A STUDY OF FACTORS PROMOTING HIGH TEACHER TURNOVER AT

MABATHOANA HIGH SCHOOL IN THE MASERU DISTRICT

LESOTHO

BY

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to investigate " Factors promoting high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High School in the Maseru district-Lesotho." This is a church school situated in the urban areas of Maseru. This study employed a case study approach where the following questions were raised: What is the nature of leadership within the school, how are the relationships within the school as well as to what extent does the community around the school influence teacher turnover?

The findings of the study revealed that the leadership did not seem to adequately involve sub-ordinates in decision-making. Moreover, relationships among teachers as well as between teachers and students seemed to be smooth, but relationships with the principal seemed to be not conducive. The community around the school did not seem to contribute to teacher turnover in the school, as it seemed to be supportive of teachers' activities.

The recommendations of the study were that the Ministry of Education should review the Teaching Service Regulations in order to ensure that principals are trained in administration, leadership and management skills before assuming the position of headship. School leaders should involve teachers in decision-making to a greater extent through the use of teamwork. School leaders should ensure that teachers are adequately motivated at all times. This can be achieved through the establishment of co-ordinated staff development activities, provision of incentives and so forth. Teachers should be assisted to improve and strengthen the existing relationships

Between themselves and the management, among themselves, between themselves and students as well as between themselves and the entire community are sound. They should also increase areas of school community interaction. This can be achieved through more staff development workshops, which will enhance their skills.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that ' A Study Of Factors Promoting High Teacher Turnover At Mabathoana High School In The Maseru District-Lesotho' is my own work and that all sources consulted and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.
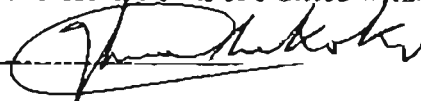
Signed---~~~~~~~~~~~   04 August 2004

Moeketsi Motjoli

Statement by supervisor

This mini dissertation is submitted with/~~without my approval~~.

Signed---~~~~~~~~~~~

V. Chikoko

DEDICATION

I dedicate this piece of work to my late father Telukhunoana, my mother Mamotjoli and my brother Eric Motjoli Motjoli who have been the source of inspiration, encouragement and support to me. Without them, I would not have achieved what I have today.

My beloved wife Masoro and our children, Telukhunoana, Nkhanuoa, Mantene and Mamoeketsi for their love, encouragement and also believing in me, that I would make it despite the odds encountered in this learning process.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Mabathoana High School is a church school situated in Maseru, Lesotho. Since 1995, high teacher turnover has been a worrying factor in this school. The researcher observed that teachers leave the school at a very high rate and this happens even during the course of the year. These teachers either transfer to other schools or join the Civil Service and take up posts in government ministries or departments. The exodus of teachers at this school has become cause for great concern to the researcher, as he is an inspector in the Ministry of Education who has access to the records of the school. Moreover, the researcher is concerned because he is a parent of pupils at the school and has vested interest in the effective performance of the school. This problem seems to have also bothered other stakeholders namely the parents, the learners at this school, the other teachers in the school as well as the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education.

High teacher turnover is likely to impact negatively on this school. The school is unlikely to be able to sustain its efforts relating to effective learning and teaching unless it is able to retain staff. For the school to be effective, it is imperative that the challenge of teacher turnover should be conquered. According to Caldwell and Spinks (1992:71), "An excellent school is an effective school; that is, goals of great worth are achieved." One of the major goals of a school is to provide quality education to students and therefore, high teacher turnover is likely to make the achievement of this goal difficult to realize.

Prior to 1995, this school was performing well. It was amongst the five top schools in the country in terms of students' academic performance in the Junior Certificate (J.C.) and Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (C.O.S.C) final examinations (Ministry of Education, 1994). Securing a place for a child to study at this school after obtaining a good pass at the Primary School Leaving Examinations (P.S.L.E) was difficult. At present, the school seems to no longer be as effective as it used to be. The pass rates of students in the external examinations at both levels have deteriorated drastically. For instance, the Examinations Council of Lesotho (E.C.O.L) in 2002 presented the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate (C.O.S.C) results for Mabathoana High School as follows: in 2001, six students achieved a first class pass, twenty-six achieved a second class pass and thirty-six achieved a third class pass. In 2002, there were no first class passes while seventeen students obtained a second class pass and fifty-one managed to obtain a third class pass. Comparatively, the 2002 C.O.S.C results can be termed poor results in this school because the majority of students obtained a third class pass, unlike in 2001 where the majority of the students achieved first and second class passes.

The loss of teachers in this school is a very significant factor in the drop in standards as some of them are highly experienced. Poole (1989:68) argues:

> Teachers with years of successful experience behind them may be quickly
> replaced by teachers with less experience and at a lower salary, but years
> of lost experience have an impact on the quality of teaching in schools.
> In addition, after many years of college training and hard work, teachers
> may be forfeiting careers in which they have invested heavily.

This implies that teacher turnover may make replacements difficult, particularly with regard to experienced teachers. It may negatively affect continuity in learning and teaching.

There is a need to investigate all the reasons for the high teacher turnover in the school. The researcher intends to study this school because besides being strategically situated, it used to

retain teachers for a long time, but recently teacher attrition rates seem to be high. This school is in an urban area and it is expected to be doing well as far as the retention of teachers is concerned.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate some of the factors which promote high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High School. The base-line information on why some schools in Lesotho experience high teacher turnover while others are able to retain teachers is not adequately available. This study is intended to investigate the role of three factors that may influence teacher turnover. First, the nature of the leadership in the school will be studied. Second, the relationships that exist in the school will be investigated. Third, the extent to which the community around the school may influence teacher turnover will also be studied.

1.3 Statement of the problem

A study of factors promoting high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High School in the Maseru District, Lesotho.

1.4 Sub-problems

The following sub-problems were addressed in this study:

1. What is the nature of leadership within Mabathoana High School?

2. What is the nature of social relationships within the school?

3. To what extent does the community around the school influence teacher turnover?

1.5 Assumptions

The study was conducted on the basis of various assumptions. Firstly, it was assumed that the high teacher turnover rate was still an on-going problem in the school. Secondly, it was assumed that the community within the school, namely teachers, members of the governing body, the deputy principal and the principal would be co-operative and willing to share their views on factors that promote high teacher turnover in the school. Thirdly, it was also assumed that members of the governing body, the principal and the staff would be interested in the study as the findings may enable them to develop ways and means of reducing the problem. Thus it was assumed that all the stakeholders to be consulted would provide genuine and adequate responses to the research questions asked.

1.6 Delimitations of the study

The study was restricted to one school. The study focussed only on members of the governing body, the teachers, the deputy principal and the principal as the target group of respondents. The investigation was restricted to three possible factors namely the nature of leadership within the school, the relationships within the school and the influence of the community around the school.

1.7 Constraints/limitations of the study

The study was limited to three possible factors. Therefore, a number of other factors that may influence teacher turnover in the school are not addressed. It was also restricted to one school, therefore the findings may not be generalizable or applicable to other schools. The study

consulted only some of the stakeholders in the school. The students' views are not reflected in this study even though they are part of the stakeholders who may also contribute to the rate of teacher turnover in the school. They are not part of the target group.

1.8 Definition of terms

This section defines terms as they are used in the study.

Teacher turnover refers to the rate at which teachers leave the school.

Teacher means a person who facilitates learning in the classroom.

Civil Service means a government department or ministry.

Inspectorate means a department within the Ministry of Education, which inspects or supervises schools.

Inspector refers to a government official who carries out inspection in schools.

Stakeholders refer to people who are affected by decisions reached particularly in the school and they also have a say in the running of such a school.

Leadership refers to the style of directing/influencing the followers towards the achievement of goals or vision.

Relationships refer to the interaction between people in the school situation.

Governing body means a group of stakeholders who have the power to govern or manage the school on daily basis.

Principal means the highest authority or head of the school.

Deputy Principal means a person who is immediately below or acts on behalf of the principal when he/she is absent from the school.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate some of the factors which promote high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High School in Maseru. The objective of this chapter is to bring together a review of some existing primary and secondary information about factors that tend to influence high teacher turnover in schools, and which I would hope will have a bearing on this particular school. While there are many factors that come into play, being a small study, this investigation particularly focussed on three broad factors; the nature of leadership existing within a school, the relationships within a school and the extent to which the community around a school may influence teacher turnover.

2.2 Leadership and how it may influence what is going on in a school

The focus of this section will be on the concept leadership, leadership styles, effective leadership and what impact leadership has in a school.

2.2.1 The concept of leadership

Hoyle and McMahon, (1982) state that, there is no general agreement amongst researchers and writers on the meaning of the term, 'leader'. Morrison (1998) argues that leadership, particularly in education is regarded as an ambiguous and complex concept as it is not vested in one person, but it can be exercised at all levels by various parties concerned. Leadership

can be described as involving the setting of the mission statement, as well as the standards and culture within the school (Morrison, 1998).

Bush and Middlewood (1997), argue that leadership is closely linked with having the ability to influence the other individuals, groups and teams, and taking them in the desired direction. It is moreover, a process in which people make salient contributions while directing others, thus it is expected to happen at different levels in the organisation. Getzels in Hoyle and McMahon (1982:96) states that, "...leadership depends on the followership, and that the followership determining the leadership is a function of cooperation or mutuality with the leader rather than forcible domination and coercion by the leader." West-Burnham in Morrison (1998:205) indicates that, "leadership concerns vision, strategy, creating direction and transformation of the organisation." Mintzberg in Morrison (1998:206) shares the same view as West-Burnham in suggesting that, "leadership is concerned with visioning, setting the tone and direction, establishing long-term objectives, generating an appropriate ethos in the organisation."

Champy and Nohria in Morrison (1998) argue that, in order for an organisation to improve and function effectively, its leadership should go beyond setting the vision, aligning the organisation and motivating the followers to work towards achieving the goals. They suggest that the leadership should tap into the creative capacity of the followers or employees and also take the best aspects of the organisation into the future so that the integrity of the organisation is maintained.

From the foregoing definitions, one can define leadership as a way in which an individual or group is able to influence followers to take the direction the individual or group wants.

Leadership occurs and is observed where two or more people interact. For instance, leadership could be observed within a team of football players who are influenced by one player who may be a leader at that particular time, to change their approach to the game so that they can win.

From all that has been said in the literature, leadership can be regarded as a form of behaviour of an individual or group, which will influence the other people, particularly the followers, to take the direction the leader wants. The behaviour of these people is influenced intentionally by the leader in order to achieve his or her goals.

Moreover, leadership is linked with the achievement of the vision or mission that has been set by the leader in collaboration with the followers or members of the group. In order to achieve the vision, there must be commitment from both the leader and the followers. This commitment can be achieved by motivating the followers. Different styles of leadership can be used depending on the situation existing at that particular time.

2.2.3 Leadership styles and their likely impact on teacher turnover

Leadership is highly valued in human society. That is why there are many studies conducted concerning leaders and leadership (Hoyle and McMahon, 1982). There are various leadership styles, which could be employed by people in leadership positions. A leadership style is the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out, and the way in which the manager typically behaves towards members of the group (Mullins, 2002). This implies that leadership styles have to do with the leader's behaviour which is exercised on members of the group as the leader carries out his or her duties.

According to Lau (1979:31) leadership style, "refers to a pattern of philosophies, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, and assumptions an individual has about leadership which influence how he or she actually behaves when managing people...it is a set of expectations an individual has as to how to use leadership position to involve himself and to involve people in the achievement of results." The implication is that there are certain expectations the leader strives to meet in order to achieve a certain goal and that can be accomplished through the involvement of both the individual leader and the members of the group. However, different situations prevailing at that particular point in time, may determine the style of leadership one could use. Fielder in Mullins (2002:272) confirms that, "leadership behaviour is dependent upon the favourability of the leadership situation."

This study has sought to establish the leadership style(s) in Mabathoana High school since leadership style seems to impact on teacher turnover in the school.

2.2.4 Democratic or Participatory Leadership Style

Democratic or participatory leadership involves members of the group in decision-making, but still maintains the control of the group. This type of leadership allows group members to make decisions on how they will tackle the task and also identify who will perform which task amongst the members (Leadership Styles, 1997) [on line].

The democratic or participatory style of leadership is crucial towards the achievement of goals and objectives that are set in the school. Bush and West-Burnham (1994:55) confirm this by saying, "There are strong links between leadership and the effective school and the relationship of leadership to school improvement."

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The democratic style of leadership is normative in orientation as management has to be based on agreement while decision-making should be on democratic principles. The democratic leadership style is founded on values and beliefs of people involved. In this style of leadership, professionals possess authority of expertise arising from their knowledge and skills; hence they have a right to share in decision-making processes. In the democratic leadership style, it is expected that staff members shall be represented at the various levels of decision-making processes in the school and decisions shall be reached through consensus and compromise and not through division, threats and conflicts (Bush in Wagner, 1994).

The democratic style of leadership is also related to the collegial approach. Collegiality is an approach or model in which members have equal authority to participate in making decisions which are binding on them. Individuals have discretion to perform their tasks as they wish, but should confine themselves to what has been agreed upon (Becher and Kogan in Thurlow, 1993). On the other hand, Wallace in Bush and Middlewood (1997:49) describes collegiality as, " the official model of good practice." This implies that members involved in decision-making are on the same wavelength. They do not have to always consult with or rely on the higher authority while making decisions, as all members have professional expertise. Collegiality emphasizes that teachers should be involved in decision-making on matters that affect them so that they can own the outcome of the decisions.

A democratic leader motivates the followers to unite in sharing the vision, and working hard to achieve the set goals, objectives and values of the school. The workforce in the school would be motivated when the leadership is being fair to them, clear about the tasks and functions to be done, shares responsibilities through delegation of duties to staff members,

gives staff members credit when they do good work as well as think about the overall interest of the school (Maddock, 1999). This implies that motivation is a key factor for making teachers work hard to achieve the goals and objectives of the school.

In a school where the leadership fails to motivate the teachers, there is a likelihood that such a school may experience a situation where teachers may move away from the school. Motivation of staff members involves recognising their efforts, appreciating and directing their efforts, thus their morale to achieve the set goals would be uplifted. Bush and Middlewood (1997:25) argue that, "not all the members are motivated by the same mix of goals, and motivation may change over time. Motivation is certainly a key operative function in resource management and effective quality leadership is of pivotal importance within it." This implies that even though people cannot be motivated in the same way, motivation of the followers is a key factor for effective leadership.

This study investigated the extent to which the democratic leadership style obtained or prevailed in Mabathoana High school. This style seems to be associated with teacher turnover in the school.

However, teacher turnover may not necessarily occur where the leadership is undemocratic, but it could also be experienced where the leadership is democratic and participatory. For instance, some democratic leaders are able to groom teachers in their schools for leadership and management positions. Then the outside world gets attracted to them and therefore, they get promoted to senior posts. Thus, they end up moving away from their schools.

2.2.5 Laissez-faire Leadership Style

Studies have shown that the laissez-faire is another style of leadership that is often practiced in some schools. In this style of leadership, there is actually no control over things that happen in the school as everybody does as he or she wishes. Mullins (2002) argues that the leader believes that the followers are working well on their own since they have been given power and freedom to do what they think is best for the organisation. The leader does not interfere with the followers as they work. However, teachers who strongly believe that there is need for motivation, supervision and direction may move away from a school that has no vision, values and goals to be achieved.

Leaders in some schools abdicate their powers and authority. Mullins (2002) states that such leaders have developed an attitude of not caring how things go in the school. They do not want to get involved in anything as they deliberately keep away from the trouble spots. Teacher turnover is likely to be experienced under the leadership that fails to exercise its powers and authority. "If the head teacher is not exercising effective leadership or if the head focuses on the management alone...the school may drift" (Dunford et al, 2003:3).

This study investigated the extent to which the laissez-faire leadership style obtained or prevailed in Mabathoana High school. This style seems to be associated with teacher turnover in the school.

2.2.6 Authoritarian or Autocratic Leadership Style

The authoritarian or autocratic leader puts all the powers onto himself or herself. The interactions within the group move towards such a leader. The leader alone has the authority

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to make decisions with regard to policies, procedures for achieving the set goals. He or she gives tasks to members and tells them how the work should be done. He or she controls rewards and punishments (Mullins, 2002).

In order to achieve the set goals and accomplish the tasks, decision-making should be centred on the people who are assigned to do the work. According to Horwitz (1991:89), "the consequences of decision-making about people have an important bearing on organisational goal achievement in both the short and long term." Therefore, imposing one's decisions on other people may hinder the achievement of the goals. Brown et al in Harris et al (1997), argue that adherence to a top-down way of making-decisions in the school would not facilitate the success of strategies to improve the school. Instead, it is expected to impede such initiatives.

A school, in which the authoritarian style of leadership is practised, is likely to experience high teacher turnover, as " the classroom is where the crucial decision-making occurs, and the questions at school level should be concerned with whether school practices encourage and support or inhibit the strategies that result in effective learning" (Brown et al in Harris et al, 1997:140).

This study investigated the extent to which the authoritarian leadership style obtained or prevailed in Mabathoana High school. This style seems to be associated with teacher turnover in the school.

2.2.7 Effective Leadership and the impact it has in a school

In order to be effective, leadership should be able to exercise leadership functions as well as the managerial roles by seeing to it that the vision, goals and objectives of the school are planned, implemented, monitored and evaluated to check progress. Dunford et al (2000:2) argue that, "an effective head teacher needs to be both a leader and a manager. The head must ensure that; good communication systems are in place; expectations are clear and consistently applied; procedures are unambiguous and fit for purpose; policies are articulated and appropriate; and that the implementation of all these is monitored and evaluated."

Effective leadership is able to create and sustain a culture of tolerance and excellence within and outside the premises of the school it is leading. The establishment and sustenance of the culture of excellence within the school will result in quality education, effectiveness and improvement (Caldwell and Spinks, 1992).

Effective leaders empower followers so that they can feel committed to the job. Empowerment of followers goes beyond participation in decision-making. In this case, it involves recognition of teachers as professionals with knowledge and skills. Empowerment requires the principal's trust and respect for teachers, support for staff development and the adequate allocation of time for the development of collaborative relationships amongst teachers (Blasé and Blasé, 2001).

Some teachers are likely to transfer from the school or change jobs, even in situations where a leader is effective and also willing to empower staff members under his or her leadership.

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This may happen because after being empowered, teachers feel that they can be on their own to face challenges in life, thus they may move away from the school.

Effective leadership is transformational in approach. Transformational leadership is about changing the performance or fortunes of the organisation positively. Transformational leaders succeed in gaining the commitment and motivation of the followers towards generating a vision for the organisation and his or her ability to appeal to higher ideals and values of the followers. In the transformational approach the leader creates a feeling of justice, loyalty and trust (Mullins, 2002).

Effective leadership should be a catalyst of change in the school. Such leadership should aspire for and spearhead positive and desirable changes to the school community as well as the community outside the school. The school whose leaders, particularly the principal are static and do not aspire for academic excellence and positive changes within the school, is likely to face a problem of teacher turnover. Reynolds (1985) is of the view that ineffectual leadership could paralyse and immobilize the whole school. He goes on to say that, a school, which feels its head, is leading it in the wrong direction will 'split off' from its leader.

In a school where teachers are not able and free to share their views with the middle managers and the principal or negotiate with them about their future plans, staff turnover may prevail. Effective communication amongst staff members as well as between staff members and the principal in the school should be encouraged and strengthened so as to enable teachers to reveal their problems, thus assisting in resolving them.

As a way of showing trust in teachers and also sharing school governance with them, transformational leaders believe that teachers as professionals need to further their studies and learn more about their profession. This is done so that teachers could improve in their ability to deliver quality instruction and learning opportunities to students (Blasé and Blasé, 2001). After completing their studies some teachers decide not to come back and teach, instead they look for better paying jobs. Even though staff development is important, it may promote teacher turnover in a school as valuable experiences, knowledge and skills of such teachers shall no longer be beneficial to that school as they would be utilized elsewhere.

This study investigated the extent to which effective leadership obtained or prevailed in Mabathoana High school. This leadership seems to be associated with teacher turnover in the school.

2.3 Relationships in a school and their likely impact on teacher turnover

This section focuses on relationships as a concept, how relationships are built, interpersonal relationships, teacher-pupil relationships and their possible impact on teacher turnover.

2.3.1 The concept relationships

Relationships amongst employees and between employees and employers are key to the success of any organisation. "...relationships are observable. They exist in the visible interactions that occur between and among people. We can thus describe what we see, shape it, and help to formulate alternatives" (Schutle and McLennan, 2001:3). The implication is that, relationships amongst people can be seen and described when people come together and interact. On the other hand Mullins (2002:277) argues that, "relationships behaviour is the

extent to which the leader engages in two-way communication with followers, listens to them, and provides support and encouragement." This implies that relationships occur between two or more people where group members communicate amongst themselves or the leader communicates with his followers and gives them the necessary support.

Brewster (1989:3) defines the employee relations as," the relationships between workers and their organisations, managers and their organisations and governmental agencies concerned with the workplace and employment generally." The implication here is that relationships at a workplace could occur between employees and employers. Employee relations are commonly known as industrial relations. Industrial relations have to do with "what employers and unions bargain about, which is essentially pay and employment conditions" (Armstrong and Lucas, 1985:193).

2.3.2 Interpersonal relationships

Establishing good working relationships is vital for institutions to function effectively. There is need therefore, for teachers and the principals to establish good working relationships in order that schools could achieve their goals and objectives. The school's educational effectiveness is associated with the morale of the staff, the power structure, the degree of trust amongst staff and the principal as well as the process of decision-making in the school (Reynolds, 1985). Further more, the principal who has the courage and skills to work with other teachers as equals, places the vision of the school and power above his or her personal needs and goals is in a position to establish good working relationships between himself or herself and the rest of the staff members (Blasé and Blasé, 2001).

The school whose leadership assumes that it is more superior than the rest of the teachers, has powers to do anything it likes, practices favouritism and nepotism may experience high teacher attrition rates as power imposed on people is short-lived while power shared with colleagues has a better chance of lasting commitment (Reynolds, 1985).

Teaching is one of the most stressful occupations in the whole world. "The most dangerous threats to the physical, emotional and intellectual welfare of teachers are the stressful and emotional dilemmas they encounter almost daily. These have a debilitating effect on teachers' professional health which inevitably leads to burnout and dropout" (Gold and Roth, 1993:3). For example, in some schools teachers are over-loaded with teaching subjects and they do not have adequate time to make lesson plans, collaborate with colleagues and also do not have enough time for rest. Thus, they end up being stressed. In order to overcome this stressful situation, the leadership in the school should be supportive of the teachers at all times, otherwise teacher turnover may prevail. According to Inger's report (1993:1) [on line] "When teachers work as colleagues, it produces greater coherence and integration to the daily work of teaching. Further, it equips individual teachers, groups of teachers, and their schools for steady improvement."

In a situation where the leadership in the school does not allocate the workload fairly, fails to encourage collaboration amongst teachers, does not establish and improve working relationships and also fails to improve positively the attitudes and behaviours of students, cases of teachers moving away from the school due to stress and poor working relationships may be experienced.

Teachers should establish good working relationships amongst themselves as well as with other teachers in neighbouring schools, teacher associations, institutions of higher learning, educational departments and so on in order to acquire knowledge, skills and expertise. Hall and Wallace in Smetherham (1993), stress that collaboration within and between schools and colleges helps in improving education and enhancing professional values, thus raising educational standards.

There is need for teachers to relate well amongst themselves so that they could jointly work together to achieve the set goals and objectives of the school. A school in which relationships amongst teachers, teacher unions as well as with teachers from other schools are poor, is likely to experience high teacher turnover because lack of co-operation and collaboration impacts negatively on them.

As stated earlier, this study sought to investigate the nature of relationships within the school under study. As has been discussed in preceding paragraphs, sound relationships may influence teacher turnover in the school.

2.3.3 Teacher-pupil relationships

The relationships between teachers and students have been a focus of inquiry since 200 years ago when the guidelines for teaching were established (Wang and Haertel 2003:1) [on line]. Van Wyk in Piek (1991:79) states that teachers and students are the most important partners in the educational relationship. He goes further to say that they should establish relationships based on mutual understanding, trust and acceptance. He emphasizes that room for active, meaningful and purposeful participation in the learning process should be created. He argues

that the relationships between students and teachers should be both authoritative and love relationships as teachers substitute parents. This means that teachers should show the learners that they are reliable to them like their parents. Thus, that relationship will make the learners to develop love and trust in them.

Wang and Haertel (2003:2) [on line] report that, "Teachers and students were believed to constitute a community of learners which engages in social discourse and produces common understandings. Teachers were seen as facilitators who guide and enrich children's learning activities, with students serving as contributors to the learning process." This implies that during the learning and teaching processes, teachers and learners construct knowledge jointly as learners also play an active role in the learning process. Teachers on the other hand, learn a lot from the students. Therefore, teachers should play a guiding role in the learning process and also make the learning process easy, otherwise they will feel frustrated and be forced to move away from the school.

The study investigated the extent to which teacher-pupil relationships obtained or prevailed in Mabathoana High school. These relationships seem to be associated with teacher turnover in the school.

In a situation where the relationships between teachers and students are not good and where students are hostile, there is a likelihood that the school may experience many cases of teachers moving away from that school to other institutions for safety reasons.

2.4 Impact of the school community

The school community plays a very important role in what happens in the school. Therefore, the school community should work hand in hand with the school in order for it to achieve its goals and objectives.

2.5 School community and its influence on teacher turnover

There are various segments forming the school community. However, the focus shall be on two groups that are part of the school community namely, parents and other members of the community around the school such as governmental, non-governmental organisations and so on, as they may have an impact on teacher turnover happening in the school. The Department of Education (2003:1) [on line] refers to the school community as, "all segments of each school community...Those segments include Parents, Teachers, School Support Staff, Administrators and Other Community Members." On the other hand, New Leaders For Tomorrow's Schools (2003) [on line] argue that school community comprises of parents, agencies and businesses that work effectively with the school as partners to improve the well-being of students, their families and their communities. Thus, the school community comprises of all the people who have a stake in the affairs of the school. These people include parents, the business sector, other sectors like governmental and non-governmental organisations who work in collaboration with the school and so on. All these people have a great influence on what happens in the school.

Wang and Haertel (2003) [on line] report that a school in which teachers do not collaborate and solicit support from parents and other members of the school community may experience undesirable student outcomes such as increased teenage pregnancies, students' riots, high

drop-out rates, high failure rates, poor attendance as well as low achievements in school activities.

Relationships between the teachers, parents and the other members of the school community are very important as they impact not only on the learning and teaching process, but also on teacher attrition rate. "The parent-teacher relationship can be one of the most important contributing factors to a child's success at school" (Queensland Government, 2002:I) [on line]. Parents should establish good working relationships with the teachers because they play a very important role towards educating their children. Parents should ensure that they attend and actively participate in meetings that are organised by the school. Their contributions in these meetings will enable the school to achieve its goals and objectives. Parents should work in partnership with the teachers by ensuring that they participate fully in the implementation of the school activities, such as supporting fund-raising activities and so on. Moreover, parents should set standards for students' learning in collaboration with the teachers. They should ensure that they monitor progress and are involved in the evaluation of students' performance. They should also provide support to teachers, so that they could reach the set standards. Their involvement in the activities of the school would make the school a place they would all be proud of (Piek, 1991).

A school in which parents and other members of the school community such as professionals in the health sector and so on fail to collaborate and relate well with teachers may experience many cases of teachers moving away from it as failure to enhance professional values, strengthen educational and social interventions would demoralise and demotivate the teachers.

Teachers cannot administer the learning and teaching processes successfully without the support of the local communities around the school. Wang and Haertel (2003), argue that the teachers should incorporate the skills and knowledge local communities have into their curriculum in order to supplement the information and knowledge students have, as communities are very resourceful. It is also advisable for teachers to make use of community resources in their teaching and this could be achieved where "the relations of teachers with the community are complementary since both have many services to give" (Piek, 1991:81). Piek ibid (1991), states that in order to get support from the community, teachers should develop interest in community affairs. It is through their active participation in community activities that they can develop a multi-faceted interest that they require.

A school in which teachers fail to get the support that they need from members of the community is likely to face a problem of teacher attrition among other problems. Learning and teaching cannot function effectively without the resources and skills obtained from the members of the community. For instance, members of the community who are knowledgeable about folk lore, traditional dances and other cultural activities could be invited to the school to conduct lessons, performances and presentations. In a school where teachers are not able to make use of the community resources, they may feel frustrated, as they would not be able to pass their message across.

Moreover, in a situation where teachers do not collaborate and get maximum support from members of the community they are likely to experience harassment in all forms. On the other hand, the community that is friendly, co-operative and supportive may also influence teacher turnover by creating awareness and encouraging teachers to go for better paying jobs.

This study investigated the extent to which the community around Mabathoana High school seems to influence teacher turnover in the school.

2.6 Emerging Issues

This section attempts to give a brief summary of the major issues addressed in the chapter. The conceptualisations of leadership were discussed. Leadership was construed to mean a way of leading and directing the followers and influencing them towards the achievement of the vision or mission. Further more, issues of how leadership may influence what is going on in a school were also addressed. Different styles of leadership namely the democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire were discussed. It was found that the style of leadership which leaders practice in schools may promote the teacher retention or teacher attrition rate in schools. The qualities of an effective leadership and its impact on a school were dealt with in details. The chapter presented insights on how each of the styles could have an impact on teacher turnover in a school.

The issue of relationships and their likely impact on teacher turnover in a school was discussed. The likely impact is that the relationships no matter how poor or good they might be may influence teacher turnover in a school. The need for the establishment and sustenance of good interpersonal relationships in a school was addressed. Emphasis was placed on "the extent to which the leader engages in two-way communication with followers, listens to them, and provides support and encouragement" (Mullins, 2002:277). The issue of how good working relationships could be built in a school was also a crucial aspect of the chapter.

The issue of establishing good working relationships in a school was found to be crucial. Relationships should be built by establishing certain means of communication between and

amongst all stakeholders in and outside the school. The provision of support mechanisms to enhance good working relationships was also found to be very important.

Good teacher-pupil relationships were also a focus of the chapter, as they enhance the learning and teaching processes. In situations where teacher-pupil relationships are poor, where students are hostile and where students and teachers have a negative attitude to learning and teaching and so on, one result may be the movement of teachers away from that school.

The influence of the school community on teacher turnover was addressed. Parents, other school communities as well as the local community around the school were found to be potential partners in the learning and teaching processes, as they are resourceful in the education of children. It was discussed that the resources existing within the school communities should be tapped for the benefit of the school. Failure to do so may result in teachers moving away from that school in large numbers.

This chapter discussed the review of literature that is related to this study. The next chapter describes the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This study was designed to investigate factors that promote high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High school in the Maseru District of Lesotho. The nature of the study was such that the key questions were addressed through the review of related literature, unstructured interviews with the target audience, analysis of documents in the school as well as observation of behaviour of participants. The study utilized the case study approach, which would make it possible to understand fully some of the possible factors that may promote teacher turnover in the school selected for the research.

3.2 Research design

This research was a case study of one school in Maseru-Lesotho namely, Mabathoana High school where factors promoting high teacher turnover were investigated.

A case study is an approach that is common in qualitative researches where cases and not variables are used. A case is the same as a unit of analysis or the unit on which a variable is measured. The analysis of case studies emphasizes many specific factors and events that occur in one place at the same time. The explanations to such events or particular people may be in narrative form (Neuman, 2000). Schramm in Yin (1989: 22-23) argues that a case study " tries to illuminate a decision or set of decisions: why they were taken, how they were implemented, and with what result." This implies that case studies focus on decision-making, their implementation and the implications of such decisions.

Thus a case study is an empirical inquiry that:

- Investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when
- The boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which
- Multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1989:23).

3.2.1 Justification for the design

The case study was most suitable for the study because it allowed the researcher to examine the same case or set of cases overtime. Thus one can see an issue evolve, a conflict emerge, or a social relationship develop. Moreover, the researcher can detect process and causal relations (Neuman, 2000). The implication is that, a case study enables the researcher to focus on a specific situation. He or she can observe things as they happen as well as identify the causes of the prevailing situations or behaviour of people in that particular setting.

The appropriateness of this method of data collection is also confirmed by Cohen et al (2001) who state that case studies are able to penetrate into situations that are not susceptible to be analysed numerically. Case studies provide real situations that enable people to understand ideas clearly. This implies that case studies are able to portray, analyse and interpret unique situations that cannot be described in terms of numbers. Furthermore, case studies "investigate and report the complex dynamic and unfolding interactions of events, human relationships and other factors in a unique instance" (Cohen et al, 2001:181). The implication is that case studies are able to get into issues and report about difficult events as they occur as well as interactions amongst people in specific situations.

Even though the case study was adopted for this study, it has the following limitations that have to be considered:

- The results may not be generalizable except where other readers/researchers see their application.
- They are not easily open to crosschecking; hence they may be selective, biased, personal and subjective.
- They are prone to problems of observer bias, despite attempts made to address reflexivity (Nisbet and Watt in Cohen et al, 2001:184).

3.3 The respondents

In this study the researcher employed a non-probability sample. Non-probability sampling allows the researcher to target a particular group of individuals knowing that it does not represent the wider population but itself. Moreover, this is the case in small-scale research that focuses on one or two schools. This non-probability sampling employs convenience sampling, which involves choosing the nearest or accessible people as respondents. Thus it does not seek to generalize (Cohen et al, 2001).

The sample included interviews with the following participants whom the researcher assumed would be informed about what was going on in the school:

- 1 principal and 1 deputy principal
- 26 teachers teaching in the school including heads of departments (H.O.Ds)
- 8 members of the governing body
- At least 5 parents who have children in the school
- At least 4 participants from governmental and non-governmental agencies who are stakeholders in the school

3.4 Data collection procedures

3.4.1 The pilot phase

Schedules for interviews and observations were developed and pilot-tested with some teachers and parents of one school namely; Abia High school. This school is also situated in

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town, on the outskirts of Maseru. The pilot testing was done so as to check the validity and reliability of the instruments. Interviews, observations as well as analysis of documents in the school were used as instruments for data collection as they are widely accepted in the case study researches.

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3.4.2 Permission

Permission to undertake the research was first sought from the principal verbally by the researcher and in writing by the Faculty of Education in the University of Natal. Permission was granted. The other informed participants in the sample were contacted to make arrangements for interviews.

3.5 Limitations of the study

The aim of this research project was to investigate factors promoting high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High school in the Maseru district of Lesotho. A number of factors negatively affected the implementation of this research project.

- The researcher thought that teachers were already informed about his coming to the school. But that was not the case, the researcher had to get teachers' permission to be interviewed and also negotiated time allocation for individual interviews.

- Time became a big constraint for both the researcher and the participants as data collection was done during the end of the year, which is examinations time. The researcher had to interview some teachers in their homes during work hours and after work. With others it was not possible, as their husbands would not allow such a thing to happen.

- Some teachers refused to be interviewed while others did not want to be tape-recorded. The researcher took field notes for those who did not want to be tape-recorded. The researcher tried to convince those who did not want to give information that it would be confidential and anonymous, but it was in vein.

- The researcher tried to negotiate permission to observe the meeting between members of the governing body and staff members, but it was not granted on the basis that all the proceedings were confidential. Similarly, the analysis of some administrative documents was not allowed for the same reasons.

3.6 Data collection methods

The research project employed triangulation in data collection. Triangulation refers to observing or looking at something from different viewpoints or several angles than to look at it in one way only. In research, it also means mixing qualitative and quantitative styles of research and data (Neuman, 2000).

Triangulation be it data or methodological uses a variety of data sources like interviews, observations as well as the review of documents to study a single problem. Through the use of this type of technique, a researcher can gain a total picture of the setting of the research study. These various methods of data collection can be used at the same time or one after the other in order to ensure the validity and reliability of the data, thus biasness in the qualitative research study becomes reduced. Moreover, triangulation enables the researcher to elicit and interpret the meaning of lived experiences of the participants (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Data for this study was triangulated through the use of interviews, observations of behaviours and physical evidence as well as the review of documents found in the school.

3.6.1 Interview

Interviewing is an approach that employs verbal questioning as its principal technique of data collection (Sarantakos, 1998).

"Interviews enable participants – be they interviewers or interviewees- to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, and to express how they regard situations from their own point of view" (Cohen et al, 2001: 267). This implies that interviews make both researchers and the respondents feel free to express their feelings about what is happening in their environment.

Unstructured interviews were conducted to collect data on various aspects related to factors promoting high teacher turnover in the school. Unstructured interview questions have no restrictions. This type of interview was used because of its flexibility and allowance of freedom to probe as well as ask follow-up questions that would be suitable to the responses that give insights into the study (Sarantakos, 1998).

3.6.2 Observation

Observation is a data collection method where the researcher pays attention, watches and listens carefully to the sources of information he or she wants to capture for his or her research (Neuman, 2000).

Sarantakos (1998) argues that observation is an indirect method of data collection, which collects information without the full knowledge of the respondent. Even when the respondent knows that he or she is observed, the actual nature and purpose of the observation are not known to him or her, but it is the researcher only who knows what he or she is actually

observing at that particular time. This implies that one can get information from the participant without him or her realising or not knowing about it. Moreover, observation can be used alone or with other techniques as it relies more on vision as its main means of data collection.

"Observational data are attractive as they afford the researcher the opportunity to gather 'live' data from 'live' situations" (Cohen et al, 2001:305). The implication is that real life situations that exist within certain settings may be captured through observations as the researcher directly witnesses first hand information. This particular school was a unit of analysis, thus interviews, direct observations of behaviours, physical evidence and structures as well as documents analysis were undertaken for a period of one week. The researcher "studied the subjects from outside the group without becoming a part of the environment of the observed" (Sarantakos, 1998:208). This means that observations assisted the researcher to investigate something about the group without being actively involved in the group. Thus, an entity under investigation could be studied and understood thoroughly through observations.

The nature of the study warranted the use of 'observer-as-participant', as the researcher could not hide his identity from the participants, but still did not become an active participant. Observations undertaken were unstructured, thus they were 'hypothesis-generating'. Unstructured observations will be less clear on what the researcher is looking for, and will have to go to the situation and observe what is going on before deciding on its significance for the research (Cohen et al, 2001). Moreover, unstructured observations allow flexibility of thought and adaptation to conditions that may occur which one did not expect (Sarantakos, 1998). The researcher observed interactions between and amongst participants, behaviours of participants, documents, physical evidence and structures.

3.6.3 Document analysis

This is a data collection technique that can be used by the researcher to study secondary material obtained from documents found in the institution that is being reviewed (Sarantakos, 1998).

This method of data collection uses non-human sources of information like documents and records of various types, which are referred to as secondary material. These documents are more accessible for data collection than the use of interviews and observations. Documents are often referred to as secondary material because they are not primarily developed for the study in which they are used (Becker and Stergios in Sarantakos, 1998). Moreover, documentary information may be relevant to every case study topic as it can take many forms and should be the object of explicit data collection plans (Yin, 1989). This implies that information from various documents can be helpful for case studies as it appears in different ways.

Some of the following documents were analysed for this research so as to get insights into some possible factors that may promote teacher turnover in the school that is under review:

- Letters, memoranda and other means of communication in the school

- Agendas, announcements and minutes of meetings and other written reports of events

- Administrative documents- progress reports, tests/examinations results and other internal documents

- Records for teachers

- Log books of the school

3.6.4 Data analysis

Since this study was a case study, data analysis started simultaneously with data collection, as it is a norm with case studies. This was done in order to safeguard oneself against the tendency of forgetting. Data was coded for purposes of acquiring ideas and meanings. Thereafter, the data that had been coded was then decoded for the actual interpretation. The data that could not be captured in the tape-recorder, but written on paper was coded in order to protect the identity of the respondents. Actual quotations from the interviews have also been included in the analysis so as to validate the interpretations.

3.7 Summary

This chapter discussed the case study as an approach employed in this research study. The sample comprised of the principal, the deputy principal, members of the governing body, teachers, parents and so on. The study used triangulation. Unstructured interviews, observations, document analysis, triangulation, piloting the methods, implementation and data analysis were discussed. The following chapter will describe data presentation and discussion.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors that promote high teacher turnover at

Mabathoana High school in the Maseru District-Lesotho. This chapter focuses on presentation

and analysis of data. The findings are presented in accordance with the broader research

questions, as articulated in Chapter 1. This chapter unfolds as described below. First, the

research setting is described. Second, findings on issues to do with leadership are addressed.

Third, findings on issues to do with relationships are discussed. Fourth, data on issues to do

with the influence of the community are presented and discussed. Finally, the chapter

highlights the key issues emerging from the presentation and discussion.

4.2 The research setting

Mabathoana High school is a Catholic school situated in the urban area of Maseru. The school

is run by Sisters of Holy Names. The school is headed by a Sister principal. There are four

heads of departments in this school and fifteen class-teachers. The majority of teachers are

married females. Some of them stay in their own houses while others are accommodated in

teachers' houses. There are six hundred and thirty students in the school comprising of classes

from Forms A to E. Each class is divided into three streams. The school is a day school and

students come from locations and suburbs surrounding the city. The majority of students

travel to school by bus and taxis while a few walk to school.

The school is comparatively well resourced as it has laboratories, a library, a hall, typing

machines, a computer, a telephone, a school van, furnished class-rooms and other facilities.

At the beginning of each day except on Mondays (when the whole school assembles

together), students in their respective classes assemble for prayer since this is a church school.

4.3 Responses related to the nature of leadership in the school

The issue of leadership within the school was divided into three categories, namely, resources, motivation of teachers and teachers' involvement in decision-making. Each of these is addressed separately below.

4.3.1 Resources

When asked about their involvement in allocation of funds in the school, most teachers indicated that the principal in collaboration with her secretary and the bursar collected and expended the funds without the teachers' involvement. On this issue one teacher had this to say:

> What are you talking about? That is a touchy subject. Teachers do not know anything about funds collected from fees and house rentals. The principal does not want to involve us in the appropriation of funds. It is her responsibility together with the bursar only. Teachers only submit lists and budgets for learning materials.

The principal also confirmed that funds are collected and expended by herself in collaboration with the bursar who is nominated by the Sisters' organisation. She indicated that teachers are asked to submit budgets for materials needed. One member of the governing body also confirmed that collection and appropriation of funds was the responsibility of the principal and the bursar. Teachers suggested materials required for learning and teaching. Sometimes teachers do not get all the materials required and no explanation is given for that.

When asked about allocation of teachers' houses, most teachers mentioned that such houses were allocated to them by the principal without their involvement. Responding to this, the principal had this to say:

> Since teachers' houses belong to the school, it is the principal and the treasurer who know which teacher has expressed the need to stay in such houses. He or she will then be informed when such a house is vacant. Maintenance of such houses is also done by the principal through rentals. I believe that teachers have too much to do, therefore there is no need to bother them about allocation of houses.

When asked about the issue of allocation of teachers' houses, governing body members consulted were of the view that the principal should be in charge of allocation of the teachers' houses as she is the overseer of everything in the school. From this evidence, one gets the impression that teachers are not adequately involved in allocation of resources like funds, teachers' houses and so on. Lack of teachers' involvement in the allocation of resources is likely to have an impact on teacher turnover in this school.

4.3.2 Motivation of teachers

When asked about what rewards teachers got for performing well in activities like sports, final examinations and so on, most teachers mentioned that they were not rewarded for the good work done. Good performance in this context may mean obtaining position one or two in the games played during competitions or having many students who obtain first or second class passes during final examinations. Rewards could be in various forms like, congratulating people, giving them prizes, and saying thank you. Rewarding people could serve as a way to show appreciation of other people's efforts and also encouraging them to do better in the future. Rewards can also act as a drive or stimulus that persuades other people to put more effort in their work.

Regarding giving rewards to teachers for the good work done, the principal had this to report:

> At the moment, rewards are not given to teachers for the good work done. We discussed that issue in the past and most teachers suggested that rewards should be given to every body and not a certain group of individuals. It became difficult to reward every body due to lack of funds for prizes. The issue was then dropped.

This statement seems to show that teachers in this school are not rewarded for the good work done. The principal puts forth shortage of funds as the main reason for not rewarding teachers. Lack of rewards for the good work done is likely to impact on teacher turnover in the school.

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Team teaching can work as a motivating factor for some teachers. When responding to whether there was team teaching in the school, some teachers agreed that team teaching was practised, while others said that enough team teaching was not practised enough. One teacher had this to say:

> Not enough team teaching is practiced in the school, as the present leadership seems not to be keen about it. She has not uttered a word about it. Some teachers do not relate well and they do not assist one another. For example, in Accounts department, I once requested some of my colleagues to guide me on teaching Business Accounting, but they all turned me down saying that they do not have time. I then realized that we were divided and this will make some of us to leave this school.

The above statement seems to indicate that teachers practised team teaching, but it was not enough since other teachers sometimes claimed that they had time constraint. Moreover, the principal seemed not to be encouraging it as she was quite about it. The principal on the other hand mentioned that team teaching was practised in the school. She went further to say that teachers shared ideas and expertise at departmental level.

Staff development can also function as a motivating factor to teachers in the school. When asked if they engaged in staff development activities, most teachers reported that they did have such activities, even though there was no staff development plan in the school. They mentioned that individuals make their own arrangements to further their studies, with the objective of advancing themselves as well as for purposes of getting a better pay after graduating.

Further studies means going to university where people obtain diplomas or degrees, which enable them to get a better pay. At the same time, people will also be acquiring knowledge and skills that will improve their teaching. Teachers sometimes go for workshops that last for a short time where they are equipped with new skills in certain areas related to their teaching field. Further studies at universities are likely to impact on teacher turnover in the school.

On the issue of further studies, the principal confirmed that individual teachers made arrangements with universities and the Teaching Service Department since it is an employing agency. She indicated that teachers informed her while making such arrangements so that replacements are done. But with regard to external workshops, which are in-service workshops held by governmental and non-governmental organisations, teachers make arrangements with heads of relevant departments.

With regard to motivation of teachers, the principal reported that some teachers' morale was low due to poor salaries. She indicated that there was need to motivate teachers through staff development activities, providing incentives and congratulating them for the good work done. " Motivating people to get results through them is central to the purposes of management" (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:223).

From observation done in one week on teachers' morale and commitment, one learned that some teachers came late to school. The teachers' record book did not reflect anything on late coming. This book records issues related to teachers, such as late coming, good conduct and many others.

From this evidence, one gets the impression that there was lack of adequate motivation and commitment amongst some teachers in this school, thus getting desired results through them may not easily be realized. Lack of adequate motivation is likely to impact on high teacher turnover in the school. Moreover, lack of uncoordinated staff development activities might also result in teacher turnover as more than two teachers could go for further studies within one or two consecutive years.

4.3.3 Teacher Involvement in decision-making

When asked about what committees were used in the school, most teachers mentioned that there were only three committees in the school namely, the sports committee, the disciplinary committee to resolve issues of discipline amongst students and the governing body.

On the issue of maintaining discipline amongst students, the principal had this to say:

> Disciplinary issues are resolved from classroom level by class teachers.
> But when the issues get out of control, they are referred to the disciplinary
> committee which will handle the issue. The committee will then report to the
> principal and recommend what disciplinary action could be taken against
> a student who misbehaved.

The implication here seems to be that teachers in this school are not involved to a greater extent in decision making.

The majority of teachers felt that there was need for them to participate in decision-making so that they can own the decisions reached. Regarding how decisions were reached in the school, most teachers indicated that it was through staff meetings that important decisions regarding the day to day running of the school could be reached, but such meetings were not regularly held in the school. On this concern, the principal indicated that staff meetings were held as per need. The minute book confirmed that staff meetings are rarely held in the school as it reflected only one meeting that was held in January 2003, while the researcher visited the school in November of the same year. The principal felt that teachers were represented in the disciplinary committee as well as in the governing body, where crucial decisions relating to the management of the school are made.

Information from the principal's office is disseminated through notices, while various departments hold meetings to discuss issues to do with scheming, attending workshops, evaluation and promotion of students and many other issues.

In response to whether delegation was practised in the school, most teachers expressed the view that delegation of duties was only practised at departmental level. For example, one teacher could be delegated to act as head of department while the head of department is away. The principal also confirmed that there was delegation at departmental level. Most members of the governing body confirmed that delegation was minimal in the school, as it was only

done at departmental level. They reported that delegation at departmental level has been the culture in the school. One board member had this to say:

> Some former principals used to share the responsibility of running the school through other teachers who were delegated to carry out certain duties in the school. Teachers were also asked to represent the school in various meetings that were held between schools as well as in workshops that were held by different government departments. So this culture has been going on since then, that is why heads of departments are still practicing delegation even now.

This seems to point out that delegation of duties to teachers at departmental level has been practised since long time ago as former principals encouraged it. The logbook also showed that heads of departments delegated teachers to attend workshops held by Ministries of Education and Health. A logbook serves the purpose of recording special events that occur in the school. For example, donation of learning materials to the school by a businessman will be recorded in the logbook.

The scenario of having only three committees that assist in running the school seems to show that the principal may not be fully involving teachers in decision-making. The principal seems not to be recognizing the professional expertise and skills teachers might be having with regard to the effective running of the school. In addition, teachers seem not to be adequately delegated duties. This may result in teachers moving away in large numbers to other institutions where their professional skills and expertise could be utilized.

4.4 Responses to do with relationships within the school

The issue of relationships within the school was divided into three categories, namely, teacher-management relationships, teacher-teacher relationships and teacher-pupil relationships. Each of these is addressed separately below.

4.4.1 Teacher-management relationships

In order to "understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively," there is need for the leadership to influence the followers towards the desired direction (Yukl, 1981:7). When asked if there was interaction between teachers, the deputy principal and the principal, most teachers indicated that the principal did not mix with them. She kept her distance from them. In confirming this, the deputy principal had this to say:

> The principal does not communicate with teachers. She does her own things
> and teachers do not have a say in what she is doing. She also does not know
> what teachers are doing on the other hand. She sees things happening without
> her influence and that frustrates the teachers.

This statement seems to indicate that there is lack of effective communication between teachers and the principal in the school.

Through observation of interaction between teachers and management, the researcher discovered that there was interaction between teachers, the deputy principal, heads of departments and members of the governing body. Teachers seemed not to be free to go to the principal's office, while the principal was also not visiting the staff-room. This may lead to low interaction between teachers and the principal.

When asked if there is sound interaction between teachers, the deputy principal and herself, the principal had this to say:

> There is interaction between teachers, the deputy principal and myself.
> The only problem we all have is that we have too much to do and this
> might make other teachers feel that we are not mixing enough. As far
> as I am concerned, I regard teachers as professionals who should not
> expect to be pushed from behind to do their work.

The implication here seems to be that sound interaction between the principal and teachers in this school does not exist and the reason advanced by the principal is lack of time due to work pressure.

Social functions in the school can unite and establish interaction among workers. In response to whether there were social functions like concerts, farewell parties and so on in the school, most teachers reported that social functions were not many as they were held once in a while. The principal mentioned that teachers socialized in that school, but such functions were not held regularly due to lack of time and shortage of money.

On the issue of interaction and information dissemination, teachers went further to say that my coming to the school to collect data was not communicated to them. They only saw my name written on the chalkboard with a short message that they should assist me with what I wanted. I then realized that dissemination of information to teachers is likely not to have been done appropriately. According to Yukl (2002:53), " group meetings facilitate subordinate participation in decision-making, improve communication, promote cooperation, and facilitate conflict resolution."

From this evidence, one learns that there might not be sound interaction between the principal and teachers. Social functions like concerts, farewell parties and so on seem not to be many. Moreover, there seems to be lack of communication between the principal and teachers, thus influencing teachers to the desired direction may be difficult to achieve. This lack of communication and sound interaction may result in teachers moving away from this school.

4.4.2 Teacher-teacher relationships

Responding to whether teachers worked well among themselves, some teachers reported that they share ideas and experiences. Inger (1993) [on line] argues that the process of working together enables teachers to understand one another better as they plan together and feel interdependent. Contrary to this, other teachers mentioned that they used to share ideas, experiences and expertise particularly at departmental level, but the team spirit that existed

has collapsed due to personality clashes resulting from teachers who do not see eye to eye. One teacher had this to say:

> Teachers used to share experiences, ideas and expertise in their
> respective departments, but that has stopped due to personality
> clashes prevailing amongst some teachers. Relationships have
> become sour as teachers do not see eye to eye in day to day activities.
> Some of those teachers have stopped doing their work in the staff-room
> and they spend most of the time in their houses.

The implication here seems to be that there are personality clashes among teachers because of not being able to see eye to eye in daily activities. This has resulted in relationships that are not smooth amongst them.

When asked if teachers worked well, the principal indicated that relationships were still smooth amongst teachers as they shared ideas and experiences. But at times tensions prevailed amongst them. She went on to say:

> Sometimes there are conflicts and tension amongst teachers that come up due
> to disagreements between them on issues of discipline of students where their
> views differ. One teacher might say that a certain student is still behaving well,
> hence he or she should not be suspended or expelled from school, while others
> insist that such a student be suspended or expelled. But I take such conflicts as
> not so serious that they can lead to teachers moving away from this school.

The above statement seems to show that sometimes teachers hold different views with regard to their work, thus tensions result. But the principal does not take that as a serious issue. Through observation of tensions among teachers, I discovered that there were indeed a few teachers who did their work in their houses and not in the staff-room during working hours. The teachers' record book did not reflect any case of resolution of tensions among teachers during the past years. From this, one learns that relationships among teachers are generally smooth. But, there are a few cases where some teachers have disputes that need to be addressed; otherwise teacher turnover is likely to occur.

4.4.3 Teacher-pupil relationships

When asked if students had a positive attitude to learning, most teachers expressed the view that students generally had a negative attitude to learning. However, their interaction with some of them was commendable. For example, some teachers shared jokes with students, gave them presents and so on. Teachers reported that even though students have not yet rioted against them, some individuals were getting out of their control. The logbook and the students' record book confirmed a good number of cases of students who were suspended or expelled from school from 1997 to 2003. The students' record book keeps records of students such as late coming, misbehaviour and so on. Some teachers expressed their concern about the rate at which students were suspended and expelled from the school. One teacher had this to say:

> I am worried about students' negative attitude to learning nowadays
> in this school. They do not care whether they pass or fail. They are lazy
> to read and to do assignments. The rate at which they get suspended
> and expelled from school is also alarming, as they are often found
> committing all sorts of crimes like abusing drugs as well as getting pregnant.
> For example, one student was expelled last a mere yesterday due to pregnancy.
> This is unheard of in this school.

The above statement seems to indicate that some students' attitude to learning is becoming negative, as they get involved in behaviour that is unacceptable. Some members of the governing body confirmed that the conduct of some students and their attitude to learning was declining due to bad influence.

When asked if students and teachers worked well, most teachers said that their working relationships with students were good, while a few teachers mentioned that their working relationships with students were bad since some students were becoming unruly and also calling teachers by various names.

When responding to the question on students' attitude to learning, the principal confirmed that students' attitude to learning was negative as parents, teachers and students seem not to be

doing their work. When asked if teachers and students worked well, the principal had this to

say:

> Working relationships between teachers and students are generally
> not so good. There are cases where teachers complain about some
> students not doing their work and also being unruly. But such issues
> are always dealt with by management in consultation with the disciplinary
> committee. Students on the other hand complain about some teachers who
> do not do their work effectively or dodge classes.

This seems to show that teachers relate well with students. However, some students'

behaviour is declining. They also have a negative attitude to learning. I also observed that

some students came late to school, which confirmed that their attitude to learning was

negative. The student record book also showed that some students were always late. But

working relationships between most teachers and most students seemed to be smooth.

Therefore, this is likely not to have much impact on teacher turnover.

4.5 Responses related to the influence of the school community

The issue of the influence of the school community was dissected into three categories,

namely, the influence of parents, influence of local politics and influence of other sectors.

Each of these is addressed separately below.

4.5.1 Influence of parents

When asked if parents communicated well with teachers, most teachers expressed the view

that there was lack of communication with parents, as some of them fail to come when they

were invited for parents' meetings to address issues that affect the whole school, including

students. Teachers expressed the view that parents did not honour their responsibilities since

some of them failed to push children to do their home-work, to get to school early and so on.

Some parents who attended parents' meetings said nasty words to teachers. One teacher had

this to say:

> During the meeting, some parents bitterly said teachers in this school

> do not want to teach their children, yet they pay lots of moneys. They
> went on to say teachers are fooling their children because they have their
> certificates for Secondary school education.

This statement seems to indicate that some parents do not support teachers. That is why they

said nasty words to them.

Responding to whether parents supported and co-operated with teachers, some teachers

indicated that some parents co-operated with them and also supported them as they physically

participated in school activities, while other parents were not supportive. Some preferred to

pay money rather than contribute labour. Some teachers mentioned that some parents insulted

them when they punished their children and even harassed them verbally when they met them

in the streets.

When asked if parents co-operated and supported teachers, the principal had this to say:

> Some parents co-operate with teachers as they come for meetings when
> invited to such meetings. Some participate in school activities fully.
> Others do not come for parents meetings. When they are requested to
> participate in school activities, they choose to contribute moneys rather
> than labour. I have also heard some parents harass teachers verbally during
> Parents' meetings. I think all parents cannot be the same as undesirable
> elements will always be there.

The implication here seems to be that some parents supported and co-operated with teachers

as they attended parents meetings and participated in school activities actively, while those

who failed to participate contributed money. Other parents harassed teachers verbally.

Parents were also asked if they co-operated with and supported teachers. One of them had

this to say:

> Some parents co-operate and support teachers in all school
> activities. But others do not co-operate and support them
> without any reasons. Some parents do not participate in school
> activities because they do not have time as they are employed elsewhere.

This seems to show that parents do not see eye to eye when it comes to supporting teachers, while others fail to provide support because of employment.

Parents were also asked if they communicated well with teachers. Those consulted reported that some parents did while others did not. From this evidence, one learns that some parents communicated, co-operated and supported teachers in school activities while others did not as they verbally harassed them. The impression that one gets is that most parents are supportive of teachers' activities while some parents are not.

4.5.2 Influence of local politics

Responding to whether the proprietor supported teachers, those consulted reported that the proprietor was supportive of teachers' initiatives and activities. The proprietor in this context would be the School Secretariat. Members of the governing body who were consulted confirmed that the proprietor was supportive and did not interfere with teachers. The principal also confirmed that the proprietor was co-operative and supportive. She indicated that the only concern she had was in relation to transfers of key teachers from this school to other schools to be in leadership positions.

From this, one learns that the proprietor is supportive of teachers except on a few occasions when he transfers them to other schools.

4.5.3 Influence of other sectors

Teachers were asked if governmental and non-governmental organisations were supportive of school activities. Those consulted indicated that there was no problem with such organisations. They reported that governmental and non-governmental agencies supported teachers through workshops, equipment given for students' competitions and so on. However, one of the teachers raised this concern:

> Governmental organisations like the National Teacher Training
> College (N.T.T.C) and other departments of the Ministry of Education
> recruit employees from this school. They regard this school as a fish- pond
> where they can pick anybody they want.

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The above statement seems to show that other government departments recruit teachers from the school as it is nearer to them.

In response to the question on support from the business community, most respondents indicated that they got support if requested. For example, they often requested transport for trips, prices for competitions and so on.

When responding to whether or not, governmental and non-governmental agencies got involved in school activities; the principal mentioned that they got involved as they trained teachers on various issues in education, health, sports and so on. The circulars observed also confirmed that the agencies invited teachers to the workshops. She also mentioned that even the business community supported teachers if they were requested to do so.

The teachers' record book confirmed that at least two teachers joined departments of the Ministry of Education every year. From this evidence, the researcher learns that the business community was providing support to teachers as per request. Governmental and non-governmental agencies also conducted workshops for teachers without request, thus showing support.

The business community, governmental and non-governmental organisations should feel that they are part of the school community. For example, they should set standards and monitor progress in collaboration with teachers, failing which, teachers might move away from the school due to lack of adequate support from them. One also learns that some of the teachers' turnover is the result of promotion as departments of the Ministry of Education recruited teachers from this school.

4.5.4 Emerging issues

This section gives a summary of what was found with regard to the following three main research questions:

Research question 1: What is the nature of leadership within Mabathoana High school?

The study found out that the principal in this school might be lacking leadership skills, as she seems not to be involving teachers in allocation of resources in the school. Moreover, she seems not to be motivating teachers enough. Delegation of duties to sub-ordinates could act as a factor that the principal could use to motivate and empower teachers. Yukl (2002:6) argues that, "leadership includes motivating subordinates and creating favourable conditions for doing the work." But the principal in this school does not seem to be practising delegation. In addition, she seems not to be communicating effectively with teachers as she communicates through notices that are written on the chalkboard or stuck on notice board. This practice might not be the best approach to be employed by leaders in organisations of this nature.

The issue of holding regular staff-meetings seems to be very critical, yet the principal in this school rarely holds such meetings. It is through staff meetings that pertinent issues and decisions relating to leadership and management in the school can be reached. Participatory decision-making also seems to be lacking in this school as the principal uses only three committees in running the school.

Research question 2: What is the nature of relationships within the school?

Interaction between the leader and the followers is very crucial within any organisation. However, in this school there seems to be poor interaction between the principal and the teachers as she keeps a distance away from them. However, working relationships between teachers, the deputy principal and members of the governing body seem to be smooth. Working relationships amongst teachers also seem to have degenerated due to prevailing personality clashes that have resulted in teachers not practising team teaching, sharing ideas and experiences. Their relationships with students seem to be smooth. But, some students' attitude to learning has become negative, thus cases of students who are unruly have emerged.

Research question 3: To what extent does the community around the school influence teacher turnover?

The research found out that the proprietor supported the learning and teaching in the school. On the issue of the influence of parents on what is happening in the school, the study found that some parents were not supportive enough to teachers as they sometimes verbally harassed teachers. Parents' contribution to learning and teaching in this school seems to be minimal. I would not like to see parents imposing themselves, but they should be playing an active role towards the education of their children. It seems that they do not join hands with teachers in setting standards for students' learning and also monitor progress.

The business community, governmental and non-governmental organisations also seem to provide support to teachers even when they were not requested to. The research has found that Government departments recruit employees from this school during the course of the year, thus making the learning and teaching suffer, as teachers with experiences cannot easily be replaced. Therefore, the school shall not be able to achieve its goals and objectives in such situations.

This study did not claim that it was going to look at all factors contributing to high teacher turnover in this school. It touched on a few factors namely, what is the nature of leadership within Mabathoana High school, how the relationships are within this school and to what extent does the community around the school influence teacher turnover?

The next chapter addresses the summary of the research, conclusions reached and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this research was to investigate some of the factors which promote high teacher turnover at Mabathoana High school in the Maseru district-Lesotho. This chapter summarizes the research and draws conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the research

Chapter 1 described the problem and its setting. Chapter 2 reviewed literature related to the study. Chapter 3 described the research methodology. Chapter 4 presented and analysed data. Through this process, the following conclusions were reached:

5.3 Conclusions

1. Leadership in the school did not seem to adequately involve teachers in decision-making. Therefore, this is likely to contribute to teacher turnover in the school.

2. Teacher-teacher and teacher-pupil relationships seemed to be cordial, but with the principal, relationships did not seem to be conducive and this may motivate teachers to leave.

3. The community around the school does not seem to contribute to staff turnover as it is supportive to teachers' activities and also provides in-service training workshops in the areas of education, health and so on.

5.4 Recommendations

- The Ministry of Education should review the Teaching Service Regulations in order to ensure that principals are trained in administration, leadership and management skills before assuming the position of headship.

- School leaders should involve teachers in decision-making to a greater extent through the use of teamwork.

- School leaders or managers should ensure that teachers are adequately motivated at all times. This can be achieved through the establishment of co-ordinated staff development activities, providing incentives to teachers for the good work done and so forth.

- Teachers should be assisted to improve and strengthen the existing relationships between themselves and the management, amongst themselves, between themselves and students as well as between themselves and the entire school community. This can be achieved through more staff development workshops, which will enhance their communication, problem solving skills and many other skills.

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13 November 2003

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

MR MOEKETSI MOTJOLI STUDENT NO. 203512574 - M.ED STUDENT RESEARCH
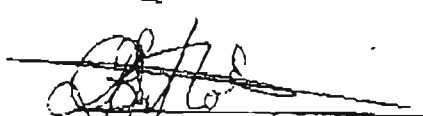
The above student is currently registered with this University for Masters in Education Degree and he is currently working on his research on Factors Promoting Teacher Turnover. I am writing to request, on his behalf, your permission for him to conduct his research in your school.
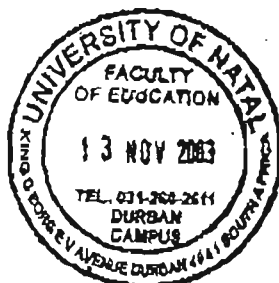
Your school will participate in this research on a voluntary basis. Students and teachers may participate in this research by answering questionnaires and / or sometimes participating in an interview. Confidentiality will be guaranteed and the information gathered will be used strictly for academic purposes only.

Should you have any queries concerning the student's status with this University, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Your co-operation and assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated.

Your Sincerely,

Mr Bongani Sithole
Higher Degrees Officer

APPENDIX 1(b)

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13th November 2003

The Respondent
Mabathoana High School
Maseru-Lesotho

Dear Sir/Madam

Subject: Masters of Education (M.Ed) Research Dissertation.

I am a student in the School of Education- University of Natal. I am studying for a
Masters Degree in Education and I am now conducting my research study in partial
fulfilment of my M.Ed programme. Your school has been selected to participate in this
study because it is centrally situated, accessible to both teachers and learners. Therefore, I
want to investigate whether teacher turnover exists in the school or not.

The aim of this study is to investigate **factors promoting high teacher turnover at**
Mabathoana High School. The study is purely for academic purposes. It will not only be
beneficial for me as an individual, but it is also important for staff and management of
Mabathoana High School and for education in general. I also wish to assure you that the
information provided shall be confidential and anonymous.

Moreover, I wish to assure you that there is no write or wrong answers to both the
questionnaire and the interview questions. What is important is your views.

Your support in this regard will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely

Moeketsi Motjoli.

Interview Schedule For Teachers

Data collection shall use interviews, observations and document analysis. The schedule for interviews shall be as follows.

1.The nature of leadership within the school

A) Allocation of resources and involvement in decision-making

- Are teachers involved in allocation of funds?

- Are teachers involved in allocation of houses?

- Are staff meetings held in this school?

B) Giving rewards

- What happens when teachers have performed well?

C) Maintaining discipline in the school

- Do teachers get involved in resolving disciplinary issues in the school?

D) Delegation of duties

- What committees do you use in the school?

2. Relationships within the school

A) Teacher-management relationships

- Do you socialize in this school?

- Do you have team teaching in the school?

- Do you have staff development activities in the school?

B) Teacher-teacher relationships

- Do teachers work well?

- Do teachers practice team teaching?

- Do teachers interact well during social functions?

C) Teacher-pupil relationships

- Do teachers and students work well?

- Do students have a positive attitude to learning?

3. Community influence in the school

A) Influence of parents in the school

-Do parents communicate well with teachers?

- Do parents cooperate with teachers?

- Do parents interfere with learning and teaching?

B) The influence of the immediate community

- Does the community harass teachers?

C) The influence of local politics

-Does the proprietor interfere with teachers?

-Is the proprietor supportive?

- Are governmental and non-governmental organizations involved in school activities?

- Do you get support from the business community?

<u>D) What other factors influence teacher turnover in the school?</u>

Interview schedule for the Principal and Deputy Principal

Data collection shall use interviews, observation of behaviour/interaction and examining

documents. The schedule for interviews shall be as follows:

A. The nature of leadership within the school

(i) Allocation of resources

- Are teachers involved in allocation of houses?

- Are teachers involved in allocation of funds?

(ii) Giving rewards in the school

- What happens when teachers have performed well?

(iii) Maintaining discipline in the school

- Do teachers get involved in resolving disciplinary cases in the school?

(iv) Delegation of duties

- Is delegation practised in the school?

- What committees do you use in the school?

B. Relationship within the school

(i) Pupil-pupil relationships

- Do students socialize well?

- Do students assist one another in their learning process?

(ii) Teacher-pupil relationships

- Do pupils and teachers work well?

- Do pupils have a positive attitude to learning?

(iii) Teacher-teacher relationships

- Do teachers work well?

- Do teachers practice team teaching?

- Do teachers interact well during social functions?

(iv)Teacher- management relationships

- Do you have social in this school?

- Do you have team teaching?

- Do you have staff development activities?

C. Community influence in the school

(i) Influence of parents in the school

- Do parents interfere with learning and teaching?

-Do parents co-oporate with teachers?

(ii) The influence of the immediate community.

-Does the community harass teachers?

(iii) The influence of local politics

- Does the proprietor interfere with the teachers?

- Is the proprietor supportive?

D. Additional information

What other factors promote teacher turnover in this school?

Interview schedule for the School Community(i.e governing body, parents, business sector, church members ect)

Data collection shall use interviews. The schedule for each instrument shall be as follows:

1. The nature of leadership in the school

(i). Allocation of resources and involvement in decision-making

- Are teachers involved in the allocation of houses?

 - Are teachers involved in e allocation of funds in the school?

(ii) Giving rewards

- What happens when teachers have performed well?

(iii) Maintaining discipline in the school

- Do teachers get involved in resolving discipline problems?

(iv) Delegation of duties

-Is delegation practised in the school?

- What committees do you use in running the school?

2.Relationships within the school
(i)Teacher-management relationships

- Are there social functions in the school?

- Are there staff development activities in the school?

(ii) Teacher-teacher relationships

-Do teachers work well?

(iii) Teacher-pupil relationships

- Do teachers and pupils work well?

- Do students have a positive attitude towards learning?

3. Community influence in the school

(i) Influence of parents in the school?

- Do parents interfere with the learning and teaching?

- Do parents co-operate with teachers?

(ii) The influence of immediate community

-Does the community harass teachers?

(iii) The influence of local politics

- Does the proprietor interfere with teachers?

- Is the proprietor supportive?

4. Additional information

What other factors promote teacher turnover in this school?

APPENDIX 3

OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

The data collection shall use observing behaviours/interaction and examining documents in the school. The schedule for each instrument shall be as follows:

1. **Observed documents and other facilities:**
   - Examine notices
   - Students' records (e.g. tests, examinations results, suspensions, expulsion etc)
   - Teachers' record book (e.g. late coming, misconduct etc)
   - Observe minutes (was not allowed to attend board meeting)
   - Circulars
   - Accommodation at staff houses
   - Classrooms, laboratories, library, typewriters, computer, telephone etc.

2. **Observed behaviours and interaction:**
   - Teacher-pupils' behaviour/interaction
   - Teacher-teacher behaviour/interaction
   - Teacher- principal/deputy principal's behaviour/interaction

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