Effects of transformational leadership on human resource management in primary schools

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We determined the impact of transformational styles of leadership on human resource management in primary schools. A transformational leadership model was employed to conduct this investigation. The model is underpinned by both theory and practice as well as with the qualitative research conducted for this study. Using semi-structured interviews, ten educators in two primary schools were interviewed. The findings indicated a movement towards an integrated or overarching use of leadership styles in the quest for transformational leadership as is evident in the model. Of note is that the principal still has, as the leader of the school, a vital role to play in changing past autocratic (transactional) structures to a more democratic, transformational type of leadership. The study revealed further that educators, including principals, must realise just how invaluable the human resources at a school are and that the support and commitment of these resources is vital to organisational success.

Introduction

Transformation involves every aspect of South African life and education is no exception. Far-reaching organisational and structural changes are required to address the severe imbalances in provision, and strong bureaucratic controls over education at all levels (National Department of Education (NDE),1998:11). At no time in our existence is change more imminent and the future more challenging than in our schools. Elliott-Kemp and Elliot-Kemp (1992:7) believe that one has to guard against the implementation of too many changes that could cause shattering stress and disorientation and consequent loss of effectiveness. Walker and Vogt, as quoted by Rossouw (1996:17), warn against initiating change for the sake of change without being knowledgeable about its impact in theory and practice, saying it can be as counterproductive as doing nothing.

With the passing of the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA) which advocates democratic school governance, school governing bodies with substantial decision-making powers should replace centralised decision-making authorities in a variety of spheres. The principle of such governing councils is democratic participation of all stakeholder groups engaging in collective decision-making. The NDE (1998:11) suggests that leadership, which could come from many different areas such as principals, teachers, parents or governing bodies as a whole, could play a major role in initiating transformation.

Chapman (1990:236) observed that all stakeholders, especially teachers, stand to gain substantially from transformational leadership, as issues can be addressed and alternatives sought through an increased knowledge base, greater understanding of decisions and improved understanding of reasons and methods for change. However, extending participation in decision-making to as many stakeholders as possible raises the possibility that people and relationships can affect the process adversely through incorrect planning, weak motivations, problematic communication networks, behaviour of individuals and structural disorganisation (Carl & Franken,1996:3). The NDE (1998:11) therefore maintains that it is the leaders, in the form of the principal, teacher, parent or governing body, who need to transform the previously top-down autocratic decision-making hierarchy to a more horizontal, participatory style of leadership.

Whilst transformational leadership appears to be widely accepted, the literature on the topic reveals contradictions regarding the nature, practice and outcomes of engaging in this type of leadership.

Firstly, there is much confusion surrounding the use of the concept leadership. Preedy (1993:143) views leadership as the initiation of new structures or procedures for accomplishing an organisation's goals and objectives. If maintenance of goals and objectives is more important here, then this aspect can be favourably compared to the definition of management provided by Van der Westhuizen (1991:39). He defines management as the "accomplishment of desired objectives by establishing an environment favourable to performance by people operating in desired groups." This notion of management can be closely linked to the definition of administration provided by Getzels, Lipham and Campbell (in Van der Westhuizen, 1991:34). They state that "administration is a social process concerned with creating, manufacturing, stimulating, controlling and unifying, formally and informally, the organised human and material energy within a unified system designed to accomplish predetermined objectives."

West-Burnham, Bush, O'Neill and Glover (1995:12) believe that the three concepts, leadership, management and administration, also have an international difference, for what management is to the British reader, is administration to the American reader and leadership drives both management and administration. West-Burnham *et al.* (1995:12) further propose a three-way dichotomy between leadership (concerned with values, vision and mission), management (concerned with the execution, planning, organising and deploying) and administration (concerned with operational details). Notwithstanding the confusion surrounding the correct use of the term leadership, in this study we focus on leadership pertaining to actions taken by leaders of the school in the attainment of organisational objectives.

Secondly, although transformational leadership requires leaders and followers to unite in the attainment of common goals (Sergiovanni, Burlingame, Coombe & Thurston,1992:24), this partnership does not take place on level playing fields where the unequal distribution of power, time, resources and knowledge, which favour the leader, remain unchanged (Duigan,1990:334). In other words, as Naidoo (1997: 3) observed, an illusion of transformational leadership may be created to conceal more autocratic (transactional) forms of leadership.

Thirdly, involving all players of an institution in decision-making in order to improve is admirable and reflects the current changes in education. However, this kind of participatory decision-making has its drawbacks: Gibbon (1995:1) reflects on a democratic process as time-consuming and further argues that players lack "specific skills, like mutual trust, sharing, accountability and these have to be developed." English and Fenwick (1992:35) also recognise that this group process can be problematic in the sheer complexity of participants' backgrounds and interests that prevent individuals from seeing a common vision to a common problem. Another problem encountered is the size of decision-making groups that would differ in primary schools according to numbers.

Fourthly, most leaders believe that the school systems in which they work are rational. However Weck (in English & Fenwick 1992: 38) argues that school contexts in which decisions are made are rarely stable enough to facilitate rational decision-making. Chapman (1990: 153) reminds us that schools do not have a single set of stable goals and that power is not a fixed entity. The school environment is far from stable and predictable. The complexity of the school's structures are described by King and Van der Berg (1991) as being a dynamic interrelationship between the social backgrounds of learners and their expectations of school. This can also take place between teacher belief systems and styles, between examinations and curriculum delivery, between formal school structures and hidden agendas, and all other elements that are both cause and effect of one another. Carlson (1995: 6) further enforces this point by noting the current moves in education away from Taylor's scientific management movement that emphasised

the bureaucratic model of management in which education was seen as a public service, to a more market-driven type of education. In a market-driven education, there are so many interrelations including new demands from customers of education: learners, parents, employers, community groups and higher education institutions and also peer demands from the providers of education: teachers, teacher unions, teacher trainers and industry. It is these expressed concerns in the leadership of schools that brings one to question how far leadership in primary schools has moved away from the traditional bureaucratic models of leadership to the more transformational leadership style characterised by participatory decision making.

Statement of the problem

Whilst transformational leadership has been used effectively in several countries in changing styles of leadership, it has only recently been introduced as a leadership option in South Africa. The SASA stipulates that as many educators, learners and parents as possible must be involved in all decision-making and that this decision-making should be transparent and open to participation by all stakeholders. The NDE (1998:9) describes this type of leadership as holistic and participatory. Governing bodies in former model C schools did in some ways reflect the principles of the Act, in that various stakeholders were involved in issues such as appointments, school fees, dress code, discipline and policies. The pitfalls, however, appear in the leadership of these changes and the uncritical participation by stakeholders that can blind transparency and distort communication that is vital in the defining of outputs and design processes. It is not just a matter of making changes, like transformational leadership, it is a matter of making them work. In this research we also investigated why cosmetic changes to leadership status will not affect the original *status quo* of the fundamental organisation and that the management of the school's human resources will remain largely unchanged. In view of this, the study focused on the effect of transformational leadership styles on the management of human resources in primary schools.

Objectives of the study

The primary objective in this study was to gauge the extent to which primary schools have affected a shift in leadership towards a transformational, collaborative leadership style and how this has consequently affected the management of the human resources. To help achieve the primary objective in the study, the secondary objectives in the study were to
- identify the principles of transformational leadership
- outline factors influencing the politics of transformational leadership
- determine conditions and forms necessary for a democratic, empowering mode of transformational leadership.

Definitions

Transformational leadership is a collective action generated by transforming leadership, which empowers those who participate in the process. In essence, transformational leadership is a leadership style that facilitates the redefinition of a people's mission and vision, a renewal of their commitment, and the restructuring of their systems for goal accomplishment (Leithwood, 1992:9). Leonard and Leonard (1999:237) maintain that the transformational leader should promote the articulation and sharing of a vision as well as fostering group goals.

Incorporating the above definitions, Telford (1996:12) refers to transformational leadership as members of an organisation, pursuing shared beliefs through combined efforts. This definition, which will serve the purposes of this study, also refers to what leaders do to bring about transformation in leadership. This includes the following elements, namely, participation, shared vision, empowerment, commitment and communication.

Management is the accomplishment of desired objectives by establishment of derived objectives by establishing an environment favourable to performance by people operating in desired groups (Van

der Westhuizen,1991:39). Management in this study refers to the evocation of attractive living that moves individuals and organisations beyond the ordinary in their zeal, commitment and work habits.

Human resources for the purposes of this study refer to the educators of a school. Human resource management, according to Van Wyk (1989:9), is the creation of an environment where people strive to do their best, where opportunities are equally distributed, where initiatives are encouraged and the conditions for success are created.

Transactional to transformational leadership

West-Burnham *et al.* (1995:68) believe the introduction of change, as in school improvement, cannot be guaranteed by transactional leadership, but rather by what is termed transformational leadership which ensures commitment of followers. This approach, illustrated in Figure 1, impacts on the management of human resources by focusing on the needs of all employees.

Transactional Leadership	Transformational Leadership
1. Manage people to achieve outcomes	Enhances opportunities for leadership development
2. Seeks and secures accountability	Increase personal autonomy of teachers
3. Centralises inter-vention strategies	Decentralises and de-emphasises intervention strategies
4. Asserts leadership to gain dominance	Supports teachers and staff to maximise organisational outcomes

Figure 1   Transactional *vs* transformational leadership

The transforming leader, while still responding to needs among followers, looks for motives to satisfy these needs by enhancing opportunities, empowering people, giving more freedom and the full support of the leader in initiatives. This kind of leader secures substantial commitment of time and energy from teachers, in a drive to change attitudes of students and parents of the school community where previously there were low levels of achievement and commitment (Preedy, 1993:148).

The transformation of leadership is a process through which the leader must actively pass. This process is clearly depicted in Figure 2. The process starts off as transactional which is essentially bureaucratic and ends off as transformational. Bartering and the political model also have common characteristics, as the leader initiates the needs and the teachers are influenced by this approach in the decisions they take. Building, bonding and banking can be likened to the collegial model with overlapping characteristics of transformational leadership. The main concepts of this process are bartering, which is transactional, and building, bonding and banking that are transformational.

The transformational leader attempts to achieve a common vision. In so doing, the staff is empowered to such an extent that they are prepared to take chances and to experiment. The transformational leader needs knowledge of current theories, change and experience as well as the ability to lead. Such a leader changes her/his beliefs of teachers so that previously dependent teachers can operate interdependently in decision-making and accept responsibility for these decisions (Carl & Franken,1996:109).

Carl and Franken (1996:109) further believe that transformational leadership developed collegiality of teachers in the execution of their duties that created a harmonious work environment and had teachers working well as a team emphasizing co-operation. Transformational teachers display a balance between people-orientated and task-orientated leadership. They attempt to build relationships and support staff, formulate aims and plan strategies. Transformative leadership there-
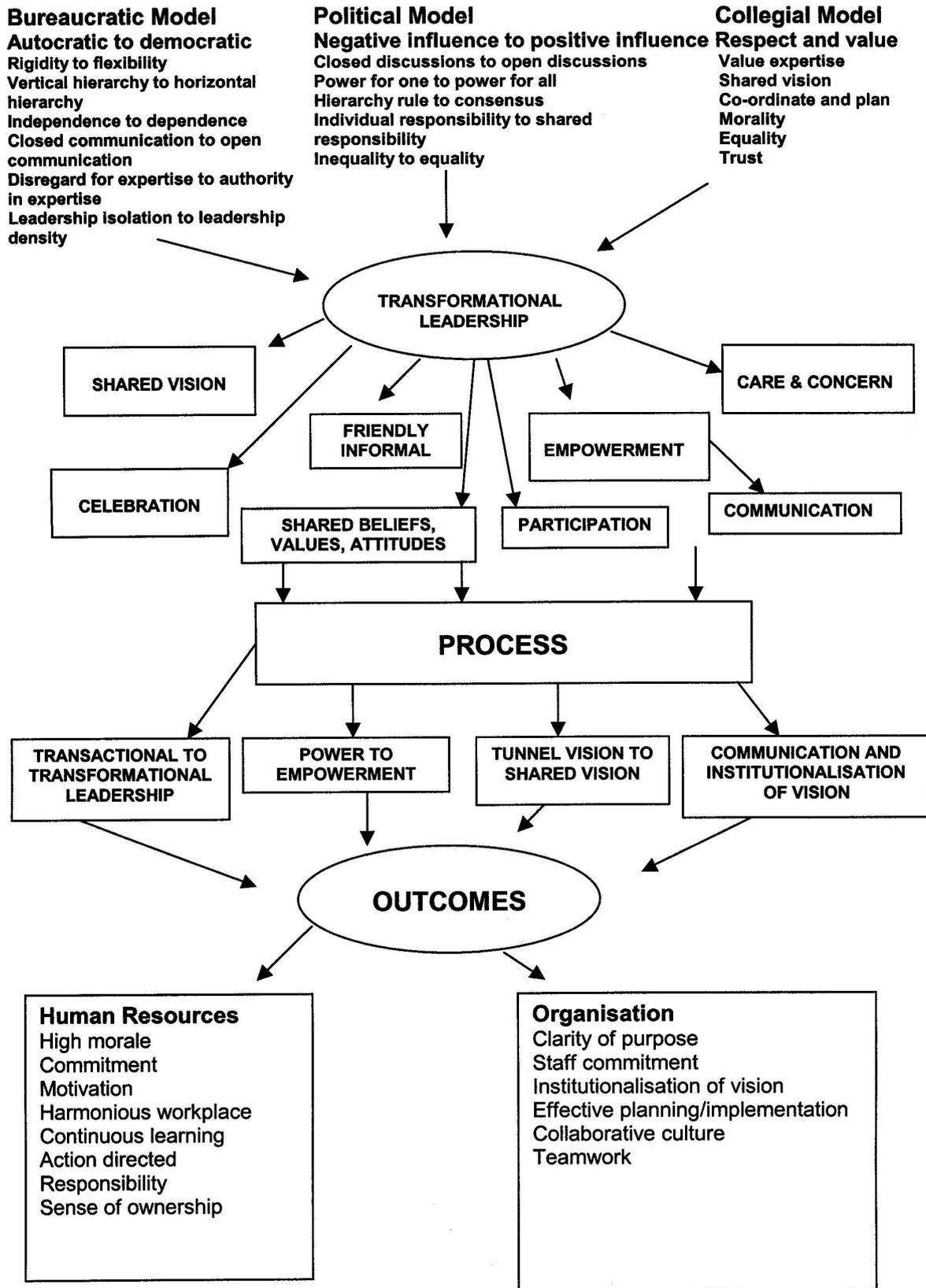
Bureaucratic Model
Autocratic to democratic
Rigidity to flexibility
Vertical hierarchy to horizontal
hierarchy
Independence to dependence
Closed communication to open
communication
Disregard for expertise to authority
in expertise
Leadership isolation to leadership
density

Political Model
Negative influence to positive influence
Closed discussions to open discussions
Power for one to power for all
Hierarchy rule to consensus
Individual responsibility to shared
responsibility
Inequality to equality

Collegial Model
Respect and value
Value expertise
Shared vision
Co-ordinate and plan
Morality
Equality
Trust

TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP

SHARED VISION

CARE & CONCERN

FRIENDLY
INFORMAL

EMPOWERMENT

CELEBRATION

COMMUNICATION

SHARED BELIEFS,
VALUES, ATTITUDES

PARTICIPATION

PROCESS

TRANSACTIONAL TO
TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP

POWER TO
EMPOWERMENT

TUNNEL VISION TO
SHARED VISION

COMMUNICATION AND
INSTITUTIONALISATION
OF VISION

OUTCOMES

Human Resources
High morale
Commitment
Motivation
Harmonious workplace
Continuous learning
Action directed
Responsibility
Sense of ownership

Organisation
Clarity of purpose
Staff commitment
Institutionalisation of vision
Effective planning/implementation
Collaborative culture
Teamwork

Figure 2   Transformational leadership model

fore focuses and builds on a shared vision that can be achieved through the empowerment of people.

From power to empowerment

Whitaker (1993:81) believes the transformational leader makes a fundamental power shift from power of authority vested in position, to power vested in the people. Power becomes spread between people in the organisation so that ownership can be felt by all.

The redistribution of power brings responsibilities to staff, parents and learners. According to Telford (1996:133), if the school culture is immersed in a belief in the democratic process, a valuing of the individual, a valuing of diversity and where interpersonal openness and caring and respect are the norm, school success can be won. The responsibilities that come with empowerment demand acceptance of and commitment to collegiality, such as taking a whole school focus, working with others in a democratic way to achieve a shared vision, valuing and respecting others' opinions, frequent communication and sharing of information. These actions form an integral part of the transformational leadership process and if taken from a headmaster's point of view, they will impact significantly on the human resources in schools. The latter is presented in the outcomes of the transformational leadership model, Figure 2, which was developed by one of the researchers (KL) towards a masters' degree (Lokotsch,2000:33). This transformational leadership model is underpinned by both theory and practice.

Empowerment is not the handing over of power to anyone who wants it; responsibilities and accountability come with any sharing of power or direction will be lost and power relinquished. Primary school leaders from a transformational perspective see everyone as a potential leader, with the focus being to enable others to act through fostering collaboration and strengthening others. This involves competencies such as the effective use of power, developing others and the ability to cope, and initiating change from both the leader and the follower. The leader then becomes a catalyst for growth, through attention to structures, development opportunities for followers and in the expectations and manner in which interaction with people takes place (Charlton,1992:92).

Shared vision

Management in the traditional paradigm is based on rules and regulations and the control of input and output. The new paradigm is based on shared leadership and a shared vision. A deep awareness of the necessity for shared vision is the core of the new and future paradigm in education (Uys,1996:32). Many teachers and heads of departments have limited vision because of their immediate jobs or roles and lack a clear perspective of the whole school. The larger the school, the more fragmented this perspective will be. When this occurs, staff contributions seem disjointed and the work of some may seem counterproductive to whole school effectiveness. Many teachers may have gained promotion on technical skills and may be reluctant to abandon or modify skills and attitudes which have been valuable to them in the past (Elliot-Kemp & Elliot-Kemp,1992:55).

A vision is also central to the transformational leader who has to get all the stakeholders in the school to move in the same direction. The commitment of all the human resources must be acquired. Once this has been achieved, the school can develop towards the organisational outcomes illustrated in the transformational leadership model (Figure 2).

Research design
Selection of schools

Two urban schools were identified to take part in the research. The research was limited to two schools, as case studies, as these institutions provided the researchers with ample opportunities to make an intensive study of leadership styles by making use of observations and semi-structured interviews. The assumption was that the leadership issues investigated at the two schools could be identified in most pri-

mary schools and that the findings of this study therefore could be related to similar schools sharing the same organisational culture and climate.

The schools were selected by means of purposeful sampling since they offered a diverse mixture of management and leadership styles. School A was identified as a school that was in the early stages of transforming leadership. Very clear lines of management in all committees and structures still existed and the affluent school community was still embedded in bureaucratic structures, as people acted independently rather than dependently. The school governing body was the most important body in the school and all major decision-making took place here. School B was identified because it fell well within the scope of transformational leadership, where all members of a diverse school community worked harmoniously together and where a tradition of democratic decision making existed. The school's governing body was functioning effectively and the degree of parental support and interest in educational issues was increasing. All staff was involved in the school's committee structures where there was co-operation and support for each other and for ongoing professional development.

Research method

A qualitative approach was used for this study in order to provide rich descriptions and explanations of situational influences. This was a conscious move away from the positivistic, reductionist approach of behaviourism to a more descriptive and naturalistic phenomenology of leaders in action. Marshall and Rossman (in Estler, 1988:30) view qualitative research as an inquiry that must occur in a natural setting rather than an artificially constrained one such as an experiment. The purpose of this kind of research is two-fold in that it tries to

> find out what is in someone else's mind ... to access perspectives of the person being interviewed, and to form a holistic understanding of the type of leadership currently used in the schools researched (Scheurick,1997:61).

The authentic and natural state of the interview allows qualitative researchers to adopt methods which emphasise progressive focusing, whereby the shape of the research is not determined before fieldwork begins, but is responsive to the initial data collected (Scott & Usher,1996:81).

Ten one-hour interviews were held on-site; five in each school. The principal, deputy principal (DP), head of department (HOD) and two teachers from each school were interviewed. The nature and purpose of the study were described to each school principal before the interviews were conducted. General accounts of casual linkages between the elements of transformational leadership and school success were sought. A deputy head and head of department were then interviewed before staff not officially seen as leaders, but who were represented by the 'teacher at large' were interviewed. The latter provided a balance of views that covered both ends of the leadership spectrum. The use of five interviews per school was effective in that neither school nor person was inconvenienced.

The interview questions clearly delineated the area of investigation and tied the questions to the nature of the study, namely, the effect of transformational leadership on the management of human resources in primary schools. The way in which the questions were asked differed, not in their content, but in terms of their language. This was necessitated by the language style employed by the various interviewees. From the outset, open discussion was encouraged and although the course of the interview was more or less dictated by the semi-structured questions, subjects felt comfortable enough to elicit facets that had not been anticipated. This proved to be most valuable and provided further direction for the study.

Data reduction

Each interview was taped, with the interviewees approval, and immediately afterwards key points that had emerged were listed: for example, 'shared decisions', 'relationship of trust', 'open communication'. Later, these elements were classified and categorised. Data from the

two schools were cross-referenced and sifted, classified and reclassified, summarised and refined until the findings were presented accurately and cogently. Ultimately the purpose of the study was linked to the findings in determining what leaders do, and the effects on the human resources.

Validity and reliability

Critics of the qualitative approach argue that imprecise measurement, weak generalisation of findings, vulnerability to bias, overload of data and extreme labour intensiveness make these methods less than desirable (Telford, 1996:35). However, if reliability of the research is such that it measures what it is expected to measure, then according to Anderson (1990:13) it must be deemed to be valid. Scheurich (1997: 80) reviews many theorists' views on validity, including Cook and Campbell, Miles and Huberman, and moves from the positivistic (conventional) views through to the post-positivistic (liberal) views. In essence however, he maintains that all the theorists' constructions of validity are simply different masks concealing the same face. Nevertheless, one must ensure that research is exactly that — research — and not a science fiction novel. Meanings emerging from the data must be tested for their plausibility, their sturdiness and their validity (Telford, 1996:35).

This study was structured from the start by the use of a conceptual framework (see Figure 2), which provided legitimate guidance and direction for the research design so that data could be organised satisfactorily, analysed and evaluated accordingly. It is however the very nature of qualitative research which leaves it open to subjective bias. Scott and Usher (1996:79) advocate that the naturalistic type of inquiry can be structured to represent reality directly. Scheurich (1997:32) on the other hand, sees the relationship between explanation and reality to be, at best, uncertain. Naturalist inquiry is an intensely personal process and the unknowing author can colour, taint or distance both the process itself and eventual research outcome through the intrusion of personal values and attitudes (Telford, 1996:36).

The view expressed in this study strongly favours the use of transformational leadership in the quest for school success. Rather than this subjective view being seen as a stumbling block towards reliability, it can be used as a vantage point in the research process. Scott and Usher (1996:79) support this view by arguing that, although it is impossible to escape one's 'pre-understanding', it is precisely through the interplay between one's interpretive framework or pre-understandings and the elements of the actions one is trying to understand, that knowledge can be developed. In other words, one's pre-understanding, far from being closed prejudices or biases (as they are thought of in positivist, empiricist epistemology), actually make one more open-minded, because in the process of interpretational understanding they are put at risk, treated and modified according to what one is trying to test.

Discussion of findings

The various models of leadership used in the study, reflected in Figure 2, formed the major part of the framework. Evidently, extensive reading of the current literature and related research was a critical prerequisite in developing the framework around these models of leadership. It was however necessary to reach a point of correspondence in order to move from the bureaucratic model to transformational leadership. The common link between the bureaucratic, political, collegial and transformational models was positive change. This change could result in flexibility in the bureaucratic model, having power for all in the political model, respecting and valuing all in the collegial model, or the celebration of a shared vision in the transformational model. The outline used will facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the responses obtained. However, the transformational leadership model will be analysed in detail. A brief description of the findings of the other models will be provided. These explanations give good insight into how current leadership in these schools has transformed.

Bureaucratic model

Elements of the bureaucratic model came under close scrutiny. These characteristics (such as authoritative relationships, closed communication, etc.) of the bureaucratic model can be related to a type of leadership in a primary school that is very rigid and where there are very definite lines of authority from the headmaster, deputy head, heads of departments, teachers, parents and learners. It is a kind of leadership that is supervisory in nature, where record keeping and evaluation of staff play an important role. Aspects of the industrial model where individual worth is not recognised and task-oriented leadership is emphasized, can also be noted in this type of leadership style. The overriding feature of leadership behaviour in the participating schools was the commitment and belief in the change process from the bureaucratic model to transformation leadership. Notwithstanding the commitment to change, the schools differed with their emphasis on bureaucratic constraints in our current education situation with School A still being influenced by traditional roles of bureaucracy as compared to School B.

Political model

Elements of political models are both a reality and valid in primary schools. All the respondents felt that it was very much a natural process that occurs without thought. These political realities are recognised and human beings live out their daily lives and socially construct their reality through the negotiations, contradictions and resistance of the rules and resources within which their lives are entwined (Telford, 1996:17). Contrary to it being considered an obstacle, leaders felt that the political milieu of school life should be used as an effective tool for school improvement. In both participating schools it was acknowledged that the leaders were in a position to control information, putting these individuals in a position of knowledge-based power. There was a definite need to open up structures and promote an atmosphere of open, honest communication.

Collegial model

An overriding feature of this model is the strong commitment to and belief in participatory processes. Participating schools agreed that shared involvement was more likely to succeed than not, and that changes brought about without participant involvement would not receive the same commitment from those concerned. Consultation and representation were the foundation characteristics in each school, reflecting a valuing of others in the school community. In both schools, leaders saw the connection between leadership opportunity and professional development, where leadership density leads to professional development in a wide range of staff.

It was clear from the response that both schools viewed participation as important and that structures are in place which support and develop this kind of culture. The following characteristics of the collegial model (Figure 2), which also form an integral part of transformational leadership, were present in the participating schools:

- open-door policy which invites all people to show expression by participation in a participatory democratic process
- opportunities for all to take an active part in the formal processes
- commitment, belief and trust in the democratic process
- respect and valuing of all and a secure and relaxed atmosphere
- responsibility not purely linked to seniority
- encouragement of others to take on responsibilities

The collegial model emphasises the valuing of individuals where there is a breadth of leadership and an absence of hierarchy and a belief in the democratic process. Leaders in the schools studied have made significant steps in the transformation of leadership, emphasising participation. Despite the differences in approach and application, both participating schools were positive in their bid to shake off the shackles of bureaucracy. The next vital step, to transformational leadership, is the focal point of the research.

Transformational leadership

Some of the terms used by Leithwood, which are represented in the transformational leadership model of Figure 2, form an integral part of the transformation process, namely, collective, empowerment and trust, participation, optimism, facilitation, mission and vision, and commitment. Specific interview questions were designed to elicit insight as to what extent leadership had transformed and how this had effected the human resources at the participating schools.

Question One: In what ways has your school shown a vision for future leadership?

The questions raised emphasize vision in schools. The way in which the vision was arrived at, its interpretation, its institutionalisation and the commitment shown by the members of the organisation towards this vision, formed the basis of the questioning. Both participating schools acknowledged the importance of vision, but had different approaches to the formulation. Both participating schools also agreed that until the Schools Act (1996), which stipulates that schools must have a vision, no real thought had gone into it. One teacher of School A noted:

> "Vision is just another term for planning and we have always planned at schools because our viewpoint has always been the one of failing to plan, is planning to fail."

This may be, but it is the process through which one goes when planning that determines whether or not the members of the organisation will be committed to that plan. Charlton (1992:51) criticises a 'master plan' that is designed by a select few and then imposed on people. The trend of the chosen few heading into the bush for a 'Bosberaad', to return with the vision or mission statement is foolish as it is undemocratic. Without the consultation of all stakeholders, people feel uninvolved and never feel ownership of such a document, which is consequently filed away only to be looked at next year. Worse still, when the leaders of participating schools were asked what the vision or purpose of their organisation was, they had to refer to the document itself rather than having internalised it. As the principal of School A said:

> "Our vision is a comprehensive document set up by a Doctor of Sociology in conjunction with staff members ... no I can't tell you what our vision is because it is very broad. ... It took about three weeks to set up."

Another teacher of the same school said:

> "I don't know what our vision is in a sentence because the whole document that was set up is part of our vision ... the document is difficult to understand."

The process of formulating the vision illustrates the difference between commitment and compliance. Short and Greer (1997:38) agree that a process which includes as many stakeholders as possible and which is on-going, is more likely to be accepted by those affected and is more likely to bring about successful change. Telford (1996:133) emphasises that only a clear, focused and common vision can hold an organisation together and enable it to produce results. A further necessity regarding vision is that it is continuously moving to embrace the rapid changes faced by the educational world. Leaders in School B were apparently enthusiastic when questioned about the vision of their school; their attitude towards the process and vision was refreshing. The principal of the school initiated the process:

> "The directives came from the department, but we were already in the planning stages. We meet every three months or once a term to review the school's vision and to check how much progress we have made towards our vision. ... Yes, it was a long process in formulating our vision; in fact we worked on it for a whole term ... teachers, parents and members of our community were involved and are still involved in the on-going process."

The principal of School B initiated the process. However, the vision did not originate from the principal, but from others and in this sense it is never truly original. Charlton (1992:52) commends a leader that is guided by the people in the organisation. Some characteristics that must guide the leader are:

- the dreams, aspirations and needs of the people
- why they choose to work at that organisation
- what they hope to achieve
- what ideas they have for organisational improvement
- what they want professionally.

Question Two: What has your school done to institutionalise this vision?

Ian McCrae, Eskom Chief Executive (in Charlton, 1992:52), comments on the importance of listening to and staying in touch with the people of your organisation:

> "There is no better way to know how well or how badly things are going than to ask your staff and then to follow their advice."

This kind of leadership was apparent in School B where the principal relied on the staff and parents of the school in the formulation of the vision of the school.

> "Our vision, which realised different mission statements by the various groups, e.g. sport, cultural, academic, finance is simple and clear and has been internalised by everyone in the school and is simply to be number one."

When a Grade 1 pupil was asked what the vision of the school was, she answered "number one". When looking for directions to the school from a petrol attendant in the area, his reply was, "Are you looking for (School B) number one?"

Not only was the vision clear and simple, it had already been internalised by teachers, parents, learners and members of the community. Closely linked to this is the vision of Eskom, which was drawn from the combination of both reason and intuition and the articulation of the desires of all stakeholders, including the personal visions of employees and is: "The best performing power company in the world and electricity for all." Wood (1984:59) indicates that values, structure and processes are necessary attributes in ensuring a commitment to mission and vision through empowerment, participation and trust. Teacher empowerment according to Steyn and Squelch (1997:2) is very important in ensuring equitable participation and commitment to a school's vision. In this way, empowerment is rather an organisational dialogue in which there is a free exchange of knowledge and in which learning must occur so that everyone can contribute to the growth and development of the school. A teacher in School B expressed this view:

> "Whenever we have our termly meeting to review our group mission statement and link that to our school's vision we find that we are definitely moving forward and improving with every meeting. An example of this could be where the cultural committee's mission to bring 'culture to the pupils' was realised when we invited Sasko Sam, a drama group and a violinist from Russia to perform during the term. Together, this all contributed to the school's vision of being number one."

Question Three: How has this influenced the staff?

A difference between School A and B is the way in which teachers are empowered. School A leaders are of the assumption that participation is something which principals give to teachers:

> "We give everybody a chance to be a leader and so to develop professionally."

School B on the other hand empowered teachers by involving them as leaders in their own areas of interest rather than as committee members to advise the principal, and also saw teachers as professionals who have a reservoir of knowledge, skills and talents that need to be tapped. One teacher at this school remarked:

> "Teachers are free to become involved where they feel they have something to contribute, there is no pressure of any sort on them to accept responsibilities they don't want."

This leadership allows people to openly share goals and values that allow collaborative individualism and in this way, people experience ownership as the leader relies on people and their strengths (Charlton, 1992:83). Inherent in transformational leadership is the belief that

leadership should not be limited to one individual or to those people holding administrative and supervisory positions. It should rather be shared in ways that encourage collegiality and commitment (Leonard & Leonard, 1999:233). The findings clearly indicate that the use of collaborative leadership is the direction in which the two schools have moved. This move towards transformational leadership has demonstrated the following characteristics:

• seek out and use individual skills and talents in the school
• shared vision and the commitment of all stakeholders
• institutionalisation of the vision
• ownership of the vision
• trust in each other
• needs of individual accommodated
• a collegial cohesive staff functioning as a team
• positive atmosphere towards improvement.

Comparative analysis of findings

In the analysis of the literature and the investigation into the current practice of participating schools, it would appear that in School A an illusion of equal and democratic participation towards transformational leadership is created through the selective transfer of power to role-players. It appears that the traditional power holders in School A (principal, deputy head, head of departments and senior teachers) continue to influence decision-making significantly. Therefore, the impression of a horizontal type of hierarchy where power is evenly and equally shared is a misleading one. This means that the lines of management in School A are still fixed in the traditional roles of bureaucracy and are in essence still of a supervisory nature rather than that of a facilitator. The motivation for this, according to Charlton (1992:114), is the current change in emphasis from task management to human resource management where leadership now acts as facilitator rather than supervisor.

Leithwood (1992:8) corroborates the findings by claiming that the blame for the failure of education to reform rests in large measures, on existing power relationships in schools; relationships among teachers and administrators, parents and students. Although School A has made progress in the development of its leadership, the traditional powers have been reluctant and conservative in relinquishing and sharing their power. The following findings characterised their conservative approach to change:

• the maintenance of clear lines of authority
• the maintenance of the leadership team
• a hierarchical structure still prevalent
• communication gap between management and staff and a lack of a shared vision
• institutionalisation of vision not apparent
• decision making largely rests with management
• teacher development not encouraged and power relationships still exist.

These are some of the stumbling blocks which hamper leadership development and prevent the school from making rapid strides in the achievement of its vision.

In contrast, the staff of School B relied on a strong culture of participation where they emphasised participatory decision-making as far as possible. Also, they are based on a radically different form of power that is 'consensual' and 'facilitative' in nature — a form of power manifested through other people, not over other people. Such power arises in finding greater meaning in their work to meet higher level needs through their work and developing their leaders' capabilities. This form of power is unlimited and has substantially enhanced the productivity of the school. Sarason (in Leithwood, 1992:09) explains that this kind of process makes people feel that they have a voice in matters that affect them and will take greater responsibility for what happens to the enterprise. Steyn and Squelch (1997:5) further reveal that this allows a natural adoption of a collegial approach that breaks down the barriers that keep teachers isolated from one another and enhances communication in contribution to decision making, creating new pro-

fessional norms and expectations.

School B was epitomised by shared power, where power lies in the hands of many, and the school is characterised by an integrated approach to organisational structure. Ideas come from multiple sources and are combined into meaningful wholes. Patterns of leadership are transformational and focus on facilitating the shared vision of the school. Group tasks and responsibilities are directed toward innovation and experimentation, with improvement being a foremost expectation, centred around teams and workgroups which are formed according to need. Expertise and interest, rather than seniority or formal status, dictate the membership of each team or workgroup. The findings have proved how effective this has been for School B and can serve as a motivating force for other schools to follow their example. Therefore, the changed role of the principal in a transformational school culture is one of group facilitator, inspirational motivator, communicator, team builder, problem solver, information sharer, ideas promoter, conflict negotiator and resource finder (Telford, 1996:128).

Recommendations

The changes shown by School B can be described as a type of VAT (value added transformation) where leaders of these schools are in pursuit of the following, certain fundamental goals:

• helping staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture
• fostering teacher development
• helping them solve problems together more effectively

• Maintaining a collaborative culture

Getting staff members involved in collaborative goal setting and reducing teachers' isolation by creating time for joint planning will foster and develop participatory skills. The active communication of the school vision, values and beliefs in day-to-day interpersonal contacts, and the sharing of power and responsibilities, will also add to a culture of transformation.

• Fostering teacher development

Teacher motivation from development is enhanced when they adopt a set of internalised goals for professional growth. This is further facilitated when they are involved in establishing a vision for the school, to which they are strongly committed. Leaders can assist by ensuring that goals are clear, explicit and realistic. Leaders can also develop teachers by giving them problems related to school improvement within a culture that values continuous professional growth.

• Improving group problem solving

Transformational leadership is valued because it stimulates people to engage in new activities beyond the classroom and put in that extra effort which is so often lacking in the traditional school setting. The commitment of teachers in School B where there was a culture of transformation, was clearly higher than in School A where teachers were not prepared to put in any extra effort. However, much of this extra effort can be utilised towards thinking smarter rather than working harder. Leaders of such schools assist group discussions, ensure open discussions and avoid commitment to preconceived solutions; they listen to different views and avoid biased perspectives. As was found in School B, the leaders also share a genuine belief that their staff could develop better solutions than the principal could alone.

Nasser and Vermeulen (1991:26) believe that management's responsibility is no longer command over people; it is responsibility for contribution. The work of the transformational leader is the integration of human resources into a viable organism (teamwork). The rapid changes in the environment and education urge educators to update styles and approaches through professional knowledge, such as further study, professional growth seminars and workshops.

All organisations are constantly in need of change. Transformation and change is about changing attitudes, perceptions, behaviours and expectations. Transformation should also be a process of

growth. Transformational leadership should encompass a process of transformation. With any kind of change however, there are stresses and strains that accompany it before growth can be achieved. O'Neill, Middlewood and Glover (1994:15) advocate an increased focus on staff contributions to organisational success. This entails a shift by education managers from traditional bureaucratic roles of leadership. Current realities and challenges place specific demands on the management of schools. Shrinking budgets, cuts in human and material resources, increasing demands on available personnel, insufficient parental support and vague departmental policies and regulations, strengthen the need for transformational leadership.

The transformational approach must respond to needs amongst followers and must look for motives, extrinsic and intrinsic, to satisfy those needs by enhancing opportunities, empowering people, giving more freedom, performance evaluation and the full support of the leader. This principal also needs to receive substantial commitment of time and energy from teachers in a drive to change attitudes of colleagues, parents and learners of the school community where previously there were low levels of achievement and commitment.

The education system of past years has made it very difficult to change because of the comfort zone of bureaucratic structures. Principals, deputies, heads of departments and even teachers find it difficult to move from this comfort zone, even if it means improving education for the learners. This was clearly evident in School A.

- Why is there resistance to change?

Change in our society is a reality so why is there such reluctance towards it? Change brings with it uncertainty about what must be done, anxiety about the ability to cope in the ever tightening economic situation and difficulty in allocating time and limited resources to these problems. Along with this is a lack of expertise and knowledge of how to implement a transformational approach. The resistance to change results from two factors: Fear of the unknown and personal loss. It could be that people have security in 'now' because they know what is happening and they feel in control. The problem is the 'tomorrow' which holds the unknown and a fear of losing that security and control.

- How to address resistance to change

Development and transformation embrace the values of collaboration, confrontation, authenticity, trust, support and openness. The organisational culture that is bureaucratic and intolerant of conflict will find it difficult to embrace the true spirit of transformation and development (Khanyo Training, 1998:4). Bureaucratic controls, scepticism and lack of leadership commitment and expertise are major features in preventing redirection. A commitment to a shared vision and the institutionalisation of the vision will provide the necessary direction.

Conclusion

Although there was a commitment to change in the participating schools, it was clear that not all leaders knew how to implement this change, or what transformational leadership entailed. It is recommended that concrete steps be taken to train all leaders through seminars, academic courses and workshops to make them aware of what is involved in transformation. The creation of negotiating procedures and structures such as transformation forums would ensure a free flow of information, which would encourage participation in the transformation of leadership. The rationale for the introduction of transformational leadership would ensure that it creates the opportunity, supports the freedom and develops the ability of all role-players to be involved in the improvement of their schools.

The two schools, however, did realise the importance of a harmonious, collegial atmosphere amongst staff that encourages communication and teamwork. Nevertheless, Van Wyk (1989:13) is of the opinion that the old adage of 'leading a horse to water ...' applies here insofar as it is the principal of a school who can initiate and develop transformational leadership. The principal's role should be changing from the traditional view to one of shared vision and planning of the school, in the quest for obtaining and developing a successful team.

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