

**Schools Principal Leadership Styles in Selected Public Secondary Schools in the
Vhembe District, Limpopo Province.**

this is my own work in design and research by and that all reference materials contained
therein has been duly acknowledged.

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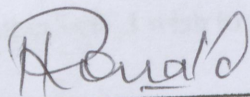
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DECLARATION

I, **Mudimeli Nyambeni Ronald** hereby declare that this mini dissertation for the degree of Master of Public Management at the university of Venda submitted by me, has not been submitted previously for a degree at this university, or any other university and that this is my own work in design and execution, and that all reference materials contained therein has been duly acknowledged.



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The inspiration I received from my colleague Shumani Tshubwana and his generosity will never go unnoticed.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the memories of my late sister Doris Lishivha who desperately wanted to have a graduate brother.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of principal leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Education in South Africa is currently going through various reforms. Previous studies and statistics have noted evidence of poor performance in public school in the Post-Apartheid South Africa. This study sought to analyse the leadership styles of principals and school performance of secondary schools in Vhembe District, Limpopo.

The study was carried out using the mixed methodology model. The mixed model design combines qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process. In this regards, two phases of data collection instruments were employed. The first phase focused on the collection of data through questionnaires. The questionnaires were used to assess the effect of principal leadership styles on school performance as perceived by the principal themselves and teachers who are members of the School Management Team. The second phase of the investigation focused on the collection of data through interview. The interview schedules were used to assess the effect of principal leadership styles on school performance as perceived by the principals themselves.

This study has shown that principals' leadership style is a critical variable in school performance. The study has also revealed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. The study has further established that the inappropriate choice of leadership styles by school principals affects the school learning culture which has an effect on learner's results. Both literature review and empirical research have confirmed that principals of good performing schools are flexible when practicing leadership styles. This research has established that unless principals are well equipped with knowledge, skills and principles of leadership, they will not be able to improve school performance.

Considering the findings of this study, it is recommended that school principals should imbibe a mixture of different leadership styles at their schools. It was also noted that the principals' leadership style is a critical variable in school performance. Therefore, the researcher recommends that the Department of Education should make it compulsory for school principal to go for refresher courses on Leadership skills ad principles. The researcher further recommends the Department of Education to give educators opportunity to further their studies in line with their professional development.

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ACRONYMS

DA	Developmental Appraisal
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PM	Performance Measurement
SASA	South African School Act
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SSPS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
WSE	Whole School Evaluation

CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Leadership style has always been a controversial topic in educational administration and management. It incorporates the accomplishment of task which is the institutional requirement and the satisfaction of employees, which is the human resource requirement. Maicibi (2005:78) maintained that, without a proper leadership style, effective performance cannot be realized in schools. Previous studies confirm that the principal's leadership has a strong direct effect on school performance and only indirect effects on educational outcomes (Leithwood, 1993: 67).

Before 1994, the main purpose of the education system was to ensure political control by the top echelons of the education departments (African National Congress Education Department, 1994:20). Senkhane (1993:4) argued that the authoritarian nature of the apartheid government was replicated at school level where most of the local power was vested in the school principals. During the apartheid regime the leadership styles observed in school principals was rigid and domineering; with close and constant control over teachers and school activities.

Since 1994 the government formulated programs for restructuring the education system on principles of equity, human rights, democracy and sustainable development. These programs include the Curriculum 2005 which was introduced in 1998, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS) in 2006. By 2010 the weaknesses of these curricula and the critique leveled against them gave rise to the new introduced Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement, (CAPS) that was released for Grades 6 to 9 in 2010 and for Grades 10 to 12 in 2011. The school principal becomes pivotal and important as these new changes come into effect. Leithwood et al (2007:123) argued that, "There is not a single documented case of a school successfully turning around its learner

achievement trajectory in the absence of talented leadership." Therefore the leadership styles of the school principals warrant an empirical study.

Of recent, the Department of Education has planned to demote and redeploy principals of poor performing schools. Therefore, the need to gain a better picture of the effect of principal's leadership styles on school performance cannot be over-emphasised. The study conducted by Legotlo et al (2002: 154) on "Perceptions of stakeholders on causes of poor performance in Grade 12" revealed that leadership styles exercised by school principals are also responsible for poor performance at schools.

1.2 Problem Statement

Education in South Africa is currently going through various reforms. Du Toit (2004: 41) has noted evidence of poor performance in public school even in the Post-Apartheid South Africa. Therefore, it is necessary to re-examine the system and evaluate the leadership styles of the school principals in relation to school performance.

There is an endless argument that the school principal is an important factor, if not the most critical element in improving the performance of the school (Lumby et al., 2008). Leithwood et al. (2010: 29) argued that principals have a powerful and indirect influence on teaching quality and learner learning. It is generally believed that good school principals are the cornerstones of good schools and that without such learner achievement cannot succeed.

A number of researchers have focused on school performance in schools in South Africa. For example, Odubuker (2007: 189) concluded that the principal's management training was critical to the performance of the school. Similarly, the study by Mathibe (2007:47) has shown a positive relationship between management of instruction materials and school performance. Legotlo (2002: 189) identified leadership as one of the causes of poor performance at schools.

However, at the time this research was conducted, not sufficient was known about the contribution of any single factor and, indeed, the relationship between leadership and school performance. Hence this research intended to investigate principals' leadership styles and their effects on school performance. Therefore, the problem of this study was to determine what relationship exists between principals' leadership style and school performance in secondary schools, Vhembe District, Limpopo?

1.3 Aim of the Study

The main aim of this study was to examine how leadership styles adopted by school principals influence the schools performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

- To investigate the challenges of principals' leadership styles on school performance.
- To describe the relationships between principals' leadership styles and schools performance.
- To explore the prevalent principal leadership style in public secondary schools.
- To determine the strategies that can be followed to enhance the principal leadership styles.

1.5 Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, four research questions were generated to guide the investigation namely:

- What are the challenges of principals' leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo?
- What are the relationships between principals' leadership styles and school performance?

- What is the prevalent principal leadership style in public secondary schools?
- What are the strategies that can enhance the principal leadership styles?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will help the school principals themselves. School principals will have an opportunity to reflect on their own leadership styles which increases their self-awareness. According to Duval (2001: 64), "People are more likely to align their behaviour with their standards when made self-aware." In this way, school principals may improve their own judgment and begin to identify opportunities for professional development and personal growth. The findings will reveal methods whereby principals could adjust their leadership styles to enhance school performance.

The research will shed light on the relationship between leadership styles and school performance. This knowledge will assist policymakers to assess the contents of the courses necessary for prospective and incumbent principals, to ensure that they are equipped with relevant skills. The information gathered in this investigation will be useful to authorities who appoint and deploy school principals as well as those who monitor the performance of schools. The findings will provide criteria the employers may use in the process of recruitment of school principals and support personnel.

In terms of the system of performance appraisal of school principals, the findings of the research will also indicate the strength of leadership styles, and their contribution to the welfare and performance of the schools. For those responsible for organizing induction courses for newly appointed principals, the research would provide some lessons to draw on.

Finally, the study will provide a basis for further studies related to leadership styles of principals in public schools. By focusing on the specific leadership factors which influence school performance, the research might motivate future researchers to identify others factors with a view to establishing the role of leadership at schools.

1.7 Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on the effect of principals' leadership styles on public secondary school in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Limpopo Province is comprised of five district municipalities, namely: Waterberg, Capricorn, Sekhukhune, Mopani and Vhembe. Only secondary schools in the Vhembe District were selected for the purpose of this investigation.

In order to maintain uniformity, the researcher was interested in public secondary schools with grade 12. The researcher chose secondary schools with Grade 12 in this study because it is an exit class in secondary schools. Therefore their annual results were important for this study. In addition, the researcher was interested to use grade 12 results as the main measuring stick for school performance.

Participants in this study were limited to Principals of the schools and members of the School Management Team (SMT). These respondents were chosen because they work in close proximity with the school principals. Therefore, their perception of the leadership styles of the principals is imperative in this investigation. Educators who are not members of the SMT were not included in this investigation.

1.8 Limitation of the Study

According to Ishmail (2004: 76), "limitations are factors that may influence your research outcomes if you do not control or limit them from the beginning of your research" Likewise, the researcher was conscious of different factors that could possibly affect the study.

Lack of funds for stationery, printing and travel was a constrain in this study. To counter this constrain, the study was conducted in Vhembe District which is a residential District of the researcher. Therefore, fewer funds were needed for traveling purposes.

The study topic itself was sensitive in that, the principals and SMT educators were resistant to return the questionnaires back to the researcher. However, the researcher was able to travel from school to school in order to collect the questionnaires.

Terminologies which are used in leadership discipline were not easily understood by the target population. However, the researcher has done his best to use the language that can be understood by everyone in his target population.

It was not easy to find time for interviewing school principals who were the target population in qualitative survey. Principals could not be easily found at schools as they had to visit circuit offices. The researcher was able to arrange for special meetings with target principals after school hours.

1.9 Definition of Operational Concepts

The following terms are defined in order to provide an understanding of how they were used in this study. However, the definitions of other key concepts are presented in the relevant chapters.

1.9.1 Leadership Style

Leadership styles are modes or methods of leadership adopted by various leaders. According to (Bass & Bass, 2008: 322), “leadership style refers to the behaviours used by a leader when implementing an approach to leadership that can be classified as laissez-faire, authoritarian, delegative, and participatory.” For the purpose of this study, the researcher has adopted the definition of leadership style according to the situational leadership theory, “the leadership style of an individual is the behaviour pattern that a person exhibits when attempting to influence the activities of others as perceived by those others (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982: 233).

1.9.2 School Performance

The Oxford English Dictionary (2006) defines performance as the accomplishment and execution of tasks. The accomplishment of tasks, in the context of the academic function of schools, refers to academic excellence or efficiency, which is measured in terms of learner performance in class work, and national examinations. According to Maslowsk (2001: 39) School performance refers to the effectiveness and efficiency of the schooling process. In the context of this research, school performance encompasses the full range of activities that would characterise a school as being successful. This would, in addition to academic performance, include well-motivated and committed teachers, learner satisfaction and involvement, parental involvement, a clean orderly school environment and strong principal leadership, amongst others. The definition is thus wider than merely academic performance in terms of pass rates and success in national examinations. Although the concept of school performance is not synonymous to school effectiveness, these two words are related. Effective schools are performing school.

1.9.3 Effective School

According to Potter & Powell (1992: 5), effective school means that “the school satisfies external criteria, such as the demands of parents and students, and does well against comparable institutions in key areas of performance such as examination results.” Whitaker (1994: 89) stresses that effectiveness requires a commitment to continual development and improvement and a consistent striving for small but significant improvements, a process involving everyone in the organisation.

Mortimore (1991: 9) argued that, “In an effective school, students progress further than might be expected from the consideration of the schools’ intake.” According to Lezotte (1991: 78), unique characteristics of the majority of effective schools are correlated with student success.

Effective school in the context of this study included those schools with consistent high academic achievement, good discipline, committed learners and educators, effective communication, team work, parental involvement, staff development, and generally good leadership. According to Sammons and Mortimore (1995: 8), “an effective school adds an extra value to its students’ outcomes in comparison with other schools serving similar intakes.”

1.9.4 School Management Team

The Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2003: 1123), defines school management team as staff members who are occupying senior or top management positions at an institution. In the manual entitled "Towards Effective School Management", school management team refers to the top management in a school (Doe (2003: 26). The module entitled "professional studies in educational administration and management"; school management team means a school based management structure that is responsible for the day to day operation of the school. This structure usually comprises of the Principal, Deputy Principal and the Heads of Departments.

School management team (SMT) in the context of this study referred to the executive body which is responsible for the professional matters of the school. It is comprised of the school principal as the chairperson of the team, and all senior officials including the deputy principal and the departmental heads.

1.9.5 Leadership

Armstrong (2004: 422) defines leadership as influence, power and the legitimate authority acquired by a leader to be able to effectively transform the organization through the direction of the human resource that are the most important organizational asset, leading to the achievement of desired purpose. Ricketts (2009: 132) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.”

These definitions affirm that leadership as a process is not an end to its self but a means to an end. In this process a leader influences or motivates individuals or followers to attain a desired vision. According to these definitions there are three important pillars of leadership. First, a leader must have followers Maxwell (1993: 43) argued that, "He that thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk." Second, a leader must have a goal or vision. Third, a leader must have the ability to influence. Leadership is about influencing people to follow your vision. Hence Maxwell (1998: 51) argued that "Leadership is influence. That's it. Nothing more; nothing less." For the purpose of this study, leadership refers to the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members.

1.9.6 Public Secondary School

According to the South African Schools Act, Act No. 84 of 1996 "school" means a public school or an independent school which enrolls learners in one or more grades from grade R (Reception) to grade twelve. However, Public Secondary School refers to high school within the public education system which generally has students from grade 8 through to 12. Public secondary schools are those schools which are under financial and administrative control of the Department of Education.

1.9.7 Principal

The chief accounting officer and an administrator in a school who represents the government within the institution. South African Schools Act of 1996 defines principal as an educator appointed or acting as the head of a school.

1.9.8 Leadership Flexibility

The extent that a leader's adaptability to various situations and ability to change his

or her leadership behaviour accordingly. A flexible leader tends to be more effective in a number of situations. A flexible leader is a leader who has the ability to use all the various leadership styles, which he chooses depending on the situation and the type of followers. Where an authoritarian approach is required, he will be an authoritarian leader. Where great vision is needed, he will be a transformational leader. To be an effective leader, one must master and be able to use the different effective leadership styles whenever the situation calls for it.

1.10 Organisation of the Study

Chapter 1: Orientation of the Study

Chapter one provides an introduction to the study, the problem statement, the research questions and the aims of the study. The motivation, the significance of the study, and the limitations are also stated.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter two presents a review of literature and relevant research associated with the problem addressed in this study. This chapter reveals the correlation between principal leadership styles and school performance as detailed by previous researchers.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter three discusses the research design and methodology where the population, sampling procedure, data collection and data analysis methods are elaborated on.

Chapter 4: Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter four contains an analysis of the data and presentation of the results. The information collected during the survey and the feedback from the respondents was presented, analysed and interpreted in this chapter.

Chapter 5: Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Chapter five is the summary in which the main findings are discussed in the light of the guiding research questions and the literature review. The chapter makes recommendations for the improvement of the performance of secondary schools in Vhembe District. The chapter also suggests areas for further research.

Although in order to examine the research questions in a critical context," Newman (2002:14) regards literature review as showing the path and prior research and how the current project is linked to the former. By so doing it provides the framework of the research and identifies the area of knowledge that the study is intended to expand. The purpose of this review was to examine the literature and research relevant to the relationship that exists between student achievement and leadership styles demonstrated by school principals.

Previous studies have demonstrated that there is a concrete relationship between principal leadership styles and school performance. The focus of this literature review was to summarise the various Leadership, management and leadership flexibility, in reviewing literature, the author has further identified different types of leadership styles, characteristics of effective schools as well as establishing the correlation between leadership styles and school performance.

1.1 Correlation between Principal's Leadership Styles and School Performance

According to Ballinger & Fleck (1996:78), there is a body of research that argues the nature and degree of principal's leadership impact on student achievement. Many studies have indicated that a relationship exists between student academic performance and principal leadership styles (Munroe, 2003; Waters, 2004). The overall premise is that

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Hicks (1996:245) argues that literature review refers to a survey of all research relevant to the topic in question, which allows the researcher to establish what has already been carried out. Cooper (1989:76) maintained that establishing literature review “provides background information and critical analysis of the existing literature and state of research in order to examine the research questions in a critical context.” Neumann (2000:446) regards literature review as showing the path and prior research and how the current project is linked to the former. By so doing it provides the framework of the research and identifies the area of knowledge that the study is intended to expand. The purpose of this review was to examine the literature and research relevant to the relationship that exists between student achievement and leadership styles demonstrated by school principals.

Previous studies have demonstrated that there is a concrete relationship between principals' leadership styles and school performance. The focus of this literature review was to conceptualise the terms Leadership, management, and leadership flexibility. In reviewing literature, the author has further identified different types of leadership styles, characteristics of effective schools as well as establishing the correlation between leadership styles and school performance.

2.2 Correlation between Principal's Leadership Styles and School Performance

According to Hallinger & Heck (1996:78), there is a body of research that argues the nature and degree of principal's leadership impact on student achievement. Many studies have indicated that a relationship exists between student academic performance and principal leadership styles (Mazzeo, 2003; Waters, 2003). The overall premise is that

there is a relationship between school principals' leadership styles and school performance but to what extent leads to controversy.

Both international and South African research literature has identified the role of the school principal as key in contributing to better school performance. There is consensus in the US and European literature, and increasingly South African research, that school managers play a crucial role in creating the conditions to improve school performance. (Marsh, 2002; Spillane, 2004; Taylor, 2007).

According to Evans (1996:112), research findings suggest a positive correlation between principals' leadership and the presence of school social organization associated with effective schools. Norton (2003:51) added that "research studies strongly support the fact that the leadership of the school principal impacts directly on the climate of the school and, in turn, on student achievement."

Researchers do not resist the notion that principals impact the success of students. However, some believe that the effects are indirect and, at best, difficult to measure. Ubben and Hughes (1992:142) maintained that "principals could create a school climate that improves the productivity of both teachers and students and that the leadership style of the principal can foster or restrict school performance." Hallinger and Heck (1998:83) reviewed over 40 empirical studies conducted and concluded that principals exercised a measurable and statistically significant indirect impact on school performance and student achievement. Similarly, Witziers, Bosker, and Kruger (2003:54) found that school leadership does have a positive and noteworthy effect on student achievement. The research work by Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2004:7) reported that effective school leadership substantially increases student achievement. Using a path analysis, Kruger, Witziers, and Slegers (2007:23) concluded that school leaders indirectly influence student outcomes and school culture.

Interestingly, some literatures revealed a direct Influence of the principal leadership styles towards schools achievement. For example, Kythreotis and Pashiardis (2006:223)

found direct effects of the principal's leadership style on student achievement. In the same vein Kythreotis, Pashiardis, and Kyriakides (2010:232) reached the conclusion that "the principal human leadership frame affects student achievement."

2.3 Leadership in relation to the Concept of Management

Different scholars have interpreted the concept of leadership differently. Ricketts (2009:32) defines leadership as "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal, while management is to exercise executive, administrative, and supervisory direction of a group or organisation." This definition affirms that leadership as a process is not an end to its self but a means to an end. A leader influences or motivates individuals or followers to attain a certain vision. This definition reveals three important pillars of leadership. First, a leader must have followers. Maxwell (1993:43) argued that, "He that thinketh he leadeth and hath no one following him is only taking a walk." Second, a leader must have a goal or vision. Third, a leader must have the ability to influence.

Leadership is the ability and the potential to influence any group towards the achievement of identified goals (Department of Education, 2004). Therefore, in educational settings, the principal is the leader and has the responsibility to influence educators towards the realization of the objectives of the school.

Bennis and Nanus (1985:34) define management as accomplishing activities and mastering routines; and leadership means to influence others and create visions for change. According to this definition, management refers to an act of accomplishing activities, that is, managers do not initiate, but they accomplish something initiated by leaders. Furthermore, a manager masters routine. This means that effectiveness in management is based on mastering the principles, policies, procedures and methods of an organisation. Formal education, work experience and mentoring are helpful in mastering management routine. Unlike managers, leaders possess natural set of talents that inspire people to follow, to be loyal, and to produce. According to Maxwell (1993:39),

“Management is the process of assuring that the program and objectives of the organization are implemented. Leadership on the other hand has to do with casting vision and motivating people.”

Straker (2009:77) argued that "Leaders focus on the future while managers focus on the present." Leaders are more focused on what will happen in the future if certain actions are taken while managers focus on the present and what would help best for the moment. A manager is concerned with here and now whereas a leader is concerned with there and later. A leader may anticipate and propose a change in the school curriculum whereas a manager is only worried about the delivery of the present curriculum.

Leaders are supposed to give us the vision, the sense of purpose and inspiration, while managers are supposed to implement. According to Kotter (1988:76), effective management carefully plans the goal of an organization, recruits the necessary staff, organizes them, and closely supervises them to make sure that the initial plan is executed properly. Successful leadership goes beyond management of plans and tasks. It envisions the future and sets a new direction for the organization. Successful leaders mobilize all possible means and human resources; they inspire all members of the organization to support the new mission and execute it with enthusiasm. When an organization faces an uncertain environment, it demands strong leadership. On the other hand, when an organization faces internal operational complexity, it demands strong management. If an organization faces both an uncertain environment and internal operational complexity, it requires both strong leadership and strong management. Kadalie (2006:21) believes that every leader must have some management capacity and every manager must have some leadership capacity. Therefore, the principal as the accounting officer has to ensure that both tasks are attended to.

Flowing from the definitions above, the common denominator identified is the word influence. According to Hornby (1995:611), the word *influence* means the power to change the person's actions, character, behaviour, beliefs and attitudes. Leading is not imposition, but persuasion through influence. In leading, the principal stimulates, directs

and coordinates group interactions and activities in a given situation to achieve certain goals. The principal as the leader should be able to give a clear direction to educators on the work they are supposed to do. Giving leadership direction avoids confusion amongst educators. The complex nature of schools presently demands leaders who will be able to ensure that schools deliver the results required of them.

Bratton, Grint & Nelson (2005:7) define the roles of management in terms of planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling. The difference between leadership and management is based on the roles of each position. The following table reflects the differences between the two concepts, leadership and management.

Table 2.1 Differences between the manager and the leader

THE MANAGER	THE LEADER
The manager does things right (efficient)	The leader does the right things (effective)
The manager administers (controls the affairs of a business).	The leader innovates (introduce new things)
THE MANAGER	THE LEADER
The manager focuses on systems (orderly way of doing, arranging things) and structures.	The leader focuses on people (relationships must work).
The manager relies on control (regulate affairs).	The leader inspires trust and knows how to empower his or her followers.
The manager has a short-range view (focus on the present).	The leader has a long range-perspective (interested in the future).
The manager prefers stability (making sure business is firmly established).	The leader is interested in change.
The manager is pre-occupied with rules and regulations.	The leader is caught up with vision (far-sighted, entrepreneur, adventuresome).
The manager is consensus driven (collective agreement and opinion)	The leader has the courage of his/her own conviction.
The manager is motivated by questions of	The leader is more concerned about issues

procedure (the regular way of doing things).	of substance (the essential part of the business)
The manager asks how and when.	The leader asks what and why.
The manager enjoys complexity (the things that are difficult to understand).	The leader knows how to simplify.
The manager has his eyes on the bottom line (the crucial factor or essential point).	The leader has his eyes on the horizon (he knows what is about to happen or that which is apparent).
The manager relies on logic (the ability to reason.)	The leader uses intuition (the understanding or feeling things immediately without conscious reasoning).
The manager accept the status quo (state of affairs as it is now)	The leader challenges the status quo.
The manager follows orders	The leader initiates.

(Source: Kadalie, 2006:20)

2.4. Leadership Styles

The literature has identified a wide range of leadership styles and that correspond to specific organizational or business conditions. These styles have specific actions, structures, and outlooks and expectations of the leader, all of which have different strengths and weaknesses. However, it is not the case that any of the profiled leadership styles are bad per se, but rather that they are useful in different contexts. Leadership styles that have been identified as most common within the school context are discussed. Effective attributes and characteristics of each style are identified in order to build a basis for the leadership style component of the conceptual framework.

Three theories of leadership styles have been discussed. These theories are Kurt Lewin's view into leadership styles, Burns' transformational and transactional leadership, and Situational or the Contingency Approach into leadership.

2.4.1 Kurt Lewin's Approach into Leadership Styles

The most commonly known leadership styles were identified by renowned social scientist Kurt Lewin and his colleagues in 1939. These styles include authoritarian or autocratic, democratic or participative, and laissez-faire leadership styles.

According to a research report by Lunenburg & Ornstein (1996:6), authoritarian leaders receive aggressive or apathetic behaviour from their subordinates. Productivity was slightly higher under the authoritarian leader than under the democratic one. However, productivity turned out to be the lowest under the laissez-faire leader's supervision

2.4.1.1 Democratic Leadership

Democratic leadership, also known as participative leadership, is a type of leadership style in which members of the group take a more participative role in the decision-making process. Researchers have found that this learning style is usually one of the most effective and lead to higher productivity, better contributions from group members, and increased group morale.

Group members are encouraged to share ideas and opinions, even though the leader retains the final say over decisions. Members of the group feel more engaged in the process. Creativity is encouraged and rewarded. According to Okeniyi (1995:66), in democratic leadership, communication is multidirectional while ideas are exchanged between employees and the leader.

Because group members are encouraged to share their thoughts, democratic leadership can lead to better ideas and more creative solutions to problems. Group members also feel more involved and committed to projects, making them more likely to care about the end results. Research on leadership styles has also shown that democratic leadership leads to higher productivity among group members.

While democratic leadership has been described as the most effective leadership style, it does have some potential downsides. In situations where roles are unclear or time is of the essence, democratic leadership can lead to communication failures and uncompleted projects. In some cases, group members may not have the necessary knowledge or expertise to make quality contributions to the decision-making process.

Democratic leadership works best in situations where group members are skilled and eager to share their knowledge. It is also important to have plenty of time to allow people to contribute, develop a plan and then vote on the best course of action.

2.4.1.2 Laissez-Faire Leadership

Laissez-faire leaders let the group decide on their own and give them complete freedom. In other words, they do not provide any leadership at all. This leadership style is characterised by very little guidance from leaders, complete freedom for followers to make decisions, leaders provide the tools and resources needed, and that group members are expected to solve problems on their own. Subordinates preferred laissez-faire leadership style over the authoritarian one.

Laissez-faire leadership can be effective in situations where group members are highly skilled, motivated and capable of working on their own. While the conventional term for this style is 'laissez-faire' and implies a completely hands-off approach, many leaders still remain open and available to group members for consultation and feedback.

Laissez-faire leadership is not ideal in situations where group members lack the knowledge or experience they need to complete tasks and make decisions. It is an ideal leadership style when working with experienced and senior members of the staff than novice. Some people are not good at setting their own deadlines, managing their own projects and solving problems on their own. In such situations, projects can go off-track and deadlines can be missed when team members do not get enough guidance or

feedback from leaders. Obilade (1998:71) argued that “laissez-faire leadership is a weak style of leadership as it leads to no meaningful progress within an organization.

2.4.1.3 Autocratic Leadership Style

This type of leadership is said to be synonymous with dictatorship, where only one person presides with complete authority over the followers. The leader directs the group members on the way things should be done. He/she also gives orders which are to be obeyed whether or not the members of staff had agreed. Adeyemi (2004:98) argued that “All powers are concentrated in his hand such that when he is away, it would be difficult for the staff to know what to do.” The team cannot put forward their views even if they are best for the teams or organizational interests. They cannot criticize or question the leader’s way of getting things done. There is little or no effective communication flow between leader and his group. The leader himself gets the things done.

The advantage of this style is that it leads to speedy decision-making and greater productivity under leader’s supervision. Drawbacks of this leadership style are that it leads to greater employee absenteeism and turnover. This leadership style works only when the leader is the best in performing or when the job is monotonous, unskilled and routine in nature or where the project is short-term and risky. This style of leadership can be effective when working with novice or new members of the staff who are not certain of their roles and responsibilities’ and who still need maximum guidance.

2.4.2 Burns’ Transformational and Transactional Leadership

Another set of school leadership styles was coined by Burns (1978:325), transformational leadership and transactional leadership. According to Hallinger (2003:234), these two styles have dominated scholarly debate as the major conceptual models of school leadership since the early 1980s. Along with passive/avoidant leadership and transactional, transformational leadership forms a new paradigm for understanding both the lower and higher order efforts of leadership styles. According to Avolio & Bass

(2004), this paradigm builds on earlier sets of autocratic versus democratic or directive versus participative leadership.

2.4.2.1 Transformational Leadership

According to Crow, Matthews & McCleary (1996:122), transformational leadership is a leadership style in which the leaders and followers interact in a manner to enable the leader to assist the follower with developing internal motivations among the followers to achieve a common goal.

Bass (1985: 93) defined transformational leadership “as increasing the interest of the staff to achieve higher performance through developing the commitments and beliefs in the organization. It entails moving people to a common vision by building trust and empowerment. Transformational leaders are motivating, influential, and proactive. They optimize people’s development and innovation and convince them to strive for higher levels of achievement. According to Burns (1978:452), transformational leaders form a relationship of mutual stimulation and elevation that converts followers into leaders. As articulated by Bass (1985:211), four factors characterize the behaviour of transformational leaders: individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Individual consideration denotes giving personal attention to members who seem neglected. Intellectual stimulation focuses on enabling members to think of old problems in new ways. Inspirational motivation is typified by communicating high performance expectations. Finally, idealized influence emphasizes modelling behaviour through exemplary personal achievement, character, and conduct.

2.4.2.2 Transactional Leadership Style

Hickman (2009:102) defines transactional leadership as a “leadership style in which the leader takes the initiative to motivate followers to achieve a goal using rewards or consequences for behaviours”. Transactional leadership is based on the reciprocal exchange of duty and reward that are controlled by the leaders.

According to Avolio and Bass (2004:223) transactional leadership is about setting up and defining agreements or contracts to achieve specific work objectives, discovering individuals' capabilities, and specifying the compensation and rewards that can be expected upon successful completion of the tasks. Bass (1985:177) argued that transactional leaders focus on the basic needs of their staff, but they are not interested in providing high level motivation, job satisfaction, or commitment. Bass and Avolio (1994:87) describe three forms of transactional leadership as passive management by exception, active management by exception, and constructive transactional. Passive management by exception involves setting standards but waiting for major problems to occur before exerting leadership behaviour. Leaders who demonstrate active management by exception pay attention to issues that arise, set standards, and carefully monitor behaviour. They believe that they should not take risks or demonstrate initiative. A constructive transactional leader sets goals, clarifies desired outcomes, exchanges rewards and recognition for accomplishments, suggests and consults, provides feedback, and gives employees praise when it is deserved. According to Bass (1985:179), transformational leaders are more likely to be proactive than reactive in their thinking, and more creative, novel, and innovative in their ideas.

Transactional leaders may be equally intelligent but their focus is on how to keep the system for which they are responsible running, reacting to problems generated by observed deviances, and looking to modify conditions as needed. Bass (1998:235) believes that every leader displays practices of both styles to some extent. Although transformational and transactional leadership are at opposite ends of the leadership continuum, he maintains that the two can be useful tools in leadership. The ideal leader would practice the transformational components more frequently and the transactional components less frequently. Bass and Avolio (1994:241) embrace this "two-factor theory" of leadership and believe that the two build on one another. The transactional components deal with the basic needs of the organization, whereas the transformational practices encourage commitment and foster change.

Considering the realities of schools today, many school principals are doing their best to manage the diverse needs of the school community. The time necessary for a transformational leader to build trust, commitment, interdependence, and empowerment of teachers and staff is not always available. In some contexts, not every leader has the ability to convince their subordinates to make an effort to perform at a high level. Transactional leaders, in contrast, do not dedicate much time to developing their subordinates; instead, they wait until they either fail or succeed and then react.

2.4.3 Situational or the Contingency Approach into Leadership Styles

The most interesting approach into leadership is the situational leadership or the contingency approach. The proponents of this approach maintain an assumption that different situations require different types of leadership. According to Hoy & Miskel (1987:274), the contingency approach attempts to "specify the conditions or situational variable that moderate the relationship between leader traits or behaviours and performance criteria".

The fundamental underpinning of the situational leadership theory is that there is no single best style of leadership. Effective leadership is task-relevant, and the most successful leaders are those that adapt their leadership style to the maturity of the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1977:221), effective leadership varies, not only with the person or group that is being influenced, but it also depends on the task, job or function that needs to be accomplished.

According to this approach, leadership is the process of influencing an individual's or a group's activities in their efforts to goal achievement in a given situation. From this definition of leadership, it can be understood that the leadership process is a function of the leader, the follower, and the situation.

The focus of the situational approach to leadership is on observed behaviour, not on any hypothetical inborn or acquired ability or potential for leadership. Utmost importance is attached to the behaviour of leaders, their group members (followers) and various situations. Thus, training individuals in adapting styles of leader behaviour to varying situations is of prime importance. Therefore, through education, training and development most people can increase their effectiveness in leadership roles. By observing frequency or infrequency of certain leader behaviour in numerous types of situations, theoretical models can be developed so as to aid a leader to adopt the most appropriate leader behaviour for the present situation (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969:254). This model claims that the most effective leadership style is contingent upon the readiness level of the group members.

Situational or Contingency models suggest that the type of leadership a leader adopts should reflect the context. The proponents entail that, a leader should consider the nature of the task, the culture and objectives of the organization, the people and resources available, and the general environment when selecting their approach to leadership. Leaders can select aversive, directive, transactional, transformational or empowering leadership approaches. Ideally these approaches match the situation. For example, aversive or directive leadership styles have been shown to be counter-productive when the objective is to develop innovative products and services.

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) argued that effective leaders assess the situation and match their approaches to the situation. There are some underlying assumptions about situational leadership. First it assumes that leaders are self-aware, that they understand and explicitly choose an approach to leading. Secondly, the situational approach also assumes that the leader has effective skills to assess the situation quickly and accurately. Finally, it assumes that leadership styles or approaches are behaviour, easily adopted and changed, rather than derived from personality traits, which are not so easily changed.

However, other authors argued that situational leadership is part of the puzzle (Avolio and Bass, 2004). Therefore, it isn't possible to just say to an employee "change your

leadership style based on the situation”, and expect them to become better leaders. They argue that people are not robots; their leadership styles cannot be easily programmed and adjusted in various situations.

The situational or contingency leadership styles basically state that there is no best style of leadership. Rather, it is the situation that will decide what kind of style would be the most effective in achieving the organizational objectives. Literature reveals different forms of situational leadership.

2.4.3.1 Fiedler’s Contingency Style of Leadership

Fiedler’s Contingency Theory states “in order to maximize work group performance, leaders must be match to the right leadership situations (Fiedler,1967).” According to Kotter (1988:93) the Fiedler Contingency Model was created in the mid 1960’s by Fred Fiedler, a scientist who helped advance the study of personality and characteristics of leaders.

The model states that there is no one best style of leadership. Instead, a leader's effectiveness is based on the situation. This is the result of two factors "leadership style" and "situational favourableness".

According to Williams (2011:267), “Fiedler assumes that leaders are incapable of changing their style”. This theory does not support Flexible Leadership. There are some criticisms of the Fiedler Contingency Model. One of the biggest is lack of flexibility. Fiedler believed that because our natural leadership style is fixed, the most effective way to handle situations is to change the leader. He didn't allow for flexibility in leaders. Even though, Bedeian, Gleuck (1983:508) stated that “despite these and other criticisms, Fiedler's contingency theory represents an important addition to our understanding of effective leadership”

2.4.3.2 Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Style

This form of leadership style was developed by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard. The proponent of this situational leadership style identified four different leadership styles and how it relates to subordinate's confidence or ability to carry out a task (Hersey and Blanchard, 1996:255).

The first leadership style is what they call telling. It is best used when subordinates either lack the ability or lack the maturity to handle a task well. This is when the leader needs to tell and direct the subordinates with specific instructions and expectations. This style corresponds with Autocratic style of leadership (Lewin, 1939:124).

The second leadership style is called selling. Instead of telling them exactly what to do, the leader sells them the idea and gives them some level of independence and autonomy to perform the task. The success of this style will be dependent on how much the subordinates are 'sold' on. In this style the leader talks to everyone about his ideas and hears the opinion of everyone. There is more shared responsibility in this style because the final decision on a task would be a collective decision of the whole team. This style corresponds with Lewin's democratic style of leadership.

The second leadership style is called the delegating style. This is when the leader fully delegates a task to a subordinate without specific instructions. He tells the subordinates about what needs to be achieved and he trusts the subordinate to find out how to achieve it. This style corresponds with Lewin's laissez-faire style of leadership.

2.4.4 Path-Goal Leadership Style

In path-goal style of leadership, the leader motivates subordinates to achieve goals and directions toward achieving the goals. According to Rowe and Guerrero (2010:205). Leaders hold inspiration on subordinates' capability to accomplish objectives, rewards offered while achieving objectives and worth of objectives. Path-Goal Theory relies on

leadership styles, subordinate contingencies, and environmental contingencies to produce subordinate satisfaction and performance outcomes. This theory supports the adaptability of leadership behaviour and is aligned to a flexible leadership style. According to Williams (2011: 270), a leader would use the appropriate style of leadership depending on the type of task, the worker's locus of control, the authority system, and worker experience and ability. Griffin (2010:559) identifies four style of leadership in Path-goal theory as Directive leadership, Supportive Leadership, Participative Leadership and Achievement-Oriented Leadership.

Hornby (1995:31) defines vision as the ability to think about or plan the future with great

2.5 School Performance

According to Manasse (1986:150), vision is "the force which moulds meaning for the people of an organization." According to Manasse (1986:150),

Simkins (1981:59) argued that school performance is a measure of output which is expressed in terms of learning. Thus, in determining school performance, Daniels and Schouten (1970:122) emphasized the use of grades in examinations which serve as prediction and criterion measures.

However, overall school performance is largely identified by a range of statistical indicators. It is not adequate to discuss the effect of leadership styles on school performance without examining some indicators of school performance. These indicators help us to gain a better understanding of the relationship therein. Research literatures show that the most performing schools are more alike than they are different. There are fundamental characteristics which are common among successful schools that they have come to be known as the Correlates of Effective Schools. Various authors concur that effective schools have shared vision, highly motivated staff and learners, encourage professional development, regular monitoring and evaluation, open communication, continuous parental involvement, commitment, safe and orderly environment and effective team work.

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2.5.1 Shared Vision

Current leadership literature frequently characterizes the leader as the vision holder, the keeper of the dream, or the person who has a vision of the organization's purpose and be able to communicate it. Davis (1998:44) identified two important elements of effective school leadership which are establishing a school vision and fostering positive interpersonal relationships.

Hornby (1995:32) defines vision as the ability to think about or plan the future with great imagination and wisdom. According to Manasse (1986:150), vision is "the force which moulds meaning for the people of an organization." According to Manasse (1986:150), vision includes the "development, transmission, and implementation of an image of a desirable future." Bennis (1990:46) argued that, "All leaders have the capacity to create a compelling vision, one that takes people to a new place, and the ability to translate that vision into reality."

Apart from the vision, school principals should also possess the skills to communicate the vision to others, to develop a shared vision. Manasse (1986:151) holds that the sharing of a leader's vision "may differentiate true leaders from mere managers." On the other hand, Covey (1991:165) argued that "there should be a shared vision at all levels of organisation." Therefore, effective school principals focus attention on key aspects of the school's vision and communicate the vision clearly and convincingly. They invite interchange with multiple stakeholders through participatory communication strategies. Bennis (1997:224) maintains that a vision that is not understood remains a mere occurrence, but one that is understood can become a living experience.

2.5.2 Highly Motivated Staff and Learners

Literature attests that an effective school is characterised by highly motivated staff and learners who are eager to accomplish their goals. Work motivation enhances the quality of work. Highly motivated staff and learners work hard to achieve the performance goals.

An effective leadership style is one that can motivate and inspire both educators and learners to strive to achieve much more than they thought they could. Therefore, leadership effectiveness is measured in terms of how successful the leader is in motivating behaviour despite resistance.

In chapter one, leadership has been defined as the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members. It is the process of stimulating people to actions to accomplish the goals. Susan (1995:76) defined motivation as an energizing force that stimulates arousal, direction, and persistence of behaviour. Motivation is both a force within an individual and a process used to get others to expend effort. According to Stephen (2000: 66), motivation is the willingness to exert a persistent and high level of effort towards organizational goals, conditioned by the effort's ability to satisfy some individual needs. The key elements in this definition are intensity of efforts, persistence, direction towards organizational goals and needs.

Previous research has demonstrated linkages between student outcomes such as academic achievement and the level motivation measured from both students and educators. According to Henson (2003:194) teachers who are highly motivated exhibit greater enthusiasm for teaching, have a greater commitment to teaching, and are more likely to stay in teaching. This shows that higher teacher efficacy is also related to school performance.

2.5.3 Professional Development of Human Resource

Since South Africa's first national democratic elections in 1994, the Government of National Unity has issued several curriculum-related reforms intended to democratise education and eliminate inequalities in the post-apartheid education system. The successful implementation of new policies, such as the outcomes-based curriculum and inclusive education, will only be effective if teachers are adequately prepared. In addition, majority of educators who are still in the profession today were trained under

the Bantu education system. The importance of educator's development programmes cannot be underestimated. Hence, performance of the schools relies on the in-service training of the educators.

There is a growing consensus among researchers that professional development has an influence in the performance of the schools. Guthrie and Reed (1986:321) regard personnel development as an investment in human capital. The dividends yielded include a more effective school and therefore improved learner achievement, greater personnel satisfaction and higher morale. Educators in primary schools do what is necessary to upgrade their knowledge and skills and be on the cutting edge in their field.

Musaazi (1982:194) refers to educators' development as the provisions made by educators' authorities to improve the performance of educators from initial employment to retirement. Since educators are part of a dynamic profession, they must be kept abreast of improvements in the teaching methods. One of the most effective ways to bring about curriculum change, teaching improvements and professional growth and development of educators, is through well-organised in-service programmes.

Erasmus (1989:55) argues that as long as there are schools there will be a need for educators, and as long as educators are needed their development should be as effective as possible. Schools that fail to provide opportunities for personnel development jeopardise the ability to achieve their organisational goals (Castetter, 1992:346).

According to Kydd and Crawford (1997:180), an effective school creates a credible, creative, positive environment for in-service training and educator development to succeed. It is also received by educators as being an acceptable part of a coherent school plan. Anderson, (2001:1) has noted that "it has become necessary to help teachers update their knowledge and skills and to deal with change, on the one hand, and manage human resources better, on the other"

Everard and Morris (1990:89) identify some development needs for an effective school. The needs include, induction, preparation for future job, requirements for new skills and attitudes, introduction of new methods and approaches and organisation development.

Truman et al. (2008) in the study entitled “primary teacher commitment and attractions,” claims that teacher commitment takes three forms, with the most important one being professional commitment. They argue that a professionally committed teacher rates their teaching abilities very highly and are committed to their professional advancement.

Harris (2002:99) contends that staff development is critical to student progress and therefore school improvement. According to her, research findings show that successful schools encourage and facilitate the learning of both teachers and pupils. Thus, the quality of staff development and learning is pivotal to maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. Most researchers believe that professional development plan should address the contemporary needs in education system. Cohen and Scheer (2003:91) point out that most professional development, from a teacher’s view does not cater for the diverse needs of teacher. Cohen and Scheer (2003:92) concur that a teacher-centred development plan, which caters for the needs, interest and talents of teachers is central to improving performance in schools.

2.5.4 Consistent Monitoring and Evaluation of Performance

According to Schmoker (1996:6), monitoring refers to “analysing what we are doing against the results we are getting. ‘Monitoring requires regularly reviewing and refining the processes that most “directly contribute to designated results. Measures used in monitoring provide feedback to teacher and learner, as well as other stakeholders, who are responsible for making changes to ensure continual learning progress.”

South African schools adopt an effective policy on monitoring and evaluation of schools. The policy Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) ensures that everything at school is evaluated. These include among others, educators’ performance, learners’

performance, infrastructure, curriculum and extra-curricular. The IQMS is an integrated quality management system that consists of three programmes, which are aimed at enhancing and monitoring performance of the education system. These are developmental appraisal; performance measurement; and whole school evaluation.

The purpose of Developmental Appraisal (DA) is to appraise individual educators in a transparent manner with a view to determining areas of strength and weakness, and to draw up programmes for individual development. The purpose of Performance Measurement (PM) is to evaluate individual teachers for salary progression, grade progression, affirmation of appointments and rewards and incentives. The purpose of Whole School Evaluation (WSE) is to evaluate the overall performance of a school as well as the quality of teaching and learning. These three programmes are implemented in an integrated way in order to ensure optimal performance and co-ordination of the various programmes. Kaplan & Norton (1996:119) maintained that “the purpose of whole school evaluation (WSE) is to evaluate the overall performance of a school, including the support provided by the District, school management, infrastructure and learning resources, as well as the quality of the teaching and learning (System evaluation).”

Purpose of IQMS is to identify specific needs of educators, schools and district offices for support and development; to provide support for continued growth; to promote accountability; to monitor an institution's overall performance; and to evaluate an educator's performance. Research has indicated a positive correlation between implementation of this policy and school performance.

In the effective school, pupil progress over the essential objectives are measured and monitored frequently. The results of those assessments are used to improve the individual student behaviours and performances, as well as to improve the curriculum as a whole.

Current educational literature characterises effective monitoring of school performance as an indication of effective school. It is no surprise that academic emphasis and frequent monitoring of student academic progress has been viewed as important correlates of an

effective school (Al Waner, 2005:68). Monitoring, evaluating and reporting student outcomes and programme effectiveness are key features of effective school.

Effective school leaders assess how well the school is performing along multiple indicators and use that information as goals are developed and reviewed. This requires astute skills for gathering and interpreting information, as well as a tradition of inquiry and reflection. Successful school leaders ask critical and constructive questions, emphasise the use of systematic evidence and encourage careful monitoring of both teaching and pupil progress.

2.5.5 Open Communication

Lutgen-Sandvik (2010:65) argued that “one of the most inhibiting forces to organizational effectiveness is a lack of effective communication.” Keyton (2011:103) defined Communication as “the process of transmitting information and common understanding from one person to another.” The word communication is derived from the Latin word, *communis*, which means *common*. The definition underscores the fact that unless a common understanding results from the exchange of information, there is no communication.

Effective schools are characterised by well-defined communication channels and means of transmitting information. A leader needs to create a proper system of communication for the organization. A message can be transmitted verbally, or in a written format. Verbal means include meetings, telephone conversations and video-conferencing. These communications can be either face-to-face, such as a meeting or a discussion, or non-face to face such as a telephone call. Written means include circulars, letters, reports, drawings and emails.

Effective leadership necessitates good communication skills. Hence, effective schools are characterised by leadership which have acquires communication skills such as listening, speaking, and writing skills. The use of communications technologies within a school can

enhance communications. Communication technologies such as global interlinked telephone, television and data transmission networks, compact discs and new multimedia technologies can help bridge the geographical, social and economic gaps that currently exist in access to information within the large schools.

The relationship between leadership styles and communication extend to the structure of communication within the group. Democratic, participative, and transformational leadership styles encourage a decentralized structure of communications where each team member communicates to everyone else frequently. Such leadership styles promote group discussions.

2.5.6 Commitment

Research on school performance has identified the importance of teachers' commitment to education in general, as well as to the particular mission of their own school as the most important factor contributing to school performance. Teachers in effective schools always put more effort than the organization expects from them. Becker (1999:8) defines commitment as the investment in a particular career. Lortie (1995:87) regards commitment as the willingness an individual enacts in investing personal resources to the teaching task.

Joffress et al. (2001:17) wrote that "teachers' commitment is a crucial factor to an effective school, teacher satisfaction, and retention." They claim that low levels of teacher commitment results into decreased student achievement tests, than in areas where teachers were found not to be committed to their responsibilities, learners performed poorly. It is important to note that teachers' commitment to their duties is significant to pupils' performance. Committed teachers tend to produce good results at national examinations.

Day et al. (2005:65) argue that there are different forms of commitment to teaching. According to them, the nature and intensity of commitment to teaching depends on

factors derived from personal and professional lives. Commitment is a word they use to distinguish those who are caring, dedicated, and who take their job seriously from those who put their own interest first. The professionally committed teachers take their job seriously and they get enjoyment from it (Elliott and Croswell, 2001).

Another view shared by committed teachers is that teaching is not just a job. Teachers invest their personal time even outside school contact hours. Committed teachers have made teaching as a lifestyle. They often contemplate on their class programs and students while engaging in a range of personal activities like in shower, shopping, or watching television (Tyree, 1996).

Choi and Tang (2009:32) indicate that a teacher who is highly dedicated to student affairs evaluates/assesses the acquisition of subject matter well and prepares well for the lessons. Hoy et al. (1991:221) added that “teachers who are committed to students are likely to spend extra time and effort needed to motivate and nurture students; for example, they are available after school hours to tutor and help students who have special problems.”

2.5.7 Community and Parental Involvement

The saying "it takes a village to raise a child", is a popular proverb with a clear message. In effective schools, the whole community has an essential role to play in the growth and development of its young people. Hence it is of paramount important for school leaders to consciously establish a positive relationship between the school and its community.

Basic to the reform of school governance in post-apartheid South Africa, is the South African Schools Act of 1996 (SASA), which attempts to give shape to the principles of access, redress, equity and democratic governance. The SASA is reflected in various provincial School Acts and regulations governing the establishment and functioning of School Governing Bodies in all provinces. It is through this structure (SGB) that parents are accorded an opportunity to participate in the education of their children. The School Governing Body (SGB) is a statutory body of parents, educators, non-teaching staff and

learners (from Grade 8 or higher) who seek to work together to promote the well-being and performance of the school community and thereby enhance learning and teaching.

Certainly before students can learn or teachers can teach, schools must be safe. As unsafe

Parents lay the foundation for education and continue to play an important role throughout the learners' schooling. It is for this reason that for schools to function effectively they should work alongside parents. This co-existence benefits the school community as a whole. Home (1998:93) argued that, "Effective schools are characterised by creating an environment that is conducive to parents to play their role as equal partners and co-educators to benefit their children." Van der Westhuizen (1991:389) describes parental involvement as of strategic importance in promoting positive attitudes on the part of parents. Parents as primary educators have a full role to play, which cannot be underestimated. Badenhorst (1995:118) stated that, "In an effective school parents are actively involved in the formal education of their children in a significant manner, and all essential aspects of formal education." Mortimore and Ecob (1988:250) added that "an effective school is characterised by parental involvement in helping in the classroom, planning educational visits, attending meetings to discuss learners' progress, parents' reading to their children, and giving them access to books at home with an informal open door policy."

Researchers concur that apart from establishing safety majors at schools, school

Keith and Girling (1991:176) are of the opinion that in an effective school parental involvement benefits the school in terms of added resources as well as staff renewal and innovation. Margret (1996:189) maintained that "SGB members could assist the school to improve learners' performance by donating resources to augment Government's effort." It helps to build broad-based political support and produces benefits in terms of improved academic achievement. Dekker and Lemmer (1994:154) suggest that for the school effectiveness, parental involvement is essential in that it is significantly related to improved learner academic achievement, improved learner behaviour in school, and increased community support for the school, including human, financial and material resources.

2.5.8 Safe and Orderly Environment

Certainly before students can learn or teachers can teach, schools must be safe. An unsafe school is, by definition, ineffective. An effective school is characterised by factors such as a conducive culture and climate of teaching and learning.

Thurston & Lotto, (1990:177) maintained that “school safety is one of the guarantees of effective schools. Effective schools are characterised by learning environments that are safe and orderly without being oppressive and by physical environments that are clean and well maintained.”

According to Rutter and Ouston (1979:121), “Effective schools ensure that they create consistency and coordinate the school discipline programme; hence the particular rules and approaches to discipline may be less important than the existence of some generally recognised and accepted set of standards.” As a matter of fact, a school should be a place where learners can concentrate on their studies without being concerned about issues of discipline, safety and security.

Researchers concur that apart from establishing safety majors at schools, school effectiveness can never be realised. Thurston and Lotto (1990:178) maintain that effective schools’ managers and educators work together to ensure that school rules and consequences are clearly defined, communicated, and understood by learners, educators and parents in order to model appropriate behaviour at schools. Effective schools ensure that they create consistency and coordinate the school discipline programme.

2.5.9. Effective Team Work

Beaubien and Baker (2004:73) defined team as “a group of two or more individuals who perform some work related task, interact with one another dynamically, have a shared past, have a foreseeable shared future, and share a common fate.” On the other hand, George (2003:184) defines a team as a group of people with complementary skills, who work actively together to achieve a common purpose for which they hold themselves collectively accountable. In other words, teamwork occurs when teachers work together for the same purpose as their skills are well utilized to achieve common goals.

Previous research has noted a positive correlation between team work and improved school performance. Beal (2003:76) believes that team work can also enhance effectiveness and productivity of a school, which in turn would facilitate positive results. Brown (1995:19) argued that “teamwork can influence performance results and organisational objectives.” Thus, the key to effectiveness in schools is thus shared commitment and collaboration among staff to achieve student learning. Fuhrman (1999:10) concurs and asserts that collaboration and team work promote professional dialogue which is a determinant for achieving the policy of Integrated Quality Management System in schools. Showers and Joyce (1988:63) also contend that collegial relationships provide opportunities to teachers to develop new meanings, new behaviours, new skills and new beliefs about teaching and learning.

Through collaboration, ideas can be shared, new and better strategies can be developed, problems can be solved, students’ progresses can be better monitored, and their outcomes are evaluated effectively. Chung et al. (2009:328) argued that “teamwork may be more productive than working alone as larger teams combine the ideas and talents of individuals.”

Effective leadership always promote team work spirit. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1977:287), a situational leader works closely with the team and shares decision-making responsibilities. Principals who are effective leaders of their team



generally have the ability to get the best out of all members of the team, and have a leadership style that is flexible and appropriate. According to Cohen (2003:82), when teachers work as a team, they serve their customers better. In effect, when teachers share ideas and experiences with regard to teaching, learning and discipline, they are likely to be more effective and efficient in the classroom.

2.6. Leadership Flexibility and Effective School

(Shamir 1999:8) argued that “Nowadays, the volatile environment, and globalization require a flexible leader that should act as an agent of change and center of gravity.” It has already been stated in the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the level of flexibility in principal’s leadership styles and the level of school performance. Many researchers concur that, the higher the flexibility in leadership style the more effective the school becomes.

There is no single “best” style of leadership. Research over the past couple of decades has made it clear that successful leaders adapt their leadership style to the needs of the situation. They recognize that there is no one best style. Effective leadership is task-relevant, and the most successful leaders are those that adapt their leadership style to the maturity of the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1977:122), “effective leadership varies, not only with the person or group that is being influenced, but it also depends on the task, job or function that needs to be accomplished.”

There is no one style of leadership which is appropriate for every occasion or situation! To be a good leader, one must know one’s group, “where they are at” in terms of their ability, knowledge, desire and willingness. In addition, one must be aware of one’s preferred style according the perception of others. A leader must be prepared to adapt a leadership style that suit the occasion. Practise moving from one style to another, depending on the occasion. The ability to move seamlessly between leadership styles is a must in any leader’s toolbox.

The purpose of the study was to explore correlation between principal's leadership style and school performance. This chapter presents an overview of research relevant to this study. The topics discussed include the conceptualisation of the terms leadership, management, and leadership flexibility. In reviewing literature, the author has further identified different types of leadership styles, characteristics of effective schools as well as establishing the correlation between leadership styles and school performance. From the literature review, the researcher is convinced that ineffectiveness in schools can only be countered through a situational school leadership approach.

In order to investigate and verify the findings in the literature review, it was important to undertake an empirical survey. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the present study. Brink and Wood (1994:100) assert that "the purpose of a research design is to provide a plan for answering the research questions." The design is a framework or blue print with a set of instructions to the researcher. Nabbie and Mouton (2001:72) regard research design as a plan or blue print of how the researcher intends conducting his study. The research design includes details of what data is needed and how to collect and measure it to ensure its accuracy and reliability.

According to Brink & Wood (1994:102) the research design is usually based on previous research findings. Before the research can be carried out, it is necessary to describe the data and how it was obtained. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology; the population; sample and sampling procedure; data collection procedure; data analysis technique; reliability and validity of the statistical technique used to analyse the data; and conclusion.

3.1 Research Design and Methodology

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:91), research design is the complete strategy of attack on the central research problem which provides the overall structure for the

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter the impact of leadership style on the performance of the school was delineated by means of literature research. From the reviewed literatures, the researcher was convinced that situational leadership (leadership flexibility) is a correlate to the characteristics of an effective school.

In order to investigate and verify the findings in the literature review, it was important to undertake an empirical survey. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology of the present study. Brink and Wood (1994:100) assert that “the purpose of a research design is to provide a plan for answering the research questions.” The design is a framework or blue print with a set of instructions to the researcher. Babbie and Mouton (2001:72) regard research design as a plan or blue print of how the researcher intends conducting his study. The research design includes details of what data is needed and how to collect and measure it to ensure its accuracy and reliability.

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procedures that are followed, the data the researcher collects and the analysis that the researcher conducts. Creswell (1998: 2) asserts that research design is "the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem, to writing the narrative". Therefore, the research design becomes the blue print of how the researcher intends conducting his study.

According to Van Niekerk (1992:32), a method is "the plan or structure that will be applied during the investigations in order to answer the research questions." Frey and Kreps et al (1991:22) define research methodology as "the particular strategies researchers use to collect the evidence necessary for building and testing theories". Thus, research methodology is a collective term for the structured process of conducting research.

Brink and Wood (1994:105) argue that all data can be described according to whether it is collected via qualitative (qualities) or quantitative (numerical) methods. Research methodologies can be quantitative (for example, measuring the number of times someone does something under certain conditions) or qualitative (for example, asking people how they feel about a certain situation). Ideally, comprehensive research incorporates both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Cook and Campbell (1979:27) maintain that "the use of mixed methodology has been advocated by a numbers of researchers."

The researcher used a variety of data collection methods in order to build up a rich and detailed picture of how the school is led, managed and administered. Hence, study was carried out using the mixed methodology model. The mixed model design combines qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process. Hence, this study adopted the two phases of study. A quantitative phase followed by a qualitative phase. In each phase, an explanation is presented on how data was collected and analysed.

The mixed model approach to research design was employed because the subject of this study consisted of both description of behavioural characteristics and the social

environment in which they were constructed. Patton (1987:65) suggested that the choice of research design should be appropriate to the subject being investigated.

Brewer and Hunter (1989: 38) stated that a multi-method approach allows investigators to attack a research problem with an arsenal of methods that have non-overlapping weaknesses in addition to their complementary strengths. They suggested that a multi-method approach to research is superior to mono-method research in that it provides grounds for data triangulation. In support of the mixed methodology, Nau (1995:1) argued that "blending qualitative and quantitative methods of research can produce a final product which can highlight the significant contributions of both".

In light of the above rationale, the research discussed the two types of research approaches and how they were carried out. The quantitative approach in the first phase and the qualitative approach in the second phase.

3.2.1 Quantitative Research Method

Given (2008:5) defines quantitative research methodology as "the systematic empirical investigation of social phenomena via statistical, mathematical or numerical data or computational techniques." Quantitative research methodology provides a measure of what people think from a statistical and numerical point of view. In Quantitative Research, researchers tend to remain objectively separated from the subject matter. This is because Quantitative Research is objective in approach in the sense that it only seeks precise measurements and analysis of target concepts to answer his inquiry.

Quantitative method is considered appropriate because it uses the survey in collecting data from a wide area by selecting a representative sample of a large population as compared to qualitative method that uses case study, selecting a few individuals or phenomena, which in most cases will not represent the entire population. Gunter (2002:227) maintains that the quantitative research method is advantageous in the sense

that it generates results that can be readily generalized to the target population from which the sample was drawn.

Punch (2003:23) states that unlike qualitative research, quantitative method does not accommodate the manipulation of variables or alteration of treatment for research purposes. Since the researcher's intention was to avoid interfering with school activities during the study, quantitative survey method was found to be the most appropriate because of its objective nature.

The researcher believes that the quantitative method was effective to collect the necessary data for this research as it reflects various leadership styles the school principal use, and the types of school climate that exist in secondary schools in the Vhembe District. Lankshear and Knobel (2004:146) assert that central to the quantitative research method is the investigation and understanding of the relationship between variables and since this study is looking at the relationship between leadership style and school performance, this method was considered the most suitable for the realization of the aim of the study.

Quantitative research method was used in this study to test a prior hypothesis that the leadership style of the principal has an impact on the school performance. This hypothesis was tested in the secondary schools within the Vhembe District in Limpopo. To further develop this research, ranking was applied to select a school for qualitative study. Once this was done, qualitative methods including observation, interview and document search were used to collect data. The researcher applied a qualitative approach to support and explicate the meaning of the quantitative research.

For the quantitative research, the researcher used self-administered questionnaires to principals and educators who were members of the School Management Team to assess their perceptions of principal's leadership styles and the level of their school performance. The results were analysed statistically to test the hypothesis.

3.2.2 Qualitative Research Method

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:2) qualitative research is an umbrella term used to refer to several research strategies that share certain characteristics. These characteristics include the collection, analysis and interpretation of data to describe people, places and conversations that are not easily handled by statistical procedures.

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005:52), qualitative researchers aim to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and the reasons that govern such behaviour. Qualitative Research is primarily subjective in approach as it seeks to understand human behaviour and reasons that govern such behaviour. Researchers have the tendency to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter in this type of research method. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:372) argued that “qualitative research is based on a naturalistic phenomenological philosophy that views reality as multi-layered, interactive and a shared social experience”.

The researcher was concerned with understanding the behaviour from the research subject's point of view and from the subject's own frame of reference. This Qualitative research method enabled the researcher to collect the data through sustained contact with people in settings where subjects normally spend their time. For the purpose of this study the researcher chose to visit principals and members of the school management team at their natural setting to interview them on how they view the effect of the principal leadership styles on school performance. It is through qualitative data collection and analysis that the general picture provided by the quantitative results was refined, extended, and explained.

3.3 Population of the Study

According to Polit and Hungler (1999:37), the term population refers to an aggregate or totality of all the objects, subjects or members that conform to a set of specifications. Sowell (2001:43) on the other hand affirms that "population is a group of people that

share common characteristics from which the researcher aims to generalize his/her results." According to these scholars, the word population refers to the interest group the researcher intends to study and to which the research result will be generalized. Bless and Higson-Smith (2000:85) emphasise the need to clearly define and describe the target population to make the compilation of the list of people in the population possible and more importantly, to ensure that the sample is selected among those who belong to the target population only.

In this study the population was all principals of secondary schools in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Hence the population of this study includes all principals from the 285 schools in the District. However, during the period of this research, not all of the 285 schools had the principalship post occupied. The researcher had noted that there were 7 schools in the District whose principalship posts were still vacant. It was in the interest of the researcher to interview officially appointed principals than acting officials.

3.4 Sampling

One of the critical activities which determine the outcome of the research findings is the choice of the respondents or subjects from the entire population under study. Cohen et al. (2005:92) argue that the quality of a piece of research not only stands by the appropriateness of methodology and instrumentation, but also by the suitability of the sampling strategy that has been adopted. The researcher cannot access every member of the population he intends to study.

According to Frey et al. (2000:125), a sample is a "subgroup of a population" that has been selected for study purpose. A sample is the subset of a larger population and the findings of the sampled respondents represent the total population under study. In confirming the above statement, Cooper and Schindler (2003:170) stress that the basic idea of sampling is to draw conclusions about the entire population.

3.4.1 Sampling Technique

Hoberg (1999:58) indicates that there are two major types of sampling procedures available to researchers, namely; probability and non-probability sampling. In this study, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were employed.

3.4.2 Sampling Size

The basis for probability sampling is random sampling. This implies that all participants will have a chance to be selected. In other words, every participant of the population has a known probability of being chosen in the sample. Reaves (1992:97) affirms that random sampling is sampling in which the researcher randomly selects members one at a time out of the entire population. Gay and Airasian (2003:111) assert that it is most likely to obtain a representative sample if random sampling technique is used.

In the first phase of sampling, purposive sampling was used to obtain a sample of 45 respondents. Purposive sampling is a type of non-probability sampling. Cooper and Schindler (2003:201) describe non-probability sampling as conforming to certain criteria selected by the researcher. This type of sampling is based entirely on the judgment of the researcher in that a sample is composed of elements that contain the most characteristic, representative or typical attributes of the population.

The respondents included 15 school principals and 30 senior educators who were members of the School Management Team (SMT), that is, 2 educators from each of the 30 sampled schools. The study focused on principals and SMT members because they are in a better position to contribute positively towards the findings of the study as leaders at schools. Senior educators are vital components of the schools and their contributions are indispensable to this study.

In the second phase of sampling, the researcher selected only secondary school principals for the purpose of interview. Care was taken to exclude all secondary schools whose principalship posts were still vacant. The researcher selected particular respondents from the population that was representative or informative about the topic under investigation.

The selection was based on the questionnaire data. Purposive sampling was used to select five principals for the purpose of interview. Principals are important respondents because they are better positioned as leaders and understand relationship between leadership styles and school performance.

3.4.2 Sampling Size

It appears there is no conventional way of determining a sample size that is representative of the target population as there are diverse views on this issue. Cohen and Manion (1994:89) assert that there is no clear cut answer to this question, for the correct sample size depends on the purpose of the study and the nature of the population under scrutiny. However, Gay and Airasian (2003:111) maintain that the sample of 10% to 20% of the target population is a reasonable sample size for the purpose of generalizing the results in an empirical research. Ary, Jacobs and Razavich (1990:178) assert that the size of the sample depends upon the precision the researcher's desire in estimating the population parameters at a particular confidence level. Leedy and Ormrod (2005:207) stress the importance of obtaining a sample that is representative of the target population from which inferences are to be drawn.

Scholars such as Cohen et al. (2001:94) believe that the "larger the sample, the better". Hill (1998:3) on the other hand affirms that increasing sample size will increase the statistical power. Therefore, a sample that is too small can make the generalizability of the study almost impossible and meaningless.

The population size of this study includes 285 school Principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Of this, 30 secondary school principals formed part of the study sample. The total number of senior educators who are members of School Management Team in secondary schools in the Vhembe District, Limpopo is 978. The researcher selected 15 senior educators who are members of the School Management Team. The sampling size for this study is summarised by the following table:

Table 3.1 Sample size

Respondents	Population	Sample
Principals	285	30
Senior Educators	978	15
Total	1263	45

3.5 Research Instrument

Hoyle (1996:231) defines instruments as tools, especially used for delicate scientific or medical work. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:19) an instrument is any plan of action that helps the researcher in gathering relevant data. The latter definition is closely related the one offered by Vockell (1983:222) that a research instrument is any sort of data collection device and technique. For the purpose of this study research instruments refer to strategies that the researcher employed to capture relevant information on how the principal leadership styles influence the performance of the school.

The instruments used to collect data in this study were questionnaire and interview. The researcher in this study carefully considered the inclusion of questionnaires as an indispensable data collection technique. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:238) state that questionnaires are relatively economical, have standardized questions, can ensure anonymity and questions can be written for specific purposes.

In the first phase of the study, the Questionnaires were administered to principals and educators who were members of the School Management Team to assess their perceptions of principal's leadership styles on school performance. These were self-administered questionnaires that consisted of 3 sections.

Section A of the questionnaire was on demographic information of the sample, such as principal's gender, and principal's years of experience. Section B of the questionnaire was used to measure the principal's leadership styles. These styles were measured on 5 point Liker-type, ordinal scales (i.e. 1 = Almost Never True to 5 = Almost Always True).

Section C of the questionnaire was used to assess the school's level of performance. This was measured on 5 point Liker-type, ordinal scales (i.e. 1 = Needs urgent support to 5 = Outstanding)

In the second phase of the investigation, the researcher made use of interviews schedule as a supplement to the questionnaire administered in the first phase of this investigation. Interviewing is a data collection tool typically involving the researcher asking questions and the participants giving answers to the questions posed. According to Nachamias (1996:232) an interview is a face to face interaction in which an interviewer asks respondents questions designed to elicit answers pertinent to the research questions. White (2003:75) affirms that interviews provide access to what is inside a person's head, they also make it possible to measure what a person knows, what a person likes and dislikes and what a person thinks.

In the second phase of this study, the researcher used structured interviews. Five school principals who were sampled for this phase of the investigation were interviewed based on the prepared interview schedule. The interview schedule was used to elicit the principal's perception of their leadership styles, school performance and the relationship between the two.

3.5.1 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument

According to Brink and Wood (1994:170), Reliability and validity refer specifically to the measurement of data as used to answer the research question. Van Rensburg, Landman and Bodenstein (1994:560) define validity as the extent to which a measuring instrument satisfies the purpose for which it was constructed. It also refers to the extent to which it correlates with some criterion external to the instrument itself. Validity is that quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to determine what it was designed to determine. In general terms validity refers to the degree to which an instrument succeeds in measuring what it has set out to measure. Behr (1988:122) regards validity as an indispensable characteristic of measuring devices. This concept of

reliability is concerned with the consistency of results when the same variable is measured in the same person.

Joppe (2000:21) defines reliability as the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study. According to Kirk and Miller (1986:41) reliability refers to the degree to which a measurement, given repeatedly, remains the same over time.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher used a mixed method approach in order to strengthen validity and reliability. Through the statistics generated by quantitative research, via assumptions and theories, it was expected that the findings would be objective and reliable. From the qualitative research, each principal, each school culture can be seen as a unique social entity and in-depth understanding for the meaning of events to individuals in a specific setting could be drawn.

The validity and reliability for the instrument used in this investigation was also tested during pilot-testing. From the interpretation of the results obtained and the sureness with which conclusions could be drawn, the researcher is convinced that both the questionnaire and interview schedule to a great extent, did measure that which it was designed for.

3.5.2 Pilot Testing of the Research Instrument

According to Dane (1990:42), a pilot study is an abbreviated version of a research project in which the researcher practices or tests the procedures to be used in the subsequent full-scale project. Pilot investigation is a small-scale trial before the main investigation and is intended to assess the adequacy of the research design and of the instruments to be used for data collection (Wilson & Sapsford, 2006:102). White (2005:131) mentions that it is essential that newly constructed questionnaires in their semi-final form be thoroughly pilot-tested before being used in the main investigation.

Kidder and Judd (1986:211) state that the basic purpose of a pilot study is to determine how the design of the subsequent study can be improved and to identify flaws in the measuring instrument. A pilot study gives the researcher an idea of what the method will actually look like in operation and what effects (intended or not) it is likely to have. In other words by generating many of the practical problems that will ultimately arise, a pilot study enables the researcher to avert these problems by changing procedures, instructions and questions.

A pilot study was conducted to determine the clarity of both the questionnaire and the interview schedule. In the quantitative pilot survey, the study consisted of four randomly drawn principals currently working in Vhembe District other than those in the sample population. In the quantitative pilot survey, two principals who were randomly selected from Vhembe District were interviewed for the purpose of pilot study. The pilot study was used to identify any needed changes in the data collection instruments.

3.7 Data Analysis

According to Strauss (1993:78) data analysis refers to “a process of inspecting, cleaning, transforming and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information.” Data analysis is one of the challenging phases of any research study. Mouton (2001: 108) argues that the analysis of data involves breaking up the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships. After the researcher had collected data, he then engaged in rigorous and systematic data analysis, which was followed by data interpretation and data presentation. During data analysis the researcher made sense of the data collected, reduced the volume of information, ensured that significant patterns were identified and constructed a framework for communicating the essence of what the data revealed. For the purpose of this study, the two methods of data analysis were employed. Namely, the descriptive statistics and the thematic analysis.

3.7.1 Descriptive Statistics

According to Guest (2012:11) descriptive statistics is the discipline of quantitatively describing the main features of a collection of information, or the quantitative description itself. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the numeric data to understand and explain the results. For the first phase of this investigation, statistical package for scientific solution (SPSS) was used to analyse the questionnaires which were used to interview the principals and senior educators. In SPSS frequency counts and percentages are used to present the information collected in the form of tables and figures. The data analysis was divided into two sections. The first section analysed the demographic data and the second section focused on the research questions on leadership styles and school performance. In this way, descriptive statistics are employed to convert massive numbers into indices that describe observed traits in the sample. Francisco (2000:104) argued that descriptive statistics are useful in summarizing and interpreting the research findings. Taylor (2000:6) adds that statistics are useful to describe, generalize and measure relationship.

3.7.2 Thematic analysis

Guest (2012:11) argued that thematic analysis is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research and it emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns within data. For the qualitative phase of this study, the first step in data analysis was to organize data through developing a systematic mechanism to be able to deal with qualitative data collected through interviews. Risimati (2007:110) mentions that organizing all this data usually involves a process of data reduction, which is a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstraction and transforming raw data. During data analysis, the researcher perceived the emerging patterns of responses from the five interviewed principals. The researcher then categorized, compared, synthesized and interpreted data to provide explanations of the phenomenon under study.

3.6 Ethical Consideration



Research ethics involves the application of fundamental ethical principles to a variety of topics involving scientific research. According to Beauchamp & Bowie, (1997:89), there are various ethical codes of conduct that regulate researchers' behavior. Those who volunteer to be participants in research have their rights and needs respected and protected. This study had considered several ethical concerns such as permission to conduct the study, personal informed consent, confidentiality and voluntary participation.

3.6.1 Permission to Conduct the Study

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Department of Education in the Vhembe District Limpopo. A copy of the letter granting the permission was distributed to schools that were sampled for the study.

3.6.2 Informed Consent

Consent was granted by the sampled school principals and educators who participated in the study. Principals and educators were personally requested to participate in the study. They were personally informed about the study's nature and purposes.

3.6.3 Voluntary Participation

Neuman (2000:135) argued that the researcher must not coerce any one into participating but participation must be based on voluntary basis. School principals and educators who were sampled for this research participated voluntarily in the study. All participants were assured of their rights to withdraw from the study at any stage.

3.6.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

The participants in this study were informed both verbally and in writing that all performance is anonymous and assured of the confidentiality of the provided information. Respondents were assured that their personal identity will be neither recorded nor published.

4.1 Introduction

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, both qualitative and the quantitative research approaches were discussed. The chapter explained simple random sampling and purposive sampling which are sampling techniques selected for the study. The researcher detailed the two phases of data collection. Phase one was focused on the collection of data through questionnaires. The second phase of the research was also explained. Data was collected through the use of interviews. The researcher also gave an exposition of how both quantitative and qualitative data was analysed. The measures of validity and reliability were also discussed. The pilot testing of the research instrument was outlined. A discussion of design is not complete until research ethics are dealt with and in this chapter four; the researcher explained how ethical considerations were addressed. In the next chapter, the analysis and interpretation of data are presented.

The responses of the questionnaires forms are presented in tabular form and are followed by a brief summary of the findings for the items.

4.1.1 Section A: Biographical information

In this section the researcher presents the biographical information of the respondents in tabular form. The information are presented in a graphical manner and followed by a brief summary of the findings.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the research design and methodologies that the researcher intends following and which indicate the structure and the procedures that were followed to answer the researcher's study questions. It has been revealed that the study was conducted using qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and this chapter data is presented, analysed and interpretation of the study. The following sections focus on reporting the empirical investigation by providing answers to the principal leadership styles and school performance. The responses to the interview items are presented in a narrative form and the responses of the questionnaires items are presented in tabular form and are followed by a brief synthesis of the findings for the item. The detailed findings are discussed in chapter 5.

4.2 Analysis of Data Collected through Questionnaire

The responses of the questionnaires items are presented in tabular form and are followed by a brief synthesis of the findings for the items.

4.2.1 Section A: Biographical Information

In this section the researcher presents the biographical information of the respondents in this study. The information are presented in a graphical tabular form and followed by a synthesis of the findings.

Table 4.1 Gender of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Male	26	57.8%
2	Female	19	42.2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

In this study, a total of 45 respondents who took part, 26 respondents (57.8%) were males whereas 19 (42.2%) were females. All targeted 45 respondents managed to return the questionnaires for analysis. It can be revealed that majority of the respondent who took part in the study were males.

Table 4.2 Age of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	21 – 29 years	0	0.0%
2	30 – 35 years	01	2.2%
3	36 – 40 years	09	20.0%
4	41 – 45 Years	26	57.8%
5	46 – 55	09	20.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Table 4.2 indicate that 26 (57.8%) of the respondents who took part in this study are aged between 41 and 45 years. 09 (20.0%) of the respondents are aged between 46 and 55, and one (2.2%) are between 30 and 35. Nine (20.0%) are between 36 and 40 years of age and there was no respondent who took part in the study who was between 21 – 29 years. It can therefore be concluded that in this study that there has been a better representation of the population in terms of age of respondents.

Table 4.3 Highest academic Qualification of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Grade 12	0	0.0%
2	Degree	21	46.7%
3	Honours	21	46.7%
4	Masters	03	6.7%
5	PhD	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Twenty-one (46.7%) who took part in this study were having a degree as their highest academic qualification of respondents. 21 (46.7%) of the respondents were having an honours, and there was no respondent who was having PhD. Also only there was no respondent who was having a grade 12 and there were 03 (6.7%) of the respondents who were having masters. A conclusion can be drawn that majority of the participants who took part in the study were having a degree and the researcher recommend that educators should be given an opportunity and be encouraged to enroll for senior degrees.

Table 4.4 Teaching Experience of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Less than 10 years	06	13.3%
2	11 – 20 years	19	42.2%
3	21 – 30 years	11	24.4%
4	31 – 40 years	0	0.0%
5	More than 41 years	09	20.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The highest teaching experience of most respondents who took part in this study at 19 (42.2%) is between 11 to 20 years. Eleven (24.4%) of the respondents were between 21 to 30 years, and nine (20.0%) were having more than 41 years of teaching experience. Only six (13.3%) of the respondent in the study were having less than 10 years of teaching experience and there was no respondent who was between 31 to 40 years of

teaching experience. From all the participants who took part in this study, the majority has got 11 to 20 teaching experience.

Table 4.5 Your Grade 12 class for 2013 obtained the following percentage

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Less than 20%	0	0.0%
2	21 – 40%	02	4.4%
3	41 – 60%	07	15.6%
4	61 – 80%	17	37.8%
5	More than 81%	19	42.2%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The majority of the respondents, 19 (42.2%) who took part in this study revealed that their class for 2013 obtained more than 81% in the final examination. Seventeen (37.8%) of the respondents revealed that they obtained 61 to 80% in the final examination, and seven (15.6%) obtained 41 to 60% in the final examination. Two (4.4%) of the respondents who took part in the study pointed out that in the final examination they received 21 to 40% and there was no respondent who got less than 20%. From all the schools that took part in this study, a conclusion can be drawn that the majority of the schools have done very well by scoring more than 80% in their 2013 grade 12 final examinations.

4.2.2 Section B: The Effects of Principal Leadership Styles on School Performance

In this section the researcher presents data which come from the research objectives and are; the effect of principal leadership styles on school performance, the consequences of principal leadership styles in the performance of learners, the prevalent principal leadership style of public secondary schools and the strategies that can enhance the principal leadership styles on school performance. The data is presented in the form of tables followed by brief interpretations.

4.2.2.1 The Challenges of Principal Leadership Styles on School Performance

This sub-section presents the challenges of principal leadership styles on school performance. Data is presented in a graphical tabular format, frequencies and percentages.

Table 4.6 The leadership styles adopted by school principal have an effect on learners' enrolment

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21	46.7%
2	Agree	16	35.6%
3	Neutral	03	6.6%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	03	6.6%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Sixteen (35.6%) of the respondents agreed with the idea that the leadership styles adopted by school principal have an impact on learners' enrolment, twenty-one (46.7%) respondents strongly agreed. On the other hand, the two of the respondents are in the disagreeing categories (4.4%). Three (6.6%) respondents were not sure whether the leadership styles adopted by school principal have an impact on learners' enrolment or not. Also, three (6.6%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that the leadership styles adopted by school principal have an impact on learners' enrolment. Most respondents of this study revealed that the leadership styles adopted by school principal have an impact on learners' enrolment.

Table 4.7 Principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	19	42.2%
2	Agree	23	51.1%
3	Neutral	0	0.0%
4	Disagree	03	6.6%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Majority of respondents who took part in the study revealed that principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners at 23 (51.1%), while 19 (42.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed with the idea. There was no respondent who was not sure with the statement that principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners. Three (6.6%) of the respondents disagreed with the idea that principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners and there was no respondent who strongly disagreed. From the above statistics, a conclusion can be drawn that majority of the respondents agreed that principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners.

Table 4.8 The leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	23	51.1%
2	Agree	19	42.2%
3	Neutral	01	2.2%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

One (2.2%) respondent was not sure whether the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline. Majority of the respondents at 23 (51.1%) strongly

agree that the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners discipline. Very few respondents at 2 (4.4%) Disagreed that the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline. In addition, there was no respondent who strongly disagree that the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline. These figures confirm that the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline.

Table 4.9 The leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	26	57.8%
2	Agree	15	33.3%
3	Neutral	02	4.4%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

A large number of respondent at 26 (57.8) strongly agreed that the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment. Very few respondents at 2 (4.4) disagreed that the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment. There was no respondent who strongly disagree that the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment. Only two (4.4) respondents were not sure whether the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment. The above statistic suggests that the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment.

4.2.2.2 The Relationship between Principals Leadership Styles and School Performance

This portion presents the consequences of principal leadership styles on school performance. The information in this section is presented in tabular form and followed by a discussion of the findings.

Table 4.10 There is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	14	31.1%
2	Agree	26	57.8%
3	Neutral	03	6.6%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The majority of respondents at 26 (57.8%) are convinced that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. Fourteen respondents (31.1%) strongly agreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. Only three respondents (6.6%) are not sure whether there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. Very few respondents at 2 (4.4%) Disagreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. It is worthy to report that there is no respondent who strongly disagreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. According to the views of the principals and SMT members in the sample, a conclusion can be drawn that indeed there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development.

Table 4.11 There is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	12	26.7%
2	Agree	29	64.4%
3	Neutral	03	6.6%
4	Disagree	01	2.2%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

According to the views of the respondents, 64.4% indicated that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement. In the same vein, twelve respondents (26.7%) strongly believe that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement. Very few respondents (6.6%) were not sure whether there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement. Only one respondent disagree that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement. According to the views of the principals and SMT members in the sample, it seems that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement.

Table 4.12 There is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	19	42.2%
2	Agree	19	42.2%
3	Neutral	02	4.4%
4	Disagree	05	11.1%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

In determining the relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline, large number of respondents has indicated that there is a relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline. 19 (42.2%) respondents strongly agreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners discipline, whereas 19 (42.2%) agreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners discipline. There were only two (4.4%) respondents who were not sure whether there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline. Few respondents at 5 (11.1) disagreed that there is a relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners discipline. From the above statistic, a conclusion can be drawn that there is indeed a relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline.

Table 4.13 There is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' performance.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	17	37.8%
2	Agree	23	51.1%
3	Neutral	03	6.6%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Most of the respondents in this survey at 23 (51.1%) agreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners performance. Moreover, Seventeen respondents (37.8) strongly agreed that a significant relationship exist between the principal's leadership style and learners' performance. Only three respondents (6.6) where not sure whether there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' performance. Very few respondents at 2 (4.4) disagreed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners

performance. The above table shows that there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' academic performance in secondary schools in the Vhembe District, Limpopo.

4.2.2.3 The Most Prevalent Leadership Style of Public Secondary School Principals

This section provides a description of the prevalent principal leadership style of public secondary schools, and the information in this section are presented in tabular form and followed by discussions.

Table 4.14 Autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	07	15.6%
2	Agree	16	35.6%
3	Neutral	04	8.9%
4	Disagree	16	35.6%
5	Strongly disagree	02	4.4%
	TOTAL	45	100%

16 respondents (35.6%) agreed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. Similarly, 16 respondents (35.6%) disagreed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. However, a reasonable number of respondents 6 (13.3) strongly agreed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. Only 2 respondents (4.4%) strongly disagreed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. Though the researcher is cautioned against drawing firm conclusions from these data, it can be concluded that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. This conclusion leaves a room for a further investigation in this research question.

Table 4.15 Democratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	06	13.3%
2	Agree	17	37.8%
3	Neutral	06	13.3%
4	Disagree	13	28.9%
5	Strongly disagree	02	4.4%
	TOTAL	45	100%

A large number of the respondents 17 (37.8%) agreed that democratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Six respondents (13.3%) were not sure whether democratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals. Thirteen respondents (28.9%) disagreed with the statement that democratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals. These figures reveal that although democratic leadership style is not the only style practiced at schools, it is the most practiced style by school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo.

Table 4.16 Laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	02	4.4%
2	Agree	12	26.7%
3	Neutral	08	17.8%
4	Disagree	16	35.6%
5	Strongly disagree	07	15.6%
	TOTAL	45	100%

According to the frequency of the responses in Table 4.16 the majority of respondents at 16 (35.6%) Disagreed that laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. Furthermore, seven respondents (15.6%) strongly disagreed that laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal in the Vhembe District Limpopo. Few respondents at 12 (26.7%) agreed that laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. Eight respondents (17.8%) were not sure whether laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by school principal. From the above table, it can be generalised that laissez-faire leadership style is not the most practiced style by school principal.

Table 4.17 Secondary school principals are flexible when practicing leadership styles

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	04	8.9%
2	Agree	17	37.8%
3	Neutral	10	22.2%
4	Disagree	10	22.2%
5	Strongly disagree	04	8.9%
	TOTAL	45	100%

Majority of respondents at 17 (37.8%) who took part in the study revealed that secondary school principals are flexible when practicing leadership styles. Only ten (22.2%) respondents in this study disagreed that secondary school principals are flexible when practicing leadership styles. Another ten (22.2%) of the respondents who participated in this survey were not sure whether secondary school principals are flexible when practicing their leadership styles. From these figures, a conclusion can be drawn that secondary school principals are flexible when practicing leadership styles.

4.2.2.4. The Strategies that can enhance the Principal Leadership Styles on School Performance.

This section provides a description of the strategies that can enhance the principal leadership styles on school performance and the information in this section are presented in tabular form and followed by discussions.

Table 4.18 Defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	19	42.2%
2	Agree	21	46.7%
3	Neutral	04	8.9%
4	Disagree	01	2.2%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

In table 4.18, a large number of respondents at 21 (46.7%) agreed that defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools. Moreover, 19 (42.2%) of the respondents strongly agreed that defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools. Four respondents (8.9%) were not sure whether defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools. Out of all the 45 respondents, only 1 (2.2%) respondent disagreed that defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools. From the above statistic, it can be concluded that defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools.

Table 4.19 Teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	32	71.1%
2	Agree	12	26.7%
3	Neutral	0	0.0%
4	Disagree	01	2.2%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The majority of the respondents at 32 (71.1%) strongly agreed that teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools. Only one respondent (2.2) disagreed that teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools. There was no respondent who was not sure whether teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools. From these figures, it is evident that teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools.

Table 4.20 Effective schools provide opportunities for staff development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	23	51.1%
2	Agree	19	42.2%
3	Neutral	01	2.2%
4	Disagree	02	4.4%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

23 (51.1%) respondents strongly agreed that effective schools provide opportunities for staff development. Only one respondent (2.2. %) was not sure whether effective schools provide opportunities for staff development. Very few respondents at 2 (4.4%) denied the

fact that effective schools provide opportunities for staff development. The figures above reveal that effective schools provide opportunities for staff development. Therefore the majority of respondents are convinced that provisioning of opportunity for staff development is one of the traits of effective schools.

Table 4.21 Effective schools have good communication skills

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	27	60.0%
2	Agree	18	40.0%
3	Neutral	0	0.0%
4	Disagree	0	0.0%
5	Strongly disagree	0	0.0%
	TOTAL	45	100%

The table above indicates that the majority of respondents at 27 (60.0%) strongly agreed, while 18 (40.0%) agreed with the idea that effective schools have good communication skills. No respondent was not sure whether effective schools have good communication skills. The table above also shows that there is no respondent who disagreed with the idea that effective schools have good communication skills. Therefore, it is evident from the table that all respondents who took part in the survey are convinced that effective schools have good communication skills.

4.3. Analysis of Data Collected through Interview

Open-ended questions have been developed in order to capture the thoughts of the respondent and also to be able to make some follow- ups on responses furnished. The total number of people that has been targeted to respond to all the developed questions is three.

Question1: What are the effects of principal leadership styles on school performance?

Respondent 1

Respondent number one stated that the principal leadership styles have an impact on school performance. The respondent further revealed that undesirable leadership style discourages and demoralises both educator and learners. According to him, leadership styles affect school discipline and communication which in turn has an impact on the overall results of learners.

Respondent 2

Respondent number two argued that many school has become dysfunctional as a result of poor leadership styles by the principals. The respondent believed that leadership styles have an impact on the performance of the school. Poor leadership style has affected the school enrolment which results in re-deployment of educators. With few educators left, the school becomes ineffective.

Respondent 3

Respondent number three indicated that the leadership style of the principal has the power to change the whole school climate. The respondent argued that when the school climate becomes unfavorable, the school may fail to discharge its role as mandated by the community and the Department of Education.

Respondent 4

Respondent number four agreed that the principal leadership styles have an impact on school performance. The respondent stated that the principal's leadership style affects the overall performance of learners. The respondent further revealed that, when the leadership style adopted by the school principal fails to maintain discipline, educators would become lazy and learners would do as they wish.

Respondent 5

Respondent number five argued that wrong choice of leadership style affects the communication process within the school. According to respondent number five, when communication fails, the production will be affected.

Question2: What are the consequences of principal style on the performance of learners?

Respondent 1

In answering question two, respondent number one argued that performance of learners depends of the commitment of both educators and learners. The respondent further revealed that leadership styles that do not promote commitment will affect the performance of learners.

Respondent 2

According to respondent number two, the school environment is determined by the leadership style of the principal. The respondent argued that principal who are dictators do not get full cooperation from the subordinates.

Respondent 3

Respondent number three indicated that wrong choice of the leadership style may affect the overall results. The respondent further stated that one style may not be desirable to all situations. Therefore varying styles to match the situation may increase the performance of learners.

Respondent 4

Respondent number four agreed that the principal leadership styles have consequences on learners' performance. The respondent stated that educators may evade unbearable leadership style by leaving the school for another. According to respondent four, high turn-over affects learners' performance because in the process of hiring new educators, learners will not have any one to teach them.

Respondent 5

According to respondent number five, leadership style affects the whole teaching and learning climate. Undesirable teaching and learning climate always bring about negative results on learners performance.

Question3: What is the prevalent leadership style in public secondary school principals?

Respondent 1

Respondent number one stated that the principals who were employed during the apartheid era are still dictators. He revealed that the majority of newly appointed principals are democratic.

Respondent 2

Respondent number two argued that because of the educational policies that are based on the democratic constitution of South Africa, Majority of principals are compelled to consult and involve others to participate in decision making processes. Hence, the respondent is convinced that the majority of principals are democratic.

Respondent 3

Respondent number three stated that most principals are democratic. The respondent further said that they work together with other colleges and that principals cannot survive as autocratic leaders these days. The respondent added that there are stake holders that safe guard the democratic principles at schools. The School Governing Body, the School Management Team, Representative Council of Learners, and many others.

Respondent 4

Respondent number four believed that most of the school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo are democratic. The respondent argued that the democratic environment prevailing in the country since the advent of democracy and the establishment of the new South African Constitution has shaped secondary school principals in the Vhembe District to become democratic.

Respondent 5

The respondent number five argued that most of the school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo are dictators. The respondent justified that they are forced by the circumstances. The respondent indicated that principals are often instructed by the circuit officers to take information to the educators and other members of the staff who had little or no control over the given instructions but to do as they are told.

Question4: What strategies can be used to enhance the principal leadership style on school performance?

Respondent 1

The respondent number one highlighted that the principal should be made aware of the impact his or her leadership style has on school performance. The respondent continued

to say that after self-awareness, the principal should be able to analyse the situation or environment in which she or he is leading. Contextual factors such as the level of educators and the background of the learners determines the type of leadership style the principal should employ. The respondent finally suggested the establishment of committees at schools which advise the principals on leadership styles.

Respondent 2

Respondent number two argued that principals need to be educated on leadership skills and principles. The respondent further suggested that there should be refresher courses for school principals. Respondent number two perceive a need for the Department of Education to establish managers' leadership program for principals and school management teams.

Respondent 3

Respondent number three indicated that educating principals on leadership issues will help to improve school performance. The respondent stated that school principals should learn leadership skills such as communication, vision and vision casting, teamwork and many more.

Respondent 4

According to respondent four, school principals should be encouraged to further their studies. The respondent suggested that leadership and management courses should be made compulsory to all candidates applying for principal ship positions.

Respondent 5

Respondent number five argued that a system of monitoring and support of principal with regard to their leadership styles should be put in place. The respondent stated that the

powers of the principals and the manner in which they lead should be monitored and regulated. The respondent further remarked that principals should be exposed to self-awareness programs in which they are made aware of their own leadership styles so that they effect necessary adjustments.

5.1 Introduction

4.4. Conclusion

The main aim of this study was to determine the impact of principal leadership styles on school performance. In this chapter, data obtained from the respondents was presented, analysed and interpreted in tabular form on the impact of principal leadership styles on school performance. Considering the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' style of leadership was a critical variable in school performance in secondary schools in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Evidences from the study have led the researcher to conclude that principals' leadership style was a function of school performance. This suggests that the style of leadership used by the principal determines the level of schools performance. In the following chapter the study will be summarised and certain recommendations will be made in the light of the findings of this research.

5.1 Major Findings

The study was comprised of fifty (50) respondents. Forty five (45) of the respondents completed the questionnaire and the other five (5) respondents who were only principals completed interview articles. The findings were analysed in line with the objectives of the study. The main aim of this study was to determine the impact of principal leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' leadership style is a critical variable in school performance.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study was to determine the impact of principal leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. This study was carried out using the mixed methodology model. The mixed model design combines qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process. In this regards, two phases of data collection instruments were employed. The first phase was focused on the collection of data through questionnaires whereas data in the second phase data was collected through the use of interviews.

The data obtained in this study was collected and analysed using SPSS and thematic analysis. In this chapter important findings from the research will be discussed. This will be followed by recommendations, criticism that emanate from this study, and a final remark.

5.2 Major Findings

The study was comprised of fifty (50) respondents. Forty five (45) of the respondents completed the questionnaire and the other five (5) respondents who were only principals completed interview schedules. The findings were analysed in line with the objectives of the study. The main aim of this study was to determine the impact of principal leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that principals' leadership style is a critical variable in school performance.

5.2.1 The Challenges of Principal Leadership Styles on School Performance

This study has revealed that leadership styles adopted by the school principal pose challenges towards school performance. The impact on dimension of school performance such as, learners' enrolment, learners' performance, learners' discipline and educators and learners commitment was tested.

The study revealed that the leadership styles adopted by school principal have an impact on learners' enrolment. The study also discovered that poor leadership style decreases the school enrolment which results in re-deployment of educators. With few educators left, the school becomes ineffective. It was revealed in this study that principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners. The study has also revealed that the leadership style adopted by school principal affects learners' discipline. The study has also revealed the impact the principal leadership style has on commitment in that; the leadership style exercised by principal influences educators and learners commitment.

5.2.2 The Relationship between Principals Leadership Styles and School Performance

The finding of this study has revealed a consequential relationship between leadership styles and school performance. The finding of this study has brought to light the consequences of principal leadership styles in the performance of learners. According to the views of the principals and SMT members who were part of the investigation, a conclusion was drawn that there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and educators' professional development. It was noted in this study that the leadership style employed by the school principal influences the educators' professional development. The majority of respondent in this study had affirmed that there is significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and parental and community involvement. Furthermore, the finding of this study has revealed that there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' discipline.

This study has proved that provisioning of effective leadership results in good discipline. The study also indicated that the majority of respondents in this survey agreed that there is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners' performance.

5.2.3 The Most Prevalent Leadership Style of Public Secondary Schools Principals

This study has revealed that autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by school principals in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. The finding was consistent with the findings made in previous study (Naicker and Mestry: 2013: 42). This confirms that even after almost 20 years of democracy in South Africa, the majority of school principals in the Vhembe District are still employing autocratic style as their primary leadership style.

5.2.4 The Strategies to Enhance the Principal's Leadership Styles on School Performance.

The study has revealed several strategies that can be employed to improve the principal's leadership style. This study has discovered that defining the vision and the mission of the school, team work, opportunities for staff development, and good communication skills are the indispensable leaders' tools towards effective schools. Of all the elements, the study has revealed that teamwork is the most important. In the analysis it was found that the overwhelming majority preferred team work as the best tool towards effective schools that all the tools given.

5.3 Recommendations of the Study

Considering the finding of this study, it is recommended that school principals should imbibe a mixture of autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire styles of leadership in their school administration in order to enhance their school performance. The Department of Education should organize regular inspection to schools to monitor the style of leadership used by principals that could enhance school performance.

The study has noted that of all the 50 respondents no one had a PhD degree. The researcher recommends that educators should be encouraged and offered an opportunity to upgrade their qualifications.

The Department of Education should make it compulsory for school principal to go for refresher courses on Leadership. The curriculum should include leadership skills such as, vision, Teamwork and communication.

A selection of principals to schools should include a qualification in leadership or management. School principals who are already in the system should be supported to enroll for leadership related courses.

There is a need for future studies to consider the perceptions of characteristics of effective schools from parents, local community leaders and NGO heads as well as the school support staff which is a new stake holders coming into being in Vhembe schools.

5.4 Conclusion

The study determined the effect of principal leadership styles on school performance in the Vhembe District, Limpopo. The objectives of the study were to investigate the challenges of principals' leadership styles on school performance, to describe the relationship between principal's leadership styles and school performance, to evaluate the prevalent principal leadership style in public secondary schools and to explore the strategies that can enhance the principal leadership style on school performance.

This study was carried out using the mixed methodology model. The mixed model design combines qualitative and quantitative approaches within different phases of the research process. The instruments used to collect data in this study were questionnaire and interview. Questionnaires were administered to principals and educators who were members of the School Management Team to assess their perceptions of principal's

leadership styles and school performance. In addition, interview schedule was used to elicit the principal's perception of their own leadership styles.

The study revealed that principals' leadership style is a critical variable in school performance. The study has unearthed many challenges resulting from the principal's leadership style. These recommendations were made in this study to improve the performance of schools in relation to the principal's leadership styles.

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P.O. Box 5225
Thohoyandou
0950
30 January 2014

Dear Respondent

I am a registered student at the university of Venda doing Masters in Public Management (MPM). I am currently carrying out a study on the topic "The effect of Principals' Leadership Styles on the performance of their Schools". The research aims to examine the effect of principals' leadership styles on schools performance in selected public schools in the Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The study is exclusively conducted for academic purposes and the information provided by respondents will be held confidential and the respondent will not be identified in anyway.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

.....
Mudimeli N.R (9423138)
pastormudimeli@webmail.co.za
cell: 083 332 2555

INSTRUMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire has been design to assess the effect of principals' leadership styles on the performance of their schools.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Please answer all questions.
- Provided information will be kept and treated as strictly and highly confidential.
- Be honest with yourself when responding to the questions.
- Note that there are neither right nor wrong answers.
- Please make a tick ☐ in the appropriate block for each of the statements given.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male	
Female	

2. Which category best describes your age?

Age in years	
Less than 30	
30 – 40	
41 - 50	
More than 51	

3. What is your highest academic qualification?

Grade 12	
Degree	
Honours	
Master	
PHD	

4. Which category best describes your years of teaching experience.

Less than 10 years	
10 - 20	
20 - 30	
30 - 40	
More than 40 years	

5. Your grade 12 class for 2012 obtained the following pass percentage in the final examination.

Less than 20 %	
20 - 40 %	
41 - 60%	
61 - 80	
More than 80%	

SECTION B: LEADERSHIP STYLES AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE



This section contains statements about leadership style beliefs and school performance. Next to each statement, tick the number that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

1. Strongly Agree
2. Agree
3. Not sure
4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

1	The effect of principal's leadership styles on school performance	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.1	The leadership styles adopted by school principals have an impact on learners' enrolment.					
1.2	Principal leadership styles influence the performance of learners.					
1.3	The type of leadership style adopted by school principal affect learners' discipline.					
1.4	The form of leadership style exercised by school principal influences both educators and learners' commitment.					

2	The relationship between principals' leadership styles and school performance	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2.1	There is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership styles and educators' professional development.					
2.2	There is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership styles and parental and community involvement.					
2.3	There is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership styles and learners' discipline.					
2.4	There is a significant relationship between the principal's leadership style and learners performance.					

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3	The most prevalent leadership style of secondary school principals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3.1	Autocratic leadership style is the most practiced style by secondary school principals.					
3.2	Democratic leadership style is the most practiced style by secondary school principals.					
3.3	Laissez-faire leadership style is the most practiced style by secondary school principals.					
3.4	Secondary school principals are flexible in their choice of leadership styles.					

4	Traits of effective schools	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4.1	Defining the vision of the school is an indispensable element in effective schools.					
4.2	Teamwork is one of the distinguishing characteristics in effective schools.					
4.3	Effective schools provides opportunities for staff development.					
4.4	Effective schools have good communication skills.					

“Thank you for your participation.”

INSTRUMENT

INTERVIEW

The Effects of Principals' Leadership Styles on Schools Performance.

1. What are the challenges of principal leadership styles on school performance?
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2. What are the consequences of principal leadership styles on the performance of learners?
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3. What is the prevalent leadership style in public secondary school principals?
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4. What strategies can be used to enhance the principal leadership styles on school performance?

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.....

“Thank you for your participation”