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**THE NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL
“ ARE YOU MANAGING “**

By

NARAINSAMI CHETTY

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Supervisor : Mr P Ramrattan

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DECLARATION

I, Narainsami Chetty, declare that this dissertation , “ THE NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL – ARE YOU MANAGING ? “, is my own work and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



N-Chetty

Durban

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ABSTRACT

This study examines managerial challenges of Novice Primary School Principals and their coping strategies in the face of these demands. In the absence of comparative studies it can be concluded that there are gaps and silences in the literature.

A comprehensive questionnaire to novice primary school principals was the main source of data complemented by a detailed case study and a semi – structured interview with the superintendent of education.

An analysis of the findings suggest that the Novice Primary School Principals are under considerable pressure form various quarters. The results are not conclusive whether these beginning incumbents are discharging their managerial responsibilities adequately. Coping strategies employed by these Novice Primary School Principals appear routine.

The recommendation made in the study will initiate further investigations into the Novice Primary School Principal. It is possible that quality and excellence will be compromised in the primary schools unless “novice or beginning” managers are adequately prepared and provided with comprehensive on – going support.

THE NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL “ARE YOU MANAGING?”

CHAPTER ONE

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

1.1 PREAMBLE

The school is regarded as a very powerful institution and is a micro organization within society. Its primary role is to provide education with all its ramifications to learners and to act as a socializing agent of society. In order to fulfill this, an organizational structure is crucial to effective management. At the centre, is the School Principal who is multi-tasked to :

- Organise and manage educators and learners
- Implement educational policy
- Manage the human and physical resources of the institution

However, this over-simplified role of the principal is even less apparent as Jones (1980) observes that possibly the most anxious time in the career of a promotion-minded teacher is that period between the interview and the moment the chairman of the governors enters the waiting room with the job result. The successful candidate has to grapple with the question: What exactly does the head teacher of a primary school do? (Jones, 1980). This self question is critical in the far-reaching implications it has for her soon to be numerous challenges as a new school manager.

Implicit in this observation are issues that concern her roles, responsibilities, duties and functions. Being appointed the new administrator does not mean according to Jones (1980) that the new head teacher is expected to possess immediately all skills needed to deal with the school's activities.

Coulson (1987) notes that, despite steady growth over the last couple of decades, school management development in Britain is still in its infancy. The South African Education system by comparison is still in transition. It is barely seven years that the country is experiencing a democratic form of education in the 21st century. We are in the first stages of our educational development. One can merely at this stage speculate at our progress given our historical backlog.

One of the themes in this study had relevance to the view of Coulson (1987) that no amount of new knowledge and skills training will effect much difference in the practice of headship in schools. Orientation, induction and training of new principals is evidently all the more necessary since Coulson (1987) notes that the lack of preparation as a Head makes on-going training for the new Leader all the more necessary. However, few people would challenge the notion that the schools of today are infinitely more complex organisations they were twenty-five years ago (Whitaker, 1983). In the light of this assertion, this study will explore the knowledge and skills of novice principals and whether it is sufficient to manage his/her role as a school manager.

Principals in the current South African context are appointed as part of the general transformation and restructuring in education. The dominant influence in this new process is the role of the School Governing Body which comprises five parents and four school-based personnel in the primary school. The interview panel is largely parent constituted. There is allowance for education department, union and school involvement but in an observer capacity. As monitors of the process the members of this observer group have to ensure that the interview panel is discharging its responsibilities in a fair, unbiased and non-discriminatory manner.

In comparison, the past practices of the promotion of principals differs radically to the post 1994 process. Aspiring principals were interviewed by the then school inspector, now Superintendent of Education. The applicant was given a rating. Subsequently, at a Promotion Board meeting each candidate was motivated by the school inspector. When unanimity was reached a candidate was allocated a post. There were merits and demerits in this system which is not the subject of attention in this paper.

The new promotion requirements were minimal. HRM 10 of 1998, prescribed the following :

- A minimum of seven years teaching experience.
- A three year teaching diploma

This gave rise to the situation where two categories of novice principals were appointed. One of the categories would be where the novice principal had previously occupied promotion posts.

This would suggest that such a Novice Principal had the benefit of some managerial experience as a head of department (level two) or deputy principal (level three) before moving into the next rung of the promotion hierarchy. The next category of Novice Principals would be a level one educator having no prior level two or level three management experience being promoted to a principal post. The sample in this study comprised of beginning primary school managers in both these categories.

This study, therefore, focuses on these categories of school managers.

1.2 STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of my study is to determine managerial challenges of Novice Primary School Principals.

1.3 CRITICAL QUESTIONS

1.3.1 What are the managerial challenges faced by Novice Principals in Primary Schools ?

1.3.2 How do new Primary School Principals cope with these perceived challenges ?

1.4 RATIONALE FOR MY STUDY

The post 1994 and fledgling democratic South Africa is experiencing sweeping national changes as part of the anticipated transformation. The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 provided the National policy impetus for changes in education.

The transformation process from Apartheid to Democratic Education in South Africa is deliberate, visible and yet sudden. The subsequent reforms in Education were dramatic. The South African Schools Act formalised the important role parents had to play in education. One of the key elements of the reconceptualisation of education was the establishment of School Governing Bodies (SGB). Conceptually a school ought to respond to the needs of the community it is located within thereby making education relevant to the community it serves while maintaining national government vision for example about literacy and human resource development for its nation. A partnership was crafted between the school and the parents, the representative of the community through the SGB.

The composition of the SGB is such that the majority of the membership is from the parent representation . School governance is now largely parent-driven as they are in the majority. One the functions of the SBG is to make recommendations in the employment of personnel at the school. Therefore, the parents of the School Governing Body played a key role in the recent promotion of school principals. This was a major shift from the appointment of school principals during the pre-democratic order whose promotion was processed directly by the Education Department. The implications of this process in the appointment of principals were alluded to earlier. This shift in the process of appointment of principals is a subject of analysis in this study. The study attempts to understand the emergence of the challenges faced by Novice Primary School Principals and how they address these concerns as school managers.

That all school principals are currently undergoing one of their severest tests of leadership is perhaps an understatement. These include a myriad of issues. However, adapting to, implementing and managing change with its wide-ranging ramifications appears to be the all-embracing leadership challenges of Novice Primary School Principals.

The recently appointed principals had to satisfy very minimum requirements. Circular HRM 35 of 99 indicates a minimum seven years of teaching experience and a three year teaching diploma as minimum requirements. This policy document is silent about the aspiring candidate first occupying the rank of a junior manager and having some managerial experience. A moot issue is how adequately equipped these new appointees are for the demands of principalship.

It is inevitable that these policy initiatives will further challenge all school principals in general and newly-appointed principals in particular. Current circumstances around systemic restructuring of education and a reconceptualisation of the curriculum e.g Outcomes Based Education influence significantly the responsibilities of principals. Such a scenario is fertile research terrain to establish the coping mechanisms of recently appointed Novice Primary School Principals in managing the complexities of their task. This study endeavours to establish how Novice Primary School Principals cope with these complexities compounded by the fact that they have minimal managerial experience.

To acknowledge gender sensitivity, the pronouns she/her his/he will refer to the Novice Primary School Principal.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Definition of terms according to Best (1977) help to provide frames of reference. In this regard the following key terms within the South African Educational context are explained.

1.5.1 PRINCIPAL

Principal, Headmaster, Head Teacher, Head, Leader, Administrator and Manager are synonymous terms that make reference to the head of the school, a status that implies both authority and power. In this study the preferred term is principal. The principal is the academic and administrative manager as well as leader of the school.

1.5.2 SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (SGB)

The SGB is a committee constituted in terms of South African Schools Act 84 of 1996. It comprises five parents and four school personnel in the primary school. The SGB is a powerful body which is an integral component of school governance and is responsible for assimilating policies and determining action plans for its implementation by the school community. It also manages the school budget. Members of the SGB play a central role in the appointment of school principals and other members of the School Management Team (SMT) .

1.5.3 NORTH DURBAN REGION (NDR)

According the the KwaZulu- Natal Schools Field Guide, (2001) there are 5968 schools in KwaZulu-Natal.

These Schools in Kwa Zulu Natal are grouped into eight regions (**SEE APPENDIX 7**), viz. :

- ❑ Durban South
- ❑ Empangeni
- ❑ Ladysmith
- ❑ North Durban
- ❑ Pietermaritzburg
- ❑ Port Shepstone
- ❑ Ulundi
- ❑ Vryheid

This study is located in the NDR. There are 734 schools in the NDR as indicated in the Summary Statistics for Education Regions and Districts (KWAZULU-Natal Snap 2001) . The 734 schools comprise,

- ❑ 29 Pre -Primary Schools
- ❑ 452 Primary Schools
- ❑ 45 Combined Schools
- ❑ 188 Secondary Schools
- ❑ 20 LSEN Schools

This study is located in one of the smaller districts in the North Durban Region.

1.5.4 DISTRICT

Due to the vast geographical expanse the Regions are further organised into Districts. There are 41 districts in the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture. The North Durban Region which has the third largest Learner population of 378967 (Annual Survey, 2000) is classified into six districts, viz :

- ❑ City of Durban
- ❑ Inanda
- ❑ Kwa Mashu
- ❑ Maphumulo
- ❑ Ndwedwe
- ❑ Phoenix

The schools in the districts are clustered into manageable circuits of approximately 25 schools. These circuits are under the organisational control of the Superintendent of Education (SEM).

1.5.5 SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION (SEM)

The SEM is the representative of the Education Department. She interacts with the principals individually or through principals' forums conveying, interpreting and ensuring that Policy is implemented in schools. . The SEM is the key link between the department of education and the school.

1.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Within the scope of this study constructs were used as parameters rather than a conceptual framework to understand the challenges faced by Novice

Primary School Principals. It was most appropriate to understand the challenges faced by Novice Principals against constructs such as educational reconceptualisation and restructuring as well as roles and responsibilities of principals. These constructs provide the parameters which allow the exploration and understanding of educational management of Novice Primary School Principals within a transformed educational context.

In this regard Easterby-Smith et al (1994) note that there are many researchers, especially in the management field, who adopt a pragmatic view about the theory discourse in reference to how the researcher should go about her work. Hartshorne (1993) concurs that education is best understood through insights which come to us through many different experiences, theories and forms of analysis. This study is informed by the following relevant underlying constructs related to school organisation and management, educational policy implementation, school governance as well as pertinent issues concerning managerial challenges e.g. management of change, unionism etc that will inform the critical questions of this study. These constructs are elaborated upon in the next chapter. (**SEE APPENDIX 8**).

1.7 METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design is employed in this study to understand the challenges faced by the novice principals as well as to comprehend the coping strategies she uses. A multi-modal methodology is employed to elicit relevant data concerning the managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

A comprehensive questionnaire will be administered in a district where there are predominantly Novice Primary School Principals. The SMT, educators, learners and school records will form the elements of a school case study.

The data from the semi-structured interview with the SEM will provide a policy perspective with respect to managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals as well as give the study validity.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

The findings of this study could be useful :

- 1.8.1 To Novice Principals so that it will improve their current practice and benefit later appointed primary school principals.
- 1.8.2 To School Governing Bodies so that it will inform the future selection process of the leadership potential of new school principals.
- 1.8.3 To researchers in the field of educational management so that it will increasing the body of research knowledge on newly appointed primary school principals.
- 1.8.4 To aspiring novice principals to get a sense of the roles challenges and coping strategies in managing an institution.
- 1.8.5** Since the literature review through the Internet, education Management Journal Search and Conference proceedings which examined local as

well as Anglo-American sources indicate there is a relative dearth of current research on Novice Primary School Principals this study will contribute to needed literature and thus promote understanding of a key aspect of a Novice Principal's work.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.9.1 Methodologically, the sampling of the Novice principals influence study as the background of the former is not researched. Their strengths, weaknesses, experiences may have influenced the way they manage their functions and this is not considered in this research.

1.9.2 Theoretically all school managers are experiencing challenges relating to educational institution and educational reconceptualisation. This factor will influence the analysis of novice principals challenges in exercising their roles and responsibilities. It will be difficult to determine with any degree of certainty that these challenges are as a result of being a Novice Primary School Principal or as a result of being within a period of time where issues of institutional change and reconceptualisation are unfolding within schools .

1.10 DELIMITS OF STUDY

As this is a limited study it is confined to Novice Primary School Principals in one of the smaller districts in the North Durban region. This cohort of Principals was chosen for the following reason, viz

- This group of principals coincide with the currency of my study.
- The geographical proximity of principals to each other.

1.11 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

A synopsis of the study is outlined.

1.11.1 CHAPTER ONE

Chapter One is concerned with outlining the study. It states the purpose of the study and the critical questions that inform this research. The struggle to locate this type of research and design a conceptual framework is summarised. A brief outline of the methodology is also given. This is followed by the benefits and the limitations of this study. A preliminary literature review is an integral part of this chapter. Key terms are defined and a summary concludes this chapter

1.11.2 CHAPTER TWO

Chapter Two is a review of the related literature on Novice Primary School Principals with the emphasis on managerial challenges and coping strategies.

1.11.3 CHAPTER THREE

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology for this study. The use of the two tools of research, the single but comprehensive Primary School Principals Questionnaire and the semi-structured interview are reported on.

1.11.4 CHAPTER FOUR

Chapter Four analyses the research findings and the results of the research are explicated.

1.11.5 CHAPTER FIVE

Chapter Five overviews the study, discusses the findings and makes recommendations for further research.

1.12 SUMMARY

The first democratic elections brought in its wake a euphoria of political promise and an expectation of a new and better life for all. While the intentions with policy making processes may be very good, relevant and a move towards social justice, equity and democracy, these values need to transcend into the implementable phase. This study may contribute to understanding part of the implementation phase of policy development. In education there has been a plethora of policy initiatives but unrealised delivery. It is against this backdrop that the 1998 Novice Primary School Principals who were the first group of appointees under the new democratisation dispensation assumed their promotion posts.

However, a centre-piece of transformation in education is school governance and the historical appointment of managers by the School Governing Body. Novice Principals who form the basis of this study will be researched. The main emphasis is on the challenges and their coping strategies the former face in their capacity as school managers.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the following objectives will be developed:

- ❑ **The exploration of educational reconceptualisation and transformation with specific reference to schools and school management in post – Apartheid South Africa.**
- ❑ **To frame and understand the challenges experienced by Novice Primary School Principals.**
- ❑ **Literature review on challenges faced by principals locally and internationally to get a sense of the issues and context within which these challenges are experienced.**

According to Daresh and Playko (1994), researchers are increasingly aware of the importance of identifying problems faced by newcomers to professional education. However, these authors contend that research on challenges faced by beginning administrators, in particular, have not been fully explored. Nevertheless, these observations were of little or no consolation for the purpose of this study. A secondary challenge presented itself of creating a conceptual framework.

Therefore, in attempting to develop these objectives, a framework of constructs is generated to explore how Novice Primary School Principals within South Africa experience their roles as educational managers or leaders within the schooling system.

2.2 THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SCHOOLING SYSTEM WITHIN SOUTH AFRICA : POST – APARTHEID

The first democratic election in 1994 heralded the potential of wide – ranging changes in every sphere of South African life. The newly elected government was committed to transformation, equity and redress as their key policy imperatives. In keeping with their pre – election manifesto the ANC government introduced tangible changes in e.g., new geographical boundaries, housing, social welfare, health etc. Education is one of the key areas that saw the most sweeping changes both conceptually and structurally.

The entire educational structure was reorganised such that there was a complete break from the previous Nationalist government discriminatory educational policies. The South African Schools Act (SASA) 86 of 1994 gave expression to the much – awaited transformation in education. SASA ‘s guiding principles are: promote equality, address equity, and make education fair, free and non – discriminatory. Prior to 1994, education was highly centralised where control resided firmly within the state bureaucracy. Policy was determined at this level and implemented through its various education departments. Previously, there was little or no involvement of other role – players, e.g. parents and unions in the educational process.

The concept of stakeholders in education was given a new dimension in the South African context. Unions and the community were positioned to play critical roles in Education through SASA. In particular, the community was legislated to play a greater and more meaningful role in School Governance through participation in the School Governing Body (SGB). SASA clearly

defined the regulatory requirement, process of establishment and the roles and functions of the SGB.

One of the many designated roles and functions of the SGB is to make recommendations on the appointment of human resources including that of the principal of the school. In the process of making recommendations for human resource implementation, the SGB:

- ❑ Identifies vacancies in the staff structure
- ❑ Makes proposals to the department of Education for creating a post or advertising a vacant post
- ❑ Receiving and screening of applications
- ❑ Interview and make recommendations to the department of education who then formally employs the candidate for the post.

2.3 NOVICE (BEGINNING) PRINCIPAL

The focus of this study is the Novice Primary School Principal. The preferred term in the literature is “beginning”.

Danzig (1997) notes that school administrators new on the job feel clumsy, unsure of themselves and need help in problems of practice.

Danzig (1997) claims further that Novice Principals do not face simple isolated problems but rather dynamic situations involving complex and interwoven problems. It places added pressure on the new administrator when he is expected to do everything well (Blumberg and Greenfield, 1986). South Africa is currently in a dynamic process initiating policy

implementation influencing existing systems and structures. The challenge for the Novice Primary School Principal is to understand, interpret and implement these policies within a transforming South African school context.

The principal's task is not made easier as Thomas and Hornesey (1991) conclude that everyone expects complete knowledge and expertise from the first day he takes office even when it is known that it is the new incumbent's first position of leadership. In addition to this Hewitson (1995) notes that a greater skill, expertise and leadership is required of both primary and secondary school principals especially in government schools. It can be concluded that all other stakeholders already have pre-existing expectations of the new school principal.

Therefore, it is timely to consider how well prepared beginning principals are to undertake their new roles. Preparation for the headship role takes on great significance in view of the demands that the new leader has to address. Harvey and Schwartz (1989) note that in terms of organisational requirements the principal is immediately held responsible for all aspects of school operations and is subjected to a constant and prolonged stream of administrative demands.

Simultaneously, while executing organisational and administrative demands newly appointed principals need to acquire a detailed working knowledge of school policies and procedures (Harvey and Schwartz, 1989). While acknowledging that the new principal is adjusting to being at the centre of the school, Southworth (1995) nevertheless argues that the new Head is

accountable for the school and answerable for much if not all that happens at the school site.

The extent to which novice principals withstand these new challenges and responsibilities cannot be underestimated. Weindling and Earley (1987) completed surveys concerning the ways in which poor school climate, low morale, negative attitude of educators, inadequate resources etc which frustrated principals in their new positions. Duke (1988) noted that beginning principals at their new schools were discouraged to the point of considering leaving the principalship, after one or two years despite the fact they were viewed as quite effective in their systems.

Duke (1988) found that these administrators experienced considerable frustrations over the fact that they did not understand the nature of leadership responsibilities before they got to the “hot seat.”

2.4 MANAGERIAL PERCEPTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In the execution of her managerial duties, a new principal will be influenced by :

- ❑ Her perception of principalship
- ❑ Her responsibilities in the new role

2.4.1 ROLE PERCEPTION

A very critical consideration of school Management is how the Novice Primary School Principal perceives her role as Head of the Institution.

Given the changing school climate with its new emphasis on management and the managerial demands of the administrator, Jones (1980) raises a rhetorical question,

“ What exactly does the head teacher of a primary school do ? ”

generates interesting speculations about role perceptions of new school Heads at different levels. At one level the new leader maybe perceiving her role subjectively and at another level how others are perceiving her. However, the Novice Primary School Principal presents a potentially new, and relatively unexplored research opportunity.

Duke (1988) notes that there is still a great need to clarify and magnify the office of school principal. The mystification is exacerbated by principals who show a sadly inadequate perception of their task (McRae, 1967). Littledyke (1997) regards this as a serious concern because the new headmaster's impact is within and outside the school milieu. However, for the principal to maximise his role it is necessary first of all to have some idea of how principals percieve themselves with regard to their roles (Carnivick and o' Donoghue, 1997).

The literature suggests that for the beginning principal to have a smooth transition in her new position she ought to have some positive perceptions of her managerial responsibilities prior to her assumption to the post.

2.4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PRINCIPALS

The new South African principal occupies his position consequent to a selection process by the SGB and the formal notification and appointment by

the education department. His general role can be summarised as being the educational, organisational and instructional leader of the School.

However, his responsibilities are complex, complicating and challenging with respect to managing educators and learners, implementing official policy and the management of human and physical resources of the school.

2.5 PRINCIPALS AS MANAGERS

The Novice Primary School Principal immediately finds herself in charge of the school management, as its senior manager.

School management in keeping with global educational developments is experiencing a metamorphosis. School leaders are now styled as managers in a management environment. Van der Westuizen (1991) regards this new educational role as a radical change. As a result of the increasing complexity of the school as an organisation, the educational leader is subjected to changing demands especially in respect of his management tasks. Inevitably, managerial training will be expected to be of greater significance in the future (Lipham and Hoeh, 1974). The principal's role has now changed to a management oriented – responsibility (Rebore, 1991) which entails being accountable for managing the human, physical and financial resources of the entire institution.

This study aligns itself with Rebore's (1991) concept of the principal functioning as a manager with all the ramifications in the school context.

Principalship becoming more managerial in nature is a view that is also held by Buckley (1985). The educational leader can no longer be expected to perform his duties in a “hit or miss fashion ” (Van der Westhuizen, 1991) which implies that school leadership must be categorised by proper planning, sound organisation, good decision-making, deliberate implementation and effective evaluation. Therefore, it must be kept in mind that the effective functioning of a school greatly depends on the professional conduct of the school principal both as a leader with vision and as a manager who implements the school’s mission.

Indications are that the principal’s task will increase in complexity and magnitude and that the managerial duties will keep the principal fully occupied (Rallis and Highsmith, 1986). The 1998/1999 Primary School Principals have undergone no management training prior to their assuming managerial duties. As one who was promoted in 1998, my colleagues and I received no training for principalship before we took up our positions.

Therefore, there is need for training in educational management (Van der Westhuizen & Legoto , 1995) of new leaders.

Management lays the emphasis on utilising the necessary people, materials and means to effectively achieve general educational aims (Van der Westhuizen & Legoto, 1995).

Management then is a complex concept which involves “ people in organisation ” (Neill, 1981). This is illustrated by Getzels et al (1968),

(Lipham and Hoeh 1974) who point out that the principal has the following management areas :

- ❑ Staff affairs
- ❑ Pupil affairs
- ❑ Physical Facilities
- ❑ Administrative, financial affairs
- ❑ School community relations
- ❑ Classroom management
- ❑ Curriculum and teaching matters

It can be inferred from the above that the principal has to exercise his managerial skills on a wide spectrum of school matters inclusive of educator, learners, administrators, department of education, community, curriculum, resources, etc. The Novice Primary School Principal will certainly be greatly challenged by these traditional dynamics as she discharges her managerial responsibilities. She has to contend with in addition to these new responsibilities a highly demanding educational environment characterised by change and transformation.

2.6 PRINCIPALS AS LEADERS

In order to effect and manage change the Novice Principal's Leadership is brought sharply into focus. A comprehensive response to this issue is beyond the scope of this limited study. However, fundamental to school management is leadership (Whitaker, 1983); (Cawood, 1985).

In any school the quality of leadership determines the quality of what happens. Dean (1987) maintains that it is unusual to find work of quality

taking place throughout the school unless the head is offering dynamic leadership.

Society today demands a much higher calibre of leadership than in former times (Cawood, 1985). The principal of today of necessity must bring strong leadership skills, positive attitudes and insights to enable her to meet complex challenges and demands. TIME (1974) highlights the following as contributing to the growing complexity in the educational enterprise:

- ❑ The knowledge explosion
- ❑ Change and renewal
- ❑ Development of the system of education
- ❑ Democratisation of the decision – making process
- ❑ Demands for accountability

2.7 MANAGERS IN CONTEXT OF CHANGE

Inherent in being a Beginning Principal in transition is the relevant issue of how the Novice Primary School Principal will manage change.

There are almost many conceptions of the change process as there are writers on the subject, but despite this there are some broad areas of agreement (Hopkins, 1997) eg, change is a constant, change is threatening, resistance to change, change is attitudinal etc. Among the first writers on change was Bennis et al (1969). Many dynamics are considered when effecting change. Bolam (1975) suggest there are three major factors in the change process.

These are :

- ❑ The change agent
- ❑ The user
- ❑ The innovation

The head can find herself in the role of change agent. However, the change agent is not necessarily the only one that stimulates change. This can be initiated by someone who puts pressure on the school (a catalyst) or providing others to do their own thinking instead of falling into the trap of providing answers (a solution giver) as well as helping others with the process of working through problems (Havelock, 1970).

However, change can be most sensitive to the situation of the individual school and local context (Hopkins, 1997). The principal can promote change strategies when change follows series of other successful changes than when it follows a series of failures (Koontz, 1968). Whitaker (1983) notes that some changes are fundamental and all embracing. Others are subtle and hardly susceptible.

The translation of a new head teacher's vision (Murgatroyd, 1993) to a reality (Whitaker, 1983) is attainable through a systematic management of change.

The change process is not linear (Miles, 1986; Fullan, 1991). New Primary School Principals must realise that there is a disconcerting and threatening side to change.

Fullan (1985) identifies the following:

- ❑ Change takes place over time
- ❑ Change initially involves anxiety and uncertainty
- ❑ Technical and psychological support is crucial
- ❑ The learning of new skill is incremental and developmental
- ❑ Successful change involves pressure and support within a collaborative setting to suggest that change is complex and not a linear process.

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) succinctly encapsulate the resistance to change by stating that:

“ if we do what we always do,
we’ll get what we always get ”

Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993) assertion is of particular significance for Novice Primary School Principals. Its acts as an inspiration for Novice Primary School Principals to be wary of traditional ideas and concepts as eventually they are counterproductive and non – progressive. Thus, this early realisation by the Novice Primary School Principal will help him to be amenable to change and not fall foul of stagnation by rigid adherence to old trends and practices.

The emphasis for the new principal will be not just generating change but managing planned and deliberate change (Owens & Steinhoff, 1976).

There are new concerns emerging in the developed world about the nature of educational services at the primary and secondary levels (Murgatroyd and Morgan, 1993). The concern of this study then is to determine what are the

managerial challenges facing newly promoted School Principals which may impact service delivery at primary schools.

2.8 UNIONS

A major challenge for the Novice Primary School Administrator is addressing Unionism in education.

A key policy document that ushered in reforms in education is the South African Schools Act of 1996 which provides for the role of all stakeholders.

The appointment as principals by the 1998 /1999 incumbents coincided with the emergence of the powerful union movement, an important and recognised Educational stakeholder. The unions with a membership of almost 77 000 Educators in KwaZulu – Natal and who enjoy full representation at the highest negotiating levels are a formidable force for the Novice Primary School Principal to contend with.

This is further compounded by the suggestion that at present, there are few developing countries where teacher unions have the power to influence governance than as in South Africa (Mtshali, 1999).

However, union militarism and the manifestation of this militarism in the form of teacher strikes is perhaps the single most important problem facing school officials (Bruno and Nelken, 1975). The implications of union strikes are serious considering the staggering fiscal and educational consequences. (Bruno and Nelken, 1975). Hence, the Novice Primary School Principal has to address fiscal constraints, educational transformation and the need to manage resources against a highly unionised climate. Mtshali (1999) notes

that unions have a vital role to play in the maintenance of standards, discipline and service. Thus, Mtshali (1999) pleads for co – operation rather than opposition and conflict. The secretary general of SADTU, Nxesi (1999) observed that employers only understand the message of mass action. The relationship between the State and the Union has not improved the level of agreement or common purpose but rather increased the tension and the potential for conflict (Hartshone, 1992).

Against this potentially confrontational background the Novice Primary School Principal will find that his managerial capacity will be put to the sternest test through Union actions like “chalkdown”, “go slows”, “strikes” and refusal to comply with departmental instructions (Hartshone, 1992).

2.9 CONCLUSION

A study of this nature can be problematic especially when the literature around the central theme is limited. However, people, materials, means (Van der Westhuizen & Legoto, 1995) are the synthesis of the challenges that confront Novice Primary School Principals.

The next chapter addresses the research methodology of this study.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will elaborate on the main elements of methodology which according to Leedy (1997) is the core concept underlying all research.

Leedy (1997) further observes that :

“ the methodology controls the study, dictates the acquisition of the data, arranges them in logical relationships, sets up a means of refining the raw data, contrives an approach so that the meaning that lie below the surface of those data becomes manifest, and finally issues a conclusion or series of conclusions that lead to an expansion of knowledge.”

Thus, this chapter can be regarded as critical to this investigation where the researcher will refer to some of the more general features of research that informed this study and explicate the whole data gathering process. It will be argued that within the scope of this study, the three methodologies were appropriate in understanding the two critical studies. The survey was an appropriate means to explore the challenges faced by Novice Primary School Principals and the Case Study was adequate to get a deeper understanding of these challenges faced by Novice Primary School Principals in their school context.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study was given research rigour through the following, viz :

- ❑ **THE GENERAL METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION**
- ❑ **RESEARCH PARAMETERS**
- ❑ **QUALITATIVE APPROACH**
- ❑ **VALIDITY**

3.2.1 THE GENERAL METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

This study lends itself to descriptive statistics which refer to procedures for organising, summarising and describing information or data (McCall, 1980). In essence these are relatively simple statistical tools for characterising data (Best, 1977). The study entailed organising, summarising and describing data through the use of simple statistical procedures, e.g. calculating high frequencies for the purpose of understanding the challenges and identifying the coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

3.2.2 QUALITATIVE APPROACH

Descriptive statistics are largely employed when the research is qualitative in orientation. Creswell (1994) defines qualitative study as an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic process formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting. The human problem in this study is in effect an educational problem where the school environment is the natural setting where the informants are principals, educators, SEM and learners. The task of a qualitative

researcher is to interpret and understand how the various participants construct the world around them (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). However, the primary focus of the study is the Novice Primary School Principal.

Qualitative research is a dynamic process. It allows for adaptation as the research inquiry develops. This study had to accommodate changes and developments as the process unfolded, for example, decisions had to be made concerning the involvement of the School Governing Body and whether the case study was to be primary or secondary data source.

Often, qualitative researchers are described as the research instrument (Leedy, 1997) since the researcher is involved in the natural setting engaging the participants directly or indirectly. In this study, the researcher interacted with all the participants individually and as groups. This gave this investigator the further opportunity of observing a range of behaviours related to this research (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). However, the focus was the challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals. Yet, Leedy (1997) comments that when qualitative researchers observe the specifics of a situation they hope to increase their understanding of the broader phenomenon of which the situation is an instance. While the study concentrates on Novice Primary School Principals some insights could be generated concerning principals in general.

3.2.3 RESEARCH PARAMETERS

Jansen (1998) recommends that data collection need not be overwhelming but parsimonious yet elegant. However, given the context of the research, the investigator resorted to a triangulated methodology (Moyle & Suschitzky,

1999) which is a multi data – gathering technique. Such an approach according to Vithal & Jansen (1996) has promise of creativity and innovativeness and helps to enrich the data collection.

The main source of data was obtained from the Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ). This was validated against the comprehensive case study and the semi- structured interview.

Hence, the study benefitted through separate data from the Novice Primary School Principals, SMT, educators, learners, the superintendent of education and school records.

3.2.4 VALIDITY

Validity is an attempt to “check out” whether the meaning and interpretation of the research instrument is sound (Vithal & Jansen, 1998). One way to establish validity is to compare findings of one instrument with findings from another instrument. Leedy (1997) also notes that validity is about soundness of the measuring instrument.

The study was informed by the Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ) (**SEE APPENDIX 4**). However, the Primary School Educators Questionnaire (PSEQ) (**SEE APPENDIX 5**), Primary School Learners Questionnaire (PSLQ) (**SEE APPENDIX 6**), Document Analysis and a semi - Structured interview validated the PSPQ. Face validity (Leedy, 1997) was assured through the fulfilling of the following conditions, viz. : the sample was representative of the population and the four instruments

ascertained what it was supposed to measure, challenges and coping strategies of the Novice School Principals.

The limitation of this study lies in its external validity because due to the small sample size, the generalisability of the conclusions cannot be applied to the universe (Leedy, 1997)

Leedy (1997) indicates there are threats to validity. This study experienced this constraint through the non – availability of the SGB minutes and the non – participation of the School Governing Body despite prior written notices, follow – up telephone calls and three visits each to the School Governing Body Members. It is significant that the educators have recorded a poor relationship with the SGB as a managerial challenge.

It must be noted that another lesser threat was experienced when educators were uncomfortable with providing biographical information for fear of being identified. This reluctance can be explained in the context of the Rationalisation and Redeployment policy which engendered much distrust and suspicion among educators. At the time of this investigation the Rationalisation and Redeployment policy was yet to be finalised.

3.3 THE RESEARCH POPULATION AND THE SAMPLE

The population of this research comprises of all Primary School Principals, educators and the superintendents of education from the six Districts in the North Durban Region.

This study was intended to be limited in its scope. Time, cost and geographical expanse rendered it not possible to sample participants from the 734 schools within the six Districts.

The sample was confined to Novice Primary School Principals appointed in 1998 and 1999. Six such Novice Primary Schools Principals were identified from one of the six districts in NDR.

This district has 2500 state paid Educators and 92 Primary Schools (KwaZulu-Natal SNAP 2001). It was expedient to randomly select a case study school where the manager was a Novice Primary School Principal. This enabled the SMT, educators, learners and the SGB from the case study school to participate in the research.

3.4 RESEARCH TOOLS

The following research tools were used to gather data, viz ;

- ❑ **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**
- ❑ **THE CASE STUDY**
- ❑ **DOCUMENT STUDY**
- ❑ **THE INTERVIEW**

3.4.1 QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire is usually distributed through the post to be filled in by the respondent on his or her own. Sometimes the questionnaires is completed under the supervision of the investigator. It is estimated that the questionnaire technique for gathering data is used in

more than half of the total research studies in education. While many questionnaires seek factual information others are concerned with obtaining opinions and attitude. The questionnaire if properly constructed and administered is the best available instruments for obtaining information from widely spread sources.

Questions may be asked in a closed or in an open form or in combination. The closed form facilitates answering and makes it easier for the researcher to code and classify the responses. The open form enables the respondent to state his case freely and to possibly give reasons. The open question evokes a fuller and richer response and probably probes deeper than the closed question.

The questionnaires in my study contained all the above elements. Different questionnaires were constructed for different source groups. The questionnaires were developed for Novice Primary School Principals, School Management Team, Level One Educators and the Learners. Data was obtained through the following Questionnaires, viz :

3.4.1.1. Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ)

A pilot study was undertaken of the PSPQ to eliminate any unclear questions. Colleagues were asked to comment on the clarity of the questions in the questionnaires. A few changes and improvements were subsequently made to the original questionnaires. The questionnaire was constructed according to accepted principles of questionnaire designs (Bailey, 1997). Some of these principles are; the questionnaire is designed to obtain opinion or attitudes, the questions must not be ambiguous, questions must be a single statement,

questionnaires must be reasonably short, questionnaire must command the interest and the attention of the respondent, etc.

A review of Educational Management Literature served as a valuable source of criteria selected (Gounden and Dayaram, 1990) to determine Managerial challenges of Primary School Principals. The PSPQ comprises three sections, viz:

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

This section elicited information on Gender, Age, Qualification, Teaching and Management Experience from the Novice Primary School Principals.

This is an important part of the questionnaire. It provides an understanding of the Educational and management experience of the Novice Primary School background. This information on the Principal's management experience or lack thereof prior to being promoted ought to impact the central issue of challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

SECTION B: FORCED – CHOICE RATING SCALE

This section comprised a forced – choice Likert type survey. There are fifty items. Principals had a choice of one option from Yes, Unsure, No. This approach facilitated statistical processing.

As the reviewed literature is sparse concerning issues around Novice Primary School Principals, a general conceptual framework was developed. The items in the questionnaire had direct relevance to the conceptual framework developed in Section B.

This comprehensive questionnaire sought information that maybe regarded as factors that represent potential challenges for Primary School Principals.

SECTION C: OPEN – ENDED

This section had three components. The first two components were directly associated to the critical questions.

Linked to the first critical question, Principals had to list challenges that they are confronted with in their capacity as an Administrative, a Professional, and an Educational Manager respectively. Cawood & Gibbon (1985) list these as a priori categories in synthesising the roles and responsibilities of an Educational Manager.

With reference to the second critical question, Principals had to indicate how they coped with these Administrative, Professional and Educational challenges.

The additional comments section was provided to allow Principals to include any new, but relevant matter, that relates to the central theme of this study.

3.4.1.2 Primary School Educators Questionnaire (PSEQ)

The PSEQ comprises two sections, viz:

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Educators were requested to provide information on Gender, Age, Qualifications, Teaching Experience, Management Experience and their Staff Status. This background information will sometimes influence how an

Educator will perceive his/her Principal. It is possible that a temporary Educator may regard his Principal differently from his permanent colleague. The same may hold for whether the Educator at Level One has or has not had acting management experience.

SECTION B: OPEN – ENDED QUESTIONS

This section had six questions. The first question related to the Educators' perceptions concerning challenges of Novice Primary School Principals. The next question had direct relevance to the second critical question which attempted to establish the understanding of their Principal' coping strategies in the face of numerous challenges.

The next three question were distractors and included merely for academic purpose. Items 3, 4 and 5 which are the distractors are intended to encourage the respondents to provide a holistic picture of their Novice Primary School Manager and attempting at the same time to elicit factual and unbiased responses to the two critical questions.

The sixth question was important in that it attempted to obtain further subjective information that will enrich the data.

This questionnaire was also used to derive information from the School Management Team (SMT).

3.4.1.3 Primary School Learners Questionnaire (PSLQ)

This was a simple open-ended questionnaire. The PSLQ comprised five questions. The first three acted as distractors. They were easy questions

which were included to enable the Learners to respond without difficulty and prepare them for the next two questions which were more demanding. The last two questions attempted to probe Learners's understanding of challenges and coping strategies of Principals respectively. The inclusion of this questionnaire complemented the data.

3.4.2 THE CASE STUDY

Case studies are concerned with investigating and interpreting certain attributes or characteristics of individuals or groups. They are a type of qualitative research which explores a single phenomenon (“ the case ”) and collects detailed information through a variety of data collection procedures (Creswell, 1994). The investigation takes place in its natural context and includes the point of the participants (Leedy, 1997). Data is gathered from a variety of sources to present a description of the phenomenon.

The phenomenon or case in this study was challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals. However, the Case Study was not central to the study.

It served the following purposes, viz. :

- Involved some stakeholders in Education
- Enriched the data
- Provided the study a form of content validity which is when a questionnaire according to Leedy (1997) is so constructed that it adequately covers both the content and the objectives of the study.

The school or the Principal was not the focus of the study. The latter merely provided the opportunity to access the school, made available the records and was also a respondent.

The following elements constituted the Case Study, viz. :

- **The SMT**
- **The Educators**
- **The Learners**
- **School Records**

3.4.2.1 The SMT

The SMT responded to the PSEQ.

3.4.2.2 Educators

The Educators participated through completing the PSEQ. The “ school community “ was merely another source to enhance the data and help interpret her own and others experiences and realities (Hartshorne, 1992).

3.4.2.3 The Learners

Learners were randomly selected from Grade Seven. They completed the Primary School Learners’s Questionnaire (PSLQ) under the supervision of the investigator.

3.4.2.4 Documents – School Records

Many small – scale real life studies involve in some way relating to an organisation, such as an office, school or hospital (Robson, 1988).

Robson (1988) points out that a feature that all organisations have in common is the collection of records and other information relating to their function which can form a valuable supplementary resource and is often possible to access them. Robson (1988) cautions that records are unlikely to provide direct answers to the questions that we are interested in when carrying out the research. However, patterns may suggest themselves and trends emerge which had not previously occurred (Robson, 1988) to the researcher. The Principal made available the following School Records with the usual ethical principles that apply in relation to confidentiality (Robson, 1988), viz. :

- ❑ **The School Log Book**
- ❑ **Minutes of Meetings**

3.4.2.4.1 THE SCHOOL LOG BOOK

This is a vital document which records the day to day life of the school. It is a living diary for posterity (Goodwin, 1968). The principal enters every matter with recording.

3.4.2.4.2 MINUTES OF MEETINGS

The following minutes were made available for scrutiny viz.:

- ❑ Management Committee
- ❑ Staff Committee
- ❑ School Governing Body

NOTE : The SGB minutes were not produced.

3.4.3 INTERVIEW WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION (SEM)

This approach has the advantage of enriching the data by introducing broad range of issues that can be explored Cohen & Manion (1989), Oppenheim

(1993). The SEM brought a Policy perspective in understanding Novice Primary School Principals challenges and coping strategies.

3.5 THE PROCESS OF DATA COLLECTION

The following preliminary arrangements had to be undertaken to facilitate the process of data collection viz:

The SEM was informed of the researcher's intent to visit schools and permission was enlisted.

- School Principals were first notified of my study at a principal's forum conducted by the SEM.
- A follow – up letter was written reminding principals of my study.
- After a school was randomly selected the investigator visited the case study school to apprise the Novice Primary School Principal that the educators and learners were selected as the random sample. The principal was to convey this to educators at a formal staff meeting.
- Telephonic communication was made with the SEM to arrange a suitable date and time for the semi – structured interview.

3.6 INSTRUMENT ADMINISTRATION

3.6.1 Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ)

This was personally handed over to the Principals in question at a Principals' Forum. After a week each of the Principals were telephoned to enquire on the progress of the completion of the questionnaire. A week later each of these

Principals were favoured with a personal visit in an attempt to retrieve the completed questionnaire.

3.6.2 Primary School Educators Questionnaire (PSEQ)

Educators were personally handed the PSEQ at a staff meeting. A staff member was identified to liaise with her colleagues to collect the completed questionnaires.

3.6.3 Semi- Structured Interview with SEM

A convenient time during the Michaelmas holiday was arranged with the SEM when the semi – structured interview was conducted. The process was tape – recorded.

3.6.4 Primary School Learners Questionnaire (PSLQ)

The school was visited personally by the investigator. The random sampling was done in advance through the use of class attendance registers. Learners were requested to complete the open-ended questionnaire. Educators accommodated the researcher in allowing him to use the lifeskills period. There was no time limit. All learners completed the questionnaire within thirty minutes.

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Data collected from questionnaires was captured and coded manually. This was possible because of the small sample. The semi-structured interview was taped and then transcribed. . The documents were analysed as they became available.

3.8 THE LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Due to the size of the sample, this study has the usual problem of Generalisability. The research methodology gave rise to further limitations. Access to schools was problematic. Time was always at a premium.

Two Principals did not participate in the study which reduced the small sample size further. These two principals returned the unfilled questionnaires. The educators were reluctant to complete the biographical section. They were of the opinion that confidentiality will be breached. However, this lack of biographical information had little bearing on the study.

3.9 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the strategy for collecting data. It addressed the choice, design and administration of the research tools for my study. The following chapter documents the next phase of the study process (Vithal and Jansen, 1998) which is data recording and analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF DATA, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this chapter is the analysis of the data produced in this study. The chapter attempts to highlight the issues related to the critical questions of the study. Specifically, it endeavours to unpack the following critical questions from the data produced: -

- ❑ **What are the managerial challenges faced by recently appointed Novice Primary School Principals ?**
- ❑ **How do these Novice Primary School Principals cope with these perceived challenges ?**

Data has been derived from the comprehensive Primary School Principal Questionnaire (PSPQ), an in-depth Case Study of a Primary School and from a semi-structured interview with a Superintendent of Education. The meaning that lie below the surface of the data (Leedy, 1997) from these research instruments is explained. The information is also reflected in tables or summarised in the Appendixes.

This chapter is developed by detailing the data management process and thus setting the context for an analysis of the data.

Finally, the scope of the study is widened with a general synthesis of the major findings of the study inferred from the multi-data sources.

4.2 MANAGEMENT OF DATA

The research instruments, PSPQ and the semi-structured interview as well as the third data collection source, the case study were described in detail, in the preceding chapter. Before meaning could be made of this rich information, a data management plan rendered it amenable to analysis. The collated data from the multiple sources are systematically recorded followed by interpretative explanations.

4.2.1 Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ)

The Primary School Principals Questionnaire has three sections, viz:

- ❑ **A Biographical Section**
- ❑ **A Likert 50 item rating scale**
- ❑ **An Open-ended section**

In **section A**, biographical data was collected from a circuit in which six Primary Schools participated that had Novice Principals appointed at the time of the study. Four such principals responded to the questionnaire.

The respondents were all males. All these principals obtained both academic and professional graduate qualifications. The nominal date of appointment helped in establishing that the principals teaching experience ranged from 12 years to 27 years.

One of these principals who is in the teaching profession for between 21-25 years also has secondary experience. He held a management position and acted as principal prior to his promotion as a primary school principal.

Two Novice Primary School Principals were level one educators prior to their promotion. **SEE TABLE 2.**

Section B contained fifty objective response items. This approach facilitated statistical processing. As the reviewed literature is limited concerning Novice Primary School Principals a general conceptual framework was designed. The items in this section had direct relevance to the conceptual framework. This comprehensive section of the instrument sought information on the conceptualised constructs of this investigation concerning management experience, perceptions of role functions, orientation and training for new primary school principals, decision-making, staff problems, learner issues, official policy issues, school governing body, unions, parental matters, leadership issues, resources and transformation. These issues represent potential challenges for Novice Primary School Principals.

The Novice Primary School Principals recorded the following items as managerial challenges. (**SEE TABLE 5**).

In **Section C**, the Novice Primary School Principals had to respond to three questions. Question one and two had direct relevance to the two critical questions respectively. Question three sought additional information.

Question one required these principals to record their managerial challenges or demands summarised in **APPENDIX 9.1** in three specific categories, viz :

- ❑ **As an Administrative Manager**
- ❑ **As a Professional Manager**
- ❑ **As an Educational Manager**

In their administrative roles the Novice Primary School Principals noted the issue of time that is involved attending to parent issues, responding to the demands of educators and resolving discipline problems of learners. Lack of resources, human and physical, makes the Novice Primary School Principal's administrative responsibility more onerous.

The major challenges facing the Novice Primary School Principal as a professional manager concerns the educators as classroom practitioners and their human relations that give rise to conflict situations. The lack of time was mentioned that militated against performing other important professional tasks as the school's manager.

Policy matters like the developmental appraisal system, curriculum reform and general transformation and the need to complement a short supply of resources, are the main challenges that confront Novice Primary School Principals in the discharging of their educational managerial responsibilities.

Novice Primary School Principals had to indicate in question two their coping strategies that address challenges in the above managerial roles. The Novice Primary School Principals are engaging in a variety of approaches to address their demands as a manager. The data suggests that Novice Primary School Principals have been creative in dealing with administrative matters through delegation of duties, planning and prioritising and the introduction of innovative management systems. The task of being a professional manager is executed by concentrating on the professional needs of educators. Novice Primary School Principals have empowered, counselled, and involved the latter in participatory management.

Novice Primary School Principals accountability as educational managers have been through the school's learning areas committee, networking and curriculum reform. **(SEE APPENDIX 11.1)**

The language issue and the role of the School Governing Body were the significant observations in the general comments noted by Novice Primary School Principals in question three.

4.2.2 The Case Study

The data from the PSPQ though comprehensive was complemented with relevant information elicited from other educational stakeholders through a case study. An in-depth case study helped make the breadth of this investigation more expansive as data was obtained from four different sources. Furthermore, the case study had some notable distinguishing features.

It provided validity, enriched the data, created multiple instruments and provided insights from important stakeholders perspectives that interface with the Novice Primary School Principals.

The case study school despite it being almost 36 years old is solidly built and well serviced by public transport. It has adequate classrooms and some specialist room facilities. The media-centre has furniture, library books and equipment which have been accumulated over the years. Though good care has been taken, some of those resources have become obsolete and have come under disrepair. A modest sports field with minimum sports equipment is also available.

It must be noted that the Novice Primary School Principals in this study have almost similar school facilities.

The Novice Primary School Principal from the case study school was not the subject of study. However, the educators, the school management team, the learners and school records constituted the case study. To some extent this approach gave the case study a sense of uniqueness. The following multiple instruments comprised the case study, viz.:

- **Primary School Educators Questionnaire (PSEQ)**
- **School Management Team (SMT)**
- **Primary School Learners Questionnaire (PSLQ)**
- **Document Study (School Records)**

4.2.2.1 Primary School Educators Questionnaire (PSEQ)

The PSEQ was made up of two sections.

The biographical details in **Section A**, were not completed by the educators. There was a great level of discomfort as the educators felt that it may identify them. This study was undertaken at a time when the department of education introduced the policy of redeployment and rationalisation which in effect declared educators surplus to the needs of a school and may have resulted in their transfer and possible retrenchment. This section is not reported on. Despite the uncertainty, nine of the 18 educators responded. Sample information is recorded in **TABLE 1.2**.

Educators had to respond to six questions in **section B** of the PSEQ. Question one, two and six have bearing on the critical questions of the study. Questions three, four and five are included as distractors.

It is noted in question one by the educators that resources, learner discipline, the SGB and department of education are the challenges facing the Novice Primary School Principal.

The educators contend in question two that Novice Primary School Principals coping strategies include consultation, visible involvement in school activities and being organised.

It is recommended by educators in question six that Novice Primary School Principals and SGB undergo training courses.

A summary of these responses to questions one, two and six are reflected in the following appendices , viz:

- Appendix 9.3 : **Managerial Challenges of the Novice Primary School Principal**
- Appendix 11.3 : **Coping Strategies of the Novice Primary School Principal**
- Appendix 9.3 : **Open-ended question**

4.2.2.2 School Management Team (SMT)

The PSEQ was constructed so that it served a dual purpose by providing data on educators as well as the school management team (SMT). The PSEQ was designed such that data can be obtained on those educators who are managers or acting managers that made up part of the SMT.

The data for the SMT was gleaned from the PSEQ. In the biographical section of the PSEQ, management and acting management experience was requested. The school has a principal and a deputy principal. Periodically, acting managers serve on the SMT. Data regarding the two critical questions were obtained from questions 1, 2 and 6.

According to the SMT, the Novice Primary School Principal is challenged by learners, educators problem parents, resources and department of education policy.

The SMT note that the Novice Primary School Principal copes with these challenges through staff consultation.

The responses by the SMT regarding challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals are reflected in **APPENDIX 9.2 and 11.2** respectively. The SMT did not respond to the open-ended section of the PSEQ.

4.2.2.3 Primary School Learners Questionnaire (PSLQ)

There were three grade seven classes of learners with an enrolment of 122.

The learners are of mixed racial background. The majority of the learners are African learners. The mean age of the learners who participated in the study is 12 years and 9 months. Sample information is indicated in **(TABLE 1.3)**

A random sampling approach was employed. Learners who were odd numbered in the register were selected to make up the sample. The return rate was 67%. Learners who responded anonymously gave their perceptions on the two critical questions. Learners have indicated that educators, peers, resources, school building, funding and the department of education as factors that challenge the Novice Primary School Principal.

Learners responses to the two critical questions are summarised in **APPENDIX 9.4 and APPENDIX 11.4** .

4.2.2.4 School Documents

The following records were accessed from the case study school, viz.:

- ❑ **The School Log Book**
- ❑ **The Management Meeting Minutes**
- ❑ **The Staff Meeting Minutes**

The School Log Book

After studying the log book entries for the period under review the salient data was organised for ease of reference under the following categories :

- Superintendent of Education
- Educator
- Learners
- Parental Contact
- School Events

The details are summarised in **APPENDIX 10.1**

The Management Meeting Minutes

The management minutes are a record of the deliberations of the school management team.

Eleven meetings were convened for the period under review. On an average two meetings are held monthly.

In the first term in addition to the principal and the deputy principal there were three volunteer level one educators in the SMT.

In the second term the volunteers were substituted by three new acting heads of department.

Managerial challenges largely concerned learners and educators. Reference was also made at times to parents. A summary is recorded in **APPENDIX 10.2 .**

The Staff Meeting Minutes

The staff meeting minutes were scrutinised to establish official school acknowledgement and responses to managerial challenges and possible ways of coping with these challenges.

Nineteen staff meetings were held. On an average three meetings are held. The main challenges recorded during staff deliberations concerned learners and educators. A summary is recorded in **APPENDIX 10.3 .**

4.2.3 Semi-Structured Interview with the SEM

The semi – structured interview with the Superintendent of Education had the advantage of enriching the data by introducing broad range of issues that can be explored Cohen & Manion (1989), Oppenheim (1993).

The SEM was interviewed on the basis of anonymity. A semi – structured approach was employed. The interview was taped.

The salient aspects of the transcription relevant to the two critical questions are summarised in **APPENDIX 9.5 and Appendix 11.5.**

4.3 ANALYSIS OF DATA

According to Leedy (1997), research design involves the visualisation of data and the employment of those data in the entire research project. Kweit & Kweit (1981) assert that research design is the strategy, plan and the structure of a research project. The data collection plan of this study was influenced by Leedy (1997) and Kweit & Kweit (1981) in that due to the wealth of information this investigation generated, a data strategy was conceived to make for easy analysis.

Central to the data process was the relevance of the information from the multi-data source to the two critical questions. The data was also codified in terms of the stakeholders, viz. school management team, educators, learners and the superintendent of education. This facilitated comparisons and cross - referencing.

The data that suggests **Managerial Challenges (SEE TABLE 3)** of Novice Primary School Principals will be analysed followed by an interpretation of the **Coping Strategies (SEE TABLE 4)** employed by the Novice Primary School Principals to address these challenges.

4.3.1

MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES

4.3.1.1 The Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ)

All the respondents were males whose ages ranged from 30 – 59 yrs. The Novice Primary School Principals have both professional and academic qualifications. The teaching experience of a level one educator who was promoted as a Primary School Principal ranges between 1 - 15 years. This situation emerged because HRM 10 of 1998 called for applications from any educator who had at least seven years teaching experience. This was one of the Novice Primary School Principals who had no managerial experience and was appointed to management in accordance with HRM 10 of 1998.

There were two new principals who were level one educators with no management experience prior to their promotion. One of these principals indicated that he did not have a clear perception of his role as a manager. It can be concluded that if a Novice Primary School Principal commences his managerial responsibility on this premise, his beginning year or years will be a challenge until he has a firm understanding of his multifarious roles and responsibilities. The Novice Primary School Principal who had secondary school experience indicated that there is no difference in the challenges that both secondary and primary school principals face.

The second aspect of the PSPQ was a fifty item objective-type questionnaire. This section was so designed that the items implied managerial challenges for the principal. For the purpose of analysis an item was regarded as a challenge if 50 % or more of the Novice Primary School Principals responded accordingly.

An analysis of the data revealed that 22 items were managerial challenges for the Novice Primary School Principals who were respondents. The information is summarised into 12 categories to facilitate discussion, viz:

- ❑ Role Expectations
- ❑ Orientation and Training
- ❑ Staff
- ❑ School Governing Body
- ❑ Unions
- ❑ Learners
- ❑ Parents
- ❑ Funding
- ❑ Leadership
- ❑ Responsibilities
- ❑ Resources
- ❑ Department of Education and Culture

This is reflected in **TABLE 5**.

APPENDIX 9.1 refers to the Novice Primary School Principals' response with respect to administrative, professional and educational managerial challenges. These three categorisations were employed because Cawood and Gibbon (1985) suggest the multifarious roles of principals. This section was included to allow these Novice Primary School Principals to focus specifically on their practice and provide further insight into the first critical question.

The responses of these Novice Primary School Principals responses appeared not to be precise despite the simplicity and clarity of questions. It must be noted that the principal as manager is the department's link with respect to interpreting policy and implementing its provisions. Since the Novice Primary School Principals responses suggested a lack of comprehension of the task at hand it is possible that the important responsibility of understanding and delivery of complex policy may be a major challenge for the beginning principal .

This aspect of the data was nevertheless valuable. administrative challenges arose because of inadequate support staff in addition to routine clerical matters. Challenges of a professional and educational nature were largely educator-oriented. It is significant that time is cited as a militating factor against Novice Primary School Principals functioning as professional managers. Principals have the important but difficult challenge to instill professionalism among educators.

Curriculum matters feature significantly in respect of educational challenges for managers. Changes in the educational system and lack of resources are also noted. These challenges are referred to by the level one educators (**APPENDIX 9.3**) and the SEM (**APPENDIX 9.5**).

4.3.1.2 Educators Level One

The Educators were part of the case study which comprised a combination of data sources. The information from the case study was primarily to establish validity for the general investigation.

The data was obtained from the PSEQ.

The educators perceptions of Novice Primary School Principals' managerial challenges were summarised for easy reference according to the following categories viz :

- ❑ Educators
- ❑ Learners
- ❑ Community
- ❑ School Governing Body
- ❑ Resources
- ❑ School Building

The educators are very perceptive with respect to what they regard as challenges for the Novice Primary School Principal. They are in accord with the Novice Primary School Principals and the SMT in terms of some of the broad categories identified.

4.3.1.2 Learners

Data from learners' perspective was elicited from the PSLQ. The learners have recorded issues concerning the educators and their peers as what they understand to be challenges for their principal.

In respect of educators representing managerial challenges, the learners have alluded to educator strikes and complaints against educators. No specific details were provided about the nature of complaints against educators.

Learners have again indicated challenges concerning their peers that educators and the SMT have not referred too. However, the Novice Primary School Principals' have indicated that minor and serious discipline issues were addressed by them. Learners recorded the following as challenges for their principal, viz:

- Drugs
- Smoking
- Sexual behaviour
- Truancy
- Late – coming
- Safety
- Department of Education

Except for truancy and late – coming the other matters represent serious managerial challenges for the Novice Primary School Principal.

It is particularly insightful that learners have observed that the department of education is one of the challenges that the Novice Primary School Principal has to contend with in his or her role as a manager.

The views of the learners sent a clear message to the investigator that the observations of the former are significant for the general understanding of managerial challenges. **SEE APPENDIX 9.4**

4.3.1.4 School Management Team (SMT)

The SMT from the case study school had two incumbent promotion post holders. There was a system of rotation of acting promotion post holders for the remaining posts. The Novice Primary School Principal had to devise a system to fill these acting posts. Staff and principal were at great odds with each other over this issue. In effect, the Novice Primary School Principal and the deputy principal were engaged in the general management of the school for a considerable period. At one stage three educators volunteered as promotion post holders. Subsequently due to a policy directive from the department of education the school was entitled to one head of department. Thereafter, a level one educator acted in the post based on seniority. This issue was a major challenge for the Novice Primary School Principal in the first and critical term of the year.

The SMT noted that discipline was a challenge for the Novice Primary School Principal. They observed that the professional discipline of the educators was wanting for e.g. high absenteeism amongst educators caused considerable organisational challenges for the Novice Primary School Principal.

The SMT also identified learner discipline, resources and parental issues that challenge managers. Significantly, the Novice Primary School Principals, the educators and the learners are in agreement with these managerial challenges for Novice Primary School Principals. **SEE APPENDIX 9.2**

4.3.1.5 The Superintendent of Education (SEM)

The SEM is a bureaucratic representative of the department of education. He provided insights from a policy perspective.

The SEM indicated that considerable responsibility rests with the Novice Primary School Principal's leadership quality as well as his innate traits of capability, initiative, skill and competence. While this confidence in the Novice Primary School Principal is admirable, the issue of lack of orientation and training prior to assuming principalship is significant to the extent that he acknowledged it as a major managerial challenge.

The PSEQ respondents were in accord with the SEM with respect to the need for orientation for Novice Primary School Principals. There is support from the SEM through workshops, meetings etc. He also noted newly appointed headmasters are also challenged by demands made by younger staff members, unreasonable parents and major learner issues which can be exhaustive. The SEM held the view that the challenges for secondary school principals cannot be separated from their primary school peers.

A view that only the SEM mentioned is that transformation matters pose a major challenge for new Primary School Principals e.g. integration, language of instruction, reducing learner enrollment.

The SEM advises that the managerial challenges of the Novice Primary School Principal can be addressed through the meaningful participation of the management committee, the school governing body and other role players.

The SEM stated emphatically that there are no rulebook solutions to challenges which depend on numerous factors and may vary from locality to locality. **SEE APPENDIX 9.5**

4.3.1.6 Document Analysis

Robson (1988) points out that administrative records (documents) are unlikely to provide direct answers to the questions we are interested in when carrying out research. He sees the value of such data in what light such information can throw on our research questions.

The advice by Robson (1988) to rearrange data and be assisted by the research questions was adhered to in this study.

School records enriched the data and was well worth spending a fair amount of time looking at (Robson, 1988).

The data was codified into the following categories to make meaning of the considerable information, viz:

- Superintendent of Education
- Educators
- Learners
- Parents
- School Events

Though these school documents did not suggest further questions or act as a starting point for unseen lines of enquiry (Robson, 1988) it helped in the additional corroboration of data acquired from other sources.

The school log book indicates that policy matters are major managerial challenges. This is indicated through the SEM, an official representative of the department of education who conveys these policies.

It is a source of great stress when feedback on controversial policy matters e.g. new admission policy in grade one have to be conveyed to the staff, the SGB and the parents by the Novice Primary School Principals.

Educator absence and late arrival make additional and unnecessary organisational demands. However, conflict with official policy which engendered industrial action proved particularly challenging for school managers as with interpersonal conflict either involving the Novice Primary School Principal or where this principal has to act as a mediator.

Learner misdemeanours and complaints of a serious nature by parents were also recorded. Forced early closure of schools due to both organised and spontaneous industrial action were indicated as challenges.

The case study school had to contend with problems of constituting a school management structure.

In part this was as a result of policy directives from the department of education which placed restriction on the composition of the committee.

Educators with future promotion in mind wanted to act as managers which amongst other things would favourably position them for promotion. Staff

showed great dissatisfaction over this matter. This was administratively exhausting. The controversial and unresolved redeployment policy continues to challenge many Novice Primary School Principals. The developmental appraisal system was not readily welcomed in a generally turbulent educational year. The challenge fell on the school manager to implement this departmental policy.

A matter that occupied a fair amount of attention in the management committee minutes was learner discipline.

Learner in-discipline and the acting management posts dominated the information in the staff meetings records.

Learner in-discipline reached unmanageable proportions to the extent that it was an agenda item that had to be regularly discussed. Under these circumstances the code of conduct assumed great significance for school management. This mechanism was formalised and implemented. However, learner discipline is still a major managerial concern for Novice Primary School Principals.

The acting management posts were already discussed in the section concerning management committee minutes. At times decisions arrived at were not satisfactory to some staff members. However, it took some creative decision-making to convene a school management structure.

This process had to be repeated several times taking new dynamics into account. There was tension within and among staff members. While this did

not affect the smooth functioning of the school it was a managerial challenge that had the potential to impact negatively on the entire school.

4.3.2 COPING STRATEGIES

This section will address critical question two with respect to the coping mechanism the Novice Primary School Principals employ to address their managerial challenges.

Reference will also be made to how the case study components and the SEM perceive these coping strategies of the Novice Primary School Principal.

4.3.2.1 Novice Primary School Principals

Coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals in addressing managerial challenges is reflected in **APPENDIX 11.1** .

The same categories viz : administrative, professional and educational were used.

It was expected of Novice Primary School Principals to refer specifically to the challenges indicated in section B of the questionnaire. This was not compiled with as required. It rendered analysis somewhat difficult.

However, the coping strategies were fairly standard approaches. It was encouraging that a transformation policy was in place. It was of concern that the time-management issue re-surfaced.

4.3.2.2 School Management Team

The school management's observation was that the Novice Primary School Principal employs staff consultation. The SMT in the case study school had undergone changes. At times there were volunteers. There was no stability in this SMT. It can be surmised that the very nature of the SMT and the issues surrounding its composition was a major challenge for the manager. However, the SMT's view is in accord with the educators and the SEM that the manager consults with staff.

4.3.2.3 Educators Level One

Level one educators provided greater input than the SMT on how the Novice Primary School Principal copes. The educators note a democratic management style of their manager who involves important stakeholders in a participatory management arrangement. It appears that staff is involved in decision-making. Furthermore, there is a consultative role for the school governing body. Educators have also recorded that the manager networks with neighbouring school principals.

This is a proactive coping mechanism. They have mentioned that the manager is visible through an involvement in the corporate life of the school is regarded as a coping strategy. Pastoral care by the Novice Primary School Principal is singled out as an important means of helping this Principal to address needs of both staff and learners. It was mentioned that their principal demonstrates a caring attitude to assist in the management of personnel. Prioritising is observed by the educators as a useful managerial tool for coping with school challenges. **See APPENDIX 11.3.**

4.3.2.4. Learners

As with indicating managerial challenges, the learners provided some mature responses on how they perceive the Novice Primary School Principal copes with managerial challenges. They have referred to the support of key staff members. The timeous reporting of matters to parents is important just as involving them in the education of their children. The learners have implied a balanced approach that is being both firm and friendly is a sound coping strategy. A systematic approach to learner in-discipline eg letters to parents, detention and suspension are observed as useful managerial strategies.

Creative school-wide programme increases awareness as well as addressing managerial concerns like drugs and litter in school. **SEE APPENDIX 11.4 .**

The learners provided very insightful perceptions on how their principal addresses managerial challenges. Their observations were pertinent and quite accurate.

4.4 GENERAL INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This study lends itself to further exploration of the data. In particular the 22 identified items of section B of the Primary School Principals Questionnaire (PSPQ) which suggest managerial challenges are subjected to additional analysis. The coping strategies of the Novice Primary School Principal is synthesised.

4.4.1

MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES

4.4.1.1 Role Expectations

25% of the respondents indicated unsure and 25% recorded that they did not have a good idea of what was expected as a Novice Primary School Principal. Further, it must be noted that two respondents had no management experience prior to their assumption as principals. There is no guideline or job description on what is expected of a principal. Compare this to a vacancy advertised in the media for a position in commerce or industry. In clear terms, the requirements as well as what is expected in the role is clearly defined. Though it may be argued that the department of education has provided a job description of the principals general responsibilities.

However, the aspiring candidate is not guided to refer to the manual in the first place. Ironically, these policy documents are handed to incumbent principals after they have assumed the post as a Novice Primary School Principal.

This situation also has implications for:

- the minimum requirements for appointment as primary school principals
- the current promotion process with respect to the parents being the majority in the interview panel

The SMT, the educators and the learners from the case study school did not make any reference to the role expectations of the Novice Primary School Principal. The SEM, observed that considerable responsibility rests with the principal's innate traits of capability, initiative and competence.

It can be concluded that the poor or lack of understanding of one's role expectations could contribute to the challenges of a Novice Primary School Principal.

4.4.1.2 Orientation and Training

The following items made reference to orientation and training for primary school principals:

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 6 | Need for an Orientation programme | 75 |
| 7 | Need for on-going training | 100 |
| 23 | Need for administrative training | 100 |

TABLE 6.1

This is a cluster of items that have great significance for a Novice Primary School Principal.

This cohort of principals did not experience an orientation programme prior to their assuming the post. While some training is now in progress there is resounding request for on-going training. The training that is requested must not be confused with the training programmes that the department of education and culture is periodically involved with e.g. whole school development, the development appraisal system or quality assurance. The latter are policy issues which all principals have to implement on behalf of the department of education and culture. Instead, what is lacking is addressing the managerial practice of Novice Primary School Principals through capacity

building, empowerment and skilling. This is clearly borne out by the Novice Primary School Principals requesting administrative training.

The SEM emphasised that the lack of orientation and training poses one of the biggest challenges for Novice Primary School Principals. The educators recorded that principals require management training and courses in human relations as one of the challenges of the Novice Primary School Principal.

Perhaps, orientation and training will reduce some managerial challenges of Novice Primary School Principals.

4.4.1.3 Staff

Staff matters as challenges for the Novice Primary School Principals :

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|---|----------|
| 11 | Lack of full staff support | 50 |
| 14 | Not contributing meaningfully to ethos of the schools | 50 |
| 18 | Lack of punctuality | 50 |
| 20 | Alleged Corporal Punishment by staff | 100 |

TABLE 6.2

The staff is vital to the smooth functioning of the school. Managers need full co-operation of the staff. Where this is lacking, energy expended on the errant educator/s can be exhaustively challenging.

The administering of corporal punishment is not permitted in public schools. Violations by educators have serious legal implications. There are serious

consequences for all concerned and inevitably this becomes a major managerial challenge for the Novice Primary School Principal.

4.4.1.4 School Governing Body

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|--|----------|
| 30 | Principals rely on SGB for decision-making | 50 |

TABLE 6.3

The South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 make provision for governance and professional management of public schools.

However, the former fall under the joint purvey of the SGB and the professional as a partnership activity. The latter is the sole responsibility of the professionals with support from the SGB in the promotion of such professional activities.

The Act does not permit the SGB to take decisions. The Novice Primary School Principals challenge will be compounded if the SGB take decisions that are of a professional nature.

The SEM also points out that the SGB cannot interfere in the professional management of the school.

All the SGB members from the case study school did not participate in the investigation despite repeated attempts by the investigator. Furthermore, the records of the SGB were not made available for scrutiny.

The educators implied that there was not a satisfactory relationship with the SGB. They observed also that the school governing body was not qualified to select leaders. The Novice Primary School Principal respondents made no anecdotal comments concerning the SGB.

It can be concluded that the SGB can potentially contribute to the challenges of the Novice Primary School Principals if the former confuse their governance functions with that of professional school management.

4.4.1.5 Unions

Due to the new dispensation in education as part of the transformation process, the unions are assured legitimate participation as one of the key stakeholders in education.

The following are the major unions in KwaZulu - Natal viz;

- SADTU: South African Democratic Teachers Union
- NAPTOSA: National Professional Teachers Organisation of South Africa
- SAOU: Suid – Afrikaanse Onderwysers Unie

Educators choose membership to any one of the above Unions. In the context of the study, Novice Primary School Principals indicated that they are affiliated to unions and they permit union activity in their schools.

However, all the Novice Primary School Principals recorded that the union members are hostile at times. It can be surmised that union members get negatively assertive during union activities like chalkdown, marches, strikes etc. On such occasions educator absenteeism is generally high. The Novice

Primary School Principal has to organise the school with a smaller staff. His challenge is compounded when a rival organisation does not participate in a particular unionised activity. There is inevitable tension within and amongst staff.

The challenge then goes beyond the union activity where the Novice School Principal has to concentrate his efforts in keeping the staff as a cohesive unit.

4.4.1.6 Learners

Discipline represented the main learner issue for Novice Primary School Principals as noted in the following items, viz :

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|---|----------|
| 33 | Learner Discipline is a problem | 75 |
| 34 | Addressed serious learner Discipline Problems | 100 |

TABLE: 6.4

Learners are central to the whole business of education. Schools exist primarily to serve the educational needs of the learners. However, schools go beyond their primary task and in fact strive for the holistic development of the learner. It is inevitable that learners will pose general discipline problems. Managers are suitably equipped to address routine discipline issues. However, there is a perception that there are serious or major learner discipline issues. The implication is that other stakeholders, for example, parents, SGB, department of education, outside agencies (social workers, psychologist, attorney etc) will ultimately become involved with learner discipline issues. The Novice Primary School Principal not only has to

address the discipline issue internally, but contend with the demands of other role-players from outside the school.

The educators, the SMT, the learners and the SEM are unanimous in their agreement over the challenges learner discipline pose for the Novice Primary School Principals.

4.4.1.7 Parents

The Novice Primary School Principals noted that item 35 presented a managerial challenge for them

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|----------|
| 35 | Parents are difficult on occasions. | 75 |

TABLE: 6.5

Parents are an important segment of the stakeholders in education. The critical role of parents is the center - piece of transformation in education. Their vital role is assured through participation and involvement in the SGB.

Parents ought to play a central role in school governance. However, the main complaint of principals is the limited involvement of parents in their fundamental role of promoting their children's educational welfare. Instead parents meddle in school matters of professional management. Parents sometimes are largely negatively critical of the school. Such parents are hardly proactive and make no positive contribution to the betterment of the school. Furthermore, the challenges of Novice Primary School Principals are compounded by recalcitrant parents.

4.4.1.8 Funding

Funding is a major challenge for principals.

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|------|--|-----|
| 36 | Full fees have not been paid for the year. | 100 |
| 37 | Payment of school fees is problematic. | 100 |

TABLE: 6.6

The Novice Primary School Principals have noted that the payment of school fees is a major issue.

The reasons have not been identified for this situation. It can be conjectured that there are various reasons for this situation, like unemployment, poverty, indifference, culture of non-payment etc concerning parents. Whatever the reason, this challenge impacts the all-round ability to be both an effective and an efficient school. Quality education and excellence of performance is the quest of all school for its learners. However, this is compromised by the lack of funding by way of school fees. The situation is aggravated by inadequate funding from the department of education. Despite the best intentions, the stark reality that faces every manager is that funding is a key factor in the provision of quality education in any school.

4.4.1.9 Leadership

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|------|---|----|
| 40 | Insufficient time spent on instructional leadership | 50 |

TABLE: 6.7

The Novice Primary School Principal who is the head teacher acts as a role model for other educators to emulate.

However, this becomes a challenge when the Novice Primary School Principal cannot find or make the necessary time to provide instructional leadership.

4.4.1.10 Responsibilities

Administrative and clerical tasks are managerial challenges for Novice Primary School Principals.

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|----------|
| 30 | Administrative and Clerical Tasks | 75 |

TABLE: 6.8

This situation can be linked to funding where schools cannot afford to employ additional support staff. Schools in the study have one administrative staff member paid by the department of education. This school clerk performs a number of roles in addition to her basic functions. She acts as the principal's secretary, link between staff and the office, consults with parents, serves the learners, attends to all financial matters etc.

It is inevitable that the Novice School Principal has to engage in administrative and clerical tasks. A distinction is drawn between managing administrative tasks which was elicited in Section C of the PSPQ and the actual execution of administrative and clerical tasks. A performance of such tasks will add to the Novice Primary School Principal's challenges and will ultimately impact negatively on his professional responsibility.

4.4.1.11 Resources

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|------|-----------------------------------|----|
| 47 | Inadequate provision of textbooks | 75 |

TABLE: 6.9

While the present situation is challenging the future is more ominous in respect of stationery and textbooks when comparing the so -called ex Model C schools with the previously disadvantaged school. These so – called ex Model C schools have the financial means of being both self-sufficient and self-supporting. The latter category are the traditionally disadvantaged schools that depend on state subsidy.

The lowered financial contributions by parents, cutbacks by the state and the possible late delivery of school books will put Novice Primary School Principals to a severe test of coping with inadequate resources.

4.4.1.12 Department of Education and Culture

| ITEM | CHALLENGE | % |
|------|---|-----|
| 48 | Department of Education is a challenge | 50 |
| 49 | Policies of Education Department is a challenge | 100 |

TABLE: 6.10

The Novice Primary School Principals indicated that the department of education is a challenge notwithstanding the guidance provided by the SEM during workshops and seminars.

... of the Novice Primary School Principals and the policies of the education department a challenge. The rationalisation and redeployment of educators is a case in point.

The department of education is a major stakeholder. It provides official guidance for the managers through policy directives. The department of education is synonymous with bureaucracy. Traditionally the designers of policy (the bureaucrats) and the implementers of policy (the school managers) are at variance. This study (items 48 & 49) suggested that this situation still exists.

4.4.2 COPING STRATEGIES

It was not practical to synthesise the managerial coping strategies of principals in a Table.

Though the Novice Primary School Principals did not make the coping strategy congruent with the managerial challenges they identified, the data was adequate and relevant in addressing the critical question.

The SEM implied that the Novice Primary School Principal has to learn to manage “on the job” by drawing on his own innate ability, collaborate with other role players as well as the official support from the SEM and ancilliary services like learner welfare and psychological services provided by the Department of Education and Culture.

The school’s management response was a ‘terse ‘ staff consultation.

The educators provided routine responses. They acknowledged the use of pastoral care.

The learners provided very insightful perceptions on how the Novice Primary School Principal addresses managerial challenges.

4.5 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER

In this chapter the findings of the study are reported. The PSPQ, the case study and semi-structured interview with the SEM provided the necessary data which informed the two critical questions. An analysis and a further interpretation was possible through the use of multiple research instruments.

In the concluding chapter there is an overview of the study and the research findings. Recommendations will also be presented.

CHAPTER 5

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents an overview of the study. Reference is made to the gist of the preceding chapters. This is followed by a discussion of the main findings that the data suggests and conclusions that are arrived at consequently. Some recommendations are made for further research before the concluding remarks.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The Novice Primary School Principal was central to this study firstly for an academic reason. The mere choice of this topic was a major challenge as the preliminary stages indicated the paucity of research endeavours in the Novice Primary School Principal. Current trends and issues enabled the researcher to generate a conceptual framework. Furthermore, this exercise had some subjective benefits as it helped inform the practice of the researcher who at the time of the study was a Novice Primary School Principal. I am influenced by the consideration that the Novice Primary School Principal will be involved for almost eight (Grade R to Grade 7) formative and most crucial years in a Learner's life. If such a Principal can practise both as an effective and efficient manager then, the academic future of six to twelve year olds are assured.

The introduction and the background to the study are outlined in Chapter One. Attention is focussed on the 1998/1999 Novice Primary School Principals whose promotion process was conducted entirely by the school governing body.

The literature review, in Chapter Two, reveals the paucity of academic attention on Novice Primary School Principals. This chapter impacted the creation of the conceptual framework and the research design. It is implied in this chapter that there is a need to engage in further research concerning the Novice Primary School Principal. In keeping with the pace of recent transformation trends this study views the role of the Novice Primary School Principal in management terms. It is intended to bring to the school environment a business-like approach. This is in sync with current Educational metaphor eg. Education Labour Act, Employer, Employee Unions, Industrial Action, Code of Conduct, Mission Statement, Performance Appraisal, etc. It can justifiably be pointed out that, " Education is Big Business ".

"In God we trust all others must use data " (Anonymous) is an aphorism that informs Chapter Three. The general methodological approach for this study was outlined. As was mentioned elsewhere this study lent itself to descriptive statistics. The research design is explicated. The PSPQ is the primary data source. Validity of the PSPQ was established through the case study and the semi-structured interview with the SEM. This multi-data gathering approach resulted in this chapter being comprehensive.

Chapter four is a logical outflow of the preceding three chapters. The data collected from the PSPQ, the Case Study and the semi-structured interview

was recorded in tabulated form or summarised in appendixes which facilitated detailed analysis. The multifarious research instruments employed generated a wealth of information which allowed for in-depth discussion. The data from these sources also provided an important validity focus for the study. This chapter was quinessential in unpacking the two critical questions.

5.3 FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented in the next section. Following the explanation of the results which were documented in the previous chapter, significant summarised findings and conclusions are presented.

5.3.1 This study suggests that Novice Primary School Principals are not the focus of extensive research. Comparative studies with Secondary School Principals would appear to be limited.

75% of the respondents in this study were unsure whether there is a disparity in managerial challenges between Secondary and Primary schools. However, the Superintendent of Education (SEM) who has regular professional interaction with both the Primary and Secondary schools emphatically points out that managerial challenges are the same for both sets of principals. This issue on its own merits further investigation.

5.3.2 An examination of the data on training and orientation appears critical for Novice Primary School Principals in coping with managerial challenges. All the respondents indicated the need for

training in administration and organisation. On-going training will also prove be beneficial. Given that some Novice Primary School Principals have no managerial experience makes this observation particularly significant. School administration is vital for school efficiency. As a principal is also the organizational leader of the school, the example the Novice Primary School Principal sets will be emulated. The study did not establish at which point organisational and administrative training be introduced for new Primary School Principals, whether prior to or during the first year of principalship. The Novice Primary School Principals' observations of on-going training is significant in promoting their efficiency and effectiveness as Novice School Managers.

It follows that Novice Primary School Principals require administrative and organisational orientation in the transitional period as well as on-going training throughout their principalship.

5.3.3 Many learner problems are as old as formal schooling itself e.g.

smoking, sexual behaviour, truancy, absenteeism, late-coming, vandalism and now the alleged use of drugs. Learners from the case study school have indicated all these behavioural misdemeanours are prevalent in their school. However, it is now becoming a serious problem and of great managerial concern. Though not all learners manifest discipline problems it is apparent that addressing these matters is a major aspect of the Novice Primary School manager's responsibilities.

5.3.4 The staff is an extremely important segment of the school system. It is of concern when half of the Novice Primary School Principals do not have the support of all staff members and also that some staff members do not contribute meaningfully to the ethos of the school.

It must be mentioned that this data was collected during the middle of 1999 when there was much industrial action and union activity over salary issues and dissatisfaction over redeployment and the introduction of developmental appraisal for educators. This was a tense period for all concerned. The managerial challenge for the Novice Primary School Principal is to acknowledge that there will be periods of both tranquility and crisis and as the superintendent of education noted each situation will call for a unique managerial resolution. Creative ways have to be experimented with by the Beginning Primary School Principal to instill professionalism in her staff.

5.3.5 50% of the respondents record it is a managerial concern when Novice Primary School Principals spent insufficient time in instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is a very vital part of an effective school. Where this is present, quality teachers and teaching will flourish. In such a climate the high standards our children deserve and our communities demand will materialize.

5.3.6 The role of the school governing body is brought sharply into focus when 50% of the respondents indicate that the former make school decisions. The SGB is an important segment of school governance. However, their involvement is documented in the South African Act

84 of 1996. The SGB can be no part of professional matters. The SEM also categorically stated this. This is a very important consideration for the Novice Primary School Principal and where such issues are not clarified at the outset they can be problematic in the smooth management of the entire school.

5.3.7 The role of the education department and the policy directives have been identified by principals, school management staff, level one educators and the learners as sources of managerial challenges for the Novice Primary School Principal. This is a high-level stressor for the Novice Primary School Principal creating intra-tension within Self and inter-tension with the stakeholders the school manager interacts with.

5.3.8 The coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals appear as fairly routine approaches to addressing their managerial challenges. It is encouraging to record that Novice Primary School Principals have indicated that a transformation policy is in place. This must be viewed against the background of the SEM's observation that transformation is a managerial issue.

The guidance of the SEM and additional support from ancillary services is acknowledged. Pastoral care from Novice Primary School Principals is welcomed by educators. Learners are quite mindful of how their principals cope with managerial challenges. Despite some creative coping strategies being present no contingency plan for crisis-management is in evidence.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study engenders the potential of further investigations in the following areas;

5.4.1.1 Further Research on the Novice Primary School Principal

5.4.1.2 Increased studies concerning the Primary School Principal.

5.4.1.3 Studies concerning important aspects of the Primary School.

5.4.1.4 Comparative studies on the Novice Primary and Secondary School Principals.

5.4.2 A critical area identified in this study is the whole question of orientation and on-going training for the Novice Primary School Principal. Such programmes on administrative, educational and professional management could be a collaborative venture between the researcher in the education department and the academic community.

5.4.3 The managerial challenges for the Novice Primary School Principal have been both intensive and extensive. The possibility of principal "Burn Out " appears a very real and grim prospect. Programmes need to be initiated for principals in:

5.4.3.1 Stress Management

5.4.3.2 Time Management

5-4.3.3 Conflict Management

5.4.3.4 Project Management

5.4.4 The study has revealed that a critical concern for Novice Primary School Managers is the question of financial and material resources. A programme on resource management for Novice Primary School Principals is absolutely essential for the efficient and effective administration of the school.

5.4.5 The Novice Primary School Principal begins to interact with a wide spectrum of role-players who present a range of interpersonal traits. A course in Human and Public Relations should be part of her acquired managerial repertoire of skills and competencies.

5.5 SUMMARY

This study was conducted at a time when Education was undergoing a major transformation.

At the same time, greater parental involvement through the school governing body, rationalisation and redeployment of educators, financial cutbacks by the department of education, curricular reform (Curriculum 2005) and heightened union activity were issues the Novice Primary School Principal has to address from the first day of her appointment.

The challenges and coping strategies of the Novice Primary School Principals are well documented. However, the study was not able to substantially demonstrate that the challenges enunciated were germane to Novice Primary School Principals.

This chapter commenced with a general overview of the 1 facets of the study. The challenges that confront Novice Primary School Principals and their coping strategies were summarised. Recommendations were made to assist future Novice Primary School Principals in the discharging of their multifarious responsibilities.

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TABLE ONE

SAMPLE DATA

| | SAMPLE A | SAMPLE B | SAMPLE C |
|---------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| SIZE | 6 | 18 | 122 |
| WHO RESPONDED | 4 | 9 | 83 |
| WHO DID NO RESPOND | 2 | 9 | 39 |
| % RETURN | 66 | 50 | 66 |
| | TABLE 1.1 | TABLE 1.2 | TABLE 1.3 |

NOTE:

- . SAMPLE A: NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**
- . SAMPLE B: PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS**
- . SAMPLE C: PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS**

TABLE TWO

NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS DATA

| GENDER | NUMBER |
|---------------|---------------|
| MALE | 4 |
| FEMALE | 0 |

| CATEGORY | INTERVAL | NUMBER |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| AGE | 25 – 29 years | 0 |
| | 30 – 39 years | 1 |
| | 40 – 49 years | 2 |
| | 50 – 59 years | 1 |

| | | |
|----------------------------|---------------|---|
| TEACHING EXPERIENCE | 1 – 15 years | 1 |
| | 16 – 20 years | 0 |
| | 21 – 25 years | 2 |
| | 26 – 30 years | 1 |

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

| LEVEL | ACTING POST | PROMOTION POST |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 2 | 0 | 1 |
| 3 | 0 | 1 |
| 4 | 0 | 0 |

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TABLE THREE**MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS****SUMMARY OF APPENDIXES**

| APPENDIX | DETAILS |
|---------------------|--|
| Appendix 3.1 | Identified by Novice Primary School Principals From PSPQ in Section C |
| Appendix 3.2 | Identified by SMT |
| Appendix 3.3 | Identified by Educators from PSEQ |
| Appendix 3.4 | Identified by Learners from PSLQ |
| Appendix 3.5 | Identified by SEM |
| Appendix 3.6 | Recorded in School Log Book |
| Appendix 3.7 | Recorded in Management Meeting Minutes |
| Appendix 3.8 | Recorded in Staff Meeting Minutes |

TABLE FOUR

COPIING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF APPENDIXES

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| APPENDIX 11.1 | Responses from Primary School Principals |
| APPENDIX 11.2 | Responses from SMT |
| APPENDIX 11.3 | Responses from Primary School Educators |
| APPENDIX 11.4 | Responses from Primary School Learners |
| APPENDIX 11.5 | Responses from SEM |

TABLE 5**SUMMARY OF MANAGERIAL CHALLENGES
OF****NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

| ITEM | DETAILS |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| | Role expectations |
| 7, 23 | Orientation and Training |
| 1, 14, 15, 18, 20 | Staff |
| 7 | School Governing Body |
| 1 | Unions |
| 3, 34 | Learners |
| 5 | Parents |
| 6, 37 | Funding |
| 9 | Responsibilities |
| 0 | Leadership |
| 3 | Transformation |
| 7 | Resources |
| 8, 49 | Department of Education and Culture |

TABLE 6**SUMMARY OF TABLES****CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS****INTERPRETATION OF MANAGERIAL
CHALLENGES**

| TABLE | DETAILS |
|-------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Orientation and Training |
| 2 | Staff |
| 3 | School Governing Body |
| 4 | Learners |
| 5 | Parents |
| 6 | Funding |
| 7 | Leadership |
| 8 | Responsibilities |
| 9 | Resources |
| 10 | Department Of Education and Training |

APPENDIX 1
N CHETTY
M ED (2nd Year) – UDW

**Burlington Drive
Burlington Heights
Ballcross
193**

**Phone H: 031 409 4065
W: 031 468 3927**

**the Regional Chief Director
for Attention : SEM in North Durban Region
ZNDEC
Turo House
urban
r**

RE : M Ed Research Project

please be informed that I am a second year M Ed student at the University of Durban-Westville. My limited dissertation topic explores managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

I seek your permission to disseminate questionnaires to the Principals, as well as educators and Learners from a randomly selected school in your circuit.

It will be greatly appreciated if I could arrange a short semi-structured interview with you on the above topic.

On completion of my project I will share at your invitation a summary of the findings .

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Warm regards

CHETTY

APPENDIX 2

N CHETTY
M ED (2nd Year) – UDW

1 Burlington Drive
Burlington Heights
hallengcross
093

Phone H: 031 409 4065
W: 031 468 3927

The Principal

Sir / Madam

RE : M Ed Research Project

Sincerest greetings!

Please be informed that I am a second year M Ed student at the University of Durban-Westville. My limited dissertation topic explores managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could assist me in this project by taking some time and responding to my brief questionnaire. This is an anonymous survey.

On completion of my project I will share at your invitation a summary of the findings .

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Warm regards

N CHETTY

APPENDIX 3

N CHETTY M ED (2nd Year) – UDW

**1 Burlington Drive
Burlington Heights
Kallcross
4093**

**Phone H: 031 409 4065
W: 031 468 3927**

Dear Educators

Sir / Madam

RE : M Ed Research Project

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please be informed that I am a second year M Ed student at the University of Durban-Vestville. My limited dissertation topic explores managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could assist me in this project by taking some time and responding to my brief questionnaire. This is an anonymous survey.

On completion of my project I will share at your invitation a summary of the findings .

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Warm regards

**_____
N CHETTY**

APPENDIX 4

N CHETTY
M ED (2nd Year) – UDW

**1 Burlington Drive
Burlington Heights
Challcross
093**

**Phone H: 031 409 4065
W: 031 468 3927**

Dear Colleagues

Sincerest greetings!

RE : M Ed Research Project

My previous communication refers.

Please be informed that I am a second year M Ed student at the University of Durban-Westville. My limited dissertation topic explores managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could assist me in this project by taking some time and responding to my brief questionnaire. This is an anonymous survey.

I will make arrangements to collect the survey at your earliest convenience.

On completion of my project I will share at your invitation a summary of the findings .

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Warm regards

N CHETTY

PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

Note: Place a tick in the appropriate column(s)

GENDER:

| | |
|--------|--|
| MALE | |
| FEMALE | |

AGE:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 25 – 29 years | |
| 30 – 39 years | |
| 40 – 49 years | |
| 50 – 59 years | |

QUALIFICATIONS:

| ACADEMIC | PROFESSIONAL | OTHER |
|----------|--------------|-------|
| | | |
| | | |

EXPERIENCE:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 - 15 years | |
| 16 – 20 years | |
| 21 – 25 years | |
| 26 – 30 years | |

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE:

| LEVEL | ACTING POST | PROMOTION POST |
|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

What is your nominal date of appointment ? _____

PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS – QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION B

USE A TICK

| | YES | UNSURE | NO |
|--|-----|--------|----|
| I was an Educator in the Primary School prior to being promoted. | | | |
| Is in a Secondary School at the time of my promotion. | | | |
| I had some management experience before my promotion. | | | |
| There are fewer challenges in the Primary school than in the Secondary School. | | | |
| I had a good idea of what was expected of me as a new Principal. | | | |
| I should have had some orientation as a new Principal before I assumed my post. | | | |
| On-going training will be beneficial. | | | |
| I know my leadership style. | | | |
| Staff can easily identify with my leadership style. | | | |
| 0. Staff always has a say in decision-making. | | | |
| 1. I have the support of all staff members. | | | |
| 2. I do not have the support of the whole staff. | | | |
| 3. I have the full support of my entire Management staff. | | | |
| 4. Some staff members do not meaningfully contribute to the ethos of the school. | | | |
| 5. I do have some staff problems. | | | |
| 6. Is staff absenteeism a problem? | | | |
| 7. Is staff-leave taking a problem ? | | | |
| 8. Is staff late-coming a problem ? | | | |
| 9. Is staff discipline an issue? | | | |
| 10. I addressed alleged corporal punishment administered by Educators. | | | |
| 11. I facilitated the Redeployment process. | | | |
| 12. My role in the Redeployment process was received satisfactorily. | | | |
| 13. I require more administrative training. | | | |

| | YES | UNSURE | NO |
|---|-----|--------|----|
| 1. I know my strengths as a leader. | | | |
| 5. I know my leadership weaknesses. | | | |
| 6. I play a leading role in Curriculum matters. | | | |
| 7. I rely on the SGB to make decisions. | | | |
| 8. The SGB interferes in professional matters. | | | |
| 9. Is there a difference between managing a school and running a school. | | | |
| 0. I am a Union member. | | | |
| 1. I allow free Union activity in school | | | |
| 2. Union members are hostile towards me. | | | |
| 3. Learner discipline is a problem. | | | |
| 4. I have addressed serious Learner discipline problems. | | | |
| 5. Parents are difficult on occasions. | | | |
| 6. Are all school fees paid in? | | | |
| 7. Payment of school fees is problematic. | | | |
| 8. I have contact with individual Learners | | | |
| 9. I spend an appreciable amount of time in administrative tasks. | | | |
| 0. I spend sufficient time in instructional leadership. | | | |
| 1. I find time for extra-curricular activities. | | | |
| 2. I have allowed for transition from the old to the new system of education. | | | |
| 3. I have a transformation policy. | | | |
| 4. There are provisions for cultural diversity. | | | |
| 5. School demography is changing? | | | |
| 6. I initiate management of change. | | | |
| 7. Shortage of textbooks is an issue? | | | |
| 8. I get support from the Department of Education. | | | |
| 9. The policies of the Department of Education is one of my challenges. | | | |
| 0. I find time to provide professional leadership | | | |

PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION C

WITH REFERENCE TO :

**THE CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND
HOW THEY COPE AS MANAGERS.**

Please indicate challenges you face in your capacity as :

.1 AN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

.2 A PROFESSIONAL MANAGER

.3 AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGER

PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION C (continued)

Indicate how you coped with these challenges in your capacity as :

1 AN ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

2 A PROFESSIONAL MANAGER

3 AN EDUCATIONAL MANAGER

4. YOU ARE WELCOME TO MAKE ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE
N CHETTY**

APPENDIX 5
PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS QUESTIONNAIRE
(PSEQ)

N CHETTY
M ED (2nd Year) – UDW

1 Burlington Drive
urlington Heights
hallcross
093
he Educators

Phone H: 031 4094065
W: 031 468 3927

ir / Madam
E : M Ed Research Project

incerest greetings!

fy previous correspondence refers.

lease be informed that I am a second year M Ed student at the University of Durban-Vestville. My limited dissertation topic explores managerial challenges and coping strategies of Novice Primary School Principals.

t will be greatly appreciated if you could assist me in this project by taking some time and responding to my brief questionnaire. This is an anonymous survey.

Thank you for your anticipated co-operation.

Warm regards

N CHETTY

PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATORS QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A

Note: Place a tick in the appropriate column(s)

GENDER:

| | |
|--------|--|
| MALE | |
| FEMALE | |

AGE:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 25 – 29 years | |
| 30 – 39 years | |
| 40 – 49 years | |
| 50 – 59 years | |

QUALIFICATIONS

| ACADEMIC | PROFESSIONAL | OTHER |
|----------|--------------|-------|
| | | |
| | | |

EXPERIENCE:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1 - 15 years | |
| 16 – 20 years | |
| 21 – 25 years | |
| 26 – 30 years | |

MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

| LEVEL | ACTING POST | PROMOTION POST |
|-------|-------------|----------------|
| 2 | | |
| 3 | | |
| 4 | | |

Are you an excess Educator? [YES] / [NO]

SECTION B

THE CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND HOW THEY COPE AS MANAGERS.

WITH REFERENCE TO ABOVE STATEMENT KINDLY RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

QUESTION ONE

List what you think are some of the main challenges that your Principal faces as the manager of your school.

QUESTION TWO

Please explain how in your opinion your Principal copes with the challenges that you have indicated in question one.

QUESTION THREE

What do you perceive as the strengths of the Principal in his/her capacity as manager of the school?

QUESTION FOUR

List some of the Principal's achievements at your school to date.

QUESTION FIVE

What do you perceive as the possible weaknesses of your Principal ?

QUESTION SIX

Are there any further comments ?

**YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED
N CHETTY**

APPENDIX 6
PRIMARY SCHOOL LEARNERS QUESTIONNAIRE
(PSLQ)

Dear Learners

kindest greetings !

Kindly note that I am doing a study on the problems (challenges) of Primary School Principals and how they cope with these problems.

It will be greatly appreciated if you could please answer these questions as well as you can.

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers.

J CHETTY

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. What is the name of your Principal ?

2. How long do you know your Principal ?

3. Describe your Principal ?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MANY PROBLEMS OR CHALLENGES THAT YOUR PRINCIPAL HAS TO FACE ?

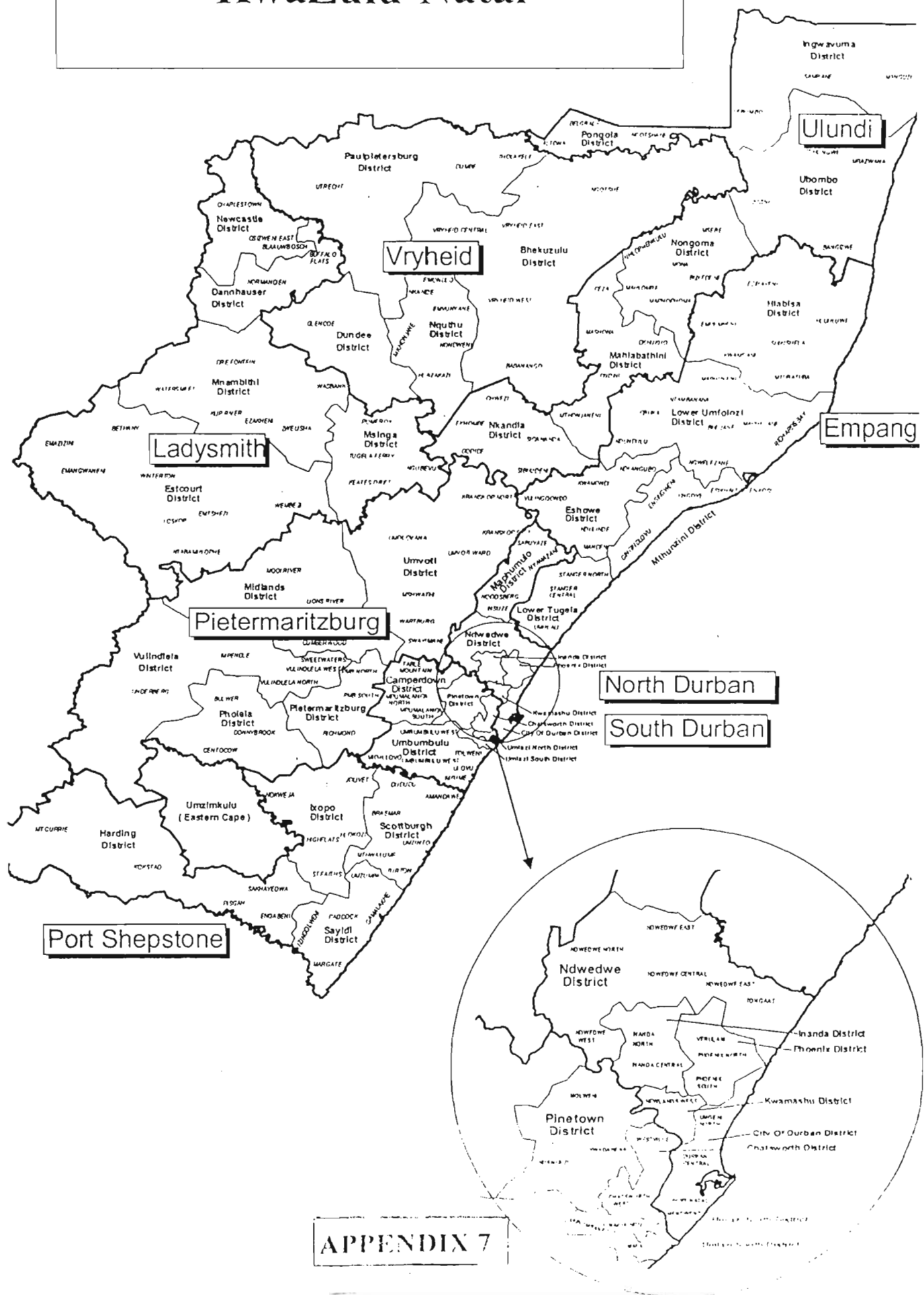
HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR PRINCIPAL COPE WITH THE PROBLEMS THAT YOU HAVE JUST MENTIONED ?

USE ADDITIONAL PAPER IF NECESSARY.

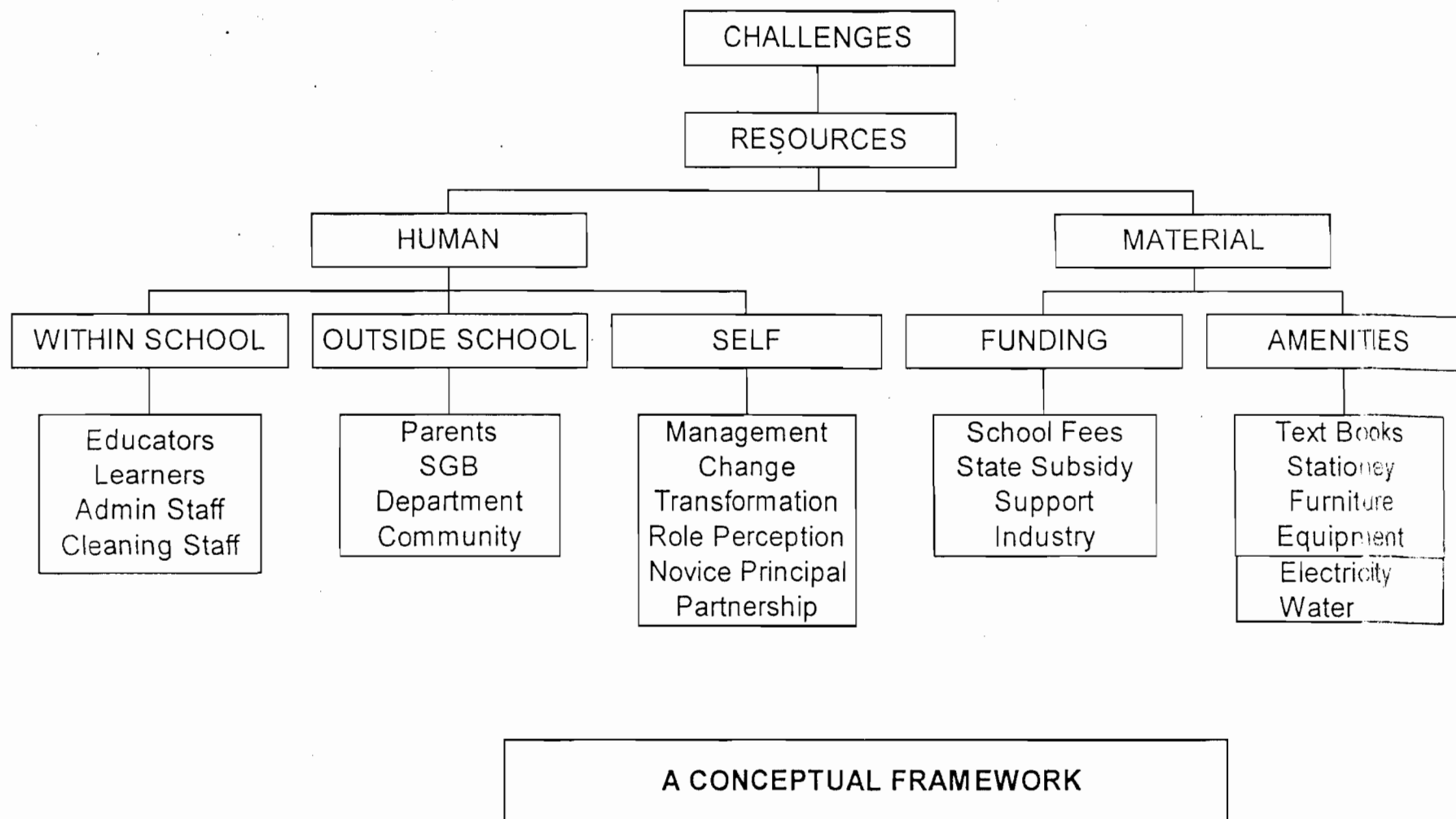
Thank you for your participation. Best wishes in all your studies.

N CHETTY

Regions, District & Circuits in KwaZulu-Natal



NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL



APPENDIX 8

APPENDIX 9.1

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPALS RESPONSES

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

Parents visit curtail quality time
Too many discipline problems
Many demands from Education Department
Duties can only be delegated after promotion posts are filled
Too many tasks including financial
Insufficient human resources
Inadequate training of support staff for transition to technology

PROFESSIONAL MANAGER

Educator record – keeping
Educator accountability
Insufficient time to perform professional task
Conflict situations that arise frequently
Instill professionalism among Educators

EDUCATIONAL MANAGER

Peer group learning is challenging
Have to build resources
Implementation of Developmental appraisal a problem
Cannot attend to Curriculum Developmental

APPENDIX 9.2

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF SMT RESPONSES

- Learner Discipline
- Educator Discipline
- | Problem Parents
- | Vandalism
- | Finances
- | Welfare of Educators and Learners
- | School Maintenance
- | Redeployment

APPENDIX 9.3

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF EDUCATORS RESPONSES

Over crowded classrooms

Learner discipline

School Fees

School Governing Body Relationship

Educator shortage

Shortage of resources

Demotivated and frustrated educators

Redeployment

Community Pressure

School thefts

Vandalism

ARE THERE ANY FURTHER COMMENTS?

- 1 Principals need to undergo courses in Management and Human relations**
- 1 School Governing Bodies not qualified to select leaders.**

APPENDIX 9.4

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF LEARNERS' RESPONSES

School Fees

Learner Conduct and Discipline

Educator Strikes

Drugs

Salaries for Cleaners

Sexual Behaviour among Learners

- 1 Shortage of stationery
- 1 School Budget
- 1 Shortage of Textbooks
- 1 School Maintenance
- 1 Litter
- 1 Light and Water Bills
- 1 Complaints about Educators
- 1 Learner Truancy
- 2 Problems with the Department
- 2 Damage to School Property and vandalism
- 2 Safety of Learners
- 2 Learner Absence
- 2 Learner Late-coming

APPENDIX 9.5

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF SEM'S RESPONSES

Lack of training prior to assumption of post

Young staff

Parents

Learners

Problems that go beyond school level

No difference with challenges between Primary School and Secondary School Principals

Problems due to transformation

APPENDIX 10

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS SCHOOL DOCUMENTS SUMMARY OF APPENDIXES

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| PPENDIX 10.1 | Relevant Summary from School Log Book |
| PPENDIX 10.2 | Relevant Summary from Management Meeting Minutes |
| PPENDIX 10.3 | Relevant Summary from Staff Meeting Minutes |

APPENDIX 10.1

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY FROM SCHOOL LOG BOOK

SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION (SEM)

Policy issues conveyed by the SEM
Feedback to staff about Policy Issues

EDUCATORS

Absence
Late Arrival
Inter – personal conflict
Conflict with official policy

PARENTS

Complaints

SCHOOL EVENTS

Early Closure of School Events

APPENDIX 10.2

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

ACTING MANAGERS

Site – Based Management
Contingency arrangements

EDUCATORS

Redeployment
Ground Duty
Excess educators
Development Appraisal

LEARNERS

Discipline

APPENDIX 10.3

CHALLENGES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY FROM STAFF COMMITTEE MINUTES

LEARNERS

Code of Conduct
Discipline

EDUCATORS

Redeployment
Excess Educators
Acting Managers Post
Site-Based Management
Contingency Arrangements
Ground Duty
Excess Educators
Developmental Appraisal

APPENDIX 11.1

COPING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF PRINCIPALS RESPONSES

ADMINISTRATIVE

Restructured financial management of school
Reorganised processing of information
Equitable delegation duties to Educators
Work beyond regular hours of duty
Delegate tasks to management staff

PROFESSIONAL

A system of participatory management in place
Educators experience responsibility
Convene workshops with Educators
Counsel Educators
Involve Educators in making presentations on key issues
Regular feedback by way of handouts

EDUCATIONAL

- Formed Learning Area Committees
- | Curriculum Development
- | A programme of Resource development
- | Fund raising for resources
- | Purchasing guides for Educators
- | Networking

APPENDIX 11.2

**COPING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY
SCHOOL PRINCIPALS**

SUMMARY OF SMT'S RESPONSES

aff Consultation

APPENDIX 11.3

COPING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF EDUCATORS RESPONSES

Staff Meeting
Consults with School Governing Body
Networks with Neighbouring Colleagues
Organises Fund - Raising Activities
Pastoral Care
Caring attitude
Involvement in school

APPENDIX 11.4

COPING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF LEARNERS' RESPONSES

Talks kindly to Learners
Receives support from Educators
Has meetings with parents to discuss school problems like school fees,
Learner behaviour
Organises fund raising activities
Arranges anti - litter campaign
Suspends learners
Sends letters regularly to parents
Detains Learners
Gets help from the Deputy Principal
Asks parents to visit school concerning their children
Has anti - drug campaigns
Informs parents about learners absence
Is strict at times
Naughty children are scolded
Available when Learners need her
Is kind and Learners can approach her

APPENDIX 11.5

COPIING STRATEGIES OF NOVICE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

SUMMARY OF SEM'S RESPONSES

Principal ultimately has to cope

Principal depends on own capability initiative

Guidance by SEM through workshops, seminars, meeting etc.

Support from SEM

Consultation and collaboration with School Management Committee

No rule book strategies. Solutions depend on circumstances that may vary from time to time.

Involve many role players

Role as Public Relation Officer

Involvement of School Governing Body
