developers organised most of the principals' in-service workshops and courses when there was a new policy, circular or programme which had to be implemented in schools. Sometimes consultants were hired to run the workshops and courses, but often regional and national education officers did the job themselves. Three, most of the workshops and courses took place at the cluster level.

Efforts were being made to identify principals' development needs and to attend to them. Inspectors reported that one of the ways of attending to the needs was to distribute manuals to principals to read. Inspector X said:

NIED developed nine modules. We distributed the modules to schools for the principals to read. The modules are practical and easy to read. They read the modules, but they do not implement what they read ... yes, modules cannot address problems such as fear. There is fear of change in principals. They feel that it is too much change for them. Some principals consider early retirement. They feel that they are expected to do things they cannot do like working with difficult teachers and learners [He sighed deeply]. ... We are not going to tolerate lazy bones [He raised his voice].

This means that reading materials for self-development were available to principals. However, although inspector X described the manuals as being "practical", principals could not put into practice what they read. The consultant could not agree more with the inspectors that there were enough manuals for self-study, but he was of the view that manuals were not reader-friendly and that principals needed constant coaching:

There are lots of manuals. They are like recipe books. We have good policies in place. Manuals and other documents need to be reader-friendly. The language used should be simple. The crucial need of principals is to implement what they learn.

They [principals] need to be given continuous professional development. They need constant coaching and apprenticeship. Principals do not get the assistance they need. Inspectors do not visit schools. They do not have the time to do that ... In developing them you need to coach them closely and constantly ... Stay with them, follow up, visit them, and of course, inspect, monitor and punish poor performance. You cannot achieve all these by sending more manuals to schools.

On the question of the extent to which secondary school principals learned from each other, inspectors were of the view that they learned very little from each, but in most cases they were reluctant to learn from each other. Inspector X elaborated:

They learn very little from each other. They do not trust each other. They trust people higher up in the hierarchy like me. There are even some knowledgeable teachers, but they do not trust them. One of them [secondary school principals] came to request me to help him to draft the school timetable. I instructed one of his teachers, whom I knew could do it, to help him.

Commenting on the relationship between the developers and the principals, the consultant also emphasised trust:

You [meaning a developer] need to develop trust between the principals and yourself. They will be willing and open to tell you

their weaknesses when they have trust in you. The reason why priests are influential is because people trust them.

In short, developers made the following suggestions:

- Proper needs assessment should be done;
- There should be well organised induction for principals;
- There should be formal in-service professional development whereby principals receive certificates;
- Developers should help principals to develop self-discipline. Inspectors, who are immediate supervisors and co-developers, should monitor performance and punish poor performance. “Play by the rules. We have rules, but we don’t keep the rules. Punish poor performance,” emphasised the consultant. Inspector X was in agreement: “We are not going to tolerate lazy bones.” Further, the developers suggested that principals should be appointed on a contract basis; and
- Professional development of principals should put more emphasis on the implementation of what they learn. “We need to be practical in the training of principals. Action! The important part is how to do it,” stressed the MoE officer. The consultant elaborated: “Stay with them, follow up, visit them, and of course, inspect, monitor ...”

4.6 Data triangulation

In this unit I focus on triangulation. Triangulation refers to cross-validation of data. I employed what de Vos (2002, p. 341) and Neuman (2003, p. 138) refer to as “triangulation of measures”, which means comparing data from varied data sources. Thus, in this section I cross-checked the data from the respondents and document analysis to see whether the same patterns kept on recurring.

4.6.1 Triangulating profiles of the three principals

Table 2: Triangulating profiles of the three principals

Respondent	Qualifications	Teaching experience	Other experiences
Mr Shikongo	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade 12• 4-year teaching diploma	16 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Headman
Mr Iipumbu	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Grade 12.• 4-year teaching diploma	4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School sports organiser• Church elder
Mr Angola	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• B Sc.• Post-graduate teaching diploma• B Ed (PG)	5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personnel officer

Table 2 shows personal and professional details of the three principals at the time of their appointment. All three principals were holders of post-secondary education qualifications, and had taught for more than three years prior to their appointment as principals. These findings confirm the literature that the longevity of teaching experience and sound professional qualifications are the two basic requirements for the position of a secondary school principal.

4.6.2 Triangulating professional development needs

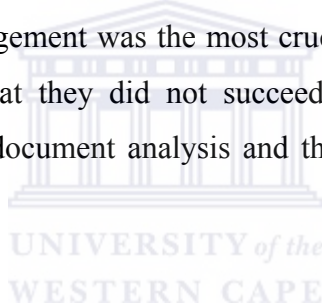
The table below juxtaposes the similarities and differences between the professional development needs of the three principals.

Table 3: Triangulating development needs of the three principals

Respondents	Specific challenges	Management area	Area of development
Mr Shikongo	Managing and leading learners	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Managing and leading personnel	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Creating environment conducive to teaching and learning	Curriculum Management	Knowledge and skills
	Securing support of superordinates	HRM	Knowledge and skills
	Coordinating, organising and facilitating professional development	HRM	Knowledge and skills
	Managing school-community relations	HRM	Values and attitudes
Mr Iipumbu	Managing finances	Financial management	Knowledge and skills
	Implementing policies	Administration	Behaviours and actions
	Securing support of superordinates. Influencing and inspiring learners and personnel.	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Coordinating organising and facilitating professional development	HRM	Knowledge and skills
	Stress management	HRM	Knowledge and Skills
Mr Angula	Managing an leading learners	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Managing and leading personnel	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Securing support of superordinates	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Creating environment conducive to teaching and learning	Curriculum Management	Knowledge and Skills
	Managing finances	Financial management	Knowledge and skills
	Coordinating, organising and facilitating professional development	HRM	Knowledge and skills
	Managing school-community relations	HRM	Behaviours and actions
	Managing Interpersonal relationships	HRM	Actions and behaviours

Table 3 shows specific challenges that faced the three principals. They faced more or less similar challenges. The similarities were attributed to the fact that the principals were managing the same school phase (grades 8 – 12) under the same national and regional conditions (context). The differences were ascribed to the varied local conditions of each individual school and the uniqueness and professional development level of individual principals.

Table 3 further shows the management areas in which the specific challenges could be categorised. The analysis of the specific challenges showed that most of them could be categorised into human resources management. That is to say that the crucial management area in which the principals fell short was how to manage people – be it subordinates, superordinates or parents. It came out prominently that human resources management was the most crucial challenge they all faced. All three principals felt that they did not succeed, in managing their human resources effectively. The document analysis and the developers confirmed this finding.



All three principals were inclined to manage rather than lead their schools. They were also inclined to maintain the status quo. This phenomenon should be understood from the fact that the head office and regional office had a tendency to prescribe to schools what to do. Principals were expected to implement the policies, regulations and instructions handed down to them from the head office and regional office. On the other hand, developers indicated that principals feared taking risking, which means that they were not good at leading and were hesitant to introduce changes. The many changes needed, most which were externally initiated, required the principals to play the roles of leaders. However, the situation was not irreversible as the documentary analysis revealed that there were new plans to train and develop principals to be able to “lead others” (MoE, 2006, p. 15). It was interesting to note that principals felt that the people they needed to

learn to lead, first and foremost, were their superordinates. This was an expression of a request by the principals to be given, as Mr Iipumbu put it, “authority to do things the way we see workable at our schools.”

The two veterans, Messrs Mr Shikongo and Iipumbu viewed leadership problems differently. Mr Shikongo felt that leadership was being hampered by improper behaviour of the subordinates, while Mr Iipumbu was of the belief that it was mainly challenged by his (Mr Iipumbu’s) inappropriate actions and behaviours. In other words, whilst Mr Shikongo believed that successful school leadership is a product of the behaviour of the subordinates, Mr Iipumbu was of the view that school leadership depends more on how leaders behave towards their subordinates. This means that the two veterans differed on the variables influencing leadership – the ability of a leader and the behaviour of subordinates.

Table 3 shows that the challenges were categorised into appropriate areas of development. This categorisation is needed during a needs assessment and analysis to make sure that the right areas of development are identified and developed. It is worth repeating that categorizing specific professional development needs in those areas is not necessarily clear-cut. It is a matter of demonstrating a trend. Categorisation of the challenges did not mean, for example, that the challenge of personnel management was solely attributed to the inappropriate actions and behaviours of the respondents. Other areas (i.e. attitudes and values, knowledge and skills) had a stake too, but to a limited extent at that time. Thus, after the specific challenges are identified, they have to be categorised in areas of development in order to determine which area of development should be emphasised more but not exclusively.

Further, Table 3 shows that while the three principals needed to be developed in all three areas of development, the area of actions and behaviours needed more urgent attention. The developers supported this finding when they indicated that

the crucial need of the principals was how to implement what they had learned. In other words, acting on what they had learned was the main challenge. The data analysed in the previous units suggest that with the exception of the IECD, other institutions involved in the development of principals did not pay enough attention to helping principals to learn how to put into action what they had learned. They needed to be assisted to develop their unique ways of doing things in their schools.

4.6.3 Triangulating professional development strategies

All three principals had not received pre-service preparation for principalship. They relied on on-the-job professional development. They developed by using self-development and people-assisted development strategies.

Most of the independent development strategies of the principals were similar, but a few were different. The common method of self-development for all three principals was independent reading, especially of government policy documents and manuals. The most popular manual was the *Guidelines for School Principals*, which Mr Iipumbu equated to the bible for all the principals and about which the minister of MoE was quoted as saying:

It is my belief that School Principals, whether newly appointed or with long standing experience, will find useful practical help and that the Guidelines will assist them in understanding and carrying out their responsibilities (MoE, 2005, p. iii).

Developers were of the idea that some leadership actions such as risk-taking (conquering fear) could not be developed through reading. Consequently, the consultant suggested that

... In developing them (principals) you need to coach them closely and constantly ... Stay with them, follow up, visit them, and of course, inspect, monitor and punish poor performance. You cannot achieve all these by sending more manuals to schools.

The other common reading materials were books. Mr Iipumbu had a book nook in his office containing his personal books. Compared to the other two principals, Mr Iipumbu had more books in his office. Unfortunately, in all three schools, there were no books, journals or research reports on educational management in the cluster centre libraries. Moreover, because of work pressure the principals had little time to read. As a result, Mr Angula did most of his reading during school recess. Mr Iipumbu noted that generally principals in the Omusati Region did not have a reading culture. He observed that principals in the Omusati Region had a lot of private work to do. They seldom made time to read. Also, many of the books the principals had were published in other countries especially, in European countries. Thus, as Nyathi (The African, December 2004/January 2005, p. 6) argues Africans embrace European “official knowledge” without a qualm. Nyathi (ibid.) contends that because of the influence of European cultures, Africans have lost their “identity” and are now “confused”. Therefore, it can be safely concluded that this state of topsy-turviness complicated the application of someone else’s “official knowledge” in an environment different from the one for which it was crafted. In short, according to the principals, independent reading helped them to improve their management knowledge and skills.

All three principals developed through hands-on experience. There were three types of learning from experience – reflecting, tapping from previous experience, and practising. All three principals said they reflected on what they did so that they could create workable knowledge and solutions to challenges they faced.

Some pitfalls negated the effectiveness of this reflective learning strategy. The principals did not have sufficient time to think the problems through. They were ever busy. Also, due to their limited book knowledge and isolation, they risked parochial thinking.

Compared to the other two principals, Mr Ipumbu gathered more experience when he was a school sports organiser and acting school inspector. He tapped from this experience, modified it, and used it to manage his school. One important lesson he learned when he was sports organiser was how to build team spirit. He felt that team spirit was important to his school as it helped to boost the level of unity of action among his subordinates. The scholarship review shows that team spirit is a vital ingredient in learning organisations.

As practitioners, the three principals learned consciously or unconsciously through practising. As they performed their work, they learned better (not necessarily effective) theory-in-use. However, Messrs Angula and Shikongo expressed reservations about learning through practising, which Mr Angula equated to learning through trial and error. He admitted, however, that there were some instances where he could not afford to make errors in the name of learning. This explains why he “asked for a formula” from his peers. And this is why all three principals read a lot about government policies so as to learn the ministry’s prescribed ways of doing things.

Mr Ipumbu, who felt that some government policies were not viable, sometimes relied on quasi-action research studies (not scrupulous studies). In 1997 to 1998, when he studied for the diploma in educational management with IECD, Mr Ipumbu conducted 12 research-related projects. Hence, unlike the other two principals, he had acquired skills in conducting research.

Unlike the other two principals, Mr Angula had access to the Internet. He could gain access to the World Wide Web and do some reading. In addition, he could share ideas with other principals through emails. Sharing was one way of reflecting with other people. Other principals complemented his thinking. Perhaps, one of the potential errors of sharing was the temptation to borrow a “recipe” from other principals. Mr Angula indicated that sometimes he “asked for a formula” from his urban peers. The “formula” might not be workable in his school if it is not adapted to suit his school context. Nevertheless, in contrast to the other principals, Mr Angula had access to the Internet for reading and sharing ideas with other people. Sharing is one of the people-assisted professional development strategies. This leads the discussion to the next subsection, namely that of people-assisted professional development.

There were two modes of developing the principals by interacting with other people, namely informal and formal professional development modes. Because of the unavailability of proper induction for secondary school principals when they were new principals, Messrs Angula and Shikongo relied on their staff members to show and tell them how things should be done at their respective schools. Mr Shikongo indicated that he learned what he called “the unwritten school rules” (school culture) from his staff. In fact, since staff members were more familiar with their school culture than developers from outside, they stood a better chance of orientating (make them familiar with new situations) the principals, especially Messrs Shikongo and Angula who had to transfer from other regions to the Omusati Region.

Furthermore, the principals learned in informal ways from interacting with visitors and superordinates. They learned from education officials such as inspectors of education, when they carried out casual visits. Mr Shikongo was good at socialising with the visitors and, as a result, learned more through socialising. He was of the view that effective socialising was a prerequisite for stakeholders (including his subordinates) to feel free to “criticise” (and thus help

develop) him. Often, he was of the view that informal professional development by stakeholders took place after he did something wrongly or behaved inappropriately. Mr Shikongo encouraged the stakeholders to “criticise” him. Mr Angula, on the other hand, relied more on his counterparts in urban centres for his informal professional development. He was of the view that secondary school principals in urban centres were more knowledgeable than those in rural areas. Mr Iipumbu, who was good at forging good relationships with the immediate community, gained a great deal of local knowledge from his community. However, Mr Iipumbu, who was the most experienced, was less interested in learning informally from other people. He was interested rather in sharing his experience with the less experienced principals, and thereby learned how to develop them.

Formal professional development consisted of organised workshops and courses with specific aims and objectives. The workshops and short and long courses were organised at cluster and regional levels. The principals employed different approaches to learning. Mr Shikongo facilitated a workshop single-handedly, mainly using a lecture method. This developer-centred approach was compatible with two of his learning strategies, namely reading and repetition. Thus, when he prepared, he read widely; and when he presented, he repeated what he had read and in both cases he learned. Messrs Iipumbu and Angula, on the other hand, made more use of other people to help facilitate their workshops. They both engaged in discussions as mere participants. Thus, their workshops were more participant-centred.

However, since the principals were the only secondary school principals in their respective clusters, they felt that what they learned from the other cluster principals was not entirely relevant to secondary education. Being primary and combined school principals, the other cluster principals lacked experience of secondary education. This was the reason why Mr Iipumbu invited a resource

person from a neighbouring cluster who had some experience of secondary education. And this was why Mr Angula was in constant contact with fellow secondary school principals so that he could learn from them.

At the regional level, consultants and education officials such as circuit (district) inspectors and other regional education officials, including the regional director acted as the principals' professional developers. Only in rare cases was the assistance of resource people from outside the education sector sought.

The professional development strategies used in the MoE's regionally organised workshop were mainly lectures, discussions and demonstrations. The lecture and demonstration methods were appropriate for conveying to principals important knowledge such as new educational management theories, education policies and regulations. The discussions catered, to some extent, for the development of management beliefs and values. The management values and beliefs of the principals, which were generally informed by indigenous/local knowledge, were so strong that mere talks about the cultural values' negative impact on their school management and leadership could not make the principals reconsider their values and attitudes and adjust them. No deliberate, significant efforts were made to help the principals to improve their management behaviours and actions. Also, not many follow-ups were made to determine the extent to which the principals put into action the knowledge they learned.

In addition to the workshops organised at the cluster and regional level, Mr Iipumbu participated in the Leadership Development Programme for principals offered by an NGO, the Institute for Educational Career Development (IECD). Besides the theoretical component of the curriculum, the 2-year programme required the participants to carry out 12 development projects. The projects, which were jointly supervised by an IECD developer and a circuit inspector, aimed at catering for developing management actions and behaviours.

4.6.4 Triangulating suggestions for improving the professional development of secondary school principals

By and large, individual respondents' suggestions for improving professional development of secondary school principals were similar. There were more similarities than differences. Of all the respondents, only Messrs Shikongo and Iipumbu's suggestions seemed to be informed by the reality facing rural secondary schools. Since there were insufficient opportunities for formal professional development, Mr Shikongo suggested that rural secondary school principals should learn from each other through, for example, visiting each other's schools, learning from each other's successes, and mentoring each other. Similarly, he suggested that rural secondary school principals should be equipped with learning skills so that they would be able to develop themselves. Elaborating on this point, Mr Shikongo wondered why, "... we are trained how to train others, but we are never trained how to train ourselves despite the eminent need?" Mr Iipumbu supported him by suggesting that the development they received should concentrate more on "how to learn than on what to know". On the basis of this, Messrs Shikongo and Iipumbu strongly suggested that the cluster centre libraries should be equipped with relevant resources, and there should be interlibrary loans between the cluster centre libraries and the regional teacher resource centre and other libraries in the country. Documentary analysis revealed that the suggestion of stocking cluster centre libraries was already being entertained in some quarters in the MoE.

The developers and Messrs Angula and Iipumbu suggested that formal professional development for secondary school principals should not be done on an *ad hoc* basis. It should be planned for and well organised. There should be various types of professional development for various principals, carefully selected developers, and issuing of certificates to principals who completed the

programmes successfully. Both the developers and Mr Iipumbu underscored the point that emphasis should be put on helping principals to put into action the learned theory. In the same vein Mr Angula suggested follow-ups to see whether the principals were implementing what they had learned. The developers took it a step further by suggesting that regular poor performance should be punished. Document analysis revealed that there were plans to appoint principals on a contractual basis.

4.7 Summary

This chapter analysed, discussed and interpreted data. It identified the core professional development needs of the three principals who partook in the study. The principals were, to a large extent, aware of, although not always explicitly clear on, their core professional development needs. However, through close and meticulous analysis it came to light that most of the fundamental professional development needs stem from the difficulties to manage and lead human resources. Efforts were being made to meet the needs. The respondents were developing themselves using various self-development strategies such as reading and hands-on experience strategies. Furthermore many people helped them to develop through informal and formal professional development strategies. The three principals were improving, to a large extent, their leadership and management knowledge and skills. However, they were making little progress on improving their management behaviours and actions. In other words, they knew things that they could not put into action. The respondents made suggestions for the improvement of the professional development of the secondary school principals in general and for the three who partook in the study in particular. One of the critical suggestions was that special attention should be paid to helping them to turn theory into practice.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a précis of the major conclusions drawn from the findings and the scholarship review. Further, the chapter discusses the implications for improvement of in-service professional development of serving secondary school principals, and suggests a model for developing school principals. Finally, it proposes research problems for further study.

5.2 Conclusions

This section collates the conclusions reached in this thesis according to the research questions. This study found that secondary education in the Omusati Region was faced with numerous challenges; therefore its leaders needed improved in-service professional development if they were to improve learning and teaching in their schools.

5.2.1 The starting point

Namibia has introduced a number of changes in its education system. The changes are embodied in legislation, policies and reports, and are intended to facilitate paradigm shifts in terms of, *inter alia*, access to education, redressing the imbalance of apartheid education, improving the quality of education and fostering democratic governance of schools.

The changes posed challenges to secondary education. There was increased awareness of the benefits of secondary education, therefore many primary

graduates enrolled with secondary schools. Many secondary schools were overcrowded.


Secondary schools became difficult institutions to manage. The situation in rural areas was more difficult and complex. It was characterised by, among other problems, poor grade 10 and 12 examination results, high absenteeism among both teachers and learners, teachers and learners being late for classes, insufficient support from parents and superordinates and a high drop-out rate. Consequently, there was a high unemployment rate, poverty and, therefore, economic underdevelopment. Thus, the culture of learning and teaching was diminished, directly frustrating the well-intended changes introduced in the education system.

Principals were expected to manage and lead schools differently. Compared to principals of yesteryears, nowadays secondary school principals had a more complicated, difficult and demanding task. They were expected to perform a combination of age-old managerial and instructional leadership functions, such as advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture or climate conducive to learning and teaching; planning, organising, coordinating, and facilitating effective staff development; fostering parental involvement and community support; being visionaries; ensuring widely distributed leadership among subordinates and other stakeholders; acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner; and understanding, responding to, and influencing, the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context. Often, new leadership functions appeared not to have clear-cut directions. They required innovative and pragmatic principals, principals who can turn things around.

It is accepted wisdom that effective school performance and improvement are significantly correlated to the success of school principals. Thus, when learner performance is called into question, as was the case with many secondary school learners in Namibia, especially those in rural areas, the remedy should be sought

from the principals heading those institutions. One of the better remedies is to improve in-service professional development of principals in charge of those schools.

Despite the availability of replicated research evidence on the need for improved professional development of principals, in-service professional development of principals in Namibia remained uninvestigated hitherto, consequently, academic knowledge of how best Namibian principals could be developed remained limited. The professional development of principals has been characterised by trial and experimentation. The main aim of this study, thus, was to fill this gap. In other words, the purpose of the study was to capture the perceptions of secondary school principals and those of the developers of the principals. Specifically, the study addressed the following four main questions:

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- What are the core professional development needs of secondary school principals?
 - What do principals do in order to meet their core professional development needs?
 - What help is available for them in order to develop?
 - What suggestions can be made for improving in-service professional development of secondary school principals' development?

5.2.2 Core professional development needs

In Chapter 4, I enumerated the challenges that were facing each of the three principals. Altogether the principals were facing the following challenges: (i) leading and managing learners, (ii) leading and managing personnel,

(iii) managing curriculum, (iv) leading superordinates, (v) establishing sound school-community relations, (vi) managing finances, (vii) administering, and (viii) establishing interpersonal relationships. These professional development needs were fundamental, in that they could be sources of many other needs not listed here. This is so because professional development needs are interwoven and inseparably bound to each other.

A close look at these professional development needs reveals that the inability of the principals to properly control and regulate (management), and influence and inspire (leadership) the behaviour and activities of other people constituted a thread that ran through all their core professional development needs. The principals failed in many cases to establish how and when to lead and manage people at their respective schools and clusters (situational management and leadership). For example, as the literature shows, if people do not want to cooperate or are not committed, management might be less effective. To make a human being willing to do something calls for more leadership, not management. Leadership is mainly essential and indispensable when a change has to be introduced. When the change is introduced, management comes in to maintain and administer the change, but leadership is still crucial to inspire people. Implementation of new education policies is one of the changes in Namibian schools necessitating a combination of leadership and management.

The principals' leadership efforts were being challenged mainly by their inability to influence the behaviour and activities of other people (interpersonal leadership). Effective leaders are people who have non-technical leadership qualities such as being committed to education, and being caring for teachers and learners. They are committed to professional values. They are people who take strange and calculated risks in order for their schools to achieve the set goals. They challenge prescribed procedures, regulations and values, including cultural values that they think have become ineffective, inefficient and inappropriate to

their schools. Furthermore, they know which leadership style to employ and when. There is no best leadership style for them; the style a leader has to adopt depends very much on the type of people he or she leads and the prevailing situation. Finally, as managers-cum-leaders, they lead and manage with the stakeholders (such as parents, teachers and learners); and thereby ensure much-needed participatory leadership and management in their schools and clusters. In short, all three principals needed to be good at both managing and leading people.

School leaders and managers are likely to be effective and efficient when they can interact very well with the people they lead and manage. This challenge, too, formed a thread running through other core professional development needs. Interacting with various education stakeholders was part of the principals' daily routine. When interacting with stakeholders, the principals were sometimes submissive. They seldom sought for co-operation, the mutual benefit of all stakeholders. They revealed an attitude of fear when negotiating with stakeholders. This kind of attitude can, to a great extent, be ascribed to their cultural and historical background. They are from a cultural background where elders and, therefore, superordinates are held in awe (feeling of respect combined with fear). Awe was reinforced and aggravated by the colonial oppression, which the three principals like other people in the former war zone endured for a long period of time. Perhaps, respecting elders (superordinates) is a value worth having, but fearing them is unnecessary as it is counter-productive. That is to say, for example, superordinates should, with due respect, be questioned if need be. They are not omniscient and their age-old advice should be called into question and be tested for its relevancy in contemporary schools. Challenging age-old advice does not mean domineering, which takes away too much of other people's freedom and independence. It should be an issue of striking a balance, which is neither dominant nor submissive and mostly co-operative.

In addition to their inability to build sound interpersonal relationships, two of the three principals fell short in establishing and fostering sound school-community relations. Like other communities, the Omusati community had a number of expectations of secondary schools in their region. It was the responsibility of the principals to see to it that these expectations were met; and to forge ties between their schools and the communities, thereby establishing sound school-community relations. This was hard to achieve because often community values were in direct conflict with professional values, and sometimes local knowledge was not compatible with school education in many ways. Abolition of corporal punishment, for instance, was not well received by many rural parents. They believed in the old axiom “spare the rod and spoil the child”. Furthermore, as partners in education, some rural parents were not adequately supportive. They were not making financial or material contributions to the development of schools. They were protesting against education, which, in their view, was irrelevant or of poor quality; others were just not well informed about the value of education. In short, the two principals found it difficult to establish and foster sound school-community relations, so that school and community could benefit mutually from their partnership.

Furthermore, all three principals failed to properly plan, organise, coordinate and facilitate professional development of human resources in their respective schools. There is strong research evidence in the literature that greater variations in learner performance exist between classrooms within individual schools than between schools or regions. This suggests that teachers within individual schools can learn more from each other than from somebody from outside their schools. Consequently, this is why the literature suggests that schools should become learning organisations, where staff members including principals learn from each other. Thus, the principals needed to learn how to coordinate school-based teacher professional development in their respective schools.

Moreover, as cluster centre heads, the three principals had to learn to properly plan, organise, coordinate and facilitate professional development of human resources in their respective clusters. This was a new task to them. They were still to learn how to do it. They needed to acquire the knowledge and skills to do this.

Administering the implementation of educational policies was another challenge facing the oldest principal, Mr Iipumbu. Namibia was still in transition, as it was in the process of reforming its education system. Furthermore, the nation's education was managed along centralised lines. The head office of the Ministry of Education had to set policies and see to it that they were implemented. As first-line managers, the principals were tasked with the responsibility of seeing to it that teachers and other staff members implemented the policies. Principals serve as a link between school and policymakers and play an important role in the actual implementation of policies.

Two of the principals also faced challenges emanating from insufficient knowledge of and skills of financial management. The fundamental challenges were how to generate and control the expenditure of school development funds. Parents of secondary school learners in Namibia were going to be requested to make great financial contributions to secondary education. The Omusati parents were not likely to be able to afford to make significant financial contributions because of their poor financial standing. Thus, the school revenue was likely to remain in short supply, which would force secondary school principals to learn how to manage schools with insufficient finances. The findings indicate that the principals needed to be equipped with at least two sets of skills, namely, the ability to influence the behaviour of parents (people leadership) to make contributions (financial or in kind) willingly, and the ability to manage the expenditure of limited finances efficiently and to achieve more with less finances at their disposal.

Furthermore, two of the principals faced the challenge of managing the curriculum. Material resources such as classrooms, textbooks, stationery and teaching and learning aids were not sufficient. The shortage of all these material resources discouraged and demotivated both teachers and learners. The challenge, thus, was for the principals to acquire the knowledge and skills to devise strategies to stimulate and secure an environment conducive to quality teaching and learning despite the limited resources at their disposal, as there were no indications that the situation was going to improve appreciably in the near future.

Finally, this study found that the challenges that faced the principals could be attributed to their inability to put their known management knowledge and skills into practice (actions and behaviours). The principals knew good management theory, which they could not implement. This was so because it is not difficult to know but difficult to act. The actions and behaviour of the principals were determined by their values and beliefs. These two professional development areas, actions and behaviours, and beliefs and values, are difficult to develop, yet they are significant factors in the management and leadership of schools. The figure of an iceberg below depicts this point more clearly:

Figure 2: The iceberg showing the three areas of professional development

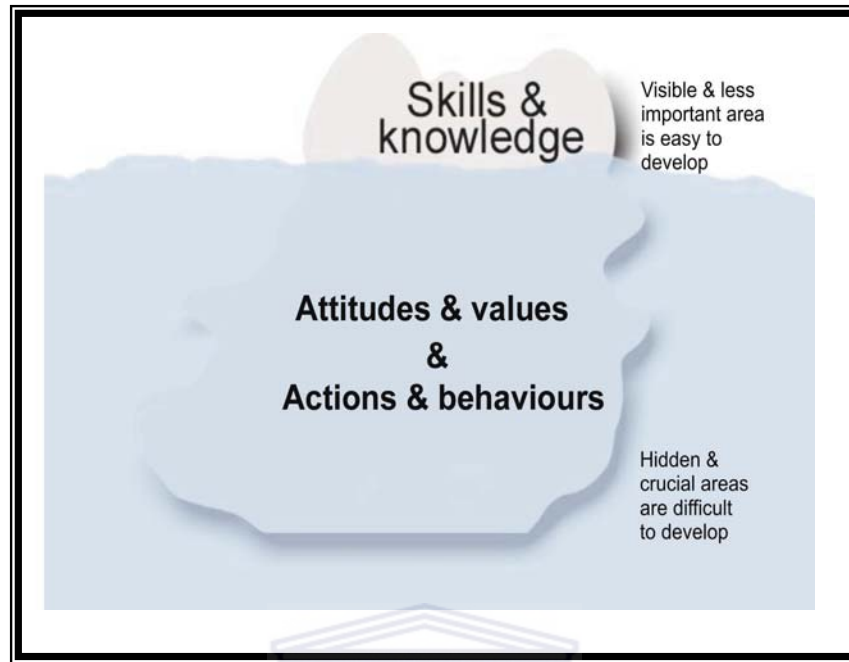


Figure 2 shows an iceberg representing the three areas of professional development: knowledge and skills, attitudes and values, and actions and behaviours. The tip of the iceberg represents the area of knowledge and skills. This area is less important and easier to develop and to measure than the other two areas. The hidden portion of the iceberg represents the other two areas: actions and behaviours, and attitudes and values. These two areas matter more, but they are difficult to develop and to measure. Unfortunately, as I will explain in the next section, principal development in the Omusati Region focused mainly on the tip of the iceberg, namely, the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Knowledge and skills in themselves have no value unless translated into actions.

In summary, the findings regarding professional development needs suggest that the first lesson the principals needed to learn was that they should be able to manage and lead others. Professional development programmes should focus on how managers and leaders can manage and lead others. This requires developers

to coach principals closely, constantly and empathetically, so that they become the good principals they can be. The second lesson was to learn how to use the existing educational management body of knowledge to devise their individual theory-in-use that is appropriate and suitable for their various contexts or for the goals they want to achieve, be it interpersonal relationships, school-community relations, financial management, or curriculum management. Great leaders have little in common, because they lead varied institutions. They employ vastly different styles and focus on different goals. Yet despite their differences, they share one common trait: they do not hesitate to break virtually any rule (such as those pertaining to obsolete cultural values and policies) held sacred by many other people provided that what they achieve is splendid, impressive and outstanding. Literature is explicit about the central function of leadership, namely, that changing things is central to leadership. Changing things before anyone else is creative leadership. This explains why leadership is tough, because it calls for leaders to challenge even the popular status quo if it does not serve the purpose effectively.

Finally, most of the professional development needs of the principals who partook in this study belonged to the area of actions and behaviours. They needed to learn how to put into action the learned theory. However, the area that needs development should be developed in tandem with the other areas, because the areas of professional development are inextricably related, interwoven, mutually dependent and supplementary to one another.

5.2.3 Professional development strategies

The absence of pre-service preparation and adequate and proper induction for secondary school principals in Namibia necessitated comprehensive in-service professional development for these managers and leaders; and the new changes and ever fermenting challenges in the country's education system made in-service

professional development of principals more essential. With the exception of courses in Educational Management in university-based programmes designed to introduce student teachers for secondary schools to school leadership and management responsibilities, there were no well-structured pre-service programmes designed specifically to prepare would-be secondary school principals for principalship. The University of Namibia launched in 2004 a one-year programme designed to prepare would-be and serving principals for principalship. Its effectiveness was still to be seen.

This study found that the challenges prompted the principals to use every available opportunity to learn in order to improve their performance. They developed themselves. On the one hand, self-development, which is informed by phenomenological, constructivist and subjectivist perspectives, was one of the current reliable approaches of principal development. Subjective knowledge is that created by individuals inside their own minds; and the central postulation of constructivism (a theory that informs this study) is that human beings construct their own subjective knowledge and meanings. It follows, then, that the crucial source of all challenges is the way in which individuals construe and make sense of their experience. On the other hand, self-development was affected by learning in isolation. The principals needed other people to help them construct their own subjective knowledge and meanings. This is so because, as the literature contends learning is personal, but it is more effective when it takes place in a group.

The predominant self-development strategies employed by the principals can be summarised as independent reading and learning from doing their work (through practising and reflecting). Although, to a limited extent, the principals improved their management knowledge and skills through independent reading, unfortunately, the other two areas of development, namely actions and behaviours and attitudes and values, were not catered for.

Self-development faced further hindrances:

- The principals had no access to recent and relevant reading material. There were no books and journals on educational management in their school libraries; and
- Due to heavy and demanding work pressure, the principals did not have enough time to read and reflect on what they read.

The need for other people to assist with the development of the principals called for people-assisted professional development. The principals employed informal and formal people-assisted professional development strategies. Informal people-assisted professional development is a process whereby the principals met their professional development needs from interacting informally with stakeholders. They viewed virtually every interaction with every stakeholder as a potential learning opportunity. They seemed to always have a question: “What can I learn from this interaction?” They learned automatically, unconsciously and sometimes intuitively from many situations they found themselves in, situations that were not formally labelled as professional development. They used feedback from stakeholders about their work. Informal people-assisted development proved to have at least four advantages:

- The principals made use of and exploited readily available experiences;
- Informal people-assisted professional development proved to be cost-effective. As a middle-income country that was experiencing high rates of unemployment, Namibia could not invest additional funds in professional development of its human resources, therefore cost-effective programmes would be ideal and should be encouraged and supported;
- In many cases, informal people-assisted professional development catered for principals’ unique professional development needs. What they learned from stakeholders concerned them and was unique to their individual schools. Areas of

development that were better catered for were management attitudes and values, and, to a lesser extent, knowledge and skills; and

- The principals applied shared knowledge immediately in their working environment to test its workability.

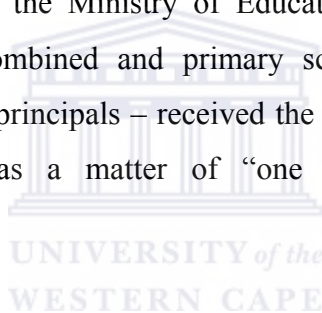
All in all, informal professional development was a step in the direction of establishing learning organisations, where principals learn from and together with other people in their respective schools.

Notwithstanding the above-listed advantages, informal people-assisted professional development was not without drawbacks. The principals hardly deliberately sought for opportunities to talk about their work with other people. They did not agree with stakeholders that time should be put aside for professional co-operation through discussions and other professional development strategies. They did not know what it means to act as “critical friends”, who listen empathetically to each other’s problems, challenge each other’s opinions, and encourage one another to question the way they do things. Informal professional development requires that principals should have critical minds. Principals should be able to construct subjective knowledge and make sense out of spur-of-the-moment discussions they have with stakeholders.

There are three more points to be made about the downsides of informal people-assisted professional development. First, the principals were not always clear about the areas of development they needed to develop and did not make conscious decisions to develop the areas that needed to be developed. Second, the principals and their informal professional developers had a tendency to consider only weaknesses as areas of development. They seldom focused on improving the strengths of principals. If development means building on what principals already have, then development should include further development of areas in which

principals were good. Finally, informal people-assisted professional development did not make provision for the principals to select individually preferred and appropriate methods of development. For example, did they prefer to listen to someone telling them about something, that is, lecturing; or did they prefer to see someone doing something, that is, by role modelling or demonstration? In other words, if they are to benefit more, principals should be expected to formalise some informal professional development.

The question in the preceding paragraph leads to the consideration of formal people-assisted professional development. Formal people-assisted professional development was comprised of workshops and courses with specific aims and objectives organised at cluster and regional levels. Most of the workshops and courses were organised by the Ministry of Education. Different categories of principals – secondary, combined and primary school principals and newly appointed and experienced principals – received the same in-service professional development. Thus, it was a matter of “one size fits all” professional development.



At the cluster level, the cluster centre principals were responsible for organising and co-ordinating and, in many cases, facilitating workshops and *ad hoc* courses. When they prepared as facilitators, they consulted books and other reading material, and when they facilitated professional development of others, they engaged in discussions. These readings and discussions were development strategies through which the principals developed.

The principals also participated as participants in cluster and regionally organised workshops and courses. The development strategies employed were mostly discussions and lecturing and, normally, participants received handouts, which they used for independent reading. Unlike informal people-assisted professional development, which focused unconsciously on management attitudes and values

and, to a limited extent, on knowledge and skills, formal people-assisted professional development concentrated more consciously on improving management knowledge and skills and, to a lesser extent, on beliefs and values. Professional development needs in the development areas of actions and behaviours were either minimally addressed or not catered for at all. Lack of effective resources (capable facilitators and learning materials such as books and journals) was the main hindrance to effective formal people-assisted professional development.

On the other hand, there were non-governmental organisations providing in-service professional development to serving principals. One such organisation was the Institute for Educational Career Development (IECD). It offered a two-year in-service professional development programme for principals to serving principals. The IECD professional development programme differed from the Ministry of Education's short courses and workshops in some respects:

- It took place over a long period. There were follow-ups and principals gained more knowledge and skills; and
- In addition to modules, each participant in the programme had to engage in a minimum of 12 development projects. An IECD developer and the Ministry of Education official, usually a local school inspector, supervised each project. Projects improved management actions and behaviours.

In summary, while principals' professional development is personal, it takes place more effectively when they interact with other people. If they are to overcome or minimise the effect of the ever changing challenges they face, and thereby help bring about the desired improvement in learner learning, they have to focus deliberately and consciously on their continuous and lifelong learning, using individually preferred and appropriate learning methods. The three principals in

this study were heading isolated rural secondary schools, and therefore were living lonely lives. Because of this, they had to learn how to learn. They depended mostly on self-development and informal people-assisted professional development, which means they had to organise, facilitate and co-ordinate their own professional development. In order to strengthen this, formal professional developers of programmes for principals should facilitate varied learning using appropriate individual development strategies, and not act as “sage on the stage” providing what is mistakenly called “true knowledge”. They are not players but coaches of players, who guide, encourage, mediate and catalyse acquisition of subjective knowledge by principals themselves. This is only possible if developers understand fully the principals they develop. One way of gaining understanding of principals is to involve them in their professional development through defining their professional development needs, planning programmes, delivering instruction, and providing professional support to each other through mentoring and coaching.

5.3 Recommendations and suggestions for improvement

This section collates and summarises the implications of the findings of the study and suggests a model for developing secondary school principals.

5.3.1 For secondary school principals

Principals should know that self-development is a more effective professional development method. A continuous quest for learning should motivate such development. Learning is never final.

- Secondary school principals should plan for their professional development. Their school plans, goals and mission statements should reflect their professional development. Their professional development should not be left to chance, but

should be made a priority. Effective principalship is the key. Even the hard-to-resolve challenges can be addressed easily when principals have improved their performance;

- Secondary school principals should engage in independent reading. In addition to government policy documents, principals should read books and journals to increase and update their knowledge. They should not only read about those ideas that they believe in but they should also acquire information on ideas that challenge their beliefs. Many principals take reading for granted. Reading is an art. It requires certain skills. Some of the reading skills are as follows:
 - (i) Readers should make meanings of what they read. They should be able to use personal and background knowledge to make connections, make inferences and ask questions;
 - (ii) They should decide how to use the text and the meanings they gain from the text; and
 - (iii) They should analyse the text to identify the author's purpose and point of view and decide whether to accept or resist the author's implied message;

- Secondary school principals should, individually and in groups, make time to reflect on what they do and how they can improve what they do. Case studies, peer-assisted learning, and secondary school principals' association as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, are some of the best learning approaches for this. A learning team should challenge each other's thinking in the spirit of teamwork and collegiality; and

- Secondary school principals should establish learning organisations in their respective schools where principals should learn from stakeholders and vice versa. Principals should not only be headmasters and headmistresses, but they must, above all, be head learners. If the main aim of principal professional

development is to improve learning and teaching and if one of the best educational leadership strategies is role modelling, then instructional leaders should not only show the way but they should also go the way, meaning they should model learning.

5.3.2 For developers or facilitators

The main role of developers should be to facilitate learning. They should not be players but coaches of players in the learning process. They should not act as “sages on the stage” but “guides on the side”. The following should be some of their critical roles:

- Developers should involve principals more in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their professional development. They should build development exercises around the principals’ world of work;
- More and varied resource people and developers should be involved in the professional development of secondary school principals. However, their contributions should be coordinated;
- Professional development of principals should focus more on the core function of principals namely instructional leadership rather than on administrative work;
- University-based developers need to conduct rigorous, comprehensive research studies in the area of professional development of secondary school principals. Research reports are useful in two ways – to inform future professional development exercises and to serve as reading material for principals. Moreover, research evidence helps university developers to review their curricula and development strategies;

- All three areas of development should be developed. Modification of attitudes and bridging the gap between theory and practice are more difficult than developing knowledge and skills. Modifying an attitude and improving practice require empathic, constant and close support, counselling and coaching. To ensure stable conception, new ideas should not substitute old ideas such as local knowledge and cultural values, but should be integrated into old ideas. However, developers of principals should help principals to modify obsolete cultural values, local knowledge and old ideas that impede the conception of needed new ideas and information;
- Professional development of principals should focus more on actions and behaviours. That is, principals should learn more about how to put into action the learned knowledge. University-based developers and developers in the field (such as inspectors of education and consultants) should collaborate in bridging the gap between theory and practice;
- In order for them to be able to swim and not sink, newly appointed school principals should be given intensive induction. First-time principals are faced with overwhelming challenges as experienced principals. Challenges do not discriminate. Therefore, first-time principals should be given more support in the process of learning how to cope in their new positions and their new work;
- There should be follow-ups to see whether principals try out the new knowledge they have learned;
- Professional development of secondary school principals should be continuous;

- There should be different types of professional development programmes for various types of principals, for example, experienced principals and inexperienced principals, and secondary and primary school principals;
- Principals should be taught how to learn so that they can take care of their development with minimum or no support of developers. Even simple things such as reflective reading skills should not be left to chance. Thus, the ultimate goal should be to equip them to become independent learners; and
- Developers should be people who are familiar with and sensitive to the principals' local lore. The implications for this knowledge are twofold. First, knowledge of local lore enables the developers to understand the principals' cognitive dissonance when they acquire new knowledge and do something to modify aspects in local knowledge that impede the compatibility between the local knowledge and the new knowledge or to bring the new knowledge in line with local knowledge. Second, developers can derive apt development approaches and strategies from local knowledge. For example, if the principals are from a community where communalism is the norm, then development strategies that require them to share ideas may be more effective than others. Coincidentally, sharing is a favoured strategy in today's professional development of principals, whereby principals have to learn from each other and even from family and community members.

5.3.3 For policymakers and superordinates

The main role of policymakers and superordinates should be to create an enabling learning environment through attending to the following:

- Since most of the professional development takes place at cluster and school levels, secondary school principals should be given enough opportunities for

development. For example, funds should be made available to stock cluster centre libraries with the necessary resources such as books and journals on educational management and computers linked to the Internet. There should be interlibrary loans between the cluster centre libraries and the regional teacher resource centre and other libraries in the country. Provisions should be made for secondary school principals to visit each other's schools to learn from each other through coaching, mentoring, observing and feedback. In order to reduce isolation of principals, opportunities should be created and encouraged for formal and informal professional cooperation among secondary school principals;

- Professional development of secondary school principals provided by governmental and non-governmental organisations should be co-ordinated. What prevents the Ministry of Education from employing an education officer who would be responsible for the coordination of professional development of principals?;
- In-service professional development of secondary school principal should not only be done on an *ad hoc* basis but should be planned for. Further, it should be a lifelong process, starting with induction and continuing with continuous in-service professional development. Principals need to learn, on a regular basis, how to handle ever-changing management challenges;
- Secondary school principals should be supported and encouraged to establish regional and national secondary school principals' associations, where principals could learn from each other and request experts of their choice to talk to them;
- Conditions of services for secondary school principals should be improved. These include the provision of resources (adequate physical facilities and teaching and learning materials) to secondary schools. Difficult working conditions such as

overloading can frustrate the principals and adversely affect their learning process;

- The work of inspectors of education, which includes advising principals about issues related to school management and leadership, should be clearly defined. A policy on inspectorate should be developed, adopted and implemented. The policy should address issues such as the work of inspectors with regard to the professional development of principals of secondary schools. Perhaps it is time for Namibia to have inspectors of education for secondary schools; and
- A policy on a school cluster system should be developed, adopted and implemented. The policy should, among other matters, stipulate the work and incentives of cluster centre heads and professional development of secondary school principals. However, a policy is only effective when it is implemented, otherwise it remains a good intention. If a policy cannot be implemented, even if it looks excellent, it should be reviewed.

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5.3.4 Suggesting the model for developing principals

Reports after reports have come in indicating that secondary school principals are unable to bring about improved learner learning. Workshops and *ad hoc* courses have not been doing them any significant service. Document analysis reveals that plans were underway to prepare a management development programme for Namibian school managers and regional officials, which would be implemented in 2008. Based on the socio-cultural and theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 1, the current body of knowledge in the area of professional development of principals discussed in Chapter 2 and the findings presented in Chapter 4, I would like to suggest a model for continuous in-service development of serving secondary school principals.

5.3.4.1 Overriding principles of the model

There are ten overriding principles that I believe provide the foundation for the proposed model:

- Professional development of principals is a primary vehicle through which learning and teaching are improved;
- Effective professional development of principals takes place on the job;
- A good professional development exercise for principals should start with a needs assessment and end with an evaluation;
- Professional development of principals is an on-going process;
- Professional development of principals does not only focus on the provision and improvement of management and leadership knowledge and skills but also focuses on attitude modification and improvement of management and leadership practice;
- The implementation of professional development programmes for principals should respect and reflect the contributions, experience, and perspectives of local knowledge, empirical theory and diverse styles and approaches to learning;
- Strategies for developing principals should be both formal and informal. Professional development strategies that are too formal stifle learning;

- Professional development of principal is personal, yet it takes place more effectively when principals develop together with other people – fellow principals, teachers, developers, and even learners;
- Professional development of school principals for middle-income countries like Namibia should be relatively cost-effective yet efficient and effective; and
- The suggested model is not a recipe but a design that can be modified and adjusted to suit any programme of developing principals where the context is similar to that of the principals who partook in this study.

5.3.4.2 Planning stage

Although constituting the core of all professional development endeavours, planning for how and what to develop in principals usually does not receive the attention it requires. If developers and principals do not plan, they may plan to fail by default.

(a) Needs assessment

Identifying, analysing and defining professional development needs are not easy exercises. Asking workshop participants to write down their expectations of the workshop and requesting them to fill out evaluation forms do not provide all the necessary information. While participants may give indications of what their professional development needs are, they may not be able to define their needs or they may not be able to articulate clearly what their needs are. As in the case of a medical doctor diagnosing a patient's disease, developers, in consultation with principals, should identify, analyse and define the professional development needs

of principals. As explicated in Chapter 1, needs refers to the gaps that exist between what principals should know or do and what they actually know or do, and professional development needs are not only weaknesses but also strengths that need to be improved upon and consolidated.

Moreover, principals and developers need to scan the environment in which principals work to see whether there are challenges that require development. They need to be proactive and they need to know the potential sources of challenges. Some of the possible sources of challenges implied by this study are as follows:

- (i) learners' affairs
- (ii) teachers' affairs
- (iii) external relations
- (iv) interpersonal relationships



When a performance problem is discovered, a thorough analysis should be carried out to determine the real need. Usually people agree on a performance problem, which needs to be put right, but they disagree on the area to which the performance problem applies. More often than not, inappropriate analysis results in inappropriate definition of the problem at hand and, consequently, meaningless professional development is offered. Analysis of needs requires a developer to use research data gathering methods such as the following:

- Interviews (individual or focus group)
- Questionnaire
- Document analysis (such as inspectors' reports)
- Observation (for example, when inspectors visit schools)

Data should not only be gathered from principals, but also from various stakeholders such as the school board, policymakers, developers and teachers.

Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 2, developers have to define the needs, that is to say exactly what the needs are. One crucial aspect in defining the needs is to determine the area of development of the identified needs:

- The principals need to acquire more and appropriate knowledge and skills if they do not know what to do;
- The principals need to modify their attitudes, if they do not demonstrate professional attitudes and values,; and
- The principals need to bridge the gap between theory and practice if they cannot turn into action what they know and believe in.

Categorising professional development needs in the three areas of development is not clear-cut. It is a question of a trend. Thus, as explained in Chapter 4, a professional development need can partly belong to all three areas of development, but is located more in one of the areas. In short, needs assessment sets the stage for action and determines the rest of the professional development exercise. That is why it is crucial.

(b) Formulation of objectives

Developers and principals derive objectives from the needs they identify. The objectives represent the task that the developers and principals want to achieve. They should be expressed in terms of what principals are expected to be able to do when they have undergone a professional development exercise. These would

constitute the behavioural objectives. It is only when principals have improved the way they wrestle with a management or leadership challenge that objectives are fully achieved.

5.3.4.3 Implementation stage

When the professional development needs are properly identified and well defined, and the objectives clearly formulated, the next step is the implementation of the model. The model can be used in any in-service principal learning situation, be it regionally organised development, cluster-based development, or whole school development. For example, a school management team, as a learning team in the whole school development, should meet regularly to identify their critical challenges, classify them in the appropriate development areas, use appropriate development strategies to learn, practise what they have learned, monitor their practice, and evaluate their performance in relation to teaching and learning in their schools. The figure below sums up the model:

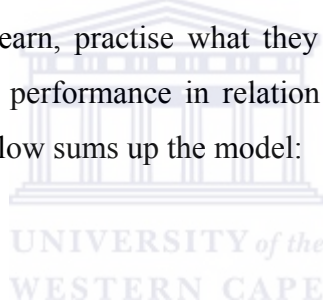
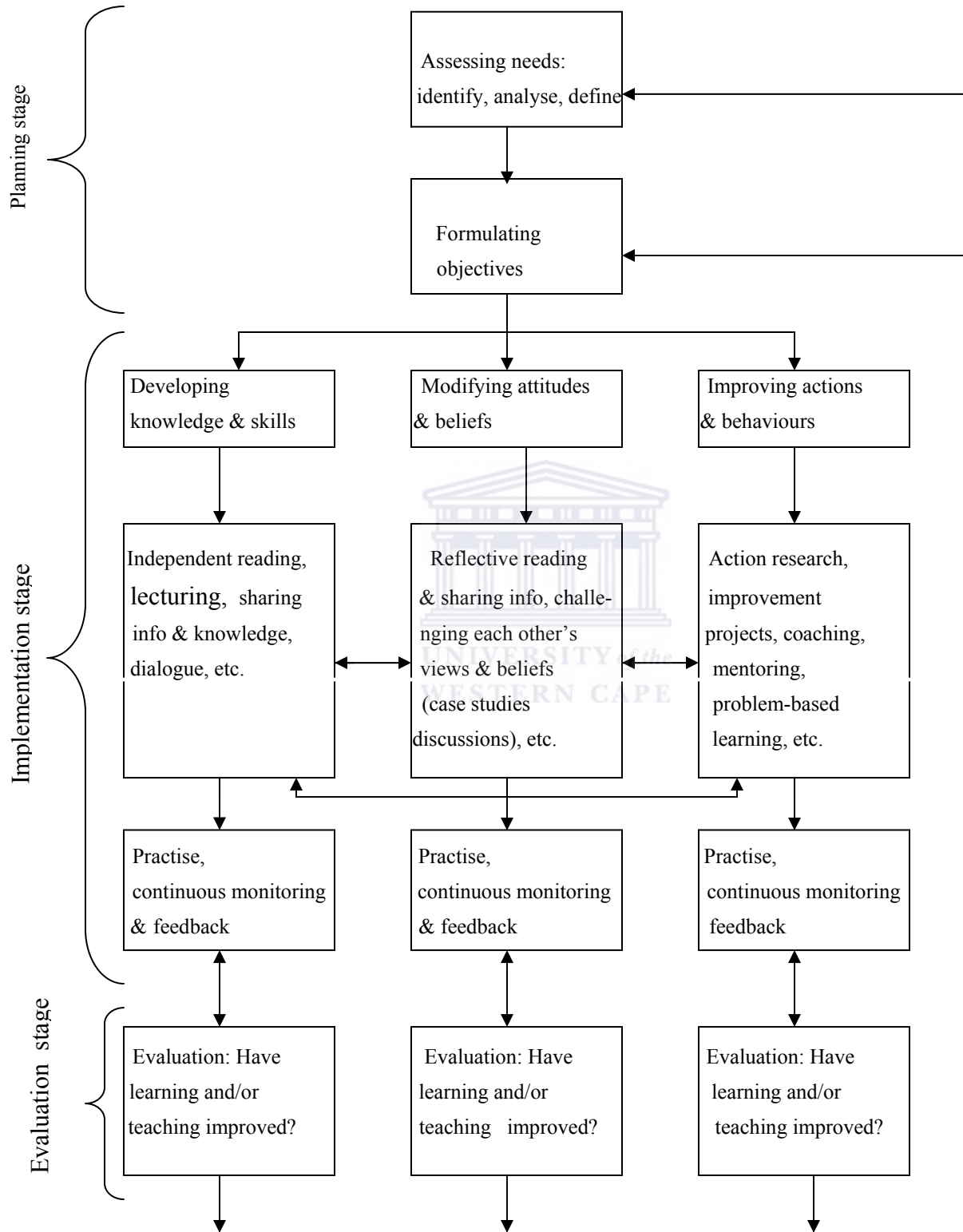
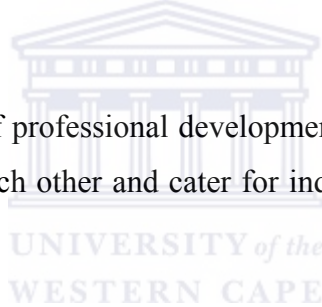


Figure 3: Ongoing in-service professional development model



The model shows, among others, the following features:

- The professional development is ongoing. New challenges crop up continually and old ones ferment constantly. In order for the principals to remain abreast of the challenges, they should keep on learning. The reality is that no matter how much they learn, there is always more to learn;
- The model starts with a needs assessment. Any professional development exercise that is not preceded by a needs assessment is akin to a medical doctor prescribing medicine to patients without prior thorough diagnosis of their diseases. Such a professional development exercise is likely not to have any impact;
- The objectives determine what is to be learned and how it should be learned;
- The model uses a variety of professional development approaches and strategies, so that they complement each other and cater for individual principals' preferred learning styles;
- While strategies intended for each area of development are best suited to achieving objectives in that individual area, all strategies can be employed in all areas. In other words, for example, while action research is best suited to help principals to apply knowledge, the same strategy can, to some extent, help principals to modify their beliefs and attitudes or to acquire more knowledge and skills. Increased knowledge and skills and modified beliefs and values have an impact on actions and behaviours and vice versa. Thus, the strategies are interrelated, interdependent and complementary to each other;
- The separation of professional development into three areas does not imply that the areas should be developed separately. The development of principals, using



this model, focuses on all areas of development, with special emphasis on the area that needs more development;

- The learned skills and knowledge should be applied in a real working environment and the application should be monitored and evaluated; and
- The model suggests that every professional development exercise should end with an evaluation. Improved learning and teaching are important indicators of effective professional development.

5.3.4.4. Evaluation stage

The effectiveness of the model is determined by the extent to which it can prepare principals to bring about the desired improved learning and teaching. When the evaluation of the model does not show improvement in learning and teaching, something somewhere in the process has not been effective or new professional development needs have crept in, and therefore the exercise should be restarted. Thus, the model shows that a professional development exercise has to be evaluated to (i) determine the extent to which it has achieved the set objectives and (ii) to serve as a source of objectives for future professional development.

In conclusion, the model is simple, user friendly and cost-effective, so even an individual principal or a learning organisation can implement it unassisted. It is just a question of: planning → implementing → evaluating → restarting the process all over again.

5.4 Suggestions for further research

Studies should be conducted to:

- Determine the correlation between continuous in-service professional development of secondary school principals and their effectiveness;
- Determine the extent to which professional development of secondary school principals impact on learning and teaching;
- Answer the question: Should developers of secondary school principals play both the roles of developers and of summative assessors? In other words, should the developers be involved in developing, assessing and licensing (certification) of secondary school principals?;
- Answer the question: Should continuous in-service professional development of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region be mandatory or voluntary?;
- Evaluate the content of the current in-service professional development for secondary school principals in Namibia;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the professional development strategies employed currently in the development of secondary school principals;
- Determine the impact of local knowledge systems on the professional development of secondary school principals;

- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Diploma of Educational Management and Leadership that was launched at the University of Namibia in 2004;
- Answer the question: What are the preferred learning styles of Namibian secondary school principals?; and
- Replicate this study in other regions in Namibia.

5.5 Summary

Professional development of principals worldwide has been the object of critical attention. There has been a call for a change in the preparation methods of professional development of principals. In Namibia, secondary school principals have been criticised for their inability to deliver to the satisfaction of education stakeholders. The role of these men and women has become complicated, difficult and demanding, requiring improved, different and sophisticated in-service professional development. Employing a qualitative research design and tapping from the existing body of knowledge, this study aimed at contributing to the existing knowledge of how serving secondary school principals in Namibia are (and can be) developed. The study found that the current development methods need to be changed. The current situation is calling for a more principal-centred professional development aiming specifically on enabling these men and women to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

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Appendix A: Interview guide for the principals.

I. INSTRUCTIONS

1. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions that follow. Therefore you are encouraged to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge, experience and understanding.

2. Because your answers to the questions will be used to understand your own professional development, you are requested to respond to the questions as frankly as possible. Your responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Your name will not be identifiable in the final report. Instead, aliases will be used in the report.
3. You are encouraged to ask for clarifications when you do not understand any question.

II. QUESTIONS

SECTION A: PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DETAILS

1. Name of school and alias
2. Years of experience as a principal
3. Years of experience in school management in other capacities
4. Years of teaching experience prior to becoming principal
5. Age
6. Highest academic qualification
7. Highest professional qualification
8. Qualifications in educational management

III. SECTION B: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

9. Briefly explain how you became a principal of this school.
10. Describe what you view as the ideal requirements for secondary school principalship.

Alternative questions and probes:

- Who should be a secondary school principal?

- Please tell me your views on what it takes to be an effective secondary school principal, describing the personal and professional qualities of a “good secondary school principal.”
- Why do you think secondary school principals should have those personal and professional qualities?
- If you were to retire today and a new principal to be appointed for this school, what, in your view, are the most important hints would you give him or her concerning school leadership and management?

11. What would you say were your challenges (professional development needs) when you were appointed as a new principal?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What were your management concerns when you were appointed as a secondary school principal?
- What were those developmental needs you met and how did you meet them?
- What are those development needs you could not meet? Why?
- Do you still have to meet them?

12. Would you share with me your belief systems (personal philosophy, vision, values, and attitudes) of educational management?

Alternative questions and probes:

- How did your personal belief systems of education evolve over the years?
- What experiences or events in your personal and professional lives influenced your belief systems of education (educational philosophy)?

- How do you react to people (e.g., parents and teachers) whose belief systems of education (educational philosophies) are different from yours? Why do you react the way you do?
- What impact do your belief systems of education (educational philosophy) have on your work of leading and managing learning and teaching?

13. Please describe the management areas in which you feel less competent.

Alternative questions and probes:

- In which management areas do you feel less knowledgeable?
- In which management areas do you think you lack the necessary skills?
- What are some of the most difficult challenges or situations you have to deal with?

14. Please describe your leadership style.

Alternative questions and probes:

- How do you normally lead your subordinates (e.g., teachers and learners)?
- Please describe the type of problems your subordinates give you.
- What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of your leadership style?

15. You have now told me a number of your challenges (professional development needs). Would you help me summarise the most important management and leadership areas you need to improve so that you can be an effective secondary school principal?

Alternative questions and probes:

- In a nutshell, what prevents you from becoming a “good secondary school principal” you want to be?
- Where are your greatest needs for improvement?

- What are your biggest concerns in this school?
- What are the real sources of difficult conditions you face in leading learning and teaching in your school?
- Please describe the management areas in which you feel most incompetent.

SECTION B: HOW THE PRINCIPALS DEVELOP AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

16. Would you begin by telling me about your college and/or university education that prepared you for principalship?

Alternative questions and probes:

- Would you describe those aspects of your preparation which best prepared you for the principalship? Why do you think so?
- Which development experiences were least useful? Why do you think so?
- What suggestions would you offer to universities or colleges of education that are involved in the preparation of secondary school principals as a way of helping them to better prepare and develop secondary school principals?

17. How did you meet the challenges (professional development needs) you mentioned in question 11 above?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What did you do to meet those needs?
- Who helped you to meet them?
- What did he or she or they do to help you meet your needs?

18. What would you say were your strengths when you were appointed as a principal?

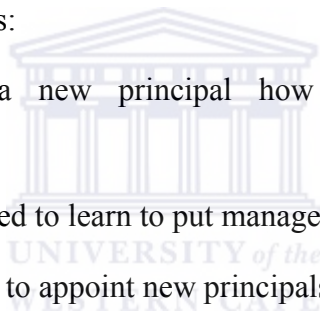
Alternative questions and probes:

- What do you think helped you run your school when you were first appointed as a principal?
- To what extent did your previous position help you to be better prepared for principalship?

19. If given the opportunity to start anew, what kinds of things would you do to better prepare yourself for principalship?

20. How are new secondary school principals in MBESC inducted (orientated) into principalship?

Alternative questions and probes:

- 
- When you were a new principal how were you inducted into principalship?
 - How were you assisted to learn to put management theory into practice?
 - If you had the power to appoint new principals, what realistic development (training) programme would you put in place for newly appointed principals?
 - How should new secondary school principals learn from experience?

21. What are your views on the mentoring programme for secondary school principals?

Alternative questions and probes:

- Please describe how it is done in your region.
- What do you think should be the criteria for selecting mentors?
- How should the mentors mentor new secondary school principals (protégés)?

- In your view, to what extent does mentoring help principals develop?

22. Since you have now had some time to reflect on your challenges (professional development needs) and how principals develop, could you please share with me how you learn by yourself to improve your school management.

Alternative questions and probes:

- What do you do to improve on those areas where you fall short?
- What do you do as self-study strategies?
- Why do you learn the way you do?

23. Please tell me how you learn from other practitioners such as your peers?

Alternative questions and probes:

- Who are the people you learn from?
- What do you learn from them?
- How do you learn from them?
- Why do you learn from them the way you do?

24. What in-service development assistance is available for you in order to develop?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What are the development opportunities available to you?
- What support do you get?
- How are you supported?
- How are your strengths reinforced?
- How are your weaknesses addressed?
- Which professional development experiences were least useful?

- What would you say are the strengths of development strategies of developers involved in your training and professional development?

25. How do you relate the in-service professional development you have undergone and the greatest needs for improvement you mentioned in 15 above?

26. What suggestions can you make for improving in-service professional development for secondary school principals in your region?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What support do they need to become “good secondary school principals”?
- How best do you think their weaknesses can be addressed?
- If you were an education officer responsible for in-service professional development for secondary school principals, how different would your development be from the one you have undergone yourself?

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27. Despite my best efforts to be comprehensive in my questioning, there is probably something I have left out. What have I not asked you that I should have asked?

END

Thank you for sharing with me your opinions, experience and perceptions, and for giving up your time to do so!

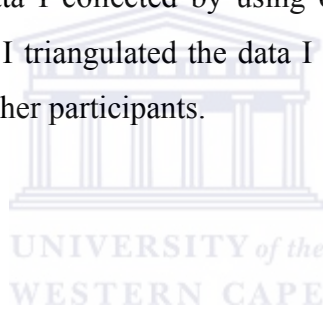


Appendix B: Observation guide for the principals

Observation strategies for this study were informed by the observation strategies used by Robertson (1999). I shadowed the principals while they were carrying out their leadership and management duties and while they were participating in professional development activities. Leadership and management duties refer to the activities the principals were involved in, for example, chairing a staff meeting, attending to a visiting parent, disciplining a learner, doing class visit, etc. I tape-recorded what the principals had to say. Tape-recording enabled me to pay more attention to active listening and probing. I took notes of their observable behaviours in a descriptive fashion. I did not make any judgment or interpretations of the observed behaviours at the time of data collection.

Observing the principals in action catered for the identification of their professional development needs; and observing them while partaking in in-service development activities such as workshops, course-based training and so on catered for their professional development (learning) strategies.

After each observation session, I engaged each individual principal in what Robertson (ibid) calls “reflective interview”. Reflective interviewing is a questioning technique that provides opportunities for respondents to explore their knowledge, behaviour, skills, attitudes and values. The technique left the power for judgment in the hands of the principals to identify in which management and leadership areas they fell short or to judge and interpret the assistance they received from their colleagues, peers and professional developers. That is, the principals gave meanings to their professional development. I triangulated the data I collected by using observations with the data I collected through interviews. Also I triangulated the data I collected from one principal with the data I collected from the other participants.



Appendix C: Letter requesting MBESC permission to conduct the study

P. O. Box 487
Windhoek
10 May 2004

The Permanent Secretary
Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture
Private Bag 13286
Windhoek

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT THE STUDY IN THE OMUSATI REGION

I am pursuing a doctoral study with the University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa. I intend to conduct an educational research, which is a requirement for my degree. The title of my study is: **Investigating In-service Professional Development of Secondary School Principals in Namibia**. The project will require me to collect data in the Omusati Region. My population comprises of secondary school principals and their professional developers.

It is my hope that the study will generate empirical data, which will be useful tools in the hands of the principals themselves and those involved in the professional development of school principals. It is indubitably imperative that principals be adequately prepared for principalship as research has found a significant correlation between effective school leadership and effective teaching and learning.

The data collection instruments are interviews, non-participant observations of a few principals, and the analysis of some pertinent documents.

I am, therefore, requesting your good office to grant me the necessary permission to conduct the research study in the Omusati Region. I hope that you will consider my request favourably.

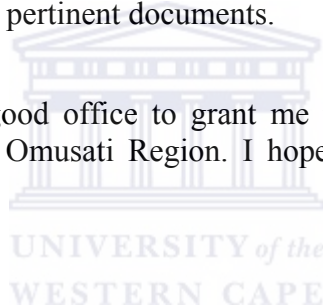
Thank you

Yours sincerely

.....

J. Mushaandja

Appendix D: Permission to carry out research in the Omusati Region





Appendix E: Covering letter for the principals

P. O. Box 487
Windhoek
10 July 2004

The Principal
..... Secondary School
Omusati Region
Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture

RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY

Dear Principal

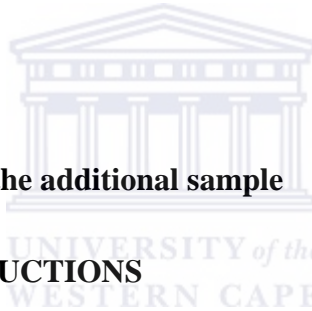
I am a doctoral student at the University of the Western Cape, RSA. I am conducting research on the professional development of secondary school principals. It is a pure

academic exercise. It is my hope that the study will generate empirical data, which will be useful tools in the hands of secondary principals themselves and those involved in the professional development of school principals. I further hope that participating in this study in itself is a learning opportunity for the participants. Meaning that through participating in this study you may have time to reflect on your own professional development.

I have identified you as one whose informed opinions can help facilitate this study. I am therefore requesting you kindly to participate in the study. I will call you in a week's time to hear your reply and, if applicable, to set a date for the two of us to meet so that I can brief you on the data collection procedures. Let me assure you that your responses will be entirely confidential to me and your name will not be identifiable in the final report.

Thank you
Yours sincerely

.....
J. Mushaandja



Appendix F: Interview guide for the additional sample

I. INSTRUCTIONS

- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions that follow. Therefore you are encouraged to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge, experience and understanding.
- You are requested to respond to the questions as frankly as possible.
- Your responses will be treated with absolute confidentiality. Your name will not be identifiable in the final report. Instead, aliases will be used in the report.
- In the course of the interview, you can ask for clarifications when you do not understand any question.

II. QUESTIONS

SECTION A: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

1. Describe what you view as the ideal requirements for secondary school principalship.

Alternative questions and probes:

- Who should be a secondary school principal?
- Please discuss your views on what it takes to be an effective secondary school principal, describing personal and professional qualities of a “good secondary school principal.”
- Why do you think principals should have those personal and professional qualities?
- If you were to appoint a secondary school principal today what, in your view, are the most important hints you would give him or her concerning school leadership and management?

2. What would you say are the challenges (professional development needs) of newly appointed secondary school principals in the Omusati Region?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What are the management concerns of new secondary school principals?
- What are their professional development needs?
- What are those professional development needs they cannot meet? Why?

3. Please describe the management and leadership areas in which secondary school principals in the Omusati Region are less competent.

Alternative questions and probes:

- In which management and leadership areas are they less knowledgeable?
- In which management and leadership areas do they lack the necessary skills?
- What are some of the most difficult challenges or situations they have to deal with?

4. You have now told me a number of challenges (professional development needs) of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region. Would you help me summarize the most important management and leadership areas they need to improve so that they can be effective secondary school principals?

Alternative questions and probes:

- In a nutshell, what prevents them from becoming “good secondary school principals” you want them to be?
- Where are their greatest needs for improvement?
- What are their biggest concerns in their schools?
- What are the real sources of difficult conditions they face in leading learning and teaching in their schools?
- Please describe the management areas in which you think they are most incompetent.

SECTION B: HOW SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS DEVELOP AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

5. How do secondary school principals in the Omusati Region meet the challenges (professional development needs) you listed in question 4 above?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What do they do to meet these needs?
- How do developers help them to meet the needs?
- What do developers do to help the principals to meet the needs?

6. How are new secondary school principals in the Omusati Region inducted (orientated) into principalship?

Alternative questions and probes:

- How do developers induct secondary school principals into principalship?
- How do developers assist secondary school principals to learn how to put management and leadership theory into practice?
- If you were to develop a programme for developing newly appointed secondary school principals, how would it be different from the current programme?
- How should the new secondary school principals learn from experience?
- How should newly appointed secondary school principals learn from experienced principals?
- How should secondary school principals be inducted?

7. Since you have now had time to reflect on the challenges (professional development needs) of secondary school principals, could you please share with me how secondary school principals in the Omusati Region learn by themselves to improve their school management?

Alternative questions and probes:

- What do they do to improve on those areas where they fall short?
- What do they do as self-study strategies?
- Why do they learn the way they do?

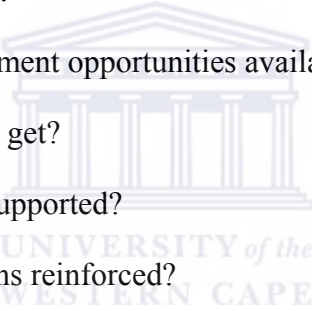
8. Please tell me how secondary school principals learn from other practitioners such as their peers?

Alternative questions and probes:

- Who are the people they learn from?
- What do they learn from them?
- How do they learn from them?
- Why do they learn from them the way they do?

9. What in-service professional development assistance is available for the Omusati secondary school principals in order to develop?

Alternative questions and probes:

- 
- What are the development opportunities available to them?
 - What support do they get?
 - How are they being supported?
 - How are their strengths reinforced?
 - How are their weaknesses addressed?
 - Which professional development experiences are least useful?
 - What would you say are the strengths of current professional development of secondary school principals?

10. How do you relate the in-service professional development of secondary school principals in the Omusati Region to the greatest needs for improvement you mentioned above?

11. What suggestions can you make for improving in-service professional development for secondary school principals in the Omusati Region?

Alternative questions and probes:

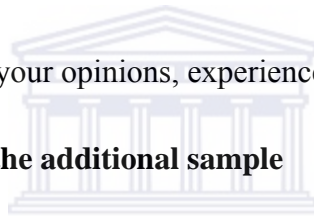
- What support do they need to become “good secondary school principals” you want them to be?
- How best do you think their weaknesses can be addressed?
- If you were to develop a new in-service professional development for secondary school principals, how different would it be from the existing one?

12. Despite my best efforts to be comprehensive in my questioning, there is probably something I have left out. What have I not asked you that I should have asked

END

Thank you for sharing with me your opinions, experience and perceptions, and for giving up your time to do so!

Appendix G: Covering letter for the additional sample



UNIVERSITY of the
WESTERN CAPE P. O. Box 487
Windhoek
07 July 2005

Education officer
Ministry of Education

RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Dear Mr/Ms

I am a doctoral student at the University of the Western Cape, RSA. I am conducting research on the professional development of secondary school principals. It is a pure academic exercise. It is my hope that the study will generate empirical data, which will be useful tools in the hands of the principals themselves and those involved in the professional development of school principals (including you and I). I further hope that participating in this study in itself is a learning opportunity for the participants. Through

participating in this study you may have time to reflect on the professional development you offer to secondary school principals.

You have been identified as one whose informed opinions and experience can help facilitate this study. I am therefore requesting you to participate in the study. I will call you in a week's time to hear your reply and, if applicable, to set a date for the two of us to meet so that I can brief you on the data collection procedure.

Let me assure you that your responses will be entirely confidential to me and your name will not be identifiable in the final report.

Thank you

Yours sincerely

.....

J. Mushaandja

