

**EXPERIENCES REGARDING EDUCATION POLICY
CHANGES IN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT ROLES
OF SENIOR PRIMARY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS: A
STUDY OF TWO RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN
UMVOTI CIRCUIT.**

BY

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**This thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the academic requirements for the
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ABSTRACT

This study is focused on documented experiences of senior primary heads of departments regarding their changed roles as a result of education policy changes in leadership and management. There are three key concepts that are the main focus of this study. They are leadership including instructional and transformational leadership; management and middle management. The study followed an interpretivist paradigm with the qualitative research methodology. Two primary schools were purposively sampled and participants were interviewed using semi-structured interview format. The primary sources of data in this research were the HODs, Principals and Post level one educators.

The research questions guiding the study are as follows:

- How do the HODs in the two primary schools manage the changes in the curriculum?
- What factors influence the strategies that they use in coping with policy changes?
- How do HODs' experience educational policy changes regarding their leadership and management roles?

The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Tape recording helps to keep accurate voices and prevent misinterpretation by the researcher. The collected data was coded and the organised into themes. Raw data was manually analysed and no soft ware was used in the analysis.

The findings of this study show that HODs in the sampled schools experience a number of challenges in the areas of curriculum planning. They also experience other challenges in performing leadership, middle management and classroom teaching roles at the same time. It has become evident that it is extremely difficult to perform management and multi-grade teaching functions at the same time. Another issue is that one of human and material support. There is lack of LTSM, there is lack of support from district officials and HODs do not have time to provide capacity building and support for the staff.

DECLARATION

I, the undersigned declare, that this dissertation hereby submitted by me for the degree: Master of Education (Education Leadership Management and Policy) at the University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg) is, unless otherwise, indicated my original work.



Nozipho Eunice Mkhize

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Elda Hilda Mkhize because of her everlasting support. Also to my precious daughter and son iZibusiso Zekhethelo, you are the most wonderful blessings to my life.

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ABBREVIATIONS USED

ASs – Assessment Standards

C2005 – Curriculum 2005

DoE – Department of Education

HODs - Heads of Departments

HRW – Human Right Watch

LAs – Learning Areas

LOs – Learning Outcomes

LP- Learning Programme

Lp – Lesson plan

OBE – Outcomes based education

NCS – National Curriculum Statement

SMT – School Management Teams

WS – Work Schedule

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

It is an accepted view among scholars that management in education is not an end in itself. Good management is an essential aspect in any education service but its central goal is the promotion of effective teaching and learning, (Godden, 1996). This idea is crucial to the understanding of the essence of education management, whose main purpose is to ensure effective learning through effective teaching. Good management would involve transformation of South African schools so that a positive learning environment is created, support is given and to do so, education management should be shared by all stakeholders in the school. New policies including the South African Schools Act (1996) were then introduced with the aim of involving parents to school governance matters therefore allowing them to transform schools in order to become more self-reliant.

This study explores the experiences of Senior Primary Heads of Departments (HODs) with regards to education policy changes in leadership and management as well as their roles in that context. This research is limited to the study of two farm primary schools in Umvoti Circuit. The leadership and management roles of HODs in the two schools are thoroughly explored through the analytical studies from the interviews conducted with HODs, principals and educators from each school.

This orientation chapter starts by giving the background of the leadership and management situation in public South African schools, focusing mostly on HODs. It also gives background to the introduction of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) with the expected instructional and transformational roles and practical experiences of HODs as middle managers.

Middle management is the concept that is mostly used in the United Kingdom. Leask and Terrell (1997) describe a 'middle managers' as all those teachers working in schools who have some kind of management responsibility for a team of staff or an aspect of the school's work, below the level of the head teacher. The situation in rural farm schools is briefly given since in the context of these two schools, is different from what exists in many public primary schools. Most public primary schools are allocated more than one HODs for example, two for the junior primary (the foundation phase) and two for the senior primary (the intermediate and senior phase). In rural farm schools there is only one HOD responsible for grades 1-7. The reason why this study was conducted is given under the section which provides the rationale of the study. The three key research questions that guide the study are also provided. Lastly, the layout of the study which spells out what each chapter of the dissertation entails is given.

1.2 Background to the study

This study explores the Heads of Departments' (HODs) experiences regarding their roles in the leadership and management of rural multi-grade primary schools within the contexts of education policy changes. According to Bush, Coleman and Thurlow (2003, p.24):

As a result of new legislation in South Africa, considerably more authority and responsibility for decision-making has been devolved to the school level than was previously the case (Bush, Coleman & Thurlow 2003, p.24).

That was an indication that South African schools had to assume a degree of autonomy and responsibility for managing their own affairs. Leadership and management roles were then decentralised to schools with the aim of allowing principals to manage their own schools. The term 'self-managing school' was then introduced. Caldwell and Spinks (1998 cited in Bush, Coleman & Thurlow, 2003) define self-managing schools as those schools where there has been significant and consistent decentralisation to the school level of authority to make decisions related to the allocation of resources. Allocation of resources includes decentralisation of decisions related to the management of the school curriculum. In order for self-management to be successful, it must be accompanied by an

internal devolution of power within the school level and by transformational leadership. Schools therefore depended mostly on the support from the provincial Departments of Education. Today South African schools have then moved from a situation where they relied mostly on the support from the provincial levels. They are now at a stage where leadership and management are at a school level through the School Management Teams (SMTs). Previously management and leadership were solely a principal's duty therefore the introduction of School Management Teams. School Management Teams consist of the Principal, Deputy Principal(s) (if the school qualifies for one) and Heads of Departments also depending on how many they are allocated. According to Tranter (2000) Heads of Departments are responsible for the majority of the curriculum. They deal directly with the management of curriculum and are responsible for the implementation of curriculum policies in this case the National Curriculum Statement (NCS).

The study therefore aims to explore how these HODS are coping with the implementation, monitoring and management of the NCS. The main focus of the study is the General Education and Training Band (grades 1-9) but mostly in grades 1-7 which falls in primary schools according to the structuring of schools in South Africa. Primary schools started the implementation of this policy as early as in 1998 and then its revised version from 2004 till present. The NCS was previously known as Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) which in South Africa, according to Jansen and Sayed (2001) is somewhat synonymous with Curriculum 2005.

The HODs are members of School Management Teams (SMTs) and they are expected to play a role of being middle managers. Middle managers have a responsibility for the subjects and pedagogy of the subject. In other words, they need to be familiar with the latest developments around subject content and also with the new methods of teaching. According to Morrison (1998) HODs may also have a responsibility for advice, documentation and support for staff (from policy formulation to planning, developing schemes of work and consultation). They have a responsibility to ensure that curriculum policies are implemented. The introduction of Curriculum 2005 (C2005) has brought

about a lot of confusion in terms of classroom practice. The HODs as members of the SMT also play a role of being instructional leaders. Instructional leadership is leadership in the design, development and delivery of the curriculum of the school. This suggests that HODs have a leading role in putting their school curriculum into practice and improving it. They also need to ensure that there is a culture of learning and teaching in their schools. Hoy and Hoy (2003) mention that instructional leadership calls for the school managers and leaders to work together with other teacher colleagues in the improvement of instruction by providing a school culture and climate where change is linked to the best knowledge about student learning.

C2005 came in three phases in the primary section, namely, the Foundation, the Intermediate and the Senior Phases. The ideal situation was to have at least one subject specialist (HOD) per each phase. However, in farm schools the situation is different in that there is only one subject specialist for all the three phases. This becomes a barrier in terms of managing change and undermines effective management. According to Morrison (1998) effective management of change in education, requires appropriate knowledge, skills, personality and characteristics for managing change. In situations where there are overloads such as the one described above, it becomes difficult if not impossible to practice effective management.

The implementation of NCS presents even more challenges for rural farm schools. These schools are mostly under-staffed because of the small number of learners. The two schools participating in this study have five staff members each and have grades 1-7 which implies that there is multi-grade teaching. The HODs in these schools are full time multi-grade teachers who only indirectly deputise their principals and have to perform instructional leadership roles which take about 50% of their time. Teaching multi-grade classes needs training on its own. Management of teaching and learning in these schools is therefore not the same as management of teaching and learning in many public and urban primary schools.

The HODs in these schools are needed mostly to help other staff members develop and maintain a collaborative, professional school culture, foster educator development and help them solve problems together more effectively. Therefore a concept of transformational leadership comes in, since it is also about the above duties and roles. Transformational leaders in these schools are needed in order to change, transform, lead and manage the change of the curriculum and other important aspects in a school. According to Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.11):

Transformational leadership is more potent and complex and occurs when one or more teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment and dedication, motivation and morality (Bush & Middlewood, 2005, p.11).

Rural farm schools are also expected to implement government policies just like all schools regardless of the challenges that exist because of their rural nature. Educators in these schools need to plan learning activities for learners who come from where there is no access to televisions, radios, magazines and all the variety of teaching learning and support materials.

1.3 Motivation for the study to be undertaken

My own interest in doing this research arose from the fact that I am the Head of Department in my school. I was promoted in 2001 when C2005 was being implemented in grade four. I came from a secondary school where the same curriculum was just being introduced in grade eight. Being a post level one educator, I was confident in teaching and managing the classroom. Changing roles from being a teacher to a manager and a leader in the entire school was a challenging experience. The most challenging part was to manage the new curriculum as per my duties and responsibilities. Tranter (2000) talks about developing a vision for the curriculum, managing your team and be line managed as a middle manager. A middle manager is the immediate senior to post level one educator but also reports to the deputy principal or principal in this case who is his or her immediate senior.

I had never heard of a workshop for HODs even when I was still at a secondary school. The HODs were mostly attending subject meetings which were often held after school hours for not more than two hours. The lack of training for HODs poses a challenge in terms education management and SMTs which should facilitate internal innovation and the development of new school vision. That has also led to the dissatisfaction with the existing practice in terms of capacity building programmes for HODs. McLennan (1995 cited in Bush, Coleman, & Thurlow 2003), suggests that one of the challenges for education management is the development of appropriate capacity in the systems, structures, ethos and managers of educational system. He further states that, that is necessary in order to ensure that the principles newly defined in policy, are achieved. This means that members of structures like the SMT who are senior leaders and managers of schools need thorough and proper training in terms of their roles as defined by the NCS. The NCS is not a new curriculum but a streamlined and strengthened version of C2005. It was introduced in the Foundation Phase in 2004, Intermediate Phase in 2005, and grade 7 in 2006. Grades 8 and 9 will be implementing in 2007. It is one of the transformational policies that were introduced after 1994 with the aim of changing from the traditional teaching which was teacher-centered to a new kind of teaching which is learner-centered. According to Malcolm (2001, cited in Jansen & Sayed, 2001, p. 203):

Learner centred education is intended to be not just learning-centred (every learner achieves the outcome), but to acknowledge the roles of learner's interests and prior knowledge in effective learning, and to allow for variations in curriculum from one school to another, and from one learner to another

The NCS was therefore introduced through an OBE approach which was a new approach in the South African education system. Educators at all levels therefore needed thorough training. The training mostly targeted post level one educators and principals. The HODs were not trained such that they are empowered to carry out their instructional leadership and management roles in as far as curriculum management is concerned. The main purpose of the study is therefore to find out how educational policy changes impact on the senior primary's (grade R-7) leadership and management roles of HODs. It looks at how they cope and at how they manage the change process.

The study is specifically aimed at exploring experiences of HODs. I had also noticed that much literature focuses on the roles of principals or educators and not much attention had been given to HODs especially in South Africa. There has been neglect on the roles of HODs during curriculum change. Even previous studies explored instructional leadership roles of principals. For example, Hoy and Hoy (2003) suggest that principals should be intellectual leaders who must keep abreast of all latest developments in teaching, learning, classroom management and assessment, and share all that with other teachers in the field. Tranter (2000) on the other hand, emphasises that it is the Head of a subject for example, Head of Mathematics, who should lead all the development and implementation of policies and practices in line with the teaching and learning policies.

Samoff (1996, cited in Jansen & Sayed 2001) has critiqued policy change in South Africa, arguing that much of what has been produced are essentially frameworks or symbolic policies with a singular lack of attention to developing strategic priorities and singling out finite areas of intervention. The Department of Education is only focusing on training educators through five days workshops. There are no supports and monitoring programmes after training to ensure that (OBE) approach is being used. Jansen and Sayed (2001) also state that there is a lack of support for the processes of change from senior management in South African schools. The findings from this research could be useful to the Education, Management, Development and Governance (EMGD) unit of the DoE which is responsible for development programs for School Management Teams and Governing bodies.

1.4 Key research questions

- How do the HODs in the two primary schools manage the changes in the curriculum?
- What factors influence the strategies they use in coping with policy changes?
- How do HODs' experience educational policy changes regarding their leadership and management roles?

1.5 Layout of the study

Chapter 1: The Orientation to the study

Chapter one introduces the study. It also provides background to the study, the rationale for the study, the critical questions that guided the research, as well as the, analysis and interpretation of results.

Chapter 2: Literature review

This chapter reviews the international and the local literature on the middle managers at schools in particular their roles and responsibilities. It defines the key concepts related to the issue under study namely; the notion of leadership and management including middle management, transformational and instructional leadership. It also defines school management together with the recent policy development related to school management in South African schools including farm schools.

Chapter 3: Research design and methodology

This chapter provides a description of the research process, design, methodology and methods, as well as justifications for such methodological choices. It also presents and explains the methodological processes chosen in order to generate and analyse data in response to the critical research questions of this study.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation

This chapter presents research data gathered from each site. It starts by presenting data sets from both schools, followed by the discussion of the issues raised by individuals interviewed.

Chapter 5: Discussion of findings

This is the last chapter which discusses the findings of the research. It starts by analysing data presented in the previous chapter. I then discuss the findings using a set of themes. Similarities and differences between the main interviewees in the two schools are also discussed. Conclusions and the implications of the study are presented with some suggestions.

CHAPTER 2

SCHOOL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP: PERSPECTIVES OF THE MIDDLE MANAGEMENT

2.1. Introduction

According to Morrison (1998) and Kanter (2005) a number of studies have been conducted around the world on the issue of management of change in schools. In many cases the focus is on the role of the principal as the leader and manager of a school. Little has been done around the issue of the roles of Head of Departments (HODs) or middle managers, (as the British literature prefers to call them) in terms of managing change as they are also leaders and managers of their respective departments, and form part of the School Management Team (SMT). This is also supported by Hopkins, Ainscow, and West (1994 cited in Leask & Terrell 1997, p.1) who states:

Much of the literature on educational management, school improvement and school effectiveness, has described the importance of head teachers and senior management in improving schools. There has, however been a relative neglect of the importance of the role of the middle manager.

The aim of this chapter is therefore to examine the international and the local literature on the middle managers at schools in particular their roles and responsibilities. This chapter firstly defines the key concepts related to the issue under study namely; the notion of leadership and management including middle management, transformational and instructional leadership. Secondly, the chapter also defines school management together with the recent policy development related to school management in South African schools including farm schools. Finally, it looks at the perspective on roles and responsibilities of the middle managers in schools, looking at both the local and international debates.

2.2 Defining Key Concepts

As stated in the introduction, there are three key concepts that are the main focus of this study. They are instructional and transformational leadership; management and middle management. This section discusses these three concepts in detail.

2.2.1 Leadership and management

According to Dunford, Fawcett and Bennett (2000), both leadership and management are necessary for a school to be effective. They further emphasise that each of these should be present and visible in a school, but they are quite separate and they have different meanings. West-Burnham (1997) argues that leadership concerns vision, strategy, creating direction and transformation of the organisation, whereas managing concerns the effective implementation of the vision, ways of ensuring that the vision happens in practice, organisational and operational matters, creating the systems and means of ensuring the organisation is run most effectively and efficiently to achieve its purpose and strategies. He summarises this difference as follows,

Leading is concerned with:

- vision
- strategic issues
- transformation
- ends
- people
- doing the right things

Managing is concerned with:

- implementation
- operational issues
- transaction
- means

- systems
- doing things right

Bush and Middlewood (2005) support the above differences by also defining leadership as developing and articulating a vision for the organisation and management as maintaining efficiently and effectively current organisational arrangements. This, in practice, means the roles of the leader include the roles of manager and vice versa. They need both the capacity to lead and also to manage change.

The task of management at all levels in the education service is ultimately the creation and support of conditions under which teachers and their students are able to achieve teaching and learning. This also means that HODs as members of the School Management Teams (SMTs) should provide support and an environment that is conducive to effective teaching and learning. The HODs are middle managers who have a responsibility for the subjects and pedagogy of the subject through the school. Morrison (1998) also supports this and further adds that they may have a responsibility for advice, documentation and support for staff (from policy formulation to planning, developing schemes of work and consultation). Therefore they are responsible for curriculum change. According to Dunford, Fawcett and Bennett (2000), leadership is different from management, but good management encompasses leadership. Leadership is an integral part of management yet distinct. In case of educational change, the principal can initiate change but the HOD can then make sure that change does take place. That means the HOD will manage the implementation part of the process. In that way management and leadership are intertwined and both are equally necessary to achieve success. They further state that leadership also goes together with vision. Each and every leader should have a vision which can be individually orientated or can be shared amongst team members. The latter can therefore serve to encourage all stakeholders to work towards achieving that common vision.

The increasing range and complexity of leadership responsibilities in schools in the United Kingdom means that it is no longer possible, if ever was, for the principal to be the sole leader. The deputy and assistant heads, and middle-level leaders such as heads of department or subject leaders, are increasingly important for the effective management in schools, Woods, Bennett, Harvey, and Wise (2004, cited in Bush & Middlewood, 2005). This means that both heads of schools and middle managers should play their respective roles during the implementation of educational change in their institutions. According to Blandford (1997) middle managers as team leaders, should encourage participation in the development and implementation processes. Hoy and Hoy (2003) supports this view and further add that instructional leadership therefore calls for management teams to work with teacher colleagues in the implementation of change in terms of instruction by providing a school climate where change is linked to the best teaching and learning practices. Leaders need to have a clear vision of how change is going to be implemented in order to transform a school, therefore transformational leadership. According to Gunter (2001, cited in Bush & Middlewood, 2005) state that transformational leadership is most often linked to vision and is about building a unified common interest between leaders and followers. This literature review therefore unpack the meaning of these two types of leadership

2.2.1.1 Instructional leadership

According to Hoy and Hoy (2003) a critical role for all principals is that of being an instructional leader. They then define instructional leadership as a responsibility for SMTs of developing a school climate that is conducive to providing the very best instructional practices and as a responsibility for delivering the instruction in the classroom by teachers because they have expertise in the curriculum and teaching. They also highlight that “*We are not suggesting that the principal alone is responsible for leadership in instruction; leadership in instructional matters should emerge freely from both the principal and the teachers*” (Hoy & Hoy, 2003, p.2). This means that the role of instructional leadership needs all levels of teaching to join hands together to make sure that effective teaching and learning take place. The Department of Education (DoE) SMT

manual on Instructional Leadership (2000) on the other hand states that HODs are instructional leaders who are responsible for taking the lead in putting their school curriculum into practice and improving on it. In simple terms they are responsible for translating the curriculum into practice. It is their responsibility to ensure that good teaching and learning actually happen. In other words both Hoy and Hoy (2003) and the DoE Manual on Instructional Leadership (2000) agree that this important role is shared amongst the principals, HODs and teachers.

According to the DoE Manual on Instructional Leadership (2000), structures such as Learning Area Committees provide support to individual educators and HODs should facilitate the establishment of such committees at school or ward levels. Also according to the PAM document of the Government Gazette 222 of 1999, HODs are required to be in charge of a subject, Learning Area or phase. Duties then include the development of policy for that department and coordination of assessment activities. The Department of Education SMT manual on Instructional Leadership, (2000) summarises their roles as follows:

- Oversee curriculum planning in the school
- Help to develop learning activities – inside and outside the classroom
- Develop and manage assessment strategies
- Ensure that teaching and learning time is used effectively
- Ensure that classroom activities are learner-paced and learner-centered
- Develop and use team planning (and teaching) techniques
- Develop and manage learning resources.

2.2.1.2 Transformational leadership

Transformational approaches are often contrasted with transactional leadership. Bush and Middlewood (2005) define transactional leadership as the leadership in which relationships with teachers are based on an exchange for some valued resource. Transformational leadership as a more potent and complex and occurs when one or more

teachers engage with others in such a way that administrators and teachers raise one another to higher levels of commitment and dedication, motivation and morality. This means that in transformational leadership, the motives of the leader and the one who is being led merges. A common understanding of the school vision is then reached.

According to Bush, Coleman and Thurlow (2003) school leaders need to adopt a more transformational model in order to achieve the goals outlined by their vision and mission. Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.11) support them and further add that:

Transformational model is comprehensive in that it provides a normative approach to school leadership which focuses primarily on the process by which leaders seek to influence school outcomes rather than on the nature or direction of those outcomes.

Leaders in that situation might end up controlling other teachers in the process of influencing the outcomes of the school. That might then depend on a style of an individual. For example, one manager might choose to lead by example, West-Burnham (1997). This means that a particular manager might set the standards for other colleagues in terms of curriculum management which might involve curriculum planning, implementation and monitoring. This will then be part of ensuring that the daily practices in terms of teaching and learning do take place. According to Dunford, Fawcett and Bennett (2000) management is concerned with daily procedures necessary to keep the school running. This will start by ensuring that procedures are not ambiguous and are fit for the purpose; policies are articulate and appropriate; and that the implementation of all these is monitored and evaluated. Other managers apply both this style of leading by example and that one of the 'open-door' policy. This necessitates a particular expertise for example HODs are also regarded as subject specialist but practically that is not the case. In farm schools in South Africa there is only one HOD who is in charge of the three phases that is the foundation, the intermediate and the senior phase. In that kind of a situation it becomes impossible to be a phase specialist let alone to be a subject specialist.

2.2.2 Middle management

The HODs are a focal point for this study. The assumption is that a school HOD plays a role of being a leader, a manager and a teacher meaning they are at a middle level of management. They manage teachers as subject heads and they are also managed by deputy principals or principals. Scholars in the United Kingdom (UK) use the term of middle management. According Leask and Terrell (1997) this term is used to describe all those teachers working in schools who have some kind of management responsibility for a team of staff, or an aspect of the school's work, below the level of the head teacher and senior management team (senior management team in this context consists of the head teacher and deputy head teachers). They further add that a middle manager, is a member of the school management team (SMT) who needs to have knowledge of all operational aspects of the school which encompass: research and development; policy and practice; curriculum issues and pastoral issues. This means that in both the UK and South Africa, middle managers are members of the SMT. Blandford (1997) defines a middle manager as a staffroom manager, managing the knowledge and understanding, skills, and abilities of colleagues. She further adds that in both roles the teacher/manager is required to work with other people.

Middle managers are expected to manage other teachers but also need to play their roles of being teachers as well. Blandford (1997, p.11) states that:

Middle managers are also teachers; on balance their timetable will have a greater number of contact hours with classes than the number of hours allocated to those employed as senior managers.

Again this is a situation which is almost the same as the one in Singapore and in South Africa, HODs teaching their subjects and also managing what is done by other teachers. According to Leask and Terrell (1997) in Singapore, the HODs are officially required to teach two - thirds of a teacher's normal workload. In South Africa HODs also teach for less than teachers but more than principals and their deputies. The only difference is in farm schools where HODs have the same load as teachers. In fact they have more because they are full time class teachers who teach all learning areas in two grades and

also need to perform some management duties as per their duties and responsibilities. In primary schools, middle managers are curriculum leaders or curriculum coordinators whose responsibilities involve leading professionals in the delivery of the curriculum.

2.3 Contextualising School Management in South Africa since 1994

This section is discusses the situation of school management in the South African context. It starts from the post apartheid era that is, from 1994 up to the present time. The aim is to look at the policy perspectives on school management specifically the South African Schools Act (SASA), (Act No 84 of 1996), the National Education Policy Act (NEPA), (Act No 27 of 1996) and the Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document.

2.3.1 Policy Perspectives on School Management

School management in South Africa is guided by education transformation policies such as the NEPA and the SASA. According to Jansen and Sayed (2001) these policies set out the principles and framework for a nonracial education and training system based on basic human rights, democratic governance, access, equity, justice and accountability. These policies are aimed at effectively managing education transformation in terms of school administration, curriculum practices, governance, management and leadership. These policies are also aimed at addressing the imbalances of the past, for example, the exclusion of parents as stakeholders in school governance, and the different racial and ethnic groups within the same department. During the apartheid era, that is, before 1994 some schools were more effective than others in terms of service delivery. For example, in the ex-House of Delegates (for Indians) and House of Assembly (for Whites), one would find better human and material resources as compared to the ex-Departments of Education and Training (for Blacks in urban areas) or Department of Education and Culture (for Blacks in rural areas).

South Africa has moved from that apartheid era to a democratic era which has led to just one National Education Department and 9 Provincial Departments. The focus of these structures is more on empowering schools through empowering their School Management Teams (SMTs) so that they are able to manage themselves. For example schools should manage and control the appointment of teachers, should develop their own admission policies, and should design their own learning programmes.

2.3.2 School Management in the context of Curriculum Change in South Africa

Curriculum change in post apartheid South Africa started immediately after the elections in 1994. The National Education Policy Act (No. 27 of 1996) provided for the development of the curriculum design tools to support an outcome based approach. In October 1997 the Statement of the National Curriculum for grades R-9 was published in terms of Government Notice 1445. Curriculum 2005 was introduced into schools in 1998. It was reviewed by a Ministerial Committee in 2000 because of a number of reasons why it was difficult to implement. Educators were complaining about the terminology that was used, many specific outcomes (66) for learners, the many features of the curriculum for example phase and programme organisers, range statements, performance indicators and many others. The Ministerial Committee then presented a report on 31 May 2000. In June 2000, the Council of Education Ministers accepted the curriculum recommendations. In July 2000 Cabinet resolved that the revision of Curriculum 2005 resulted in a draft Revised National Curriculum Statement for grades R-9 schools. This draft RNCS was made available for public comment on 30 July 2001. The RNCS is thus not a new curriculum but a streamlined and strengthened C2005. It was introduced in the Foundation Phase in 2004; Intermediate Phase in 2005, grade 7 is being implemented in 2006 and grades 8 and 9 in 2007. Late in 2005 the National Department of Education decided to change this policy from being a Revised National Curriculum Statement to just being the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) since it was no longer revised.

The NCS is not a new policy but a revised, streamlined and strengthened version of Curriculum 2005 (C2005). C2005 came in three phases in the primary section, that is, the

Foundation, the Intermediate and the Senior phases. The ideal situation was to have at least one subject specialist (HOD) per each phase. However, in farm schools the situation is different in that there is only one subject specialist for the three phases. This becomes a barrier in terms of managing curriculum change and cannot be described as effective management. According to Morrison (1998) effective management of change in education, requires appropriate knowledge, skills, personality and characteristics for managing change.

The training in South Africa still targets post level one educators and principals. HODs are not trained such that they are empowered to carry out their instructional leadership and management roles in as far as curriculum management is concerned. Samoff (1996) has critiqued policy change in South Africa, arguing that much of what has been produced are essentially frameworks or symbolic policies with a singular lack of attention to developing strategic priorities and singling out finite areas of intervention. This means that some areas were left out unattended just like this area of developing and capacitating the HODs.

2.3.3 The Case of Farm Schools in South Africa

2.3.3.1 What are farm schools?

According to Hartshorne (1992) the historical, social and economic conditions on commercial farms, inherited from years of an undemocratic minority government, mean that farm schools - public schools on private commercial farms, which constitute 13 percent of all state-funded schools and provide education to about 3 percent of learners in the public school system - are among the poorest in human resources, financial resources, physical structure and quality in South Africa.

The South African Schools Act of 1996 makes provision for two types of schools - public (state-run) and independent (private). Farm schools have a hybrid status, being deemed to be public schools on private property. Section 14(1) of the Schools Act states that: "A

public school may be provided on private property only in terms of an agreement between the member of the executive council (the provincial education minister) and the owner of the private property.” According to section 14(5) of the Schools Act, such an agreement must provide for:

- The provision of education and the performance of the normal functions of a public school;
- Governance of the school, including the relationship between the governing body of the school and the owner;
- Access by all interested parties to the property by the school;
- Maintenance and improvement of the school buildings and the property on which the school stands and the supply of necessary services; and
- Protection of the owner’s rights in respect of the property occupied, affected or used by the school.

The South African government has had problems with protecting the right to primary education for children living on farms by neither ensuring their access to farm schools nor maintaining the adequacy of learning conditions at these schools. This violates South Africa’s 1996 South African Schools Act (SASA), the National Education Policy Act and its obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the child. Receiving an education is compulsory for all children up to grade nine or age fifteen, depending on whichever comes first. The historical, social and economic conditions on farms, inherited from years of an undemocratic minority government, mean that farm schools are public schools on private farms, which constitute 13 percent of all state-funded schools and provide education to about 3 percent of learners in the public school system which are among the poorest in financial resources, physical structure and quality in South Africa. Farm children may attend schools without electricity, drinking water, sanitation, suitable buildings or adequate learning materials. Also, children may face harassment from farm owners.

Farm schools are the only accessible sites for many children who live with their parents or relatives on farms. Historically under apartheid, farm owners established these schools in order to keep children occupied by providing a basic, limited education while their parents or relatives worked on the farm. The owner was effectively in charge of the school, though he/she received a state subsidy under an agreement with the government. The joint government and farm owner management of farm schools confused the roles of government and farm owner in the provision of education in a way that continues today. Since the introduction of a new legal framework governing schools in South Africa, farm schools have been classified as public schools on private properties.

Most farm schools have only the barest of facilities, a classroom. Water and power supply, which in a number of cases depend on the co-operation of the landowner, are not always available. At some schools fresh drinking water is not available. The lack of power affects the administrative activities at a school and also hinders advancement in teaching. The state, or where applicable the farm owner, is required in terms of the regulations made under the South African Schools Act of 1996 to provide basic services such as adequate drinking water, sanitation and power. Failing to provide basic services, which encompass the fulfillment of the right to education, are directly linked to an absence of contracts that would normally delineate which party state or farm owner is responsible for their provision. The lack of state funded transport from homes to schools further hinders the right of access to education in commercial farm areas. Children from neighbouring farms travel long journeys on foot; the lack of transportation can prevent children in South Africa's commercial farming districts from accessing schools. For example, two-thirds of the children some young as seven years old attending in our school travel about ten kilometers. Fatigue and exhaustion adversely affect these and many other children's ability to adequately participate in activities in the classroom. Furthermore, children are exposed to dangers such as sexual assault and road accidents when walking to and from school. That result in non-attendance or irregular attendance.

2.3.3.2 Management in Farm Schools

School management in farm schools is different because of the small number of learners in these schools. In most farm schools, management is handled by the principal only since there are no HODs and deputy principals or by the farm owner himself. According to Hartshorne (1992) the farm owner has full control of the management of farm schools. Also according to the study that was conducted by the Human Right Watch (HRW) (2004) in the provinces of Limpopo, Free State and North West in South Africa, in the main, management of the school is the preserve of the farm owner. This included responsibility for teacher selection and dismissal, maintaining school records and enrollment. This means that the management of these schools might be in the hands of an unprofessional person because of the shortage of staff. These schools also made use of school inspectors who have an oversight function on management issues. This creates problems in terms of their availability since they are based at district offices and come to these schools once or twice a month.

According to the HRW (2004) most farm schools consist of one HOD and the principal. These two form the SMT in these schools. Bennett (1995, cited in Blandford, 1997) casts doubt as to whether primary schools and middle management are compatible. He then supports his argument with three key observations that he made in a study he conducted in the UK:

- most primary schools have ten or fewer full-time teaching staff and under three hundred pupils
- primary schools are usually organised on the basis of one teacher taking responsibility for all the learning of a class of children for the whole year
- primary schools have a majority of female staff

This is true for many primary schools in South Africa. The first observation is common especially in small farm primary schools. They both have a staff of five including the principal and the HOD. This becomes a challenge in terms of school management and leadership since all educators in these schools are expected to take responsibility for the learning of their classes and for SMT members to perform their management and

leadership duties. Bennett (1995, cited in Blandford, 1997) describes the practice of middle management in primary schools as confused. This is supported by Bush and Middlewood (2005) who then suggest that both middle and senior management are both important for effective school management therefore they need development.

2.4 Middle Management in Schools: International and Local Debates

Bush and Middlewood (2005) argue that when heads and principals are reduced to implementing directives from national, regional or local government, they lack the scope to articulate school goals. They also cannot lead and manage staff effectively because all the major decisions about staff appointments, promotions and development are made by government officials. This is also supported by Blandford (1997, p. 2) who reports about the management of schools in London, she states that “*even teachers are no longer classroom managers responsible for the delivery of the curriculum only.*” Teachers are now managers with responsibilities as diverse as developing the new school prospectus. All members of a school have a new role which involves management at different levels.

This section discusses some of the issues that emanate from the local and international debates. It is going to look at the school size, the impact of diverse school contexts in terms of human resource capacity, capacity building and support; the roles and responsibilities of middle managers; and lastly the dilemma they face in farm schools.

2.4.1 School Size and Middle Management

According to the HRW (2004) small schools of learners of fifty or less are found predominantly among farm schools. This results in the teaching of multiple grades and in some cases one-teacher schools. As of 2000, approximately 20 percent of farm schools were one-teacher schools. All schools visited had more than one grade in a class either due to insufficient classrooms or to too few learners per grade and a limited number of teachers. In general, the latter situation is common at farm schools.

According to the WHR (2004), the instructor at one-teacher schools is both a teacher and principal. Problems arise where a teacher has to attend courses either on skills or curriculum developments. This effectively means that the school is shut for the day and the children are deprived of an education. This is the case at Cambridge Primary School in the Free State Province of South Africa where the teacher and principal are one. When the teacher was away attending courses, the school was shut for the time that she was away. At Itemogeleng School, also in the Free State Province, it was reported that the school was shut for two months when the only teacher took ill. The teacher at a farm school in the Free State Province reportedly stated that she was unable to apply new teaching methods in her multiple grade class. The teacher at Khotso Pula Primary School, which was also visited by Human Rights Watch researchers, raised similar concerns.

Teachers at these schools have to weigh the benefits of attending courses, which introduce new teaching methods and curriculum developments, and which may positively affect the quality of education, against the drawback of shutting the schools which deprive children of an education during their absence. This is another side of what is happening in farm schools where at some stage management or middle management does not exist because of the small sizes of these schools. According to Bush, Coleman, and Thurlow (2003), rural schools including farm schools are disadvantaged in terms of the distribution of HOD posts. In their study that was conducted in South African primary schools, four had one HOD and two had no post at all. This means that middle management duties are not performed because of the small size of the school or those who are the only HODs do double roles, teaching full time and management.

2.4.2 Human Resource Capacity: Impact of diverse school contexts

Human resource is also another problematic area. According to Bush, Coleman, and Thurlow (2003), the formal management structure in South African schools is largely determined by the provincial departments of education, which allocate deputy principals and HOD posts to certain schools. Currently the Department of Education (DoE) in the province of KwaZulu Natal is using a particular formula that determines the number of

educators in a school. It does not accommodate farm schools at all, and it is applicable in ordinary public schools. For example, one would find that a farm school has about 150 learners enrolling from grade 1-7; the DoE will not consider the fact that each grade should have at least one educator. The school will not get seven educators for instance, but will get five, meaning that for some grades there should be multi-grade teaching. That is a situation where one educator teaches two or more grades in one classroom at the same time. The most challenging part is for the HOD who is also expected to teach two grades, all Learning Areas, and perform leadership and management duties at the same time. Educators in these contexts are also not well capacitated to deal with such situations. This was supported by Bush, Coleman, and Thurlow (2003) in their study where educators from fifteen primary schools were interviewed. They indicated that there was a lack of support from the education department.

2.4.3 Middle Management: Capacity Building and Support

According to Leask and Terrell (1997) in the Singapore education system, middle managers or heads of department (HODs) are recognised as a significant source in ensuring that quality education reaches out to pupils. They further argue that HODs are rarely selected on the basis of their competencies, their leadership capacities and their subject matter knowledge. According to these two authors they are mainly selected on the basis of their teaching experience. In order to empower and capacitate HODs in Singapore, their National Institute of Education (NIE) offers a one year full time departmental headship training course. This course is attended by HODs from both primary and secondary schools where upon graduating they are awarded the Further Professional Diploma in Education. This course enables them to be able to perform their roles as instructional leaders.

On the contrary, South Africa has a different situation. HODs are also appointed mainly because of their teaching experience, but unfortunately there are no programmes or courses offered by the Department of Education with the aim of empowering and capacitating them with management and leadership skills. McLennan (1995, cited in

Bush, Coleman, & Thurlow, 2003) suggests that one of the challenges for education management is the development of appropriate capacity in the systems, structures, ethos and managers of educational system. He further states that, that is necessary in order to ensure that the objectives newly defined in policy, are achieved. According to the NCS policy, HODs should be leading in the development of Learning Programs, Work Schedules and Lesson Plans in order to make sure that it is implemented. They are supposed to be learning area specialist or at least phase specialists not just HODs for the whole school, being responsible for grades 1-7. That indicates serious problems with the existing practice in terms of capacity building programmes for HODs. Lack of capacity building therefore compromises the quality of their performance in terms of their roles.

2.4.4 Roles and Responsibilities: Ambiguities and tensions

The Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) document, in Government Gazette 222 of 1999 states clearly the formal duties and responsibilities of middle managers or HODs in our South African context. One section which is in terms of extra co-curricular issues, specifies that one of the HOD's roles is to provide and coordinate guidance on the latest ideas on approaches to the subject, method, techniques, evaluation, aids and so on in their field, and effectively convey to the staff members concerned. According to Bush, Coleman, and Thurlow (2003, p.77), "*the role of the HOD in South Africa goes well beyond that of subject leadership, expected in many other countries, to include wider academic and management responsibilities*". They further classify their duties as follows:

Subject leadership

- Departmental management
- Leading departmental meetings
- Class teaching

Academic leadership

- Grade (year group) leadership
- 'umbrella' leadership of several departments
- Leading staff meetings

- Monitoring and guiding staff
- Conducting workshops
- Professional development

School management

- Coordinating aspects of school organisation
- Team leadership
- Leading extra-curricular activities
- Support for the principal
- Timetabling
- Premises management
- Responsible for systems and procedures
- Acting for the principal in the latter's absence (school with no deputy)
- Attendance at governing body meetings.

The above mentioned duties indicate the potential of an overload for HODs, since they also have a substantial teaching commitment. In a study conducted by Bush, Coleman, and Thurlow (2003), one principal commented that HODs have very little time to do management duties. This becomes more difficult in farm schools where there is multi-grade teaching not just normal single-grade teaching which is common in most schools. Multi-grade teaching means that HODs just like other teachers teach more than one grade at the same time in the same classroom, which on its own is a heavy burden.

2.4.5 The Dilemma of Middle Management in Farm Schools: The South African Context

According to Blandford (1997), middle managers may encounter management dilemmas which generally arise out of the conflict between management of learning and management of people. This situation is similar to the one that exist in South Africa. Management of learning in farm school contexts means that middle managers in accordance with their roles need to design learning programmes best suitable for farm

school learners and ensure that they do cope with learning. Managing people on the other hand is also difficult since people have different attitudes, beliefs and values. Choices will need to be made and difficult people confronted. Blandford (1997) also supports this and further adds that middle managers manage people in order to get things done. In as much as the number of educators to be managed in farm schools is small, the heavy work that they do frustrates them and makes it difficult for HODs to manage them. According to the HRW report after a study that was conducted in South African farm schools, these schools also lack learning, teaching and support materials. Middle managers as role models of these other educators need to improvise and develop their own materials in order to make teaching and learning more meaningful and enjoyed by learners.

2.5 Conclusion

This literature review on school management and leadership: perspectives of the middle management, has attempted to explore in details the concepts of leadership, management and specifically middle management. This literature review has also looked at school management in the South African context where new policies and curriculum change in the case of farm schools were explored. Lastly this chapter has also discussed the issues of middle management in schools looking at both the international and local debates, which shows that in both contexts the issues of leadership and management are challenging. This is in particular to the roles of middle managers who according to Tranter (2000) have multiple roles. They are managers and leaders to their teams but they are also line-managed by a deputy head and are ultimately accountable to the head teacher.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This study explores the Heads of Departments' (HODs) experiences regarding their roles in the leadership and management of rural multi-grade primary schools within the contexts of education policy changes. It also aims to explore how these HODS are coping with the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). I have chosen two primary schools because of their similar contexts and manageable number. The two schools share similar context in terms of deprivation of both human and physical resources on one hand and socio-economic background on the other hand. They are both rural farm schools with multi-grade classes, that is, two grades in one classroom taught by the same educator. The learners from both schools are coming from rural areas where the levels of illiteracy are very high. The number of learners in each of the two schools is about 150 and they both have five educators including the principal and one HOD.

This chapter sets out to explain the methods, as well as the methodology underpinning the methods used. It also aims to present and explain the methodological processes I have chosen in order to generate and analyse the data that address the critical research questions guiding this study. I start by exploring the meaning of the two terms, namely, methods and methodology. According to Wellington (2000), methods mean techniques or tools that are used to gather information that helps to answer critical questions for the study and methodology is the activity or business of choosing, reflecting upon, evaluating and justifying the methods are used. This means that it becomes difficult to assess or judge the value of any piece of research without knowing its methodology.

Details of the research design and the methods used are provided. The research instrument designed by the researcher is presented and discussed, and the specific and general advantages and disadvantages for choosing the particular instrument are

explained. The research procedures and the sample are described in order to contextualise the research design. Data collection techniques used included individual interviews of three sets of participants, the HODs, Principals and Post-level one educators. The data analysis techniques used to analyse the data is also described. Literature relevant to each method is also discussed to substantiate and validate the choices made. I also reflect on the effectiveness of the research techniques.

As I mentioned in chapter one, the research questions that guided this study are as follows:

- How do the HODs in the two primary schools manage the changes in the curriculum?
- What factors influence the strategies they use in coping with policy changes?
- How do the HODs' experience educational policy changes regarding their leadership and management roles?

Section One of this chapter, focuses on *setting up the research design* where I provide a narrative account of how the research design of this study unfolded. Section Two, the *data collection plan* focuses on how the research choices I made attempted to answer the critical research questions of the study. I present a description of the sources of data, the sample, the design and kinds of instruments that were used to access the data. I provide details of the strategy employed to answer the critical question as well as the methods employed to enhance the validity of my data. Section Three, *focuses on how the process of analysing the data went* in that section I present decisions made about how the textual as well as statistical data was analysed and presented.

3.2. Section 1: Setting up the Research Design

3.2.1 Context of the schools

I have chosen these two rural farm schools because of their background. Farm schools are those schools built on private property but are owned by the Department of Education.

These schools are disadvantaged in many ways including the human, financial and physical resources. For example, a farm school offering grades 1-7 will usually have five educators instead of seven. That means that some educators combine classes. Such a scenario leads to a multi-grade situation where one educator teaches more than two grades in one classroom during the same period of teaching. Some educators in these schools are still under qualified and even those who are qualified still show some kind of resistance in terms of implementing new policies.

The HODs in these schools are in a situation where they are expected to teach two grades and perform their management roles, for example that of being instructional leaders. This contradicts the Personnel Administration Measures (PAM) document of the Government Gazette 222 of 1999, which states that HODs are required to be in charge of a subject, Learning Area or phase. HODs are responsible for three phases from grades 1-7 and that has the potential to lead to poor management of the curriculum. According to Morrison (1998) they may have a responsibility for advice, documentation and support for staff (from policy formulation to planning, developing schemes of work and consultation). HODs in these types of schools are not performing their roles as they are supposed to, there is role conflict. They are doing things that are not outlined by policy because of being understaffed.

3.2.2 Access

In accessing participants, ethical issues according to the University ethics regulation were adhered to. Participants were promised unfettered access to transcripts in order for them to check for accuracy and also for compromising information. Another critical ethical concern is that it was important that the participation of educators and School Management Teams (SMT) was not taken for granted because the principal may have already agreed to participate. The SMT in these schools is formed by the principal and the HOD only, whereas in most schools it is formed by the principal, the deputy principal and three to five HODs. The design of the study located all participants within school premises; therefore there was no need to consult and seek permission from Amakhosi (chiefs) or Izinduna (headmen) as the normal protocol in tribal lands demand. Permission

from the Department of Education was obtained. The ward manager or Superintendent of Education Management (SEM) in the circuit of the schools concerned was consulted through the provincial office and gave permission for the research to be conducted (See annexure 5 and 6).

3.2.3 Paradigms, Methodology, Methods and Techniques

This research falls within an interpretivist paradigm. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002), this paradigm focuses on the individuals and sets out to understand their interpretations of the world around them. This allows the participants to reflect their individual perspectives, personal constructs, negotiated meanings and definitions of situations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002). Wellington (2000) also adds that the interpretivist researcher, however, accepts that reality is a human construct. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002) support the argument by adding that the interpretivist researcher is characterised by a concern for the individual. This means that the face to face situation between the observer and the observed will bring about that reality that will allow the researcher to develop insights into situations. The study has mostly used a qualitative style where information was gathered from the two farm primary schools through interviews using semi-structured interview schedules. According to Wellington (2000), the purpose of "qualitative" research varies according to the research paradigm, methods, and assumptions. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly, (2006) also support the above idea and further add that qualitative researchers want to make sense of feelings, experiences, social situations, or phenomena as they occur in the real world, and therefore want to study them in their natural setting and attempt to describe and interpret some human phenomenon, often in the words of selected individuals (the informants).

In this paradigm, the researcher is the key instrument and is therefore part of the situation. This paradigm is appropriate for this research mainly because it is methodological purpose of visualising a situation as a means for understanding what is happening. Hittleman and Simon (2002) support this and further add that the researcher

will therefore provide judgments about policies, practices and innovative instructional practices. The main data production method was the usage of interviews. Reference was also made to the PAM document and the minute's book. As indicated by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002) conducting interviews is a natural form of interacting with people than making them fill in a questionnaire Interviews therefore fit well with the interpretive approach to research. It allowed my participants to freely express their views therefore contributing positively in the research process. Wellington (2000) states that the purpose of the interview is to probe the respondent's views, perspectives or life-history that is the exchange should be far more in one direction than another. In other words an interview is rather more than a conversation with a purpose.

The interviews were then tape recorded with the aim of ensuring authenticity and avoids misinterpretation by the researcher. According to Wellington (2000), using a tape recorder has advantages and disadvantages. They are represented in the following table:

Table 1 Summary of advantages and disadvantages of using tape recorders

Advantages	Disadvantages
Preserves actual natural language, i.e. a verbatim account	Can generate enormous amounts of data
Can be flattering for interviewee	Time-consuming to transcribe
Is an 'objective' record	Context not recorded
Interviewer's contribution is also recorded and can be reflected upon	Presence of machine can be off-putting, e.g. creates anxiety
Allows interviewer to concentrate, to maintain eye contact and to observe body language	Core issues may be masked by irrelevancies

The above mentioned, information especially the disadvantages on one hand help to take caution of some factors that might hinder the process. Acknowledging such factors therefore minimises problems that might arise. The advantages on the other hand help to make the best out of the whole process. For example, one of the common mistakes researchers make is the failure to ensure that all mechanical aspects are taken care of to

avoid any distraction that may result, and also the shifting of focus from the interview to paying attention to the recorder and its functionality. All mechanical aspects were then taken care of. For example, the recording cassette lasted each interview without being changed. The interviewee was then not distracted.

3.3 Section Two: Data Collection Plan

3.3.1 Sampling

The selection of schools and HODs was done through purposive sampling, which means that they were targeted because of particular features. The criteria used for the purposive sampling is as follows:

- HODs of farm primary schools in Umvoti Circuit
- Both schools are offering multi-grade teaching
- Both schools are built in private property therefore has a section 14 status (public schools that are build on private property.)
- HODs are managing the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement
- HODs were willing to participate in the study

After having identified the two HODs, two principals and two post level one educators from the two schools, in the district, I coded them as: HOD-A; HOD-B; P-A; P-B; E-A and E-B. I then used these codes throughout this dissertation.

HOD-A: refers to the HOD from School-A

HOD-B: refers to the HOD from School-B

P-A: refers to the principal from School-A

P-B: refers to the principal from School-B

E-A: refers to the educator from School-A

E-B: refers to the educator from School-B

3.3.2 Participants

The primary sources of data in this research are mainly the HODs, Principals, Post level one educators and the PAM document. The main participants to be interviewed were the HODs from both schools. I gave them first priority mainly because they are main focus of the study as instructional leaders who lead in the transformation of the curriculum. That is an ideal situation outlined by the PAM document. That ideal situation does not exist in these sampled schools. That means that policy is not implemented because of the kind of situation which is caused by the multi-grade teaching context versus the management roles of HOD. Principals and post level one educators were also being interviewed for the purpose of data triangulation. According to Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Kelly (2006, p.287) "*Triangulation entails collecting material in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible*". Wellington (2000) further adds that it can also be achieved by checking with the individuals that your interpretation as the interviewer matches and accurately reflects their views and attitudes. In this case it helped to verify the information gathered from the HODs.

The participants were taken from two rural primary schools where they are the HODs. That is because the focus of the study is on the small rural primary schools where they have about 150 learners and a staff of 5 teachers. Their learners come from very disadvantaged and poor communities. According to the Human Right Watch (2004) they are disadvantaged because, like many schools in rural communities, they do not have running water and electricity. This means that most of those learners have no access to televisions and other type of media that can enhance their learning. They depend mostly on the resources provided by the Department of Education. According to the people I talked to most mothers are not working and depend mostly on the salaries brought by fathers who work in Johannesburg and come home at least once a term. According to the Human Right Watch (2004) rural areas have the highest levels of illiteracy. The high level of illiteracy is also a problem as it creates another barrier in terms of assisting their children with homework. Poor parental involvement in the affairs of the schools is another challenge for farm schools in this community.

3.3.3 Instruments Used

The research instruments used were semi-structured interviews and were administered to the three types of participants namely, the HODs, Principals and Post level one educators. According to Wellington (2000), semi-structured interviews are more controlled by the interviewer, are flexible and are not completely predetermined. This means that the questions serve as a guideline not exactly as a rigid framework. The interviewer further probes the respondents should there be a need, as long as it helps to get all the views and information required. Close-ended questions were used only for specific answers but most questions were open-ended as indicated earlier to probe the respondent's views and experiences. Closed-ended questions were asked at the beginning and then the more difficult open-ended questions which require more thought and interpretation towards the end. Wellington (2000) supports this and further adds that it allows the interviewer to start simple and build up to a crescendo. The questions were divided into sections to cover the four broad areas of leadership and management; NCS workshops, curriculum planning and the management of the implementation of NCS.

3.3.4 Validity and Reliability

According to Bless, Higson and Smith (1995), reliability is the extent to which the observable (or empirical) measures that represent a theoretical concept are accurate and stable when used for the concept in several studies. In other words it is concerned with the consistency of measures. For example, an instrument which produces different scores every time it is used to measure an unchanging value has low reliability. It cannot be depended upon to produce an accurate measurement. On the other hand, an instrument which always gives the same score when used to measure an unchanging value can be trusted to give an accurate measurement and is said to have a high reliability. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000, p.117) "*a reliable instrument for a piece of research will yield similar data from similar respondent over time*". It is then important for the research to use a reliable instrument. Validity is concerned with just how accurately the observable measures actually represent the concept in question or whether,

in fact, they represent something else. This means that an instrument with very high reliability is useless if it has poor validity. Similarly, an instrument with very low reliability should not be used merely because it has very high validity. For example, where reliability asked the question ‘how accurate and consistent is this instrument?’ validity asks questions such as ‘what does this instrument measure?’ and ‘what do the results mean?’ “*If a piece of research is invalid then it is worthless,*” (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2002, p.111).

In order to enhance reliability, the research instruments that were used with School-A, were also be used with the School-B without any change of questions or content. The same semi-structured questions in the interview schedules for the three types of participants that are, HODs, principals and post level ones, used in School-A, were used in School-B. That was done in order to ensure that the instruments used in this study were consistent and accurate. The guiding questions used were phrased such the respondents from both schools were able to comment around the similar issues for example, issues of transformation, leadership, management, curriculum planning and curriculum management. In as much as the respondents were categorised into principals, HODs and post level one educator, their questions were also around similar areas in order to enhance validity of the information they gave. The purpose of targeting different levels of participants was mainly for data triangulation but at same time not changing the content in order to allow for the validity of data. The instrument was able to establish what the experiences of these different individuals regarding the implementation of new educational policies especially the National Curriculum Statement. The study takes note of the fact that it is not easy to achieve total reliability and validity.

3.3.5 Ethical Considerations

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002) ethical issues are areas often deemed to be resolved by procedures such as voluntary participation, informed consent, absence of risk or harm, confidentiality, and anonymity. The participants were therefore informed that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from this

research project at any time. They were also promised that their names and that of their schools would remain anonymous to protect their identity. They were also promised confidentiality; that meant that whatever was said during the interviews would remain between them and the researcher. An informed consent also be sought from the principals, HODs and post level one educators involved and they signed it after explanations had been made about what the study was about. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002) mention that asking for the informed consent involves a process of a fair explanation of procedures to be followed and their purposes. They further add that it protects and respects the right of self determination and places some of the responsibility on the participant should anything go wrong in the research. Participants were also informed about the use of the tape recorder and the researcher thoroughly explained the purpose of the interview and the recording, so as to gain their confidence and help in minimising any undesirable effects of having the interview recorded. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2002, p.122) *“Another way of protecting a participant’s right to privacy is through the promise of confidentiality”*, Confidentiality was also assured and that participants would be allowed to have access to the findings of the study. They were also clarified in terms of using the language that they are most comfortable with when they give their responses. Furthermore, I decided to exclude copies of interview transcripts from the thesis as appendices because their inclusion would expose my participants, thus undermining anonymity.

3.3.6 Limitations of the Study

One of the main limitations of the study was the availability of participants for interviews. Since these schools are offering multi-grade classes meaning they need more time for teaching and learning activities compared to other single-grade schools. I therefore could not use their teaching time. The only option was to interview them after school hours. Unfortunately that was also problematic, I discovered that teachers do not live within the school premises they travel daily because they live in town. Careful consideration of time was therefore necessary. The only choice I had was to interview them after school and take their time. Fortunately they came up with an idea of using

break time where they made special arrangements to use just one long break instead of two. The geographical location of the schools was another problem. Accessing these schools during a rainy season needed specialised transport. However this problem was avoided because the research was conducted during winter time, that is, between May and June.

The presence of the tape recorder during the interviews might have caused some discomfort especially from the side of the interviewee. I therefore explained to the interviewees that for example the tape recorder was not taking what was said during the interview to the Department of Education. Changing cassettes during the proceedings of the interview might have disturbed the interview process. I therefore brought the size of the cassette that lasted the full duration of the interviews without changing it.

3.4. Analysis

Wellington (2000) identifies three stages of data analysis that is, data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing. Data reduction consists of data selection and condensation. In this stage, data are collated, summarised, coded and sorted out into themes, clusters and categories. Data display is the stage where data are organised and assembled, then ‘displayed’ in pictorial, diagrammatic or visual form. This ‘display’ allows the researcher to conceptualise the data, leading towards interpretation and conclusion drawing. Conclusion drawing, the third stage, involves interpreting and giving meaning to data. This process involves searching for themes, patterns and regularities, and the activity of comparing or contrasting units of data.

I started by scanning and reading the data collected from interviews. I then grouped and categorised the responses those from interviews with HODs, principals and educators. The responses from the two schools were also compared. Since data was collected through a qualitative approach, representation of data was through themes. The findings of the study and conclusions were drawn after data had been interpreted and analysed.

3.5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this chapter was to provide an explanation of the research design, the data collection plan and how data was analysed during the research process. Under the research design section, the contexts of the two schools of the study were given and issues of access were discussed. The main focus of the study has been identified in this chapter, that is, to explore the Heads of Departments' (HODs) experiences regarding their roles in the leadership and management of rural multi-grade primary schools within the contexts of education policy changes. In accessing participants, permission from the Department of Education was obtained and ethical issues according to the University ethics regulation were adhered to. Paradigms, methodology, methods and techniques were also discussed. Part of the issues that arose under this section include the advantages and disadvantages of using the tape recorder as the data was collected through interviewing participants using semi-structured interview format. It was necessary for the researcher to take note of those advantages and disadvantages in order to minimise problems that might arise before the interviewing process. For example, it was important to become familiar with the usage of the tape recorder before the interview.

The second section has discussed data collection plan where the description of the sources of data, the sample, the design and kinds of instruments that were used to access the data was presented. One of the main issues discussed in this section was that of data triangulation. The main participants of the study are HODs but for data triangulation process, principals and post level one educators were also interviewed. This process entails collecting data in as many different ways and from as many diverse sources as possible. Using this process therefore allowed the researcher to collect data from a variety of sources at the same time verifying the information gathered from the main participants. Issues of validity and reliability were also discussed with the aim of ensuring that the instruments that were used in this study were consistent and accurate. According to Bless, Higson and Smith (1995), reliability is concerned with the consistency of measures and validity is concerned with just how accurately the observable measures actually represent the concept in question or whether, in fact, they represent something else.

The third section which is the last section of this chapter, has discussed how data will be analysed. The main steps include reading and scanning of the data collected followed by categorising the responses those from interviews with HODs together, principals and educators. Lastly, literature relevant to this whole chapter was also discussed to substantiate and validate the choices made.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present two stories meant to present characteristics of each school. Rural farm schools in Umvoti area like many rural schools have their own uniqueness, and peculiar contexts. I have used different captions to portray each school's character and also to indicate the role that each principal, HOD and post level one educator has played in creating such an atmosphere. The two case reports are told in ways that:

- Show how each school is similar or different from the other in terms of human and material resources to support and ensure effective policy implementation.
- Show how leadership and management roles are displayed by HODs during the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) policy in each school.

I start by presenting the research contexts, educator and school profiles from both schools. I then present data sets from both schools and lastly the discussion of the issues raised by the individuals interviewed.

4.2. The research contexts, educator and school profiles

The two schools share almost similar contexts in terms of deprivation of both human and physical resources on one hand and socio-economic background on the other hand. They are both rural farm schools with multi-grade classes. That is, two grades in one classroom taught by the same educator. The learners from both schools are coming from rural areas where the levels of illiteracy are very high. Parents are mostly farm workers who did not finish school because of poverty in their homes, they had to leave school, find work and buy food for their families. The number of learners in each of the two schools is about 150 learners and they both have five educators each, including the principals and one HOD.

Management structures are also the same in that both schools have School Management Teams (SMT) made of the principal and one HOD. The HODs act as principals when their principals are absent from schools or when they are attending some meetings. Governing Bodies are not very active since parents are at work most of the time and they work far away from where their homes and schools are located. The fact that many parents are not literate compounds the problem. According to the people interviewed, parents do not attend their meetings which are aimed at discussing the learner's performance because they cannot read. Decision-making is mainly between educators and the SMT.

4. 2.1. School-A

Table 2: Educator Profile

	Principal	HOD	Educator
Gender	Female	Female	Male
Grades Teaching	1	2 & 3	5 & 6
Teaching Experience	+/- 20yrs	+/- 10yrs	+/- 8yrs
Age group	Between 45 and 50	Between 40 and 45	Between 30 and 35
Highest Qualification	Diploma in Education	HDE	Diploma in Education

School Profile

The school is situated in the province of KwaZulu Natal, Ukhahlamba region at a small farm with just a few houses of people who live around. Learners come from poor backgrounds where their parents work for the farmer and earn a very low income. The school therefore charges school fees of not more than R50 per annum. The school was built in order for their learners to attend closer to their homes. Due to a small number of those learners, other learners from the rural area which is about 5kilometres away from school, had to attend this school so that the Department of education does not close it down.

The school has about 150 learners and 5 educators. There are five educators who travel daily to school from the nearby town using their own transport. The learners come from IsiZulu speaking families where there is no exposure to the English language. They come from where there are no TVs, radios, magazines and so, on which can be used to support learning. The school is made up of five small classrooms and each educator has his/her own classroom. There are no facilities such as computer rooms, library or laboratories. There is no electricity, no telephone and the road is muddy and impassable during rainy seasons. Fortunately, there is however, running water and toilets for both educators and learners.

4.2.2 School-B

Table 3: Educator Profile

	Principal	HOD	Educator
Gender	Female	Female	Female
Grades Teaching	7	6 & 7	4 & 5
Teaching Experience	+/- 15yrs	+/- 10yrs	+/- 10yrs
Age group	Between 40 and 45	Between 35 and 40	Between 35 and 40
Highest Qualification	HDE	B Ed	Diploma in Education

School Profile

The school is situated in the KwaZulu Natal province, Ukhahlamba region at the Mondi Company area. There are houses where workers and learners live. Parents are employed by Mondi and work in the forests. There are also cottages where the three educators live. They only go home on Fridays and stay during the week. The principal and HOD travel daily sharing transport from a town which is about 55 kilometers away from school. The number of learners is 150. Learners are also IsiZulu speakers and struggle to understand English which is used as a medium of instruction from the Intermediate phase.

There are three classrooms built with red bricks, a small hall which is shared by two grades and a principal's office. The school has running water, toilets for both teachers and learners, telephone, one computer and has electricity. The telephone and computer are kept in a well organized principal's office. There is no library, computer room or laboratory. In the previous years the school has been allocated only three educators yet having seven grades because of the small number of learners. There has been no HOD for the past five years.

4.3. Transformation is almost the same as change

South Africa as a country started transformation processes as early as in 1994 when it experienced democracy for the first time after many years of apartheid. All departments had to transform their policies, structures and systems. In the department of education, all structures including schools had to transform. One of the important aspects that were also transformed in schools was the curriculum. There was then a need to understand what transformation was all about and how to actively participate in the process. The first part was to understand the terminology itself.

The first section of the interview schedule was on transformational terms. The three respondents that were interviewed used the word 'change' in the responses. Their understanding was that transformation has to do with changing from the old to the new systems in order to improve and make things better. For example, one of the participants had this to say:

"It is almost the same as change, it involves change, and it is about moving or shifting from what you used to do before and doing it differently." [P-B]

This view was shared by an educator from School-A when he said:

"With transformation I think it is to improve on something that is already there with the aim of making it better. I don't think they mean the same with change.

with change; it is to change something completely and with transformation as I said it is to improve and make something better.” [E-A]

Similar sentiments were echoed by the head of department from the same school when she said:

“It means changing completely from the old way of doing things to the new proposed ones. It is more or less like change.” [HOD-A]

Although they were a little bit not sure whether transformation meant the same thing as change, it was evident from their responses that they have some understanding of the linkages between the two concepts. They knew that there must be some changes in the school which will include the implementation of some national policies with the aim of transforming the old education system. The NCS is then one of the curriculum transformation policies that were discussed during the interviews.

4.4 Leadership and management are two sides of the coin

Leadership and management are the main concepts of this study; there was then a need to share the understanding of these concepts with the respondents. These terms can be defined very broadly or they can be context based. It was very interesting to hear what the different respondents interviewed had to say.

“Leadership is leadership, (ubuholi), playing a leadership role at work is like being a director, giving directions about running a school, where you allow others to follow you without leaving them behind. Management is to check how work is done, checking whether everything is in order if not what are challenges.”
[P-B]

This meaning was given with a sense of understanding that showed that this principal knows exactly what she is talking about. It was evident that she really gives directions if you listen to the way she talks to her staff. During the interview she had to answer the

telephone and then gave some orders to the HOD since we were still busy. The same HOD gave her meaning of these terms as follows:

“I think leadership is about how a person leads; a person who leads must have some skills and qualities so that other colleagues will be able to follow you. Management has to do with how things are done.” [HOD-B]

Leadership was placed on the other side which is about leading the way using some skills and qualities that will allow others to follow while management was placed on another side of checking how are the followers doing on their way to success. The other respondents in the other school also gave almost the same meaning as these two interviewees.

“Leadership means guiding, directing, leading the people towards the goal you want to achieve. Management means managing or controlling or monitoring what is being done, checking if it is done effectively and efficiently in order for the goal to be achieved.” [HOD-A]

That was an understanding given by the HOD. The principal from the same school responded as follows:

“Leadership skills are shown when one has the responsibility to lead during the performance of a task. Management is to be in a position where one can make staff effectiveness a reality.” [P-A]

All their responses indicated that these leaders and managers leadership and management being of equal importance. That was an indication that they have a clear understanding of their roles. Understanding what is expected in a role empowers and allows one to act accordingly and responsibly.

4.5. Revealing the NCS training experience

The introduction of a new curriculum policy to be implemented in schools was then a call for an intensive training programme to capacitate and empower all educators before they could be in a position to teach it. The training of educators about NCS took different forms in the entire province. In the district and circuit where this study was conducted, it was in the form of workshops. Others attended five day training workshops, while others attended for two days only. Others attended these workshops only once a year, while others attended for about three times a year. These workshops also had different target groups; others were for educators while others were for principals. When asked about the target group of the workshops that their HOD attended the response from the educator was as follows:

“It was just for all educators, not for SMT members specifically; in fact I have never heard of a workshop strictly for HODs, the person who attends workshop is the principal”. [E-B]

The educator from the other school was also asked the same question which was about the target group of the workshops. This is how he responded:

“All educators, SMT members and post level one educator”. [E-A]

Targeting different levels for NCS training ensures that both SMT members and level one educator are well capacitated in terms of their expected roles. What came out of such a response was that their HODs attended workshops that were focusing on teaching and learning only and not on the specific management roles. For example, they should be trained on curriculum management, planning and assessment so that they will be able to guide, lead, manage and control other educators' work. One HOD on the other hand thought the above areas were covered.

“The training was mostly on curriculum management and nothing much on the classroom practice, they were not getting into classroom practice details.”

[HOD-B]

Both the educator and the HOD agreed that the workshops were for all educators including HODs but they differed in terms of the main concepts covered. That was also interesting, but surprisingly that the other HOD gave a different view:

“The workshop did not meet my expectations as I needed more clarity on the levels of planning and assessment.” **[HOD-A]**

The reason why it was surprising is that these HODs come from the same ward which then makes it more likely that they were talking about the same workshops. That was then one of the gaps identified. Seemingly the participants had different expectations of the workshops and therefore had different experiences.

4.6 Planning with no background

One HOD mentioned that she teaches grades 6 and 7 and is a senior phase specialist. She comes from a secondary school and was deployed to this school because of the Post Provisioning Model (PPM) programme. She has never taught lower grades yet now she is expected to lead curriculum planning programmes in all the seven grades including the Foundation and Intermediate phase grades. For example this is what she said,

“In our school if you are an HOD you are responsible for the whole school that is, grades 1-7. It then becomes difficult to plan together with the foundation and intermediate phase educators without having the necessary information.”

[HOD-B]

This situation is not common in other public primary schools which are not rural farm schools. They have big numbers of learners and educators. HODs in those schools are

only responsible for one phase only not for the whole school. The other HOD shared the same sentiments though her situation is the other way round. She is a Foundation Phase specialist and has never taught senior grades but is expected to lead curriculum planning from grade 1-7. When she was asked about her experience, she responded as follows:

I didn't have a clear understanding of their work and all the sufficient information for their respective grades in order to check whether planning was done accordingly. [HOD-A]

This was an indication that being an HOD responsible for the whole school is not an easy task especially when they are expected to lead planning for the implementation of the new curriculum.

4.7 NCS implementation: Classroom practice challenges

When the respondents were asked to reflect about their experiences of teaching the NCS in terms of classroom practice, a variety of responses was noted. Others sighted the problem of assessment, recording and preparations. The question was as follows: In terms of classroom practice, what challenges do you as educators in your school experience? The response was as follows:

"It is assessment, there is a lot that we are supposed to be doing and you end up not knowing exactly which one to do learners' self or peer assessment, group or educator assessment? You end up not knowing which one you should do and not being able to do it all, at the same time there is a lot of paperwork, you need to ensure that the paperwork that is going to be needed by the HOD is ready." [E-B]

This shows that assessment is really a problem and is one of the issues that frustrate most educators. Another challenge that they identified was that one of the large number of assessment standards that must be used in all the different learning areas. The HOD from the first school responded as follows:

“It is difficult to do all Learning Outcomes that we were supposed to do and the number of Assessment Standards is too much.” [HOD-A]

The HOD from the second school also expressed the same concern about the number of assessment standards which they said was too much and further added that,

“With other assessment standards, it is very difficult to say they have been achieved, sometimes it is because of the time factor.” [HOD-B]

Others sighted the issue of being in a farm school situation. One principal explained that being in a farm school in this time of NCS it is very challenging, the very fact of combining two grades, is a challenge, the fact that those learners have different levels of understanding but they are in one class doing the same grade. She further explained that it means that even the very teaching methods that teachers use, gives them more work even though learners are few in the classroom because the teacher is supposed to give work specific to each grade. One of the methods that they wanted to use was research; they saw a need to give learners opportunities for research, to bring some things from home.

“You find that what you have asked learners to do at home as part of something, maybe a project, they won’t finish, they will come to school the following day with nothing or not having finished that part of homework with a number of excuses where as a teacher you could see that its because at home nobody cares.” [P-B]

Unfortunately since they are in a rural community where people know nothing about education, parents do not care and they do not value education as being important. The above situations are just a few out of a number of them that they mentioned. These might then frustrates the implementation of NCS if there are no other strategies provided to assist educators in these situations.

4.8 HODs in a multi-grade teaching situation “a hell of a job”

Teaching a multi-grade class is a full time commitment in the classroom. Being the only HOD in a school and having to manage the implementation of this new curriculum from grades 1-7, monitor other teacher’s lesson plans might be difficult. During the interview one responded as follows:

“There is no sufficient time to perform my HOD duties because I’m also expected to spend more time in the classroom.” [HOD-B]

This then proves that it is really a difficult situation to handle and some how causes confusion in terms of the duties outlined by policy. The Personnel Administrative Measures (PAM) document which is the Department of Education policy also requires HODs to be in charge of a subject, Learning Area or phase. This is on top of the normal teaching times which all educators’ even principals abide to. Unfortunately policy does not speak to multi-grade teaching situation; it only addresses normal class teaching which is done in most primary schools.

The respondents expressed that it is not easy to be a level one educator who teaches a multi-grade class because it means you teach two different grades at the same time. It also means you teach all the eight Learning Programmes as the stated by the overview document of the NCS. The HODs expressed that it is even worse for them because they have other management and leadership duties that they have to perform on top of just normal teaching.

“It is a hell of a job being a full time class teacher and at the same time having to perform HODs duties, but I do take some of the time to be able to perform the duties that I am expected to perform although that same work is not done properly.” [HOD-A]

According to Tranter (2000), it is important for HODs or middle managers to be excellent classroom practitioners. Their role is to guide their teams towards improved classroom skills and they must be able demonstrate those practices themselves. This means that they should be able to role model good classroom skills to other educators which then become difficult in a multi-grade context.

4.9 “Support, a big cry for help”

In order for a policy to be successfully implemented, strong support systems must be put in place. The implementation process therefore depend mostly on support whether from inside the school or from outside the school. Leaders at different levels should therefore provide support which can be either material or human resources. According to Leask and Terrell (1997), leaders should support staff particularly those who are having difficulties. For example, educators can form subject committees where they can use one educator’s expertise in a particular subject. District officials in the form of subject advisors can also guide mentor and support educators during the implementation of new teaching strategies, methods or styles.

The respondents expressed different views showing how they feel in terms of getting different kinds of support from different levels. Others indicated that there was confusion after they attended the first workshops since the facilitators were only summarising saying that there was no time. Those educators could not support each other they said that they also needed more support from the subject advisors.

4.9.1 Support from the district office

Subject advisors are district officials who have a duty to visit schools, check whether Departmental policies are implemented, identify problems experienced at that level and then provide support. During the interviews the common feeling was that these officials have never visited these schools. The only support that they provide is during advocacy

workshops and nothing after that. When educators were asked if they do receive any kind of support from the district office, they responded as follows:

“Only through workshops which are held once or twice a year” [E-A]

This response was an indication that educators cannot even remember the number of times of those workshops. It showed that even if the district provides support it is only through workshops and the problem with that is the fact that schools are then not monitored as to whether they implement what they were taught during the workshops. The educator from the other school simple gave a response that was also supporting the above statement.

“No, they have never visited us, except that during the workshops facilitators will ask us to phone them if we need any kind of support from them, but that has never happened.” [E-B]

That was an indication that there is really no support from the district office. The only support they depend on is the internal support which might come from the principal or the HOD. To my surprise, the response was not a positive one.

4.9.2 Support from the management

One educator indicated that there is no much support from their HOD since she has her own work to be done in the combined classroom where she teaches as well as in the office. She further mentioned that the same HOD must follow up on other teacher’s work, man the office if the principal is absent and supervise teachers and classes. It is a difficult situation for her to handle. As one participant put it:

“There is nothing much that she does because she has got her own work that needs to be done also in her classroom, besides that she also has other duties to do she is expected to monitor some things in the whole school, sometimes the

principal is not at school, she must man the office, supervise teachers and classes and that becomes even difficult for her to handle it all.” [E-B]

Her principal supported her and said:

“It is not easy for me to say how she supports other teachers.” [P-B]

That was an indication that even the HOD herself needs support since she has a lot to do. The HOD is supposed to be a phase or Learning Area specialist who should guide the educators in terms of developing NCS based teaching activities. The lack of support from the HODs to educators as school level, and lack of support from the district office to schools, leaves questions marks about the quality of teaching practice after training workshops.

4.9.3 Learning and Teaching Support Material, the managers speak

Learning and teaching support material plays a very significant role in the implementation of the NCS. Schools are now given a separate allocation just to purchase all the different kinds of LTSM. That was a big positive step taken by the Department of Education in South Africa especially with the aim of supporting learning and teaching in rural contexts. It was so touching to listen to the heads of the schools also telling about another area which they said was lacking

“There is a lack of proper teaching facilities because of the unavailability of electricity in the area. [P-A]

This principal also explained that the school is very old and has been operating like this for a number of years. The HOD from School-B was very firm and gave specific examples of what was lacking,

‘The other problem we encountered was that there is no sufficient teaching material like textbooks, pictures, and photocopying machine.’ [HOD-B]

The principal from the same school also gave her side by adding that,

“If you want learners to bring some magazine cuttings or pictures to school, you as their teacher must provide them with those magazines because they don't have.” [P-B]

A situation like the one described above raises some concerns about the quality education in rural schools. There is a lack of basic learning, teaching and support material (LTSM). Magazines, newspapers, TVs and radios help learners improve their reading and listening skills. These materials are obtainable from most urban homes without using the school budget. NCS encourages the use of LTSM in order to facilitate more participative and learner-based activities as outlined by policy. Educators in this school survive by using a photocopier since they have electricity unlike the other school where the situation is worse. There is no electricity, telephone, computer or media centre. That was then showing that the availability of electricity is given much value therefore its unavailability is seen as having a very negative impact.

Another issue that indicated a lack of LTSM was that one of the medium of instruction.

“We also experience problems in using English as a medium of instruction; our learners struggle to understand because of the environment they are coming from.” [P-A]

This then indicated a need for a library. A library is where learners can have access to reading materials that can improve their reading, speaking, listening and writing skills especially of the English language. The learning and teaching process can then be improved and made easier. Learners are then disadvantaged if there is no library.

4.10 The type of learners we teach

The successful implementation of a new curriculum policy also depends on the nature of the learners one is dealing with. This was another sentiment shared by educators from both schools. They were really not satisfied with the nature of their learners. The feeling was that learners coming from a rural environment where there are no radios or TVs are disadvantaged in terms of media resources which support learning. One question was around the issue of using Learning Outcomes and Assessments Standards as policy requires in the teaching of the NCS. The response was that it is difficult to say that outcomes have been achieved or attained by learners because of the time factor and the type of learners.

“The type of learners we have, they are challenging, I have seen that they are so slow, you find that you plan a particular activity for an hour and then find that they take more than that and completely fail to finish within the allocated time because of their slow pace.” [HOD-B]

The same HOD when asked about other challenges experienced in terms of classroom practice, also complained about the kind of learners they have.

“What I have realized is that during the beginning of the year, the new learners in a multi-grade class become very much reserved, they do not know the teacher, they are not used to her and they are afraid of her. They also have a feeling that they know nothing compared to the others who are already in their class, so they act as if they are not present in the class but as time goes on they start to get used and they start to participate and you can then see that they are also capable.” [HOD-B]

The principal from the same school complained about combining classes and further said that the situation is even worse because of the kind of learners they have.

“The very fact of combining two grades is a challenge, the situation is made worse by the fact that learners have different levels of understanding but are in one class.” [P-B]

That was another side of the same story of the rural, farm and multi-grade class learners. It showed that they are really a challenge on their own. They have a slow pace when given activities, they have inferior complexity since are in a mixed ability situation and they have different levels of understanding. This is something that is not their fault, neither the educators’ fault nor the principals’. The question still remains as to who should minimise this kind of a situation.

4.13 Similarities and Differences in the responses of:

4.13.1 HODs

Both HODs showed a clear understanding of education transformational concepts. They have both attended NCS workshops in 2005. The HOD from School-A initiates planning a year before they implement in some grades. There was no clear understanding of how planning for the Foundation phase should be handled, as a result it was then left for the following year. The HOD raised the issue of having lacked proper training in terms of handling curriculum planning. Other issues raised by this HOD are that planning took a very long time, educators are few compared to the number of Learning Areas, planning of Learning Programmes was difficult such that they decided to plan quarterly while going back to C2005 and the fact that there was no support from the other colleagues since they also lacked proper training from the workshop. The HOD from School-B said that it was difficult to plan with all Phases, that is, the Foundation, Intermediate and Senior Phase having attended only the Senior Phase workshop. She finds it difficult also because she has been teaching at a secondary school and was brought to this primary school to manage the Senior Phase only to find that she must be in charge even for the junior grades. She also mentioned that they have got a problem with the limited use of the photocopier, the shortage of text books and the insufficient knowledge of designing

learning programmes for other grades/ phase. Other educators had no clear understanding of the contents of Learning Programmes, Work Schedule and Lesson plans.

In terms of managing the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement, both HODs rely on having meetings with educators where they discuss classroom challenges and then share solutions. The common problem that they raised was that as HODs they were expected to monitor other teachers work by checking their files while at the same time they were expected to teach their classes which in real terms meant teaching two grades simultaneously. They said that there was then no time to do all that within the normal school time. Practically, it also means that they are full time class teachers with multi-grades classes and all eight Learning Areas to teach, while also expected to perform some leadership and management duties. This becomes more difficult in the absence of the principal where the HODs must be in the office, supervise teaching and learning in the whole school, meet any visitor that requests to see the principal and then teach their own classes. Attending to office duties leaves their classes unattended for some days or sometimes for a week. The HOD from School-B even indicated that the two grades that she teaches at the same time are from different phases, that is, grade seven in the senior phase and grade six in the intermediate phase.

4.13.2 Principals

Both principals also had some understanding of the main concepts and indicated that their HODs attended these NCS workshops but cannot remember how many workshops or when were they held. They share the same sentiments with their HODs in terms of the time they chose for planning, managing curriculum implementation and classroom challenges as a result of being rural farm schools with multi-grades classes. The principal from School-A indicated that her staff travels daily but were willing to remain after school in order to plan, reflect and share their teaching experiences. She further said that the main problems that they experienced included the lack of proper teaching facilities because of the unavailability of electricity in the area and the issue of using English as a medium of instruction where learners struggled to understand because of the rural

environment that they are coming from. Principal-B also indicated that her staff members had a good team spirit, willing to learn but having difficulties in terms of teaching learners with different levels of understanding in one class and the lack of parental support in learner homework.

4.13.3 Educators

Educators from both schools had a very slight understanding of the transformational terms which is an indication that they might not be clear with what is expected from them in terms of curriculum change. The educator from School-A indicated that their HOD cannot support and guide them in curriculum planning of the Intermediate and Senior Phases because she is the Foundation Phase specialist. They then felt that she had no expertise in the phases and therefore could not supervise them. That was a serious problem because she is their senior who is supposed to provide support and mentorship in order to ensure effective delivery, Tranter (2000). The other educator indicated that their HOD must plan for the two grades that she is teaching, check their planning that we submit to her weekly and quarterly, monitor some things in the whole school, and deputise the principal in her absence. This is a similar issue that was also raised by the principals and it shows that they really see it as serious problem.

4.14 Conclusion

The chapter has tried to present the research contexts, educator and school profiles from both schools. It has also presented data sets from both schools using different themes and has lastly discussed the issues raised by the individuals interviewed. The next chapter will then analyse and discuss the findings, as well as, draw some conclusions.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis, discuss the findings and make recommendations. I start by analysing data presented in the previous chapter using the responses of the interviewees to the three main questions of the study. These responses are given themes which were selected because of the frequency of their emergence in the data. I then discuss the challenges of HODs in the two schools which is another part of the findings. I also discuss the similarities and differences in the two schools with the aim of establishing the variety of strategies used by the two schools in their similar contexts. The chapter analyses data and discusses the findings making reference to all the relevant literature.

The main research questions were as follows:

- How do the HODs in the two primary schools manage the changes in the curriculum?
- What factors influence the strategies they use in coping with policy changes?
- How do HODs' experience educational policy changes regarding their leadership and management roles?

5.2 How do the HODs in the two primary schools manage the changes in the curriculum?

Curriculum management: Lack of middle management capacity

Firstly, the two HODs indicated a lack of middle management capacity in terms of managing curriculum in the entire school. The HOD from School-A indicated that she teaches grades 2 and 3 and is a Foundation phase specialist. She further said that it

becomes difficult for her to perform most of her instructional leadership tasks for example, overseeing curriculum management in the whole school especially without been trained for other grades and phases. She has never attended training workshops for the Intermediate and Senior phases. The non attendance to training workshops leaves her with no relevant information of how to manage the curriculum for the respective phases. She does not teach grades 4-7, yet she in her persal records is ranked as the schools' subject specialist yet she does not have expertise in the same area. This means that she is not well capacitated to manage change in the curriculum but the study could not for example establish how she actually manages without the necessary expertise. Managing change in the curriculum ensures good quality of teaching and learning. The above situation therefore compromises quality public education. That contradicts Tranter (2000) who argues that middle managers are subject leaders who must be responsible for the quality of teaching of their subject. The similar situation is noted with the other HOD who on the other hand is a senior primary specialist but also expected to manage junior grades.

Secondly, the two HODs indicated a lack of capacity in terms of developing other staff members in curriculum management. They are not in a position to develop other staff members simply because their expertise is limited within one phase. They also indicated that there are no specific workshops for them as HODs. That is an indication that the Department of Education concentrates on capacitating principals only and forgets the middle managers who are responsible for staff development. That creates a gap in terms of staff development programmes within the school. Middle managers, who are not well capacitated to perform their roles, impact negatively in staff development programmes. According to Leask and Terrell (1997), the leadership and professional expertise of the head of department is a key to successful staff development. This is simply because HODs are responsible for staff development and should monitor, mentor and develop educators in their departments. Bush and Middlewood (2005) support this and further add that deputy and assistant heads, and middle-level leaders such as heads of department or subject leaders, are increasingly important for effective management in schools.

5.3. What factors influence the strategies that they use in coping with policy changes?

Lack of human and material support hinders teaching and learning

The successful implementation of the National Curriculum Statement which adopts an outcomes based approach depends on a number of supporting strategies. According to Sayed (2001, cited in Jansen & Sayed 2001) an OBE approach to learning and teaching involves a major change in the culture of schools and classrooms. This includes new teaching materials significantly different from traditional content-based texts, and major retraining of teachers in order to understand the new approach to supporting learning.

One of the important aspects that kept on coming during the research is that one of support. The respondents indicated that there is a lack of basic human resources. Their schools are not well staffed. For example, they have grades 1-7 and instead of having seven educators, they have five. The ideal situation is to have at least one educator per each grade, but unfortunately in these rural farm schools, that is not the case. The Department of Education allocates teachers using the number of learners in the whole school. They do not think about the poor quality of education that result in multi-grade classes. Multi-grade teaching makes it difficult to use the Assessment Standards which are grade specific. The multi-grade teaching strategy they use, impacts negatively on the implementation of the new NCS policy.

Another lack of human resources was identified in terms of poor support from the school management teams and district officials. Educators in these schools do not get support from both these structures. They indicated that district officials do not visit their schools after training workshops. Visiting schools allows district officials to monitor the implementation of policies. It was evident that district officials and SMTs do not provide curriculum support and they do not assist educators with new assessment strategies relevant to the NCS. The assessment strategies that they are currently using are not well informed by the NCS policy and that also impact negatively.

There is insufficient learning, teaching and support material which is needed mainly for the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement. Teaching and learning is mostly assisted by the use of these support materials especially in rural areas. Most learners are not exposed to audio-visual materials for example, newspapers, magazines, television, videos, DVDs and so on. They therefore depend on the resources provided by their schools. What becomes evident here is that these schools are also not in a position to provide the learners with the necessary audio visual materials since there are no library centres, no TVs and not even textbook.

It was therefore evident that in addressing the above question, lack of support from the school, lack of support from the district and lack of learning and teaching materials, negatively influence the teaching strategies that these HODs use in order to cope with policy changes.

5.4 How do HODs experience educational policy changes regarding their leadership and management roles?

Curriculum planning: Lack of middle management capacity

In responding to the question above question, they indicated that they lack proper information on curriculum planning in all the three phases that is, the Foundation, the Intermediate and the Senior phases which then hinder the process of leadership and management from their side. They also indicated that they expect some kind of continuous support from the department, yet there has been no capacity building programme in place to help them handle curriculum planning in these phases. According to Hoy and Hoy (2003), planning influences what students will learn, because planning transforms the available time and curriculum materials into activities, assignments and tasks for students. Lack of proper curriculum planning therefore compromises the quality of teaching and learning. During the implementation of the National Curriculum in the UK, the emphasis was on ensuring that content was planned as a coherent whole, across different subject. (Leask & Terrell, 1997). In South Africa, it is not evident that planning

for the implementation of the NCS was properly done especially in the rural farm schools.

Lack of capacity building programmes for middle managers, has a very negative impact. One HOD indicated that since she was appointed as an HOD, she has attended only one workshop for School Management Teams (SMTs) to help them with planning for the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS). The workshop was for two days and did not cover all planning aspects, that is, the Learning Programme, Work Schedule and Lesson plan level. The other workshop was for three days and it was meant to cover both planning and assessment issues but then time was not enough. It appears that most departmental workshops lack sufficient time. Their feeling was that the facilitators focus more on theory and do not allow educators to practically develop teaching and learning activities that will help them in their teaching. That shows that training needs are not adequately addressed especially with the need to empower teachers to implement new departmental policies. Having not acquired the necessary leadership and management skills result in a situation where these HODs do not perform their roles.

According to the Education Labour Relations Councils (ELRC) Workload of Educators: School-based, Resolution Number 7 of 1998: The HOD is required to be in charge of the subject, learning area or phase, to jointly develop policy for that department, and to coordinate the evaluation/assessment, homework, written assignments and so on, in all subjects in that department. This is also supported by Blandford (1997) who said that HODs as middle managers, who are members of SMTs, need to have knowledge of all operational aspects of the school which compass curriculum, policy and practice issues. The HOD must also control the following: the work of educators and learners in the department, reports submitted to the principal as required, mark sheets, test and examination papers, as well as memoranda, and the administrative responsibilities of staff members. In addition to the above responsibilities, SMT members are also expected to perform the following **Instructional Leadership tasks**, which should take up at least 50% of their time:

- Oversee curriculum planning in the school

- Help to develop learning activities inside and outside the classroom
- Develop and manage assessment activities
- Ensure that all policies are in place
- Ensure that teaching and learning time is used effectively
- Ensure that classroom activities are learner-paced and learner-centred
- Develop and use team-planning and teaching techniques
- Develop and manage learning resources

This might involve the following curriculum-based activities:

- Setting up and overseeing a staff development programme where curriculum policy and methodology are discussed
- Participating in an appraisal panel
- Carrying out classroom observation
- Overseeing curriculum planning meetings at a grade and phase level
- Discussing curriculum policy and methodology with other educators
- Orientating new educators
- Establishing and maintaining relations with the department

The findings indicated a serious contradiction of the ELRC resolution where the Department of Education laid down the roles of HODs but do not put the capacity building programme in place. In South Africa, there are no special training programmes to capacitate educators with management and leadership skills when they move from level one to middle management level. That also impact negatively on the processes of educational policy changes.

5.5. Challenges of middle managers in a multi-grade class

According to the above mentioned policies HODs must ensure that the NCS as a policy is implemented. They can do that by managing and monitoring the implementation process. According to Blandford (1997), middle managers manage people in order to get things done. They therefore control other educators' work by checking whether their lesson plans including lessons, teaching and learning activities are NCS based. That would at

least give them an indication of what is happening in the classrooms and in the whole school.

The two HODs reflected that it is difficult to check other educators' lesson plans and at the same time plan their own for two grades. They said they are full time class teachers and are also expected to plan and teach eight Learning Programmes of the NCS in two different grades. It is a situation which is really not practical if one looks at the time available in schools and with the kind of learners from these two schools.

There is not sufficient time to practically plan for and teach two grades and at the same time perform the HOD roles as outlined by the departmental policies mentioned above. HOD duties include management of the curriculum and also management of staff under the department led. HODs in these schools have three educators to lead and manage on top of managing the entire school curriculum. This is one of the management dilemmas which arise out of the conflict between management of learning and management of people. Blandford (1997) referred to such a situation as a 'role overload' where more is expected of you in a role than you can manage.

The other HOD also indicated that she teaches grades 6 and 7 which are two different grades in different phases. She said that it is a challenge on its own, since the scope of work differs. She further explained that the complexity in the same situation is that grade 7 is the last grade of the primary education in the schools. Learners should then be thoroughly prepared for grade 8 which is the first grade in Secondary schools. That on its own puts a lot of pressure to the educator who teaches that grade. It is like teaching matric where the learners' results are a reflection of what takes place in each school. An HOD has to spend about 50% of time on Instructional leadership tasks; she was concerned about the fact that she fails to spend 100% of teaching time in the classroom in order to teach the two grades including this grade seven.

Besides teaching, middle managers in these multi-grade classes also are expected to act as school principals in the absence of their principals. This normally takes place when principals attend their meetings leaving their HODs to be in charge of the smooth running

of the school in their absence. Duties include manning the office, supervising teaching and learning, attending to any one who enters the school premises for example, parents or officials from the DoE. The class with two grades is then left unattended and teaching and learning no longer takes place for that whole day or two. Unlike in countries like England and Scotland, South Africa does not have support staff or 'classroom assistant' as they are called. According to Bush and Middlewood (2005), classroom assistants or support staff helps by performing administrative duties like photocopying, controlling the attendance register, examination entries and so on, while teachers focus in teaching only. This is a kind of a situation that South Africa needs to adopt in order to provide quality teaching and learning.

5.6 Similarities and Differences between the two schools

Transformation of the education system came as a very challenging process to most people in our country. One of the main reasons was the resistance to change therefore holding back the processes of transformation. Schools needed strong leaders who were going to lead them towards the achievement of their institutional goals. Bush and Middlewood (2005), therefore, emphasise the practices of transformational leadership in schools where leaders will influence school outcomes.

The schools sampled by this study share almost a similar context in terms of their geographical and socio-economic background. The difference that was noticed especially through the school profiles is that one of electricity. School-A has no electricity while School-B has. That makes the other school a little bit better than the other even though they are both situated in rural contexts.

It was also evident that even their learners come from almost the same home backgrounds where the levels of illiteracy are still high. Such conditions make the process of transformation a little bit difficult. Leaders in both schools had a basic understanding of what is expected in order to move from the old methods of teaching and move towards the new methods which are advocated by the NCS.

The implementation process depends a lot on the kind of leadership and management that is within the schools. The study reveals that the middle managers in both schools are not well capacitated to lead and manage the implementation of the new curriculum. That was one of the gaps identified in both schools. The HOD from school A clearly stated that during training, there was nothing much that was covered in terms of clarifying the planning stage and the assessment processes. The other HOD from school B was not that much worried about assessment but mainly about the classroom practice part. Even educators in these schools indicated that their HODs have never attended training workshops that were mainly for SMTs. They are not capacitated to provide leadership for basic teaching and learning. This is in contrary to Leask and Terrell (1997), who indicated that it is the head of department who provides the leadership, organisation and resource base for teaching and learning. This was also supported by Tranter (2000) who indicated that middle managers, whatever their role, need to have a depth of understanding when considering the issues which affect the quality of teaching and learning.

One of the hindering factors that were also identified in both schools was the issue of multi-grade teaching. HODs in both schools are multi-grade teachers who are then expected to spend 100% time in their classrooms, yet expected to perform management and leadership roles as outlined by the departmental policies. Principals in both schools attend their meetings and leave their HODs to act as their deputies. Unlike in big primary schools, these small rural farm schools are not entitled to have deputy principals because of their small numbers. It is the HODs then who are expected to take all the principals' management, administrative, governance and professional duties. This indicates that the department advocates quality public teaching yet not leaving up to its set standards. It also shows that rural farm schools are neglected and they experience all these problems with no one to help them. According to Jansen and Sayed (2001) when Curriculum 2005 was first implemented in South Africa there was a lack of a consistently shared vision from the national level to all provinces, and from provincial through regional, district,

circuit, school and classroom levels. This is still the same even after so many years of democracy and is an indication that schools are not treated fairly and equally.

5.7 Recommendations

5.7.1 Recommendations for further research

The current study has been conducted during the early stages of the implementation of the National Curriculum Statement and during the advanced stages of the new methods of school management and leadership in South Africa. The two levels compliment each other in that even though the implementation of NCS proved to have some challenges, management and leadership roles of HODs should have been at a stage where practicing the same skills allowed them to be able to handle the process with ease.

Based upon the findings of the current study, recommendations for further research were then made. It would be interesting to conduct research in order to determine the strategies that under capacitated HODs use to manage the changes in the curriculum. Another research can be conducted on multi-grade teaching and strategies. Researching around the extent to which lack of support impact on the management and leadership roles of School Management Teams can be of interest especially to the members of the same structure.

It might also be very interesting to extend the current research theme to other provinces and regions of South Africa. Expansion of the current research questions to more than six participants and to more than two schools can also be considered.

5.7.2 Recommendations to the Department of Education

The DoE needs to design an ongoing support and capacity building programme for HODs in their specific phases. It might take a day or two at least once a term. The DoE will need to design a separate programme for HODs in multi-grade contexts. The Teaching and Learning Support (TLS) component for the General Education and Training band in the DoE, together with the Education Management Development component, needs to

conduct training workshops for HODs as Subject specialist where they will train them on planning, assessment and management of subject specifics. They will then develop and administer a monitoring tool that will ensure that after those trainings, there is improvement and quality teaching in schools.

Lastly they also need to develop a different model of allocating teachers in rural farm schools. The already existing model of allocating teachers because of the number of learners in a school is not suitable for rural farm schools. The situation is different; for example, one multi-grade class might have seven learners doing grade 4, 10 learners doing grade 5 and eight learners doing grade 6. According to the existing model, that class should be allocated one teacher. That is an unfair situation to that teacher who will have to teach three grades in one class. There is therefore a very urgent need to develop that separate model which will cater for the diverse needs of rural farm schools.

5.7.3 Recommendations to school principals

Principals of these schools need to facilitate networking and clustering of their schools for the purpose of sharing resources amongst them and those that are better resourced. They also need to ask for donations of old books again from better resourced schools or libraries within their circuits in order to enhance the reading skills of their learners.

5.8 Conclusion

The study has revealed interesting facts and opinions in as far as the experiences regarding education policy changes in leadership and management roles of Senior Primary Heads of Departments. Some of the responses from the three main questions of this study reveal that there are challenges in implementing new policies in rural farm schools. For example, there is no clear indication as to which strategies do they use in order to cope with policy changes.

HOD-A indicated that she is frustrated because she is a foundation phase specialist who is not comfortable to lead the processes on curriculum planning and management. According to Blandford (1997), that was the same frustration that was experienced by the Welsh primary middle managers who then concluded that the day-to-day task of teaching demands an extensive curriculum planning. In the South African context the reason is mostly because there is no capacity building programmes in place for SMT members especially in the unusual situation of being the only HOD for the whole school. According to Tranter (2000), one of the job descriptions of middle managers is to create a climate which enables other staff to develop and maintain both positive attitudes towards the subject and confidence in teaching it. So if an HOD is not well capacitated, it becomes difficult to develop other staff members. She only attended workshops that were for her phase only and the school was not able to release her when there was training for the other phases because of the shortage of staff.

HOD-B also indicated the same frustration but in a different context, she is responsible for grades 1-7 but is coming from a secondary school and has never taught in the foundation phase or the intermediate phase. She finds difficulty in managing, monitoring, controlling the work of educators where she has no expertise. The training that they attend does not address classroom practice issues.

The cry for support also indicated that these two schools are not getting the required support. Educators are not getting support from the school managers including the HODs. The HODs are not getting external support from the district officials in terms of curriculum support since they have subject advisory services. Schools are not getting sufficient LTSM which will allow them to effectively implement the NCS which calls for an OBE approach. Jansen and Sayed (2001) compare South African schools with Australian schools where the OBE model was used; it occurred that Australian schools unlike our schools are well resourced with libraries, photocopiers and computers. Park (1999, cited in Jansen & Sayed 2001), further comment that these conditions are a far cry in South Africa where for example, less than half the schools have water or electricity. The study did not reveal how the two schools handle such situations.

It has become evident that it is extremely difficult to perform management and multi-grade teaching functions at the same time. Multi-grade teaching on its own requires more time. The situation is also complicated by learners who come from rural contexts where there is no exposure to basic audio-visual materials to support their learning. These learners need full time educators who are always in the classroom to enhance their teaching and learning. The two HODs are not of good help to the learners since they need to take care of their principal's duties whenever they are absent therefore leaving their classes unattended. The HODs are not well capacitated to handle their role functions because of the multi-grade teaching context they are in. According to Leask and Terrell (1997) middle managers in the United Kingdom receive little training or support when they take on this role. This is a similar situation to what happens to Heads of Departments in South Africa. The HODs only attend one or two days workshops after their appointments and that will be all. There is no other training after that and they end up not being able to perform accordingly. Moving from being level one educator needs more management skills and therefore support from all levels is essential.

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Annexure 1

Semi-Structured interview guide-HODs

I would like you to tell me about challenges that policy changes, in particular the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) bring in your leadership and management functions.

1. General Questions

1.1 Could you please tell me what do you understand about the following terms?

Change

Transformation

Leadership

Management

1.2 Do you see yourself as a manager, a leader or both?

1.3 Explain

2. NCS Workshops

2.1 Have you attended any workshops on the National Curriculum Statement?

2.2 If so, how many?

2.3 What were your expectations when you attended those workshops?

2.3 What were the main topics covered?

2.4 Tell me about your first workshop, how would you rate the entire workshop?

	1	2	3	4
Concepts were clearly defined				
More emphasis on classroom practice				
More emphasis on curriculum management				
Planning was given sufficient				
Assessment was clearly explained				

1 - Poor

2 - Average

3 - Good

4 - Excellent

2.5 Did the workshops meet all your expectations?

YES	
NO	

2.6 If not which ones were not met?

2.7 What was the target group for the workshop?

SMT Members	
PL1 Educators	

2.8 How long did it take?

3. Curriculum Planning

3.1 When did you plan for the implementation of NCS for this year?

Early 2005		Late 2004	
Other Period			

3.2 Why did you choose the above mentioned period?

3.3 'As the HOD, What was your role in the planning process?

3.4 Which documents did you use as guidelines for planning?

3.5 Tell me about the challenges that you encountered during the planning process in terms of:

Time	
Support from colleagues	
Learning programme Template / example	
Work schedule template	
Lesson plan template	
Any other challenges	

3.6 How did you cope with pacing and sequencing of learning outcomes (LOs) and assessment standards (Ass) for the whole year?

4. Managing NCS Implementation

4.1 As the Head of Department (HOD) in your school, how do you manage the implementation of NCS in your school?

4.2. How many educators do you have in the intermediate phase?

4.3 Schools are now given an opportunity to choose their combinations of Learning Programmes (LPs) leaving Maths and the Languages as distinct LPs in the Intermediate Phase, how did you combine in your school?

4.4 In terms of classroom practise,

4.4.1 What challenges do educators in your school experience?

4.4.2 As the HOD how do you provide support?

4.5 Do you receive any kind of support from the district office?

YES	
NO	

4.5.1 If yes, what kind of support?

4.5.2 How often?

5 Reflections

5.1 How do you rate the overall manner in which you handled this new policy in your school? -----

4	Excellent
3	Good
2	Average
1	Poor

5.1.1 If you were to improve, which areas would you target and how would you improve?

5.1.2 Any other Comments?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT YOU HAVE MADE.

Annexure 2

Interview guide for- PL1 Educators

I would like you to tell me about challenges that policy changes, in particular the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) bring to your HODs' leadership and management functions.

1. General Questions

1.1 Could you please tell me what do you understand about the following terms?

Change

Transformation

Leadership

Management

2. NCS Workshops

2.1 Have you HOD attended any workshops on the National Curriculum Statement?

2.2 If so, how many?

2.3 What was the target group for the workshop?

SMT Members	
PLI Educators	

2.4 How long did it take?

3. Curriculum Planning

3.1 When did you plan for the implementation of NCS for this year in your school?

Early 2005		Late 2004	
Other Period			

3.2 Why did you choose the above mentioned period?

3.3 What was the role of the HOD in the planning process?

3.4 Which documents did you use as guidelines for planning?

3.5 Tell me about the challenges that the team encountered during the planning process in terms of:

Time	
Support from colleagues	
Learning programme Template / example	
Work schedule template	
Lesson plan template	
Any other challenges	

3.6 How did you cope with pacing and sequencing of learning outcomes (LOs) and assessment standards (Ass) for the whole year?

4. Managing NCS Implementation

4.1 How does the HOD in your school manage the implementation of NCS?

4.2. How many educators do you have in your school?

4.3 Schools are now given an opportunity to choose their combinations of Learning Programmes (LPs) leaving Maths and the Languages as distinct LPs in then Intermediate Phase, how did you combine in your school?

4.4 In terms of classroom practise,

4.4.1 What challenges do educators in your school experience?

4.4.2 How does the HOD provide support to other educators?

4.5 Do you receive any kind of support from the district office?

YES	
NO	

4.5.1 If yes, what kind of support?

4.5.2 How often?

5 Reflections

5.1 How do you rate the overall manner in which you handled this new policy in your school? -----

4	Excellent
3	Good
2	Average
1	Poor

5.1.1 If you were to improve, which areas would you target and how would you improve?

5.1.2 Any other Comments?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT
YOU HAVE MADE.**

Annexure 3

Interview guide for Principals

I would like you to tell me about challenges that policy changes, in particular the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) bring to your HODs' leadership and management functions.

1. General Questions

1.1 Could you please tell me what do you understand about the following terms?

Change

Transformation

Leadership

Management

2. NCS Workshops

2.1 Have you HOD attended any workshops on the National Curriculum Statement?

2.2 If so, how many?

2.3 What was the target group for the workshop?

SMT Members	Both
PL 1 Educators	

2.8 How long did it take?

3. Curriculum Planning

3.1 When did you plan for the implementation of NCS for this year in your school?

Early 2006		Late 2005	
Other period			

3.2 Why did you choose the above mentioned period?

3.3 What was the role of the HOD in the planning process?

3.4 Which documents did you use as guidelines for planning?

3.5 Tell me about the challenges that the team encountered during the planning process in terms of:

Time	
Support from colleagues	
Learning programme Template / example	
Work schedule template	
Lesson plan template	
Any other challenges	

3.6 How did you cope with pacing and sequencing of learning outcomes (LOs) and assessment standards (Ass) for the whole year?

4. Managing NCS Implementation

4.1 How does the HOD in your school manage the implementation of NCS?

4.2. How many educators do you have in your school?

4.3 Schools are now given an opportunity to choose their combinations of Learning Programmes (LPs) leaving Maths and the Languages as distinct LPs in then Intermediate Phase, how did you combine in your school?

4.4 In terms of classroom practice,

4.4:1 What challenges do educators in your school experience?

4.4.2 How does the HOD provide support to other educators?

4.5 Do you receive any kind of support from the district office?

YES	
NO	

4.5.1 If yes, what kind of support?

4.5.2 How often?

5 Reflections

5.1 How do you rate the overall manner in which you handled this new policy in your school? -----

4	Excellent
3	Good
2	Average
1	Poor

5.1.1 If you were to improve, which areas would you target and how would you improve?

5.1.2 Any other Comments?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND FOR ALL THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT
YOU HAVE MADE.**

Annexure 4
Letter requesting permission

P.O. Box 1435
Greytown
3250
16. January. 2006

Department of Education
Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

Dear Sir/Madam

Letter requesting permission

I Nozipho Eunice Mkhize hereby wish to conduct research in your school/ward. The research aims to assess the leadership and management roles of Head of Departments (HODs) in primary schools during the implementation of new policies. The study will take a closer look at the way in which HODs lead and manage when there are new policy changes. The participants will be given a chance to participate voluntarily, to remain anonymous and to withdraw their participation should they wish to. Confidentiality will also be assured and they will be allowed to have access to the findings of the study. Data will be collected through interviewing the participants using structured interview schedules. The interviews will be tape recorded. That will ensure authenticity and avoid wrong interpretation by the researcher.

I promise to respect all the routine activities in the sight concerned until the end of the research.

Yours Sincerely
Miss N.E. Mkhize

Contact Details:

Researcher:

Name: N.E. Mkhize

Cell : 0849559338

Supervisor:

Name: Dr. T.T. Bhengu

Cell : 0839475321

Annexure 5
A letter granting permission



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8610
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKHOHWE SIYONENI PIETERMARITZBURG HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:
Imibuzo: Sibisiso Alwar
Navraa:

Reference:
Inkomba: 054406
Verkysing:

Date:
Usuku: 22/05/06
Datum:

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Ms NE Mkhize (200402091) has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, he/she must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- Ms NE Mkhize has been granted special permission to conduct his/her research during official contact times, as it is believed that their presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, he/she must, therefore, conduct his/her research during non-official contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Annexure 6 Approval



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL
ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATALI
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UMNYANGO WEMFUNDO
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS

Tel: 033 341 8610
Fax: 033 341 8612

Private Bag X9137
Pietermaritzburg
3200

228 Pietermaritz Street
Pietermaritzburg, 3201

INHLOKOHLOSI PIETERMARITZBURG HEAD OFFICE

Enquiries:
Imbuzo: Sibusiso Akar
Nayraa:

Reference:
Inkomba: 0145106
Verwysing:

Date:
Usuku:
Datum: 220506

To: D Buchler Ms Ne Mkhize
Faculty Research Committee
Faculty of Education
Edgewood Campus
University of KwaZulu-Natal

RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Please be informed that your application to conduct research has been approved with the following terms and conditions:

That as a researcher, you must present a copy of the written permission from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution bearing in mind that the institution is not obliged to participate if the research is not a departmental project.

Research should not be conducted during official contact time, as education programmes should not be interrupted, except in exceptional cases with special approval of the KZNDoE.

The research is not to be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where the KZNDoE deem it necessary to undertake research at schools during that period.

Should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application for extension must be directed to the Director: Research, Strategy Development and EMIS.

The research will be limited to the schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.

A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis must be provided to the RSPDE Directorate.

Lastly, you must sign the attached declaration that, you are aware of the procedures and will abide by the same.

for SUPERINTENDENT GENERAL
KwaZulu Natal Department of Education

Annexure 7

INFORMED CONSENT

I..... (Full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE
