

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE LINKS BETWEEN
PRINCIPALS, ADVISORY SCHOOL COMMITTEES
AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES IN THE
MANAGEMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL
EDUCATION IN LESOTHO: A STUDY OF THREE
SCHOOLS IN BOTHA-BOTHE DISTRICT**

2002

JONE ANDREAS MAROLE

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DISTRICT**

JONE ANDREAS MAROLE

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degree of Master of Education – University of Natal – Durban**

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ABSTRACT

The study explores communication links existing in the management of primary schools in Lesotho. The frequency of the links as well as the content and channels used in the transmission of messages between the principals, advisory school committees and management committees were investigated. The Lesotho primary education management system involves the principals, advisory school committees and management committees. Management committees in Lesotho manage all primary schools under their jurisdiction. Principals manage schools on daily basis on behalf of the management committees. Advisory school committees advise the management committees on all matters relating to education.

Questionnaires, interviews and school record books were the research tools used in this study.

The responses revealed that links exist between the above bodies even though the links are inadequate in most instances. The way through which messages are sent vary from link to link but most of the links are in the form of meetings. These meetings are often below the stipulated number in the country's Education Act.

DECLARATION

I, Jone Andreas Marole, declare that this is my own work. The material included in this investigation has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university.

Jone Andreas Marole

:


(Signature)

Date


:

Statement by the supervisor.

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

Thandi Ngcobo

:


(Signature)

Date

:

20 March 2003

DEDICATION

To my beloved parents, Mr. and Mrs. Marole, for the number of years you have toiled and the sacrifices you have made, in order to educate your four children. God bless you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my thanks and appreciation to the people who helped and supported me to make this study a success:

- ✓ My supervisor, Ms Thandi Ngcobo, of the Department of Education, University of Natal – Durban.
- ✓ The respondents, who willingly participated in the study and provided information.
- ✓ My wife, 'M'alekhanya Josephinah, our children and my whole family for their tolerance and patience enabling me to finally complete this study.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Declaration	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgement	v
 CHAPTER ONE: Introduction	
Introduction.....	1
Historical background of educational management in Lesotho.....	1
Rationale for the study.....	2
Theoretical framework.....	4
Key questions.....	5
Definition of terms.....	5
Organisation of the report.....	5
 CHAPTER TWO: Review of related literature	
Introduction.....	7
Organisational communication.....	7
Directions of organisational communication.....	11
Conclusion.....	15

CHAPTER THREE: Methodology

Introduction.....	17
Research method.....	17
Sampling strategies.....	18
Research instruments.....	19
Data analysis.....	22
Validity.....	22
Limitations of study.....	23
Ethical considerations.....	23

CHAPTER FOUR: Analysis and Discussion

Introduction.....	25
Part I: Biographical details.....	26
Part II: Interactions between the principals and the ASCs.....	27
Part III: Interactions between the ASCs and the MCs.....	33
Part IV: Respondents' duties and perceptions.....	37
Part V: Interactions between the principals and the MCs.....	40
Conclusion.....	44

CHAPTER FIVE: Conclusion and Recommendations

Introduction.....	45
Existing links between principals, ASCs and MCs.....	45
Existing links between ASCs and MCs.....	46

Existing links between principals and MCs.....	47
Recommendations.....	49

REFERENCE.....	51
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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Lesotho Education Act of 1995 extract.....	57
Appendix B: Lesotho Education (Amendment) Act of 1996 extract.....	60
Appendix C: Lesotho Teaching Service Regulations of 2002 extract.....	61
Appendix D: Covering Letter.....	62
Appendix E: Questionnaire.....	63
Appendix F: Interview questions.....	69
Appendix G: List of Tables.....	71

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

This research investigated existing links between school principals, advisory school committees (ASCs) and school management committees (MCs) in the management of primary schools in Lesotho. In this chapter, historical background of education in Lesotho will be explored. The researcher will outline the main objective of this study, describe the problem under study and give rationale for the study.

Historical Background of Education Management in Lesotho

Formerly, the educational management system in Lesotho allowed for a school to be managed by one person. This, according to the Lesotho Education Order of 1971, as amended in 1983, could be a proprietor or it could be persons or committee appointed by the proprietor. The committee could be made up of five people. This number excluded the principal, who was to act as secretary and treasurer of the committee and could not vote.

The composition and functions of management committees have been unclear to both proprietors and management committees (Ralise, 1996), as they were also not specified in the Lesotho School (Supervision and Management) Regulations of 1988. Ralise further contends that, as a result, it was difficult to separate roles and functions of chairman of management committee (manager) from those of principals. Thus, functions

of management committees and their links with schools in the management of education differed from proprietors to proprietors. In fact, Makhetha and Pitso (1991) in their study on local school management observed that there were no guidelines on channels of communication between school committees in most schools. They also observed that even where these channels existed they were ignored by the managers, or were never explained or given to the committee members to study. They observed that the education management system did not include other stakeholders. The present Education Act of 1995 serves to amend the education Order of 1971, as amended in 1983, by stating functions and composition of management committees.

Rationale for the study

The Lesotho primary educational management is controlled by the country's Education Act of 1995, as amended in 1996, and the Teaching Service Regulations of 2002 (see appendices A, B and C). According to the Act, a **principal** is, by virtue of his or her position, a member of an **Advisory School Committee (ASC)**. Other members of an ASC include representatives of proprietors, parents and teachers as well as an area chief, or his or her representative. The membership of a **Management Committee (MC)** is elected from among members in different ASCs, under one proprietor in an area. For example, principals from various ASCs in an area and under one proprietor will elect from among themselves a principal who will be in an MC as their representative. However, like all members in MCs, he or she is still a member of his or her respective ASC.

According to the Act and the Regulations, a **principal**, on behalf of a Management Committee (MC), is responsible for the discipline, organisation and day-to-day running of the school he or she leads. The Act stipulates that the function of an **Advisory School Committee (ASC)** is to advise the management committee on all matters relating to education in any relevant school. The Act also stipulates that an ASC should meet at least **eight** times per year. According to the Act, one of the responsibilities of a **Management Committee (MC)** is to supervise the schools for which it has been constituted and be responsible for proper and efficient management of schools under its jurisdiction. According to the Act, an MC should meet at least **four** times in a year.

The following are not clear from the legislature:

- ◆ It is not clear as to how a principal should interact with an MC. It is not clear whether it should be through the
 - i. principal him or herself (although he or she may not be a member of the MC),
 - ii. ASC or
 - iii. principals' representation.
- ◆ It is not clear as to how an ASC should interact with an MC. Whether it is through the ASC itself or its members (who by **luck** might be in the MC).
- ◆ It is also not clear as to how the principals' representative in an MC should consult with other principals.

As an inspector the researcher has observed misunderstanding and resulting confusion in the execution of duties and in the extent to which they are executed between principals,

Advisory School Committees and Management Committees. This study is thus aimed at investigating existing links between the above groups of people. The study will also serve as a follow up on implementation of the new legislature. This will help the researcher in his duty, as an inspector, in schools. While this study was conducted in only three schools, the issues might well be similar for other schools. The findings will assist in establishing and/or improving links between principals, advisory school committees and management committees in schools.

Theoretical Framework

The Systems Theory of management will inform this study. The Systems Theory sees organisations or systems as not stable and simple but changing and complex. Whilst not disregarding the fact that appropriate managerial behaviour in a given situation depends on a wider variety of elements, Systems Theory maintains that effective and efficient functioning of a whole system is dependent on the interaction between all its components (Donald *et al.*, 2002). The Systems Theory focuses on viewing an organisation as a whole and as the interrelationship of its parts (Lussier, 2000). The systems theory emphasises synergy, the notion that a whole is greater than the sum of its parts, that is, parts of a whole may be more successful working together than when they work alone (Griffin, 1999). Based on this theory, for the Lesotho school educational system to operate effectively and efficiently, the interaction between principals, advisory school committees and management committees must be effective.

Informed by the above, the study looked at organisational communication existing between and among principals, advisory school committees and management committees in the management of school education. It also looked at interpersonal communication, as it exists in meetings in support of organisational communication.

Key questions

The aim of the study is to find answers to the following key questions:

1. What links exist between principals, advisory school committees and management committees in the management of primary school education in Lesotho?
2. How are the links established and maintained?
3. What is the content of the links?

Definition of Terms

Link in this study will mean a connection between two or more people as defined by the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary of Current English. This will focus on existing links from communication point of view.

Proprietor will mean any person, church, society or corporation by which a school is established.

Parish will mean any identified administrative area for local church schools in a district.

Organisation of the report

The report is organised into five chapters. This introductory chapter has clarified the main objective of this research. The historical background of education management in

Lesotho and the problem under investigation were also given. The second chapter will be a review of literature related to the study. The third chapter will outline the methodology used to carry out the study. The fourth chapter will present the data analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings. The last chapter will be on conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter looks at existing literature on effective communication with a view to getting a better understanding of the phenomenon under study. The study attempts to investigate existing links between principals, advisory school committees (ASCs) and management committees (MCs) in the Lesotho education management system. It also looked at interpersonal communication, as it exists in support of organisational communication. Management committees manage primary schools, advisory school committees advise management committees and principals manage schools on daily basis, on behalf of management committees.

Organisational communication

According to the Systems Theory, for a system to be effective, effective interaction or communication should exist between its components or departments (Donald *et al.*, 2002). A system can be defined as a grouping of elements that establish relationships with each other and interact with their environment both as individuals and as a collective (Gibson *et al.*, 2000). Bush (1995, 35), quoting Hoyle, emphasises:

‘Schools are not organisations consisting of carefully articulated parts functioning harmoniously in the pursuit of agreed objectives. They are characterised by conflict, malintegration and the pursuit of individual and group interests.

Nevertheless a certain degree of systematic integration is necessary for their effective function’.

Communication can be described as a process of transmitting information and meaning, using verbal or non-verbal symbols. Communication is about creation and sharing of meaning (Dessler, 2001; Pretorius, 1992) through sorting, selecting, forming and transmitting (Riches, 1994) of verbal or non-verbal symbols (Gibson *et al.*, 2000). Two-way, that is, a give-and-take communication with active feedback, is likely to be more effective than a one-way communication (Griffin, 1999).

Effective communication is more critical than ever before for management and effectiveness of schools. This is because many significant changes are occurring in schools. The changes include an increased complexity, both in structure and technology, even in smallest primary schools, as well as the changes brought about by Government and general legislature (Riches, 1994).

According to Steers *et al.* (1985), the final basis on which communication can be classified in organisations is its purpose. Steers *et al.* (citing Scott and Mitchell, 1976) identify the following purposes. First, communication can be intended to control behaviour of others to clarify duties, and to establish or reinforce authority relationships within an organisation. Second, communication can provide information on which to base important decisions. Third, communication can be used to motivate employees and elicit their co-operation and commitment. Finally, communications often are used to express

emotions or feelings about decisions or the actions of others inside and outside an organisation.

Communication in schools, like in any organisations, can be categorised as interpersonal or organisational. Interpersonal communication occurs between two individuals. Generally, interpersonal communication is either oral or written (Griffin, 1999). This type of communication can be with colleagues, subordinates or supervisors (Dessler, 2001).

Organisational communication occurs among several individuals or groups (Dessler, 2001) or between an organisation and important parts of its environment (Steers *et al.*, 1985). Communication among individuals and groups can take place in a number of different ways although verbal and written methods are most common (Steers *et al.*, *ibid.*).

Enhancing organisational communication

In enhancing organisational communication three organisational skills may be essential. These include: following up; regulating flow of information; and understanding the richness of different media. Following up simply involves checking at a later time to be sure that a message has been received and understood. Regulating information flow means that the sender or receiver takes steps to ensure that overload does not occur. For the sender, avoiding overload could mean not passing too much information through the system at any one time. For the receiver, it might mean calling attention to the fact that he is being asked too many things at once. Both senders and receivers should also

understand the richness associated with different media. For example, when a manager is going to lay off a subordinate temporarily, the manager should deliver the message in person. On the other hand, a face-to-face meeting would enable the manager to explain the situation and answer questions (Griffin, 1999).

Barriers to effective communication

Fielding (1997), Steers *et al.* (1985) and Robbins and Coulter (2002) offer the following as having been found to be barriers to effective communication:

- *Filtering* of information, which occurs when information is deliberately manipulated so as to appear favourable to the receiver. In some cases, a sender leaves out the information, which he or she perceives as dangerous or damaging.
- *Selective perception* which exists when people selectively interpret what they hear or see on the basis of their interests, background, experience, and attitudes.
- *Emotions* may become barriers in that the way one feels when he or she receives a message will influence the way he or she interprets the message.
- *Language* becomes a barrier when people have different patterns of speech depending on the backgrounds they come from.
- *Culture* may pose as a barrier in that it influences the way people perceive things.
- *The number of stages* through which a message, often-critical information, has to go before it reaches its destination is itself a barrier to effective communication.
- *The amount of time* allowed for the message to move through to its destination may become a barrier if the communication channels are too slow and cumbersome. The

receiver is put under pressure of acting on the message within a very limited time. At times, the message may arrive when other decisions have already been made.

- *Lack of comprehension* of intended message.
- *Overloading of information*, which may occur when too much information is passed making it difficult to make sense of the information. Much of the major issues may be lost in the process of sorting information.
- *Underloading of information*, which may occur when insufficient information is received at any one time.
- *Rejection* of the information, which occurs when the receiver does not accept the transmitted, messages, for example, rejection of job instructions.

Directions of organisational communication

Communication may be vertical or horizontal.

Vertical communication

Vertical communication may be downward or upward. Bennett (1995) states that the hierarchical structure of bodies assigned different duties encourages vertical communication through the system. Vertical communication is hierarchical and mostly bureaucratic. In bureaucratic organisation there is a defined chain of command and communication. The ability and right to identify issues, which call for decisions, is the prerogative of one or few in any organisation. Organisational members are not expected to conceive an organisation as a whole (Paisey, 1981). However, a bureaucracy is also expected to be a unified institution, since members are working to the same set of rules

(Bennett, 1995). According to Bennett (*ibid.*), there are problems in bureaucratic approaches. Those taking decisions at the centre can become isolated from the place where the core work is done. The information passed up to them can be out-of date, or get distorted or 'sanitised'. Also, managers who either misunderstand the information or for some reason do not subscribe to the organisation's values and are pursuing personal goals rather than those of the organisation may distort down-flowing information.

Downward communication

In the school situation, downward communication occurs, for example, when a manager passes down, to the subordinates, information on school goals, policy statements, mission statement, procedures and instruction on how schools should operate (Fielding, 1997; Gibson *et al.*, 2000; and Lewis, 1975). These writers also contend that this type of communication occurs when managers provide feedback to their subordinates on how successful the previous jobs have been and on the general performance of subordinates. According to Lewis (1975) and Sigband (1982), downward communication is the most used channel but can be the most misused when managers place no emphasis on adequate and accurate upward communication. Riches (1994) contends that downward communication is usually the strongest of the three major directions of communication. He (*ibid.*, 253) argues that managers have 'the power to put messages in motion and start them on their downward journey – either to be received or not, or to arrive distorted, or late'.

Downward communication, in many organisations, 'often is both inadequate and inaccurate, as reflected in the often heard statement among organisation members, "we have absolutely no idea what's happening" ' (Gibson *et al.*, 2000, 404).

Barriers to downward communication

These may occur when managers are, themselves, not sure of the kind of information to provide to subordinates. This may also occur when managers are not sure of the amount of information that subordinates should get access to or be provided with. This may thus lead to provision of little or too much information or instruction (Fielding, 1997).

Upward communication

This occurs when subordinates need to report on the progress of the tasks as well as providing managers with suggestions and proposals (Fielding, 1997). It can also occur when a manager receives reports on attitudes, motivation and perceptions of parents and teachers. Managers need to receive information regarding employees' individual performance (Fielding, *ibid.*). Formal monthly meetings with subordinates help in enhancing and influencing upward communication (Dessler, 2001).

Ideally, as Smit and Gronje (1997) and Steers *et al.* (1985) state, the primary purpose of the upward communication should be to provide feedback on performance of subordinates. Research has shown that upward communication is more subject to distortion than downward communication (Griffin, 1999; Smit and Gronje, *ibid.*; and Steers *et al.*, *ibid.*). This may occur when subordinates decide to withhold or distort

information that makes them look bad and inefficient. According to Gibson *et al.* (2000), a recent study has found that in organisations where upward communication programs were effectively implemented, the majority of managers improved their performance.

Barriers to effective upward communication

Barriers to effective upward communication occur when subordinates fear that if they raise suggestions or proposals they may get the response such as 'you raised the problem, solve it'. Subordinates may also fear being seen as incompetent when they are to provide reports concerning their progress. The subordinates will, therefore, decide to filter the information and leave out certain messages. Upward communication may also be ineffective if managers accept certain parts of messages, often those that please them, and ignore the rest or accept positive messages, which they feel, are right and are appropriate to their situation or which support the present policy (Fielding, 1997).

Horizontal communication

Horizontal communication also plays a part in the hierarchy of a system but Packwood, (cited by Bush, 1995) contends that such contacts are for co-ordination rather than management. The collegial perspective of organisational management, however, acknowledges horizontal communication. 'The ultimate authority for taking decisions rests with the autonomous individuals working as a collectivity, and not at some central or senior point within a hierarchy or network' (Bennett, 1995, 62). It is through the democratic decision-making by collective of individuals that their commitment to and acceptance of a decision can be guaranteed (Bennett, 1995). Horizontal communication

serves as co-ordination between and among the different departments in a system (Riches, 1994; and Smit and Gronje, 1997). It prevents departments, within an organisation, from feeling more important than others feel. According to Riches (1994), horizontal communication is the most frequent because people working in the same level often talk to each other about work related events, management and personal matters. '[M]eetings play a decisive role in promoting effective horizontal communication, provided the right people attend them' (Smit and Cronje, 1997, 337).

Barriers to horizontal communication

The fact that, under this communication there is no one superior to the other may itself trigger reluctance to share knowledge and resources with each other. Sometimes people may decide to be too technical for others to understand them. This could result when, for instance, teachers and principals decide to talk and operate in a technical manner that committee members lose meaning and interest of what is transpiring in schools. Subordinates or departments are sometimes isolated and not motivated to communicate with each other. Lack of motivation may occur, for instance, if managers do not reward good horizontal communication (Fielding, 1997).

Conclusion

For the Lesotho's education management system to be effective and efficient, it is important that effective and efficient interaction exists between principals, advisory school committees and management committees. This effectiveness and efficiency should be facilitated by effective communication between the three bodies. As was stated in the

introduction, principals manage schools, on daily basis, on behalf of management committees (MCs). Apart from that, principals, by virtue of their position, are members of advisory school committees (ASCs). ASCs advise MCs on all matters relating to education in schools. It is thus important, for the effectiveness and efficiency of the Lesotho education management system that effective horizontal communication exists between the principals and the advisory school committees. There is also a need for both upward and downward communication between MCs and principals as well as ASCs and MCs.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter, the following will be presented: the study's research method, sampling strategies, research instruments, data analysis, validity, limitations and ethical consideration.

Research Method

This study is quantitative and according to Best and Kahn (1993) such study enables the researcher to numerically describe its findings. The study was conducted by means of a survey. The researcher decided to choose a survey because of the following reasons, as offered by Cohen *et al.* (2000) and Waksberg (1995). It

- gathers data on a one-shot basis and hence is economical and efficient. Given the time, within which the study was to be conducted and completed, it helped the researcher to speedily obtain the required data.
- enabled the researcher to numerically present data thus making it easy to analyse.
- helped the researcher get descriptive and explanatory information from which the researcher was able to describe the situation in the schools.
- ascertains correlation. It was important for the study to find correlation between the different schools.

Sampling strategies

The study investigated schools in Botha-Bothe district of Lesotho. The district was convenient to the researcher since he is an inspector in the district and is familiar with it and the findings of the study would help improve aspects of his duty. The population of the study comprised principals, advisory school committees (ASCs) and management committees (MCs) of the schools selected in the district. The researcher identified three proprietors whose schools formed the majority of schools in the district, namely, Lesotho Evangelical Church, Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Church of Lesotho. A school was randomly (simple) selected from schools under each of the three proprietors. Simple random selection was employed because, as Cohen *et al.* (2000) states, it offers each member of the population under study with an equal opportunity to be selected.

The researcher adopted purposive sampling in this study. In purposive sampling a researcher selects elements in the sample, on the basis of his or her judgement, of their typicality, in that way building up a sample that will satisfy his or her needs (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). All members of ASCs, except principals and proprietors, constituted the ASCs sample. The members in the ASCs sample were parents, chiefs and teachers. The reason for selecting these members from the ASCs was because ASCs are looked up as committees closer to communities than MCs and thus the members mostly interact with communities. Proprietors participated in the study in their capacity as members of management committees. This is because proprietors own schools and thus have interests on their management. Principals were selected in their capacity as principals and as members of MCs, since they manage schools on behalf of MCs.

Research Instruments

The study employed self-administered questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and document study for data collection in an attempt to not only collect data within a short time but also get in-depth information on some issues. This would also be important in ensuring validity in the study, as will be discussed later.

Self-administered questionnaires

The researcher delivered the questionnaires to the respondents a week before the interviews. A questionnaire was suitable for the study because as Gray (1981) states it is efficient in obtaining information within a short time and is not very expensive. It was administered to three teachers and two chiefs (one from each school). The researcher was informed, on arriving, at one school that the chief has decided to no longer participate in the ASC thus the two chiefs, as opposed to three. The aim of employing questionnaires was to get information that would influence in-depth data collection during interviews and guided by Cohen *et al.* (2000) observations, to triangulate the data collection because exclusive reliance on one method may bias or distort the researcher's picture of what is being investigated. Through the questionnaires, the researcher identified issues that would need clarification during interviews.

The parents, proprietors and principals were interviewed in an attempt to get in-depth information as they form what is normally referred to as 'three-legged pot' in education, which follows the fact that Lesotho education is a joint responsibility of the three 'legs',

namely: parents, proprietors and government (on whose behalf principals stand). The chiefs and teachers were offered questionnaire.

Semi-structured Interviewing

Through establishment of rapport and trust with the respondents, which is encouraged by Gray (1981), the researcher conducted semi-structured face-to-face interviews with the schools' three proprietors, three principals and three parents (one from each school). The interviews were conducted in Sesotho, the mother tongue, because some respondents were not very fluent with English and felt free when communicating in Sesotho.

The use of interviews, as had been observed by Best and Kahn (1993), helped the researcher to explicitly explain the purpose of the interviews to the respondents. According to Cohen *et al.* (2000), semi-structured interviews present both formal and informal approaches to a study and this offered the researcher freedom to repeat questions, change their wording and sequence, add to them to suit the situation and make clarifications where there was any uncertainty. The researcher also probed for more information where the response was incomplete or irrelevant. The respondents were, as had been Bless and Higson-Smith's (1995) contention, free to expand on the topic and to relate their own experiences, as they saw fit.

One other purpose of the interview was to validate other methods, as Kerlinger (cited by Cohen *et al.*: 2000) stated. This is because, for example, with questionnaires bias may arise from respondents' lack of understanding of questions (Bless and Higson-Smith,

1995). Respondents can lie for various reasons and sometimes provide information that they believe the research wants to read.

The other reason, as previously stated, was also to get an in depth information and clarification of certain issues rose by respondents in the questionnaires. Also, the researcher conducted interviews because, as Best and Kahn (1993) contend, people are usually more willing to talk than to write.

The researcher tape-recorded responses because this, as Best and Kahn (1993) state, obviate the necessity of writing during the interview, which may be distracting to both the interviewer and respondent. Later, the tapes were replayed and information transcribed and translated from Sesotho to English.

Document Study

Before studying the documents, the researcher first established availability and potential usefulness of different documents in providing data on (a) training and induction of new members (b) number of meetings held and (c) frequency of visits paid to schools by the ASC and MC members. Documents established as useful for providing information on the number of meetings held in 2002 were the Minute books whilst those found as useful for providing information on number of visits were the School Visitors' books. The researcher could not obtain documents that could provide information on the training or induction of new members.

Data Analysis

Data analysis started as soon as the researcher commenced data collection. Patterns were established when accessing the documents, interviewing and receiving the questionnaires. When analysing data from the questionnaires descriptive statistical analysis was employed. Content from data collected during interviews was examined and fitted into themes arising from questionnaire analysis and document analysis. The data obtained from the different tools was placed in categories, for example, 'interactions between principals and advisory school committees'.

Validity

Validity refers to the issue of whether the data collected reflects the true picture of what is being investigated and also whether the data obtained would apply to all subjects in the sample being studied (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995). In an effort to ensuring validity the researcher, based on Cohen *et al.* (2000) and by piloting the instruments and by triangulation, ensured that the instruments covered items that they purport to cover.

Piloting

In an effort to increase the reliability and validity of the instruments, as had been outlined by Cohen *et al.* (2000), the researcher piloted the instruments in three local schools which were readily accessible to him and which were not part of the study sample. The researcher also requested colleagues to edit the instruments and make suggestions on their relevance and improvement. Piloting helped the researcher reveal any unforeseen difficulties and handicaps in the instruments.

Triangulation

‘Triangulation may be defined as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour’ (Cohen *et al.*, 2000, 112). The researcher decided to employ triangulation to avoid exclusive reliance on one method, which may bias or distort the researcher’s picture of what is being investigated. Through triangulation all contrasting accounts produce as full and as balanced a picture as possible (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). Data collected through one instrument was crosschecked with that collected in the other.

Limitation of Study

The following limitation needs to be taken into account in respect of this study. The sample of the study is small, especially because only one school was selected from one proprietor. Thus, though the data may be similar for other schools, caution should be ensured during extrapolation of the data from this study since generalisation cannot be guaranteed.

Ethical consideration

The researcher, before undertaking the study, requested permission to do so from the district education officers and management committees of the schools. A covering letter was attached to every questionnaire. The purpose of the covering letter, as had been observed by Cohen *et al.* (2000), was to indicate the aim of the study, to convey to the respondents the importance of the study, to assure them of the anonymity and

confidentiality, and to encourage their response (Cohen *et al.*, 2000). In the case of the interviews, such guarantees were verbally expressed before each interview session.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

In this chapter, data gathered through use of questionnaires, interviews and document study to explore existing links between principals, advisory school committees (ASCs) and management committees (MCs) in the educational management of schools in Lesotho will be presented. As stated in chapter three, questionnaires were administered to the following members of ASCs: two chiefs and three teachers. Interviews were conducted to parents, principals and proprietors, one each per school from the three schools in the study.

As was elaborated in chapter three, descriptive analysis will be employed when analysing data gathered by use of questionnaires. Data will be numerically presented to find common trends (modes). Data gathered through interviews has been transcribed and common trends identified. Data collected from identified documents will be numerically presented. The aim is to identify common trends in the data obtained and thus produce as full and as balanced a picture of the situation in schools as possible.

The findings will be presented under the following categories: biographical details, interactions between principals and ASCs, interactions between ASCs and MCs, and interactions between MCs and principals. Finally, responses with regard to duties of

ASCs and MCs as well as respondents' perception of interactions useful to the management of primary school education in Lesotho will be presented.

PART I: Biographical details

Table 1: Biographical details of respondents

BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
<i>Proprietorship</i>	<i>L.E.C</i>	<i>R.C.C</i>	<i>A.C.L</i>
Age: 35 to 44	1	1	1
Age: 45 to 54	1	2	2
Age: 55 and above	2	2	2
<i>Male</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Female</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>
Married	4	5	5
<i>Trained</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Not trained</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>
Certificate	1	1	1
Diploma	1	1	1
Degree	0	0	0
C.O.S.C/Matric and below	2	3	3

Note: L.E.C – Lesotho Evangelical Church

R.C.C – Roman Catholic Church

A.C.L – Anglican Church of Lesotho

C.O.S.C – Cambridge Overseas School Certificate

In all the three schools there is diversity in age. The difference between minimum and maximum ages is at least 20 years and majority is above 45 years of age. Majority of respondents is male, have not been trained as preparation for their duty as committee members and possesses qualifications not above C.O.S.C (Matric). All respondents are married.

PART II: Interaction of the principals with the ASCs

Frequency of information transmission from principals to ASCs

All respondents stated that principals regularly passed issues about schools (as shown in Table 6) to ASC members during meetings, as illustrated by the following responses:

We have dates, during which we sit, every month. However, where there is an emergency meeting, like yesterday, then letters are sent to us.

(ASC member, school B)

In fact, at the beginning of every year, each school is expected to schedule their meetings. We [ASC] sit down and actually set the timetable for the whole year...

(Principal, school C)

Ways through which principals pass information to ASCs

Table 2: Responses on ways through which principals pass information to ASC members

WAYS	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Verbal	3	4	4
In writing	2	4	2
Telephone	3	0	0

It seems that issues about schools from principals to ASC pass verbally during meetings and in writing of letters. This is in line with the observation of Steers *et al.* (1985) that communication among individuals and groups can take place in a number of different ways but verbal and written methods are most common. This is, however, mostly the case with school B. When asked to state ways, through which principals verbally transmitted information to ASCs, the following data was obtained.

Table 3: Responses on when principals verbally pass information to ASC members

WAYS	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Principals meet ASCs	3	4	4
Through pupils	0	2	2
Through fellow members	2	3	1
Announcement in church	0	1	0

It seems that verbal transmission of information from principals to ASCs occurs mostly during meetings of principals and ASCs. This is in line with the Smit and Cronje's (1997) contention that meetings play a decisive role in promoting effective horizontal communication. This is also confirmed by responses offered under Table 5, on number of meetings held by ASCs. Transmission of information from principals to ASCs also occurs when pupils (who might not interpret messages well) and fellow members are requested to inform members of ASCs about issues of schools, as majority of respondents in schools, A and B, and schools, B and C respectively stated.

Frequency of information transmission from ASCs to principals

All the respondents stated that ASCs regularly passed information relating to needs and wants of the community to principals. One member of the ASC illustrated this by saying that:

Often. You know, the way we work, people who are close and those we normally advice, are the principal and teachers. Those are the people we advice, on matters happening, during their work.

(ASC member, school B)

Ways through which ASC members pass information to principals

Table 4: Responses on ways through which ASCs pass information to principals

WAYS	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Verbal	3	4	4
In writing	1	2	1

Mostly, ASCs pass information to principals verbally. Communication through writing is not common in the schools, contrary to the contention of Steers *et al.* (1985) that verbal and written methods are common ways through which organisation occurs. However, in school B, written method is frequent, as stated by 50% of the respondents. In other words both verbal and written methods are common in school B. When asked as to when verbal communication occurs all respondents stated that it occurs during ASC meetings. The fact that meetings do take place was confirmed by data as provided below.

Number of ASC meetings

Table 5: Responses on number of meetings held by ASCs and principals

NUMBER OF MEETINGS	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Four	3	1	4
Six	0	3	0

It seems that four meetings were mostly held by ASCs since the beginning of the year, as shown by most of the respondents in two schools, A and C. The number of meetings falls short of the stipulations of the Lesotho Education Act of 1995 that ASCs should hold at least eight meetings per year. However, majorities of respondents were not aware of the stipulation. Given the fact that the Lesotho school calendar year covers about eight

months, this implies that ASCs should hold at least one meeting per month. The researcher conducted the study in September when schools had been in session for about six months. It implies, therefore, that the ASCs should have held at least six meetings.

The response of one of the members with regard to the low number of meetings was:

It's like this, you will find that at times when the day has been set for a meeting those in-charge in the committee are not there and therefore the meeting cannot be held. They [meetings] are often postponed.

(ASC member, school A)

The minute books confirmed that four meetings had been held in the two schools, A and C and that in school B, six meetings have been held so far.

Issues discussed in ASC meetings

Table 6: *Responses on issues discussed in ASCs and principals' meetings*

RESPONSES	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Finance	3	4	4
Feeding	3	4	4
Teachers' issues	1	2	1
Building	1	3	3
Projects	3	4	3

It seems as if the major concerns for the schools revolve around finance, feeding schemes and school projects, as shown by the majority of respondents in the three schools. However, as shown by most respondents in two schools, B and C, issues on buildings are included in the schools' agendas. Indeed, the dilapidated state of the classrooms confirmed the need for the issue on buildings in the agendas. School B is the only school in whose meetings most issues are discussed.

People who set ASCs' agenda

Table 7: *Responses on who decides what is to be in ASCs and principals' meeting*

PEOPLE WHO SET AGENDA	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Principal & secretary	3	3	2
Principal	0	1	1
Secretary	0	0	1

It seems that for the three schools both the principal and the secretary of ASC decide on the issues to be discussed in the meetings. In two schools, B and C, respectively 25% of respondents also stated that principals, on their own, set the agenda for the meetings. The setting of agenda by both principals and teachers may influence discussion of recent and essential issues relating to the day-to-day occurrences in schools as some of the members illustrated:

People who work where things are happening are the principal, helped by the teacher [secretary], the ones who know all things that happen in the school.

(ASC member, school A)

Mostly things come as his/her suggestions because, you understand, we [ASC] are not there from time to time.

(ASC member, school C)

Provision of agenda to members

Table 8: *Responses on whether ASC members know agenda before meetings*

RESPONSES	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
Yes	3	4	3
No	0	0	1

It seems that in all these schools, agenda is made known to members before they come into meetings. This may influence effective communication in that it will facilitate

comprehension of issues during discussion in meetings. Lack of comprehension of intended message has been found to be a barrier to effective communication (Fielding, 1997; Steers *et al.*, 1985; and Robbins and Coulter, 2002).

Language used by principals when communicating with ASC members

It seems that the language used when principals communicate with ASC members is the mother tongue, Sesotho, as was shown by all respondents. Some of their responses were:

...because most do not know English.

(ASC member, school C)

Actually we do not have the same educational backgrounds, so we presume it will show transparency that our issues are discussed in the language that we all understand. Even when we address our issues to the parents, it will require us to address them in the language all parents understand.

(Principal, school B)

This is also confirmed by minutes of the meetings, which are also written in Sesotho. The minute books also reveal that any correspondence written in English is translated to Sesotho by principals or secretaries of ASCs (teachers) for all members to understand. This may result in effective communication.

Decision making in ASC meetings

Table 9: Responses on who makes decisions in ASCs' meetings

PEOPLE WHO MAKE DECISIONS	SCHOOL A (n = 3)	SCHOOL B (n = 4)	SCHOOL C (n = 4)
MC	0	0	1
Principal	1	0	0
All members	2	4	3

It seems that in all three schools all members collectively make decisions regarding activities of ASC. When asked about the manner, in which decisions are reached, respondents stated that it is in a democratic and respectful manner.

You will find that everyone airs one's views until it is agreed as to what the final decision should be. There *should* [stressed] be an agreement. When there is no agreement then we vote so that we can decide based on majority.
(ASC member, school B)

Genuinely, in a respectful manner all the times, [not] all those arguments that could be expected of people with different views.
(ASC member, school A)

According to Bennett (1995), democratic decision-making by the collective of individuals guarantees their commitment to and acceptance of a decision.

PART III: Interaction of the ASCs with the MC

Frequency of information transmission from ASCs to MCs

It seems that in all the three schools, ASCs *occasionally* passed issues (as shown in Table 10) to MCs. Some of the responses were:

When they [issues] are there...

(Principal, school B)

I think they [ASC members] can advise where they *have* [stressed] problems...

(MC member, school C)

It is not a must that they [ASC members] report, as it is now, except for the report which is a must and which should be reported, the financial statement...

(MC member, school A)

I think that we report *when* [stressed] necessary, when we *have* [stressed] issues...

(ASC member, school C)

Ways through which ASCs pass information to MCs

According to all respondents in the three schools, the only way ASCs communicate with MCs is through the writing of letters, as one of the respondents stated:

...through a letter. We tell it [MC], for example, that there is a need for the extension of classrooms.

(ASC member, school B)

This is, however, contrary to Steer *et al.*'s (1985) contention that both verbal and written methods are common ways through which communication occurs. When asked why members of ASCs and MCs never verbally communicate with each other, mostly the response was that they do not hold meetings together (Table 14).

Messages ASCs pass to MCs

Table 10: *Responses on messages that ASCs pass to MCs*

MESSAGES	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Progress reports	0	3	1
Requests	1	2	1
Suggestions	2	4	4

It seems that when ASCs communicate with MCs, they mostly make suggestions regarding what they as ASCs are planning to do, as most respondents have shown in the three schools. However, in school B the majority of respondents further stated that they report progress of their schools. In the two schools, A and C, ASCs do not report progress of the schools and there are no requests they make from MCs in relation to their job. This is contrary to the Fielding's (1997) contention that the main purpose of upward communication is for subordinates to offer, to managers, report on the progress of tasks

as well as providing managers with suggestions and proposals. This may be attributed to the fact that MCs do not encourage such communication (as will be observed later).

Frequency of information transmission from MCs to ASCs

Table 11: *Responses of frequency of information transmission from MCs to ASCs*

FREQUENCY	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Occasional	0	3	1
Never	4	2	4

It seems that MCs occasionally passed issues (Table 13) to ASCs, as shown by respondents in two schools, A and B. The interviewees in the three schools could not state as to why MCs never meet with ASCs. When asked whether they ever get feedback on the messages that they have sent to their MCs, they stated that they have never got any. One of them offered this response:

We just advise them [MC] and genuinely, it has never happened that there is feedback. We often presume that we can go on with things [decisions].
(ASC member, school A)

Ways through which MCs pass information to ASCs

Table 12: *Responses on ways through which MCs pass information to ASCs*

WAYS	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Verbal	0	4	0
Written	1	4	1
None	3	1	4

It seems that mostly MCs do not pass information to ASCs. However, in school B both verbal and written methods are common as shown by the majority of respondents. The

four respondents in school B stated that verbal transmission occurs during school visits by all MC members and written transmission occurs through letters.

Messages MCs pass to ASCs

Table 13: *Responses on messages transmitted from MCs to ASCs*

MESSAGES	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Advice	0	2	0
None	4	3	5

It seems that in two schools, A and C, there are no messages that MCs pass to ASCs. In school B, views were different. This is contrary to the observations of Fielding (1997), Gibson *et al.* (2000) and Lewis (1975) that managers pass down to subordinates information on school goals, policy statements, mission statements, procedure and instruction on how schools operate. When asked whether MCs ever met with ASCs the following data was obtained.

Number of meetings jointly held by ASCs and MCs

Table 14: *Responses on number of meetings jointly held by ASCs and MCs*

RESPONSES	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
None	3	2	4
One	0	3	0
Not sure	1	0	1

As shown in two schools, ASCs and MCs never jointly met since the beginning of the year. When asked why ASCs have never met with MCs, most respondents simply stated that it is because they write to the MCs instead. In school B, 60% of the respondents

stated that the ASC and the MC have jointly held one meeting since the beginning of the year.

PART IV: Respondents' duties and perceptions

Duties of ASCs

Table 15: Responses on the duties of ASCs

DUTIES	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Advice MCs	4	5	5
Link school with community	4	5	5
Organise funds	1	1	1
Supervise feeding	1	2	2
Support school projects	0	2	1
Recommend appointment of teachers	3	3	3
Resolve conflict	1	3	1
Monitor school funds	0	1	1

Most of the duties that ASCs do, as shown by most respondents in the three schools, are to advise MCs, serve as link between community and school and recommend appointment of teachers. It seems that, in school B, the ASC did more duties than ASCs in the other two schools did, as shown by more than 50% of the respondents. One member of ASC, in support of the fact that they serve as link between school and community offered the following response:

Anything that we do but will affect parents especially financially then they must be consulted. We have never done anything without their consent.
(ASC member, school A)

More than 50% of respondents in each school stated that ASCs recommend appointment of teachers to MCs. When asked as to how ASCs advise and make recommendations to MCs, respondents stated that ASCs do that through letters.

Duties of MCs

Table 16: *Responses on the duties of MCs*

DUTIES	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Recommend transfer of teachers	2	3	3
Recommend promotion of teachers	3	3	2
Recommend demotion of teachers	3	3	3
Recommend appointment of teachers	1	3	2
Advice ASCs when necessary	2	1	2
Supervise schools	1	2	2

In the three schools, major duties of MCs, as identified by most of the respondents, seem to be the following: recommendation of teachers' (a) transfers, (b) promotion, and (c) demotion. Recommendations of appointment of teachers and provision of advice to ASCs are not major issues as only in schools B and A respectively. It seems that the MC in school B did more duties than the MCs in other two schools did.

Helpful interaction

Table 17: *Responses on interaction helpful to management of schools*

INTERACTIONS	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Principal with ASC	4	5	5
Principal with MC	2	3	3
ASC with MC	1	3	1

It seems that interactions that are helpful to schools, according to most of the respondents in these schools are the interactions between principals and ASCs and those between principals and MCs. It seems that most respondents in school B respectively perceive all the above interactions as helpful to the management of schools. When asked why the interactions between ASCs and MCs are not helpful some respondents could not give

reasons while others just stated that it is because ASCs only advice MCs, nothing further happens.

Changes or recommendations on interactions

Table 18: *Changes or recommendations on interactions between principals, ASCs and MCs*

CHANGES / RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHOOL A (n = 4)	SCHOOL B (n = 5)	SCHOOL C (n = 5)
Duties of ASC be clearly spelt out	4	5	5
Training for members be regular	4	4	5
MC should consult ASC during every school visit	3	2	3
ASC be given authority to appoint temporary teachers	3	2	4

It seems that all the above are recommended in schools. In two schools, A and C, there are more recommendations than are in school B. In school B, more than 50% of respondents made two recommendations. The recommendations: (a) duties of ASC be spelt out and (b) training be regularly conducted, are similar for all the three schools. When asked as to why training for members should be regular, respondents stated that some of them are new in the committee and have not been trained and also those who were trained have already forgotten what was discussed during the training. Some of the members offered these responses:

They tried to inform us but as you know of our brains, you will understand this and subsequently forget it.

(ASC member, school B)

Oh! Men. I might not even be able to answer you because there were so many, many, many issues and they were in English. (Trying to recall) Indeed, and we couldn't grasp those in English well, even those in Sesotho...(pausing

and trying to recall) It is also because it is a long time back. Sir, that workshop we held, it was way back...it is about a year now.

(MC member, school B)

During interviews and when asked other questions, some respondents related to lack of training and induction:

...to my understanding, as someone who has joined the committee when it was already operating, and who has received nothing [induction/training] from anybody, just my experience and individual understanding, I think ...

(ASC member, school C)

This dire need for training confirms Ralise's (1996) observation that functions of management committees were not clear to the committee members. This need for training implies undefined or absence of guidelines on channels of communication hence supporting Makhetha and Pitso's (1991) observation as stated in Chapter One.

PART V: Interaction of the principals with the MCs

Frequency of information transmission from principals to MCs

In the three schools, all responses stated that principals occasionally passed messages to MCs.

...if there is anything, if there is [stresses], then she/he can report it to the management.

(MC member, school C)

Groups of people through whom principals pass information to MCs

Table 19: Responses on groups of people through whom principals pass information to MCs

GROUPS OF PEOPLE	SCHOOL A (n = 2)	SCHOOL B (n = 2)	SCHOOL C (n = 2)
ASC	2	2	2
Principals' representative	1	2	2
Principals themselves	1	2	1

It seems principals mostly pass information on schools to MCs through ASCs. The number of stages (groups of people) and amount of time that messages, some of which may require immediate attention, will take before reaching their destination have been found to be barriers to effective organisational communication (Fielding, 1997; Steers *et al.*, 1985; and Robbins and Coulter, 2002). In two schools, B and C, according to majority of respondents, information is also passed through the principals' representatives in the MCs. In school B, though, all three groups of people are engaged in the transmission of information concerning the school, from the principal to the MC.

Messages passed from principals to MCs

Table 20: *Responses on messages passed from principals to MCs*

MESSAGES	SCHOOL A (n = 2)	SCHOOL B (n = 2)	SCHOOL C (n = 2)
Suggestions	2	2	2
Progress reports	0	2	0
Requests	2	2	2

It seems that principals mostly make suggestions and requests to MCs, as most of the respondents in these schools have shown. In two schools, A and C, principals do not seem to report their progress to MCs. This is contrary to the contention by Fielding (1997) that subordinates need to report on the progress of their tasks as well as providing managers with suggestions and proposals. School B is the only one whose principal makes suggestions and requests and also reports her progress.

Frequency of information transmission from MCs to principals

All interviewees stated that MCs occasionally passed information to principals.

Groups of people through whom MCs pass information to principals

Table 21: *Responses on groups of people through whom MCs pass information to principals*

WAYS	SCHOOL A (n = 2)	SCHOOL B (n = 2)	SCHOOL C (n = 2)
ASC	0	2	0
Principals' representatives	1	2	1
Principals themselves	2	2	2

It seems that MCs mostly pass their messages to principals directly, as shown by respondents in the three schools. ASCs and principals' representatives are not involved in the delivery of messages to principals. When asked whether ASCs ever get to know of messages that are sent to principals the respondents stated that only when principals and ASCs meet or when principals decide to write to them. As was shown earlier, the number of stages and amount of time that the messages have to take before reaching their destination, have been found to be barriers to effective organisational communication.

When asked as to when principals received messages from MCs, the respondents stated principals receive the messages during school visits when they meet with MCs. When asked how often MCs visited schools, interviewees stated that a school is normally visited once a year or whenever there were urgent issues to be attended to in the school. The minute books for the three schools showed that the MCs visited schools when there were conflicts that needed urgent attention. There were also schedules of proposed schools visits in two schools, A and C. It was evident from the schedule that a school is visited once in a year unless there were urgent matters to be addressed in the school, as was observed from the minute books. The respondents stated that when MCs visit schools

and are not attending to urgent issues they investigate the general condition of schools.

One of the members offered this response:

It is to see whether the suggestions made [by the ASC] have actually materialised... It can meet with the Advisory there, if it has required so... We are actually investigating whether their suggestions are materialising.
(MC member, school A)

On being asked as to how often those representatives of principals passed the issues to MC, some of the respondents stated that issues are passed during meetings of MCs.

Number of meetings held by MCs

Table 22: *Responses of number of meetings held by MCs since beginning of the year*

NUMBER OF MEETINGS	SCHOOL A (n = 2)	SCHOOL B (n = 2)	SCHOOL C (n = 2)
None	2	0	0
One	0	0	2
Two	0	2	0

It seems that MCs held no meetings since the beginning of the year. It is only the MC in school B that held two meetings. The number of meetings falls short of the stipulations of the Lesotho Education Act of 1995 according to which MCs should hold at least four meetings per year. The Lesotho school calendar covers a period of about eight months. As was earlier stated, the study was conducted in September when schools have covered about six months. This implies that MCs should have held at least three meetings. The minimal number of meetings implies minimum interaction between the members and thus may impact negatively on communication and effective management.

Messages MCs pass to principals

Table 23: Responses on messages passed from MCs to principals

MESSAGES	SCHOOL A (n = 2)	SCHOOL B (n = 2)	SCHOOL C (n = 2)
Advice	2	2	2
Policy statement	0	2	0

In all the schools, MCs offer advice to principals. In school B, there is a common understanding that the MC (a) advised principals with regard to their job and also (b) offered policy statements to the principal with regard to the management of the school. This is contrary to the contentions made by Fielding (1997), Gibson *et al.* (2000) and Lewis (1975) that managers pass down to subordinates information on school goals, policy statements, mission statements, procedure and instruction on how schools operate.

Conclusion

The findings show that there is two-way interaction and communication between principals and ASCs. There are few ways through which the links are maintained. The findings have also revealed that there are links between ASCs and MCs even though these are not two-way and not properly maintained. Finally the findings have also revealed that principals link with MCs through few ways. However, the links are as well not two-way.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate existing links between principals, advisory school committees (ASCs) and management committees (MCs) in the management of education in Lesotho. The study was aimed at investigating how the links were established and maintained as well as the content of the links. To achieve this, the study set out to investigate three primary schools. The similarities and differences were drawn in an attempt to make as full and as balanced a picture of the situation in schools as possible.

In this chapter, conclusions on existing links between principals, advisory school committees and management committees will be drawn and recommendations will be made. These will be based on the findings obtained from the data collected from the three schools investigated in the study.

Existing links between principals, ASCs and MCs

Data indicates that there are indeed links between principals, ASCs and MCs. Principals mostly link with ASCs in two ways. The main link is in the form of verbal communication as was evidenced by data on page 27. The link is established through meetings, as data on pages 28 and 29 showed. However, the number of meetings falls short of the stipulations of the Lesotho Education Act of 1995, as amended in 1996. This

may, therefore, impact on the intensity of the link. Principals and ASCs also link through writing (page 27) whereby principals inform ASC members on issues in schools by letters. Data on page 27 also showed that principals and ASCs communicate often. These regular interactions enable members to access agenda before attending meetings and thus acquaint themselves with issues in the agenda before meetings start. This facilitates effective verbal communication, as members will possess better comprehension of issues to be discussed (Fielding, 1997; Steers *et al.*, 1985; and Robbins and Coulter, 2002).

The findings revealed that in a school where the number of contacts was high and the number of meetings between principals and ASCs was greater, a number of issues were known to and discussed by members (page 30). The findings also revealed that in a school where the principal was fully engaged behind issues discussed in the meetings, (page 31) and where members collectively made decisions (page 32) then members knew more about their duties (pages 37 and 38). This is in line with the contention that democratic decision-making guarantees commitment to and acceptance of decisions (Bennett, 1995). In meetings, principals, as managers of schools on daily basis, present issues of schools that need to be discussed by ASCs. Communication between principals and members of ASCs is facilitated also by the fact that Sesotho, mother tongue, is used in meetings, as was stated by 100% of the respondents.

Existing links between ASCs and MCs

The findings of this study revealed that there is a link between ASCs and MCs. This link exists in the form of written communication by ASCs to MCs. The flow of information is

one-way in that information flows mainly from ASCs to MCs, as was shown by data on pages 33 and 35. ASCs occasionally write letters to MCs when making suggestions on activities they think should be undertaken in the schools. As was earlier stated, upward communication serves as a way through which managers receive feedback as to how work is being performed and as to how their messages have been received (Steers *et al.*, 1997). However, the study revealed that upward communication from ASCs to MCs is not given much attention in schools since members of management committees are selective when receiving information. ASCs are also not expected or encouraged, by MCs, to report their progress in schools. These have been found to be barriers to effective communication (Fielding, 1997; Steers *et al.*, 1985; and Robbins and Coulter, 2002).

Downward communication is used to provide subordinates with feedback on how successful their previous jobs have been (Fielding, 1997; Gibson *et al.*, 2000; and Lewis, 1975). However, this is mostly not the case with the studied Lesotho schools, as findings have revealed. MCs mostly do not pass any information to ASCs.

Existing links between principals and MCs

The findings also revealed that links exist between principals and MCs. Messages, which at times might be seeking immediate attention, from principals to MCs, are sent through ASCs and representatives of principals, as shown on page 40. From the findings on pages 36 and 43, the number of meetings of the ASCs and MCs is minimal. As was earlier stated, the amount of time taken and the number of stages through which messages have to go, pose as barriers to effective communication. An important fact to note is that MCs

do not encourage upward communication from principals, as was shown by data on pages 33 and 40. Research has also shown that in organisation where upward communication programs were effectively implemented, a majority of managers improved their performance (Gibson *et al.*, 2000).

Thus the conclusions that can be reached with regard to the three key questions of the study are that:

- i. Links exist between the principals, ASCs and MCs. However, the diversity of the links is limited in that there is limited number of links used between the three bodies of authority. This has thus resulted into few interactions between principals, ASC and MC members. This could have impacted negatively on the knowledge of duties by these groups of people.
- ii. Links between the different bodies are not well exploited thus resulting in poor establishment of links between these bodies. Existing links are not properly maintained since in most cases the links between any two bodies tend to be predominantly one-dimensional. Even where links exist in the form of meetings such meetings fall short of the stipulations of the legislature. This poor maintenance of the existing links has led to some of the trained members forgetting their duties.
- iii. The content of the existing links is minimal as evidenced by limited knowledge of duties and issues to be discussed in meetings.

It is, however, vital that for effective management of primary schools in Lesotho necessary links are established and maintained between the principals, ASCs and MCs. The links must possess content beneficial for the management of the schools.

Recommendations

The researcher feels that teachers and principals; advisory school committees and management committees; school proprietors and their secretaries; and education officers should address the following recommendations in order to improve links between principals, advisory school committees and management committees:

1. The issue of training and induction, for both ASC and MC members, on their duties as members of the committees, need to be seriously considered. The findings on pages 37 and 38 revealed that there are uncertainties in regard to the different duties that ASCs and MCs do. The training and induction need to emphasise effective organisational communication between principals, advisory school committees and management committees in the Lesotho education management system.
2. Reference material should be made available at school level for all members to access. These should include all documents on legislature.
3. It should be ensured that schools operate in accordance with the provisions of the education legislature especially with regard to holding meetings.
4. It should be clearly stipulated as to how ASCs should interact with MCs while advising the MCs.

5. It should be clearly stipulated as to how principals should interact with MCs while managing schools on daily basis and on behalf of MCs.
6. The function of ASCs should be revised and clearly spelt out.
7. Based on the findings of this study, the researcher feels that the number of meetings suggested by legislature may not be practical or may be too much. The researcher therefore feels that there is need for further study on appropriateness of this number of meetings for both ASCs and MCs.
8. The researcher also feels that this legislature, involving two committees in management of schools may not ideal. The researcher feels that there is need for a further study to investigate effect of two committees (advisory school committee and management committee) in the management of schools in Lesotho.

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APPENDIX A

Lesotho Education Act of 1995

957

- (b) a record containing the name and address of every member of the approved management committee;
- (c) register of teachers, in which shall be entered the name of every registered teacher and his qualifications;
- (d) a record containing the name and address of every proprietor.

Grants in aid

16. (1) The Minister may, after consultation with the Minister responsible for finance, make to any proprietor a grant in aid from public funds for any educational purposes upon such conditions as the Minister may prescribe.

(2) The Minister may, after consultation with the Minister responsible for finance, withdraw the whole or part of the grant, if the proprietor does not fulfil the conditions prescribed by the Minister.

Part III - Management Committees of Schools

Management Committees of Primary Schools

17. (1) Every primary school shall be managed by a management committee appointed by the proprietor and approved by of the Minister.

(2) Each management committee shall be responsible for a maximum of eight schools which belongs to one proprietor.

(3) Each management committee shall consist of the following members elected from various School Advisory Committees:

- (a) two members elected by representatives of the proprietor, one of whom shall be Chairman;
- (b) three members elected by representatives of parents, one of whom shall be Vice-chairman;
- (c) one teacher elected by representatives of teachers;
- (d) the principal elected by the principals of the schools under one management committee who shall be the secretary;
- (e) one representative of chiefs under whose jurisdiction the eight schools which belong to one proprietor fall.

(4) The Minister may in writing withdraw his approval of the management committee or of a member if the management committee or if a member fails to carry out its or his functions efficiently.

(5) A member of the management committee whose approval has been withdrawn under subsection (4) shall not become a member of any management committee without the written approval of the Minister.

(6) A member of the management committee holds office for a period of three years, and is eligible for re-appointment.

(7) The management committee shall meet at least four times a year.

(8) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the management committee and, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall preside.

(9) The decisions of the management committee shall be by the majority of the members present and voting and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a casting vote in addition to his deliberative vote.

(10) Five members of the management committee shall form a quorum.

Responsibility of the Management Committee

18. The management committee shall,

- (a) supervise the schools for which it has been constituted;
- (b) be responsible for the management and for the proper and efficient running of the schools under its jurisdiction;
- (c) recommend to the Educational Secretary or Supervisor as the case may be, the appointment, discipline, transfer, removal from office of a teacher other than a teacher whose salary is paid by the Government;
- (d) on the advice of the District Education Officer, recommend to the Educational Secretary or Supervisor the promotion or demotion of a teacher other than a teacher whose salary is paid by the Government.

Advisory School Committees of Primary Schools

19. (1) There shall be an Advisory School Committee for every primary school.

(2) Each Advisory School Committee shall consist of the following members appointed by the proprietor:

- (a) two representatives of the proprietor;
- (b) one representative of teachers who shall be the secretary;
- (c) four members of the community served by the school who shall be elected by parents of pupils admitted in that school;
- (d) a chief of the area where the school is situated or his representative;
- (e) the principal of the relevant school.

(3) The appointment of members of the Advisory School Committee shall be subject to the approval of the Minister.

(4) A member of the Advisory School Committee (other than a member referred to in paragraph (a)) holds office for a period of three years, and is eligible for re-appointment.

(5) The Advisory School Committee shall meet at least eight times a year.

(6) The Chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Advisory School Committee and, in his absence, the Vice-Chairman shall preside.

(7) The decision of the Advisory School Committee shall be by the majority of members present and voting and in the event of an equality of votes, the person presiding shall have a casting vote in addition to his deliberative vote.

(8) Five members of the Advisory School Committee shall form a quorum.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

20. The members of the Advisory School Committee shall elect both the chairman and vice-chairman of the Advisory School Board from members referred to in paragraphs (2)(a), (c) or (d).

Function of the Advisory School Committee

21. The function of the Advisory School Committee is to advise the management committee on all matters relating to education in the relevant school.

School Boards of post-primary schools

22. (1) Every post-primary school shall be managed by a School Board appointed by the proprietor.

(2) The appointment of the members of the School Board shall be subject to the approval of the Minister.

(3) The School Board shall consist of,

- (a) two representatives of the proprietor, one of whom shall be Chairman;
- (b) three members of the community served by the school, who shall be elected by parents of pupils admitted

APPENDIX B

Lesotho Education (Amendment) Act of 1996

471

- (5) Any person who obstructs or resists any officer appointed under subsection (1), in the performance or exercise of any power or duty imposed or conferred by or under this Act, is guilty of an offence and is liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding One Thousand Maloti or to imprisonment for a period not exceeding one year or both.

Duties of a Principal

14A The principal shall —

- (a) be responsible for the discipline, organisation and day to day running of the school;
- (b) be the chief accounting officer of the school and shall be responsible to the Management Committee or School Board for the control and use of school funds;
- (c) maintain or cause to be maintained records of income and expenditure for the school;
- (d) prepare an annual budget for the school and submit it to the Management Committee or School Board for its approval;
- (e) submit at the end of each school year a financial statement of the school to the Management Committee or School Board for its approval; and
- (f) perform any other duties as may be prescribed by the Minister or delegated to him by the School Board or the Management Committee."

Principal Secretary to maintain register

12. Section 15 of the principal Act is amended by repealing paragraph (c).

Management Committees of Primary Schools

13. Section 17 of the principal Act is amended —

- (a) in subsection (1), by deleting the word "of" after the words "approved by";
- (b) in subsection (3) —
 - (i) by deleting the words "School Advisory Committees" and substituting the words "Advisory School Committees";
 - (ii) in paragraph (d) by deleting the word "management" and substituting the word "Management".
- (c) by inserting the following new subsection after subsection (3) —
"(3 A) Notwithstanding subsection (3) where there are no Advisory School Committees in the circumstances set out in section 19 (1) the

APPENDIX C

Lesotho Teaching Service Regulations of 2002

25

- (14) The Commission may transfer a teacher at any time on the exigencies of the Service.
- (15) A teacher shall not transfer to another school without the approval of the Commission.
- (16) A teacher shall be notified of his transfer by the Commission, using a form designed by the Commission similar to that set out in Schedule 23.

PART VI CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Responsibility of Service

- 23. (1) A teacher employed in the Service shall, during the period of employment, be responsible to the School Board or Management Committee of the school to which he is allocated.
- (2) The School Board or Management Committee shall carry out its duties in accordance with the provisions of the Act.
- (3) The Principal shall be responsible for the day to day management of the school on behalf of the School Board or Management Committee.
- (4) The Deputy shall act as Principal whenever the Principal is absent.

Duties of teachers

- 24. (1) The Principal may require a teacher to give instruction in any class and in any subject appropriate to such teacher's qualifications and experience.
- (2) A teacher shall, in addition to the performance of his duties during school hours and on the school premises, take part when required by the Principal in any matter affecting the general work and welfare of the school including such sporting and extra-mural activities as may be conducted for the benefit of the pupils.

APPENDIX D

Florence Powell Hall - Room H8
University of Natal
Durban
4041
4th October 2002

Respondent

..... Primary School

Dear respondent,

RESEARCH ON LINKS BETWEEN PRINCIPALS, ASCs AND MCS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS

I am a student in the above University and I am currently conducting a research whose title is:

An Investigation Of The Links Between Advisory School Committees And Management Committees In The Management Of Primary School Education In Lesotho: A Study Of Three Schools In Botha-Bothe District.

This research forms part of my academic work under Masters of Education. The findings from this study will be useful to teachers, principals, ASCs, MCs and inspectors. Your school has been identified and selected to be one of the three schools to be studied. I, therefore, humbly request you to accept this invitation to participate in this study by completing the attached questionnaire.

The questions are short and straightforward. This will enable you to not only provide detailed information but to also complete the questionnaire within a short time. Confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed.

Looking forward to your compliance in pursuit of effective and efficient management of primary education in Lesotho.

Yours faithfully

J. A Marole

APPENDIX E

TEACHERS' AND CHIEF'S REPRESENTATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

School: _____ Registration Number: _____

Membership: Teacher ☐ Chief ☐

Note: Please tick in appropriate boxes in all the sections below. Two or more boxes may be ticked where necessary.

SECTION A:

1. Age: Less than 35 ☐
 35 to 44 ☐
 45 to 54 ☐
 55 and above ☐

2. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

3. Religious inclination: L.E.C ☐
 R.C ☐
 A.C.L ☐
 A.M.E ☐
 Other (Specify) _____

4. Professional Qualifications: Up to COSC ☐
 Diploma ☐
 Degree ☐
 None ☐
 Other (Specify) _____

5. Marital Status (Tick the appropriate)

Single/ Married/ Divorced/ Widower/ Widow/ Separated

6. How long have you been in this ASC? _____

7. Have you received any training as ASC members that prepared you as committee members?

Yes ☐ No ☐

SECTION B: *(Interaction of the principal with the ASC)*

1. When does the principal pass information to the ASC?

Often	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. What are the ways through which the principal passes information?

.....

.....

.....

3. When does the ASC pass information to the principal?

Often	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occasionally	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not sure	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What are the ways through which the ASC members pass information, concerning communities, to principals?

.....

.....

.....

5. How many meetings have you held, as an ASC, this year? *(Circle the appropriate answer)*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

6. Which issues of the school do you normally discuss in the meetings?

.....

.....

.....

7. Who decides on what should be in the agenda? Chairperson

Principal

Secretary

Other *(Specify)* _____

8. Is the agenda made known to you before the meeting? Yes

☐

No

☐

9. Which language is used in the meetings?

English

Sesotho

Other *(Specify)* _____

10. How does the principal contact ASC member while they are at home? *(Tick more than one if necessary)*

Members are requested to remind each other

Letters are sent to member

School children are asked to remind members

Other *(Specify)* _____

11. Who makes decision for ASCs in ASC meetings?

Management committees

Principal

All members

Other *(Specify)* _____

SECTION C: (Interaction of the ASC with MC)

1. When does the information from the ASC reach the MC?

Often

Occasionally

Never

Not sure

2. Which messages does the ASC communicate to the MC? *(Tick more than one if necessary)*

Progress reports

Suggestions

Special requests

Not sure

Other *(Specify)* _____

3. How does the ASC pass information to the MC? *(Tick more than one if necessary)*

The ASC meets with the MC

The chairman meets with the MC

Secretary writes them a letter

Minutes are made available to them

Not sure

Other *(Specify)* _____

4. When does the information from the MC reach the ASC?

Often

Occasionally

Never

Not sure

5. Which messages does the MC pass to the ASC? *(Tick more than one if necessary)*

Job instruction

Policy statements

Not sure

Other (Specify) _____

6. How does the MC pass information to the ASC? *(Tick more than one if necessary)*

Secretary writes them a letter

The whole MC meets with the whole ASC

The MC chairman meets with the ASC chairman

The representation meets with the ASC

Not sure

Other (Specify) _____

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

12. How many meetings has the MC held on its own since the beginning of the year? *(Circle the appropriate answer)*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

13. How many meetings has the ASC and the MC jointly held this year? *(Circle the appropriate answer)*

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

SECTION E:

1. To your knowledge what are the duties of the ASC and the MC? *(If you need more space please continue overleaf)*

ASC duties	MC duties
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

2. To your knowledge, which links, as they stand, are helpful to you in the running of the schools?

Link

Link of the principal to the ASC

Link of the ASC to the principal

Link of the ASC to the MC

Link of the MC to the ASC

Link of the principal to the MC

Link of the MC to the principal

Yes	No

3. What changes or recommendations (if any) do you have regarding these links?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

APPENDIX F

Interview guide questions

School: _____

Registration Number: _____

1. Age: Less than 35 ☐
 35 to 44 ☐
 45 to 54 ☐
 55 and above ☐

2. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

3. Religious inclination: L.E.C ☐
 R.C ☐
 A.C.L ☐
 A.M.E ☐

Other _____

4. Professional Qualifications: Certificate ☐
 Diploma ☐
 Degree ☐
 None ☐
 Other _____

5. Marital Status

Single/ Married/ Divorced/ Widower/ Widow/ Separated

6. How long have you been in this ASC? _____

7. Have you received any training as ASC members that prepared you as committee members?

Yes ☐ No ☐

The following questions, centered on the key questions, will be asked:

1. How many meetings have you held with ASC this year so far?
2. Who decides on the agenda of the meeting? Any reasons?
3. Is agenda made known to members before the meetings?
4. Which language is used in the meetings? Any reasons?
5. How are decision reached in the meetings?
6. Which messages do you normally pass to the ASC?
7. How frequent does the ASC communicate with you?
8. Which channels does the ASC use?
9. Which messages does the ASC pass to you?
10. How frequent do you communicate with the MC?
11. What channels do you use?
12. Which messages do you normally pass to the MC?
13. How frequent does the MC communicate with you?
14. What channels do they use?
15. Which messages does the MC normally pass to you?

APPENDIX G

LIST OF TABLES

Responses on ways through which principals pass information to ASC members

Table 1: *Biographical details*

Table 2: *Responses on ways through which principals pass information to ASC members*

Table 3: *Responses on when principals verbally pass information to ASC members*

Table 4: *Responses on ways through which ASCs pass information to principals*

Table 5: *Responses on number of meetings held by ASCs and principals*

Table 6: *Responses on issues discussed in ASCs and principals' meetings*

Table 7: *Responses on who set agenda for ASCs' meetings*

Table 8: *Responses on whether ASC members know agenda before meetings*

Table 9: *Responses on who makes decisions in ASCs' meetings*

Table 10: *Responses on messages that ASCs pass to MCs*

Table 11: *Responses of frequency of information transmission from MCs to ASCs*

Table 12: *Responses on ways through which MCs pass information to ASCs*

Table 13: *Responses on messages MCs pass from to ASCs*

Table 14: *Responses on number of meetings jointly held by ASCs and MCs*

Table 15: *Responses on duties of ASCs*

Table 16: *Responses on duties of MCs*

Table 17: *Responses on interaction helpful to management of schools*

Table 18: *Changes or recommendations on interactions between principals, ASCs and MCs*

Table 19: *Responses on groups of people through whom principals pass information to MCs*

Table 20: *Responses on messages principals pass to MCs*

Table 21: *Responses on groups of people through which MCs pass information to principals*

Table 22: *Responses of number of meetings held by MCs since beginning of the year*

Table 23: *Responses on messages MCs pass to principals*