

**A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AND
ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN
SCHOOLS**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work in this assignment is my own original work and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree. It is being submitted for a Master in Philosophy (Leadership in Education) degree at the University of Stellenbosch, Western Cape, South Africa. It had not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

ABSTRACT

There are many new developments in education taking place specifically in the field of schooling. Some of these developments – school based management, OBE curriculum developments and the devolution of control to the school level have brought with it many significant policy changes.

Many educational leaders are struggling to keep abreast with these transformational changes that are confronting them with regard to leadership and management of education, and educational structures within the school. Therefore, visionary leadership is an essential ingredient in understanding the democratic changes and restructuring taking place at present. Many principals at schools are struggling with the changes, while possibly not fully understanding the political, social and economic dynamics of these changes.

This assignment seeks to establish the need for visionary leadership in order to meet the challenges and constraints educational leaders face in their attempts to effect transformation in South Africa. I strongly identify with the democratic principles used to overcome the challenges and constraints to redress education in South African schools.

Interviews were conducted and data was constructed with principals of six different schools in the East London area. The educational leaders interviewed, ranged from primary to high school principals giving a vast expanse of expertise as leaders within a specific school community.

This assignment is based on the assumption that there is scope for educational leaders to bring about greater change and transformation in schools. There are many ways to visualise an effective school landscape based on a combination of personal, organisational and professional strategies. This assignment can be considered a contribution in this regard.

KEY WORDS: Educational leaders, transformation and visionary leadership

OPSOMMING

Daar is baie nuwe verwickelinge wat plaasvind in die onderwys veral op die gebied van skole. Baie van hierdie verwickelinge, onder andere, skool-gebaseerde bestuur, kurrikulumontwikkeling en die oordrag van gesag op skoolvlak het baie nuwe, aanpasbare opvoedkundige beleide en veranderings verwesenlik.

Baie opvoedkundige leiers worstel om aan te pas by hierdie veranderinge. Hierdie veranderinge vereis dat leiers en bestuurders in die onderwysomgewing en strukture binne skoolverband om meer responsief op te tree.

Visionêre leierskap is 'n belangrike vereiste om die demokratiese veranderinge en herstrukturering van skole te bevorder. Baie skoolhoofde worstel met hierdie veranderinge, omdat hulle nie heeltemal besef wat van die politieke, sosiale en ekonomiese uitdagings wat verandering bied, verwag word nie.

Hierdie taak poog om die noodsaaklikheid vir visionêre leierskap en die vereistes en beperkinge wat onderwysleiers konfronteer in hulle benadering om transformasie in Suid-Afrikaanse skole te bewerkstellig, te ondersoek.

Onderhoude was onderneem en data was gekonstrueer met skoolhoofde van ses verskillende skole in die Oos-London-omgewing. Die onderhoude met die onderwysleiers het plaasgevind by primêre- sowel as hoërskole. 'n Omvattende uitbreiding van wysheid en vaardigheid as leiers binne 'n spesifieke skool omgewing was geopenbaar.

Hierdie taak is gebaseer op die aanname dat daar ruimte is vir onderwysleiers om beter transformasie in skole aan te bring. Daar is baie maniere om visuele, effektiewe skole se terrein, gebaseer op 'n kombinasie van persoonlike, organisatoriese en professionele strategieë, te verwesenlik. Hierdie taak kan beskou word as 'n definitiewe bydrae in hierdie verband.

KERNBEGRIPPE: Onderwysleiers, transformasie en visionêre leierskap.

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As a token of my sincere gratitude I would like to dedicate this research assignment to my Dad as he celebrates his 80th birthday this year.

ACRONYMS

ABET	Adult Basic and Education Training
ANC	African National Congress
DAS	Developmental Appraisal System
DoE	Department of Education
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EEA	Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1996
ELRC	Educator Labour Relations Council
ETDP	Education and Training Development Programme
LSM	Learner Support Material
NEPA	National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
NRCS	New Revised Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes Based Education
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SASA	South African Schools Act 84 of 1996
SETA	Sector of Education and Training Authority
SGB	Schools Governing Body
SMT	School Management Team
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose and challenge for undertaking a study in visionary leadership is a research area very close to my heart. Nanus states that visionary leadership helps you develop the appropriate vision for your organisation based on a conceptual systematic analysis of the fundamental nature and future prospects of the organisation (Nanus 1992: xxi). In this case the organisation referred to is a school. Vision entails looking at two modalities: The first being your personal values, and the second the organisation's vision. The relationship of the two can be moulded into a tangible, attainable outcome for a defensible idea. As an educational leader or more commonly known as school principal, visionary leadership has a double-sided purpose and innate sense that the self is part and tied to the social or organisation you lead. My passion for the teaching profession has ignited this inquiry in order to determine the value, importance and necessity for a school to function as a successful institution. The emphasis, I contend, lies heavily on the shoulders of the school leader and how visionary the leadership qualities are of the principal. The outcome of an effective visionary approach would enhance the transformative educational process, creating change aligned with a vision. Without visionary leadership the enactment of transformation in

schools would not take its course. The challenge is to transform the school so that a democratic approach to contemporary visionary leadership can set the tone for a futuristic direction for the school where the vision is based on values to develop the quality and effectiveness of education and learning in 21st century schools.

The downside is that a school cannot progress sufficiently if principles are only based on traditional bureaucratic rules and regulations. A new educational landscape is required which is determined by the general tone of society (Mehrtens 1996: 6). A critical analysis of the progression of the school needs to be assessed and a direction set for future developments within the institution by means of goal setting and strategies. The principal's visionary leadership forms a pivotal role when determining the effectiveness of the school within the community, nationally and internationally. The need to expand on this research is simply to "open the eyes" of colleagues and address the "short-sightedness", namely their seeming reluctance to change.

I critically view the leadership approach and styles of colleagues and ask the question: Do principals know that the Constitution of South Africa has changed significantly since 1994, and that there is a new education dispensation for all public schools? I think that transformation has not been the order of the day but only slight adjustments and adaptations have been made appearing to be politically correct in the face of the Department of Education.

Have colleagues really transformed their schools? If visionary leadership were an important aspect of leading then changed personal views and organisational processes addressing areas of inequality, race, discrimination and gender in schools would have been adequately implemented. There is a need to change the mind-set of principals who can lead schools towards learning organisations abreast with modern technological trends, intertwined with social integration and diversity of learners in the 21st century. Effective leadership is an “awakening of the soul”, a progressive step towards democratising the school into a living organism of knowledge and lifelong learning, preparing learners for the workplace and global challenges that lie ahead. This is possible if leaders become critical thinkers and emancipate their thoughts and actions by developing an appropriate vision for change.

Schools need visionary, dynamic people to get them off the ground, (Lord 1988: 131). My argument is that in order for schools to be effective learning institutions the pillars of strength lie in the leadership structures where stakeholders are empowered to lead at every level of the organisation as to enhance the quality of education and lifelong learning in schools.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND FOCUS

Can the notion of visionary leadership enact educational transformation in schools? Are South African principals “in tune with” global, economic, political and technological trends and changes impacting on school education? Do the education policies guide our school practices? I critically argue that school principals have not made significant paradigm shifts in their thinking and school practices to embrace the notion of a democratic school environment. I contend that many principals are acting in a “cocoon” environment protecting them from the reality of change. These principals, I argue, have not yet been transformed into change agents.

Bearing in mind that a democratic state has been instituted nine years ago and educational transformation in relation to the South African Schools Act (SASA) of 1996 was initiated some while ago, I contend that the enactment of transformation is not yet sufficiently evident in many schools. This leads me to the central issue of this study, which involves analysing three dimensions of democratic transformation within schools. These include, the personal perception of some principals, the context that the school finds itself in, and finally the professional development of schools in order to enact their vision and to make adequate changes to reflect a democratic climate within the school context.

Technology has progressed and advanced at such a rapid speed, virtual reality, e-commerce, global networks and futuristic technocratic knowledge have expanded at an alarming rate. But the question remains: Are school leaders equipped to deal with such challenges of educational innovation? Visionary leadership can enact and transform schools to become effective institutions through democratic change. Loader (1997: 77) states that the principal has to hold onto a vision through good times and bad. Visionary leadership is about commitment to the bigger picture. However, my vision is that educational transformation best takes place if there is a focus on the notion of visionary leadership which links strongly with an enactment of transformation in schools.

1.3 SCOPE OF STUDY AND RATIONALE

Transforming the education system in South African relies heavily on the capacity building of educational leaders, their role and skills to enact change in schools. The grounds for transformation are based on the existing bureaucracies in schools and the necessity for implementing a vision based on values to redress education at schools in a post-apartheid era. Global challenges, social justice, humanitarianism, global competitiveness, technological advancements, marketability of educational approaches for lifelong learning are all challenges and constraints which confront schools. All the more reason why this study needs to be in tune with the progressive needs of learners and the effectiveness of school organisations.

The emphasis on values of quality, equality, accessibility, equity, non-racism, non-sexism and redress forms the framework and platform for visionary leadership by bridging the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged schools. The scope of this study will be to explore and analyse concepts such as vision, visionary, lead, leader, leadership, visionary leadership, transform, transformation, education, schools, policy, policy frameworks and paradigm shift. These concepts will also be explored and framed within the context of transformation in South African schools particularly related to education policy implementation.

The understanding of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996 and Bill of Rights, National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, South African Schools Act 84 of 1996 and the various White Papers on Education and Training will inform the scope of this study. The Whole School Development and School Management Manual on Leadership as well as the Development Appraisal System provide the backdrop for enacting visionary leadership transformation in schools. The period from 1994 based on democratic pressures and challenges to date in schools has a huge influence on the leadership and visionary perspective of an educational leader. The aim is to develop a visionary leadership approach whereby schools could become successful learning institutions where critical thinking and lifelong learning prevail and where schools are guided by an articulated vision which enacts educational transformation.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND METHODOLOGY

In this assignment I shall use conceptual analysis to explore important concepts such as visionary leadership and its implications for educational transformation in schools. I also embark upon an empirical study which involves conducting interviews with educational leaders in six selected schools in the East London area.

The critical paradigm will be a strong focus for this study. The empowerment, emancipation and transformation of the view of reality within the social context of the school milieu seen through the lenses of the principal would hopefully transform the setting. The limited political awareness related to transforming education from a post-apartheid perspective will impact heavily on the discourse and notion of visionary leadership. The study hopes to change the thinking patterns of school principals. In this way they would hopefully be empowered to cultivate progressive schools within a democratic framework of educational transformation.

1.5 PRELIMINARY STUDY

When focusing on the question whether visionary leadership can enact transformation in schools, the context of educational leadership has to be viewed

in terms of the political, social and economic structures in South Africa. Separate schooling for different race groups and separate departments of education with white supremacy as autonomous in leading education for the advancement of white scholars characterised South African education prior to 1994. A post-apartheid South African education perspective framed by the Constitution serves as the conceptual basis for education transformation in schools. Thus, one finds that national education policy strongly advocates transformation in the following ways:

- (i) the appropriate of every person to be protected against unfair discrimination within or by an education department or education institution on any ground whatsoever;
- (ii) the appropriate of every person to basic education and equal access to education institutions;
- (iii) the appropriate of a parent or guardian in respect of the education of his or her learner or ward;
- (iv) the appropriate of every learner in respect of his or her education;
- (v) the appropriate of every student to be instructed in the language of his or her choice where this is reasonably practicable;
- (vi) the appropriate of every person to the freedoms of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression and association within education institutions;

- (vii) the appropriate of every person to establish where practicable, education institutions based on a common language, culture or religion, as long as there is no discrimination on the ground of race; and
- (viii) the appropriate of every person to use the language and participate in the cultural life of his or her choice within an education institution (National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996, Education Law and Policy Handbook 1999: 1-3).

These principles emphasise national education policy such as the full personal development of each student and the moral, social, cultural, political and economic development of the nation at large, including the advancement of democracy, human rights and the peaceful resolution of disputes. Achieving equitable education opportunities and redressing past inequality in education provision, including the promotion of gender equity and the advancement of the status of women are also advocated. Endeavouring to ensure that no person is denied the opportunity to receive an education irrespective of social or physical diversity seems to be a major thrust of education policy.

In addition, the reconstruction and development of the educational system by means of recognising the aptitudes, abilities, prior knowledge and experience of students where independent and critical thought, promoting a culture of respect for teaching and learning in educational institutions is considered as a main priority. The development and promotion of inquiry, research and knowledge

advancement through systematic research and development on education, monitoring and evaluating education provision and performance, and training educators and education managers have become important for the transformation of education in schools. According to the Education Law and Policy Handbook (1999), enhancing the quality of education and educational innovation through systematic research and development on education, monitoring and evaluating education provision and performance, and training educators and education managers, are necessary if transformation is to be implemented successfully.

My focus on visionary leadership and the enactment of transformation in schools not only requires a transformative visionary leader who internalises the national education policy but also one who is attuned with “educational innovation”. Visionary leadership can only function within the context of democratic transformation in schools. The emphasis on the training required for school managers is an essential core principle for the development of visionary leadership for a school. In order for a school to be progressive in the 21st century the role of leadership and the mind-set of the leader should be in harmony with “educational innovation”. My contention is that visionary leadership can only take place in schools where democratic transformation of education has been taken seriously. The potential contribution of this assignment lies in its ability to establish links between visionary leadership and the democratic transformation of education.

1.6 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter One is an historical overview of the education system in South Africa since 1994. The various policy frameworks form the foundation for this research assignment guided by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. The various Acts, policies and White papers provide the framework for a visionary leader to expound on the purpose and intent of creating an effective educational institution in the 21st century. The impetus of the school community assisted by various role-players within and outside the organisation form an integral part of the networking in order to articulate the purpose of the vision.

Chapter Two will be guided by the theories of Habermas and Freire, which advocate critical theory and enlightenment through self-reflective and transformative practices. This chapter conceptually analyses visionary leadership. I also explore the concept of vision in relation to the notion of school community.

In Chapter Three I shall analyse educational transformation in schools. The global and national capitalist imperatives such as social, cultural, economic and technological issues will form the background for the context of educational transformation since 1994 and the transformation of school organisations as a result of a unified education system. A constitutive meaning of educational

transformation seems to be democratization of the education system. I shall explore this practice of democratisation by reflecting on challenges and traditional bureaucratic structures which seem to be operative in some schools. The quality of education and the justification of elements of connectedness between visionary leadership and educational transformation will also be examined.

Chapter Four is a practical application of methodology where the interrelatedness between the historical context, the understanding of a visionary leader and the critical paradigm focuses on directions schools ought to pursue with the intended purpose for educational transformation to take place. The case study where six different school leaders will be expressing their views of visionary leadership and the response provided by the school principals will have some impact on the implications for future research regarding the opportunities and challenges facing schools in the future and how schools can educationally need to transform their vision.

1.7 SUMMARY

The school principal needs to have a global picture of where education is going in the 21st century. A visionary leader, more specifically that role which a school principal ought to perform needs to be sensitive to and sensitised by what is happening around him/herself as well as the strong influences of political,

economic and technocratic developments and the societal challenges that face schools. It is here where the potential contribution of this assignment lies. The intention of this assignment is to develop an appropriate notion of visionary leadership, which can positively effect the democratic transformation in schools.

CHAPTER 2

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Coming to terms with visionary leadership creates a kaleidoscope of visual images. To me the word “vision” suggests the power of seeing, the ability to see further ahead in greater latitude and depth than others. When referring to visionary leadership within an educational context then vision takes on the conceptualisation of seeing into the distant future in order for necessary change to take place. The historical context of education in South Africa plays a significant role in the transformation process since 1994, which requires visionary leadership in a democratic climate and environment. Hence, visionary leadership plays a significant role in educational change and is driven by the school leader in collaboration with all role-players. Historically in South Africa, educational leadership has been approached in an authoritarian way in an apartheid educational system (Davidoff 1997: 158). Freire’s theory (Gibson 1999: 2) is that people need to liberate themselves and more often the leader will generate elements of a vision from others and liberate his or her internalised perception and synthesise the information in order to view the world from varied angles. Within the school context however a vision is aimed at achieving creative imagination (Adair 2002: 110-111). However, a more facilitative style of

leadership and management has emerged becoming too laissez faire without giving adequate guidance or rigour resulting in a lack of direction and purpose (Davidoff 1997: 158). Thus, visionary leadership enacts a higher reason or purpose, inspiring a leader in transforming an organisation. However, I contend that there is more to enlightening and emancipating those within the organisation than merely communicating a vision. Effective leadership will liberate emotions, feelings and energy, enthusing others. Alvin Toffler (1972) talks about a future society where truth and interdependence lead to social dependence on those around us. Therefore, I argue that visionary leadership cannot be sustained in a school where the vision has not been collaboratively, collectively and socially constructed.

The school leader or principal has visions of a fully, functional school where whole school development can be implemented successfully and, therefore, a leader's visions are usually large, ambitious and wholly unrealistic. For example, Theodore Roosevelt, Thomas Edison, Henry Ford, Nelson Mandela and Wendy Luhabe were all visionaries of their time with the latter being visionaries of the 21st century in South Africa. Where are the exceptional leaders in our schools? Are we timidly low in expectation, driven by Education Minister Prof Kader Asmal and the dictates of National Policy in areas of Outcomes-Based Education and the Revised National Curriculum Statement, merging of higher institutions and religious policy implementation in schools? Carl Jung said that the true leader is always led referring both to internal listening and to listening to others (MacBeath

1988: 5). I am not convinced that policy makers always listen in our country. Hence, my focus on the notion of visionary leadership which requires that we listen and act according to what seems to be educationally justifiable.

2.2 EXPLORING THE NOTION OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

2.2.1 LEADERSHIP

The word “leadership” conjures images of figures that revel in power, larger than life, status aware undermining other people’s opinions, most definitely an anti Habermasian concept. According to opinions of United Kingdom schools, educational leadership is described as being constructive destabilising acts which result in staff dissatisfaction and threats (MacBeath 1998: 6). At the moment this understanding could be linked to South African education. Educators are feeling the pressure of insecurity with regards to another round of redeployment, closed post provisioning and a revised OBE curriculum.

Leadership styles are contributing factors when transforming and creating change in schools. School principals have created different perceptions of leadership in the following ways. Autocratic styles of leadership where those in positions of power make decisions unilaterally and do not allow overtly or covertly dissent. This seems to be a style of leadership that many teachers in South African schools are familiar with. Laissez faire leadership, essentially non-

directive and open-ended recognising a more participatory approach not allowing direction or a framework for constructive participation also seems to be prevalent in South African schools. A laissez faire approach tends to go to the opposite extreme in terms of directiveness. Moreover, the peacemaker style of leadership avoids conflict as a way of trying to keep everyone satisfied but often at the cost of addressing real issues undermining the effective functioning of the school. Then, a democratic style of leadership is described as a participatory, consultative, negotiating and inclusive style of leadership (Davidoff 1997: 158 – 159). I would argue that a democratic style of leadership has the potential to enact transformation but requires visionary leadership to achieve the ultimate outcome of a successful school in a post-apartheid environment.

Murphy in MacBeath (1998: 8) states that leaders lead not from the apex of the pyramid but from the center of the web of human relationships. Justifiable leadership is when a leader is in the thick of the action and that the vision and qualities of leadership receive the sternest test. This is so true when you read the biography of Rudolph Giuliani the Mayor of New York city on 11 September 2001 where communication and trust are values evident in Giuliani's leadership style.

In England, Scotland and Denmark school educators saw leaders as vision building in different ways. The English and Scots wanted a strong hands-on leader who points others in a clear direction. The Danes wanted their leader to be more collaborative to build a vision in conjunction with educators (MacBeath

1998: 60). I critically question as to what South African schools want to see in a leader. Heron (1992) pointed out that if we polarise “autocratic” and “democratic” leadership, we could run the risk of labeling any form of directiveness as being authoritarian. Heron (1992) describes three main styles of leadership, namely directive leadership which is often important in the initiation of development processes at schools. He says that good leadership means ensuring that appropriate consultation and discussion take place in schools as a consultative style of leadership. He also mentions that an autonomous leadership style knows when to delegate authority and responsibilities providing an opportunity for other members of the school community to take responsibility for the successes of the school in a more meaningful way. This he adds is allowing for the sharing of control and responsibility, an important aspect of democracy (Davidoff 1997: 158-159). My contention is that South African school leaders need to be visionary in thinking about the future of schools as there are many realistic challenges facing them, namely, poverty, unemployment of parents (affecting school fees payment). Aids pandemic, vandalism, learner uprisings, crime, corruption and crumbling family structures are all realistic challenges school leaders ought to face. The current role of the school leader is vastly different from the previous role principals performed during the apartheid era.

The school leader has to contend with the above challenges, as well as to develop the quality of education, attend to the professional needs of educators, and to manage the resources of the school within the framework of education

policy and the SASA. Therefore, the vision for the school has to be aligned with these demands. A more democratic, participatory, consultative, negotiating and inclusive style of leadership is an essential quality for a South African principal to function effectively in a post apartheid era – what I refer to as elements of visionary leadership.

An “*ubuntu*” approach of appreciating human dignity plays a leading role in taking a school to the next level of social integration and pluralistic advancement where consensus of views of people and the contribution they make to the organisation are cultivated. The threat of the rich getting richer and the poor getting poorer are a reality where schools are shadowed behind parental demands. For instance, the payment of exorbitant school fees, low percentage of social diversity in schools, non-democratic reflection of racial integration on governing bodies, creating exclusivity where opportunities and facilities are only for those that can afford it. Is that not in opposition to democracy? I critically question whether visionary leadership is operative at these institutions. Personally, I view an even greater racial, economic and social divide being created lead by “blinded” regression of trying to cling to an archaic apartheid philosophy. Some schools again have over compensated the expression of liberation and an influx of culturally diverse learners into schools has resulted in leaving a perplexed and unprepared staff trying to deal with the cultural challenges presenting themselves. A strong Westernised teaching ethos is emphasised in schools. Yet, learners reflect other cultural interests creating disharmony between the school

and the expectations of the school community. Semi-urban schools are being overcrowded by the infiltration of squatter settlements. I refuse to place schools and learners in boxes or categories of racial demarcation and will, therefore, throughout my assignment only refer to urban, semi-urban and rural schools.

Visionary leadership at macro level is needed to aid school requirements in the above mentioned situations. Our local newspaper in the Eastern Cape, *The Daily Dispatch* regularly reports that rural schools are dealing with 23 percent teacher absenteeism in the Eastern Cape. Does this not highlight the need for strong visionary leadership? Dysfunctional schools require restructuring and ought to become functional quality organisations with systems in place. Lack of visionary leadership at our institutions seems to be a reality, which negatively impacts on teacher attitudes. I reflect on nine years into a new democratic South Africa and yet education seems to be on the decline. I shall argue that visionary leadership for effective change is what is needed from national level to classroom level.

2.2.2 VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Visionary leadership creates a sense of direction. It personifies a person who is unafraid to take risks, being courageous, bold, uplifting and inspiring who continually reshapes and renews a complex world into a simplex community. Vision is the guiding light and driving force for a successful organisation that is, you have to see beyond the threshold. A critical ingredient is moral imagination;

vision plus values because the voices of conscience reflect the qualities of leadership character. We are so desperately trying to rebuild and restructure a new educational society based on the principles of democracy. Vision is, therefore, the capacity to invent a desirable future. I contend that an Africanised model for leadership could be adopted in schools. Burden claims the following:

If educative institutions are to bridge for learners the wisdom of the past, the realities of the present, and the probable alternative of future times, education leaders should understand futuristic issues and incorporate such thinking into their strategic planning. The rapidity and complexity of social and technological changes require leaders who are proactive in their attitudes and practices (Burden 1989: 403).

Visionary leadership offers a reconceptualisation of the role of leaders that focuses on the individual, future consciousness and social behaviour. Morris (in Peters 1992: 405) calls it “rational emotive theory”, a futuristic cognitive view of leadership and a move from “I-ism” to “We-ism” where cooperation and togetherness form the foundation for progression and transformation. A philosophical approach used by Freire and Habermas where development of conscious awareness and a focus on cooperative tendencies among nations and individuals need to change and be developed in order for vision to become real in an organisation.

Ellis (in Burden 1989: 412) contends that leaders who develop rational thinking and a future consciousness will be adequately equipped to deal with the stress that accompanies social transformation. You need to create “stability in change”.

2.2.3 EXPLORING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Habermas’ (2000) and Freire’s (in Gibson 1999: 4) critical perspective and enlightenment thought of self-reflective and engaging practice is crucial to an understanding of visionary leadership. I am of the opinion that educational leaders need to address the inner person or “inner principal” before becoming visionary leaders. By this I mean becoming a change agent in thought processing, as well as developing relationships with those around you. Leadership ought to reflect on social justice and democratic values, which are transformational principles necessary to transform schools. The leader needs to understand, be conversant with and accept the changes necessary to bring about social equity and the recognition of diverse cultures in schools. Adair (2002: 94) says that a leader must listen to his or her leadership intuition and follow the heart and conscience, feelings and emotions. When one analysis leadership then certain practices become important:

- ◆ Be a guide to good practice;
- ◆ Someone who can cope with public scrutiny;
- ◆ Have the ability to cross boundaries;

- ◆ Converse through active dialogue with people;
- ◆ Listen to your intuition;
- ◆ Make good positive judgements;
- ◆ Reflect on situations;
- ◆ Listen to the power of your personal voice that “supersense” to act, read or remain in control through harmony and composure;
- ◆ Take introspection of the self and then the situation or context in collaboration with others; and
- ◆ Have courage by creating a tomorrow for your choices – a step ahead – a vision such as to become a daydreamer seeking a futuristic means to developing a sense of reality.

The above characteristics are all typical Habermasian based because they are self-reflective (Habermas 2000: 1-4).

2.2.4 VISION

Let us analyse the concept vision by firstly exploring the word vision. Vision is about following your dream and listening to your heart. Dreaming is part of visioning and is a personal experience and forms an integral part of institutional thinking and planning. The principal needs to dream about the school and where it is going in order to take the school to the next level of democratic progress producing quality education framed by national policy, guidelines such as the

SASA. It is a strong springboard when making future decisions for the school. Critical thinking is essential for a principal in determining the vision because effective leadership requires imagination and creativity to solve problems.

Loader (1997: 114) calls it “the dreaming principal”. Dreams tell you a lot about yourself and your preparation for the future. Educational dreaming is a stirring of an emotion and yet a challenge to achieve. Vision, however, is not a fantasy in the extreme because schools remain artificial contrived settings where the only rooms are classrooms. Therefore, it is essential to develop a vision where the principal invites all role-players to take a collaborative and decision-making role in the unfolding of a vision in order for everyone to be part of the reality of achieving the dream. Handy (in Loader 1997: 127) states that the leader needs to be in touch with his/her community and walk with a different agenda in order for the vision to become realised. This is so, since dreaming and visioning initiates emancipation of thought processing and liberation of being in collaboration with others and sharing the vision.

In the context of social organisations, visionary leadership requires an empowering of the self and others in order to reach for the imagery, clutch it and make it your own. Ownership of the vision and its values is the guiding principle of transformation. Socially, the vision has a powerful effect on people within the organisation.

Nanus (1992: 8) emphasises that a vision is a realistic, credible, attractive future for your organisation. It is a personal articulating voice of the journey towards which your organisation should aim as it is better, more successful and more desirable than the present. To me, vision is future orientated and progressive in nature. However, a justifiable vision is an energising idea that leap frogs, anchoring itself in skills, creative talents, resources and structures to make it come alive where the action is. Creating a unique vision for a particular school requires strong leadership.

Can vision be achieved without leadership? I think not, because the vision constitutes leadership (Sagor, Barnett & Barth 1993: 10). Visionary leadership seeks the future in order to take the organisation and self to the next level of achievement through other people. Possibly a very African perspective of "*ubuntu*" where the success of the leader or person is due to the collaboration of the group. Silzer (2002: 36) says that vision is having a purpose and creates a clear line of sight. Blasé and Blasé (1994: 68) define vision as a "driving dream" in sight that will support change efforts to articulate values and supply direction for progression. Visions provide orientation for specific action incorporated with values and commitments that guide the system and beliefs about structure. Vision statements are not intended to be realistic but to be inspiring, that is, they describe conditions to be realised (Schelecty 1997: 62-64).

School improvement visions seem to be driven within the organisational context of “scanning the environment” for an attractive opportunity to improve a collective vision (Hughes 1999: 17). Visionary leadership affords a school an opportunity of visualising a better future for an organisation because it is an illumination of a creative idea, that is, being “mental models” for change.

Vision also has the capacity to exercise moral imagination. Elements of importance to enact a vision are the character of the principal, culture of the school and the socio-political context that the school is rooted in (Blumberg & Greenfield 1986: 239). Vision ought to play an important role in the entire life cycle of an organisation. It empowers people who according to Habermas and Freire enhance their ability to liberate their thoughts as critical inquirers and emancipatory actors. It moves people to action, whereby the organisation evolves and makes progress. It creates power to grab the attention of those within and outside the school (Nanus 1992: 16).

What is so important about the appropriate vision for a school? An appropriate vision gives people a nucleus of commonality and equal commitment to the focus. Visioning gives a feeling of transcending inspiration to ensure personal and organisational success. An appropriate vision can establish the quality and standard of excellence of staff and learner performance (Nanus 1992: 19).

Vision ought to be contextualised. For example, an affluent urban coastal school taking the learners to the beach is not considered a challenging learning experience, but this would not be the same for inland rural or urban learners. The focus of the learning experience requires a certain perception and vision of realistic expectation. The school community dictates the needs or requirements, parents' influence is important when determining the appropriate vision. For instance, asking urban learners to use plastic packets for satchels and expecting poverty-stricken areas to wear blazers and Panama hats to school. Every school needs to review and assess its context and community in order to provide visionary needs in relation to the community and the schools feeder area. The appropriate vision is, risk taking, futuristic, and threatening if not articulated. A vision is a positive move, Habermas' idea of enlightenment and enriching peoples' lives focuses on organisations' direction, a buying into and tapping teachers' expertise and experience in a channelled way. In essence, visionary leaders ought to be willing to take risks and to create change. The principal's personal ideology can influence the educational vision. The appropriate vision needs a breath of knowledge and long term sustainable performance.

2.2.5 CORE VALUES AS THE FOUNDATION FOR A VISION

What does a visionary leader want to achieve in the school? I would like to refer to it as values which influence thinking and action; a decision involved in leading and managing a school. A more personal belief is that one's ethical posture

depends largely on one's commitment interrelated with your individual worldview. The uniqueness of being human is that people can develop their ethical positions, which is a sign of human maturity and skill development (Hughes 1999: 133).

Schlechty (1997: 73-74) states that belief is deeply held and supported by values. Values depend on dialogue, discussion and logical analysis. I would extend these values to critical inquiry in order to ensure visionary leadership. Values give an organisation a sense of purpose. Therefore, the basic elements of truth, trust and respect are value driven leadership traits.

Values of a new era lies in its strong impetus towards reform and willingness of its people because of shared goals and a social supportive society based on a broad humanitarian personality, namely honesty, integrity, candor, intelligence, wisdom and emotional intelligence. Schuitema (1998: 90) says, "values are only demonstrated to be sincere if the person remains true to them". Moreover, values can be analysed as actions that are demonstrated and measured against behaviour in situations. For instance, leadership in action can be associated with Rudolph Giuliani's candor and integrity as he shared his expertise as mayor, as well as his emotional intelligence to handle the 11 September 2002 Twin Towers situation. Likewise in a school there are certain value strategies that have to be implemented in order to "visualise" and prepare for certain situations, for example, evacuation practices. Ghandi was another such visionary leader who

took India to new heights based on his belief in his people and his strong values. Values have an impact on people as seen by the above mentioned heroes of their time simply because the notion of value is linked to courage, and courage is about risk taking and submitting oneself to a higher order as well as empowering others along the way. Values influence thinking and action in the organisation and ultimately the choice of the vision. Values affect vision in several ways and provide the context within which issues are identified and alternative goals evaluated. Therefore, values need to be accounted for when visionary leadership is enacted. Values shape an organisation's culture.

2.2.6 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MISSIONS, GOALS AND STRATEGIES IN SUPPORTING A VISION

Mission Statements

There are a few questions to answer when exploring the notion of a mission statement. Who does the organisation serve? What is its line of business? In this case we are researching schools and education practices. The Constitution of South Africa and the policy structures for education as laid down by law form the framework for any mission statement in schools. A mission states the purpose of the institution within the school community. By this I mean that a mission takes into account the purpose of the institutional goals in relation to the aspirations of the school community.

Goals

Goals respond to the needs of learners' diversity in an inclusive education system. The aim is to provide an excellent service where quality education is supported and encouraged. One has to ask questions such as: What the organisation provides, is it enriching? Is teaching and learning being experienced, in an holistic way? A goal of the organisation is to provide a safe and secure learning environment where parental support is necessary. Likewise, the organisational culture depicts a dedicated core staff upholding the standards of the profession. These goals are attainable outcomes desired by an organisation.

Strategies

Strategies are the structures that are going to be implemented in order to turn a vision into a reality. The structures to be implemented would be determined by a managerial plan called the SWOT analysis, needs analysis and plan of action with allocated time frames and people responsible for the implementation of the plan. The aim of developing strategies is to prevent teething problems and to help and support staff during the process of change. An example is the Revised National Curriculum Statement for Outcomes-based Education (OBE). A plan of action needs to be visualised and implemented in ways commensurate with the

processes of teaching and learning in the 21st century aligned with global trends in educational practice. The SMT and SGB need to support and encourage the vision for morale development. The staff will become more efficient as procedures unfold and a vision for lifelong learning is experienced through a guided direction into the future needs of our learners. My contention is that a vision cannot be implemented independently from a mission and the intended goals to be achieved by a school.

2.3 SUMMARY

Visionary leadership is an active curiosity where learning from experience, dreaming, enthusing others and making things happen are fulfilling aspirations of an effective leader. The “inner principal” and personal self-esteem is of vital importance in order to develop a relationship of belief in others and in preparing educators and learners to take up their role as leaders in society. The importance is to encourage colleagues to experiment with ideas as with the Revised National Curriculum Statement for OBE. Develop, talk, design, process and implement ideas relating to a learner-centered approach to lifelong learning. Show respect for others and, in turn, you will earn the respect as principal that you deserve. Stimulate colleagues and learners’ imagination and creativity. Allow for fantasy and futuristic ideas and encourage an interest in science fiction reading. As leader you need to show appreciation towards others and develop social practices and communication skills that enhance positive relationships creating a

school atmosphere depicting social justice. Share enthusiasm, get excited, help and develop ways for educators, learners, parents and all other stakeholders to engage in cognitive processing by means of developing critical analysis and communicative skills through problem-solving and decision-making techniques. Teach your leadership qualities to others and develop a progressive school for the future where there is a purpose for everyone in the institution because of their valued contribution. All the above seem to be qualities of a visionary leader who can mould an organisation that is decentralised and flexible.

CHAPTER THREE

AN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN SCHOOLS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Internationally and nationally, South Africa is considered a young democracy. Transformation is clearly coupled to democracy and reflects democratic values deeply embedded in human rights. The schooling of a learner is, therefore, the extension of primary education from the home where democratic principles and values are processed, taught and implemented with the outcome of developing a responsible, critical learner being responsive towards society. Against the backdrop of educational transformation the question arises: Can the notion of visionary leadership enact transformation in schools? I concur, for the reason that educational transformation is based on vision through national policy frameworks forming the blueprint for change in our country. The foundation for educational redress is embedded in democratic principles and the concepts that come to the fore are quality and equality as highlighted in our Constitution.

Visionary leadership and the enactment of educational transformation are strong forerunners for developing quality and equality in a democratic educational environment. A strong premise is that democracy forms the backbone of transformation and change in schools. However, transformation cannot take

place without insightful leadership and strong managerial principles, which form a vital and functional role in establishing the values of democracy by determining the future of the school according to redress and renewal. The establishment of a deep and sustainable democracy in South African schooling is essential for developing the balance between quality and equality to compete in a global arena (Steyn 2000). An integral part of educational transformation at schools has been the emphasis of improvement in quality and equality of the teaching and learning process, providing opportunities to level the playing fields for all schools by creating equal opportunities for all learners (Steyn 2000: 21-23). A noteworthy point by the DoE emphasises that the South African education system must be transformed, in other words, changed for the better (DoE 1997: 6-9). South Africa has made major transformational changes as part of a process of democratisation in areas of government, society, education and business institutions.

The birth of the TIRISANO ("Working together") project in July 1999 was an initiative by the Minister of Education to intervene in the crisis that education, determining quality education as the norm for transforming schools into equitable, multicultural learning environments. The transformative function of leadership is to commit to achieving access, equity and quality thereby redressing the injustices of the past (DoE 2000).

3.2 AN ANALYSES OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN SCHOOLS

Manno in his article entitled “The coming transformation of America’s schools”, 1998, states that: “New relationships among school, state and families are transforming the nation’s primary and secondary schools”. He mentions that American education is being reinvented because the governance, structures and power relationships of the past are being replaced. He further mentions that public authorities continue to set standards for educational performance, that being the underpinning criteria for South African education, focusing on the core elements of democracy, namely, quality in education and equality in access. Education according to the Oxford Dictionary is “the process of training people’s minds and abilities so that they acquire knowledge and develop skills”. Transformation defined is to “change the form or appearance or character of a person or thing”. In this case we are discussing educational transformation which, simplistically defined, is the changing of the appearance of the process of training people and in so doing emphasising a shift towards lifelong learning. In other words, educational transformation is a process in teaching and learning that has significantly changed to meet the demands of a democratic society in South Africa and globally, so that learners can contribute and function as fully-fledged worthy citizens of our country and be representative thereof in an international environment.

The fall of the apartheid-regime in 1994 has laid the foundation for establishing a democratic state in South Africa developing a unified system of education for all. This radical form of transformation required new legislation for the country and in particular for education. Thus, the magnitude of educational demand has resulted in renewed policy documents based on democratic theories, processes and, at school level, the implementation thereof. Schools have had to undergo major changes to meet policy documentation requirements for democratic schooling. These significant transformative changes have drastically changed the face of a unified system of education as opposed to the apartheid era based on racial discrimination. Education transformation has imposed greater responsibility on the shoulders of school leadership because democratic principles and structures such as the devolution of power, participatory management and decentralised school governance have required an intensive change in personal attitude and approach to organisational leadership. Visionary leadership to develop the necessary changes reflecting a democratically transformative, renewed approach and change within the leader, as well as the organisation, is a strong requirement for success. The various White Papers on Education have promulgated the necessity for change, requiring a transformative approach to teaching and learning. The OBE approach, ECD admission policy, school financing, norms and standards, whole school development, developmental appraisal system, inclusive education and the recent draft on religious policy in schools, school uniforms and such related matters directly link to the core concepts of quality and equality in education. These have been challenging issues to implement policy into action at

schools, as people are reluctant to change. The process of change requires astute and careful strategic planning by means of visionary leadership and solid managerial structures to prevent a chaotic situation. This only seems possible if all stakeholders are adequately prepared and have a changed attitude to handle the skills to meet the required changes.

By definition formal education is reflected in the teaching and learning process taking place at schools or institutions of learning guided by the SASA and policy documents such as those proposed by SAQA. SAQA is a system that focuses on excellence, accessible to all and promotes the development of young citizens who can contribute to building the country (Ramphela 2000). The mission of SAQA is to:

Ensure the development and implementation of a National Qualification Framework which contributes to the full development of each learner and to social and economic development of the nation at large (The National Qualifications Framework: An Overview 2000: 2).

The NQF is a framework that sets the boundaries by means of principles and guidelines, which provide a vision, a philosophical base and an organisational structure of a qualification system. Many countries worldwide are embarking on improved ways of educating their people and organising education and training systems to increase a competitive economic global environment. This framework

is an example of transformation in education where learners know that there is a clear learning pathway providing access to and mobility and progression within education, training and career pathing creating wider opportunities and an increased skills base, for a productive workforce. Ball (1996) describes the kind of learner profile suited to the 21st century as “flexible generalists”. By using the term “flexible generalists” he implies that multiple career changes are possible through personal development and a significant contribution to the life of our country and the world. Therefore, transformation in a young and new education and training system is able to support the notion of an adaptable workforce. The various levels of entry and exit including ABET are radical changes from the previous erosive education dispensation where only the elitist were allowed entry at various levels to education. The rest of the South African society was labeled skilled, unskilled or illiterate where no prior lifelong learning was recognised. Thus, transformation seems to be a progression and a restructure of permanent change to reflect the democratic rights of all South African citizens. The misleading perception that one-size fits all for public and private schools from macro level (national) to the micro level of classroom based education forms the crux of this research assignment based on social and cultural equality and quality where values and attitudes, form the basis for democratic structures permanent, educational change is regarded as an integral part of transformation in schools. In essence, visionary leadership directs an organisation by means of forecasting necessary changes which can possibly lead to restructuring the process to meet the challenges facing school communities. Visualising and analysing of

transformation educational needs at community level could influence the relevant renewal changes, to align the school as a social organism to assimilate new realities based on values of quality, diversity, tolerance, inclusivity, environmental sustainability and technological changes, allowing the establishment of activities grounded in improving schools and developing a democratic arena for quality benchmarking.

Visionary leadership serves as a sensitising exercise to initiate a shift of reality that lies beyond the present, grounded in principles of democracy where key concepts of equality and quality form the balancing acts within the context of educational transformation. Innovative visionary action with regard to democratic change is necessary in developing quality and standards in schools (Brand 2000: 80). Transformation is, however, a challenging experience and democracy is a fragile system which can only survive when there is a strong foundation entrenched in democratic values, directed by a focused vision for the school embracing the diversity of all stakeholders. Schools are social and divergent cultural structures and transformation is linked to democracy. Therefore, visionary leadership requires a balance of the two to reflect democratic values as framed by policy documents for educational transformation.

3.3 GLOBAL AND NATIONAL CAPITALIST IMPERATIVES

Transformation as part of a process of democratisation in South Africa has impacted heavily in many areas of governmental, societal, business and educational institutions. The post-apartheid process has been an ongoing reality especially in education where radical changes have been implemented to improve the quality of education to form an integral part of educational transformation. The realisation of benchmarking the South African educational system and school practice is connected to standards of internationally comparable and competitive education. According to Steyn (2000: 8),

Quality education is also a primary function of any sound democratic government. The country and nation as a whole could only benefit when quality is reality and not an undefined perception.

Steyn mentions that quality management refers to the actions, processes and structures necessary to ensure that the delivery of education is of the highest quality. He contends that a function of quality management is the responsibility of those in operational and managerial roles at whatever level as role-player in the school community. In the document "quality assurance for schools", the DoE iterates that the aim of quality management practices are "to produce outcomes that not only meet the needs of learners and parents but also meet nationally

determined standards that are comparable to international standards” (DoE 1999: 10).

There are certain societal issues that impact heavily on global and national imperatives, and that being the acceptance of all persons as dictated to in the Bill of Rights:

- Everyone is equal before the law and has the appropriate to equal protection and benefit of the law;
- Everyone has the appropriate to a basic education, including adult basic education;
- To further education, which the state must take reasonable measures to make progressively available and accessible; and
- Everyone has the appropriate to use the language and participate in the cultural life of his or her choice, but no one exercising these rights may do so in a manner inconsistent with any provision of the Bill of Rights (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996).

These social and cultural issues are enshrined and entrenched in our Constitution. It is clearly stated in the preamble that “South Africa belongs to all

citizens united in our diversity". The Constitution stresses that the foundation for a democratic and open society, in which government is based on the will of the people to "improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person building a united and democratic South Africa able to take its appropriate place as a sovereign state in the family of nations". This once again confirms that transformational changes taking place in education, based on the notion of the constitutional principles build a democratic transformative society commensurate with equitable and qualitative education practices. Equality and liberty should continuously ensure liberation and emancipation emphasising an equal basis for all ethnicities, cultures, groups and individuals as equals and prevent exclusion and marginalisation and so transcend and promote transformation.

A democratic discourse rejects the idea of a dominant culture imposed on diverse people. The ethnicity of groups creates a collage of cultures where plurality and difference provide rich diversity in a process of collective empowerment; reflecting on cultural experiences, beliefs and ideologies blended into a wealth of contributing knowledge within an organisation where dialogical action is treated with respect for each others' diversity. In other words, a scene can be set to communicate and live your differences and develop a new hybrid of interculturalism with other people living together in solidarity, different yet equal.

Economic issues are another driving force for an educated society through the process of lifelong learning by gaining access to greater knowledge, skills and

attitudes of people. The access to education has been determined by the Constitution and the SASA but the practicality thereof is not that easy when implemented in schools. All public schools offer equal access to schooling, but the quality and disparity of quality still exist between dysfunctional schools and highly functional schools. A clear indication of first world and third world structures, where the division and inequalities of the poor and the rich are still poles apart. The enormous financial outlay to create parity and equality is still in its infancy stage. The gap is so wide requiring an enormous amount of financial outlay from government, private sector and overseas funding to help bridge the gap created by the previous apartheid regime prior to 1994. Barriers such as poverty, unemployment, erosion of the ecosystem and the biodiversity exploitation, HIV/AIDS, crime and terrorism are realistic issues that face education at present and in the future. These social issues are economically driven by a lack of adequate funding and facilities to meet the needs of people in South Africa. All the more reason why we need to transform the thinking of our society by means of educating people and uplifting their well being to become self-sufficient and educated.

Technological issues are moving at such a rapid pace that schools need to become technologically aware of the vast amount of knowledge, constant changes and greater scientific discoveries taking place globally and constantly changing. Can schools transform and change at the pace of global economic and technological advancement to stay abreast with post-modern and futuristic

knowledge and education required of and by learners? Michael Johnson and Richard Schwab (1999) in their Internet article mention that there is a national rush to increase computer technology and networking in schools which is having a growing impact on education and the teaching profession. Publishers are increasing their curriculum offerings in electronic digital form via CD-ROM, computer networks, and the Internet. They continue to add that teachers are facing the dilemma of not knowing how to use and effectively incorporate these information tools into their teaching practice. The disparity between learner information and teacher information is presenting itself as an inadequacy of knowledge and skills on the part of educators. Their conclusive research mentions that the real benefit of educational technology will be an institutional transformation to a more student-centered and learning-focused educational process. This, once again, brings the focus back to the economic issues of setting up such technological institutions. Will this provide equal access of world knowledge to all learners from urban to rural environments, or create an even greater threat to equality and equity? I think so, since the challenges to overcome these problems require transformative thinking and visionary leadership to direct and develop a future focus of where schools are heading for in the 21st century and how quality and equality can be achieved.

3.4 A CONSTITUTIVE MEANING OF EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

Democratic transformation creates the backdrop for visionary leadership and it is, therefore, essential to explore this concept. Democracy is a buzzword worldwide where most countries are declaring themselves in favour of democracy in a post-modern era. However, is democracy that obvious in the real world or maybe misused globally? In the South African education arena there is a clear indication that the word democracy has different meanings for different influences and in particular when it comes to ruling parties trying to stamp their approval of a specific ideology on all its citizens. The struggle for power by a majority empowered government has made its mark in South Africa under the auspicious of democracy where forms of dominance are evident in order to equate the social injustices of apartheid. "Democracy is a fragile system and can only survive where democratic values are deeply entrenched" (O'Connell in Steyn 2000: 21). According to Steyn *et al*, (1999) the following values are important in education for creating a democratic society: Freedom, equality, communication, respect for others, sensitivity towards others, empathy, adaptability, openness, honesty, team work, unselfishness, loyalty, self-realization, critical thinking, responsibility, self-discipline, recognition of human dignity, individuality, self-respect, firmness, independence, co-operation, tolerance, integrity, trust, consideration and kindness. De Klerk (2000: 39) states the following:

Schools ought to reflect the democratic values of society. Schools therefore have to be purged of practices that contradict the democratic values of society. On the other hand, moral education is essential for the survival of democracy. Changing our schools also implies changing our teacher training programmes. Only then will we be involved in substantial, long-term changes in education.

There are two different kinds of democracy deeply rooted in South Africa namely liberal and social democracy. A clarification of liberal democracy is rooted in liberalism evolved from individualism while social democracy has evolved from socialism based on equality, communality and centralisation. Liberal democracy is characterised by decentralisation, individual competition and personal freedom (Steyn 1999: 5-7). Therefore, liberal democracy and quality education go hand in hand based on the rights and freedom of individuals to participate and achieve qualitative outcomes. Social democracy has its ideological focus on equality in education. I contend that the clustering of quality and equality are the supporting core concepts in education in developing a democratic society. However, it is evident in schools at present that there exists a tension between the concepts and the relationship between quality and equality. This tension is most evident in highly functional schools and dysfunctional schools based on social, cultural, economic and technological issues.

The leadership initiative in transforming education in South Africa plays a pivotal role in removing inequalities in access and resources, democratising education and improve the quality of education. The many policy documents and formal changes as highlighted throughout this chapter namely the Constitution, Bill of Rights, NEPA, SASA, EEA, ELRC, NQF, OBE (RNCS), and the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education is evident of the seriousness of the law to transform education. These policies emphasise and confirm the removal of inequalities of access to better education irrespective of race, gender, language, religion or culture. The impact on schools will be determined by the role educational leaders play in the visioning for the future of education and the education system. The contextualisation of transformative change will depend on the implementation at school level to focus on the democratic changes necessary to establish a democratic society. A responsible and accountable task for the visionary leader is in creating change within a democratic school environment.

The point about democracy and democratisation of education is that the latter ought to inform the process of educational transformation in schools. This makes democracy a constitutive meaning of educational transformation, that is, educational transformation cannot occur in schools without democratic practice and its concomitant values.

At this point I think it is pertinent to address the various leadership styles of school principal based on a constitutive meaning of educational transformation,

that is, democracy. A democratic leader will involve employees in collaborative, participatory decision-making, delegating authority and encouraging communicative feedback and would foster decentralisation in the process of educational transformation. The transformational leader according to Tichy and Devanna (1990: 5-6) "need to change and develop structures where organisational struggle is taking place". A transformational leader recognises the need for revitalisation and the challenges the leader encounters when attempting to alert the organisation to growing threats from the environment. Creating a new vision and refocusing the organisation's attention to meet future and global educational developments are central to democratic educational transformation. The institutionalising changes where the leader seeks to transform the school in order to become a democratic institution based on a post-modern approach to education are necessary. A transformational leader sees the distinctive need for change driven by the laws and policies of a new educational dispensation for South Africa and so makes the necessary managerial changes by means of structures, activities, deadlines and creating responsibilities towards a renewed action plan for the implementation of democratic transformation.

The visionary leader has greater latitude and a deeper understanding of educational policy, aware of the issues of social, cultural, economic and technological developments and other challenges facing education. This leader visualises a future for the school based on global intentions and the empowerment of people to develop their potential to contribute towards

knowledge and skills which can result in a transformed school environment embracing all stakeholders and extending the educational well being of the school radiating into the community. Social justice and human dignity are values for the school to become a quality democratic institution. A visionary is one who takes risks, is passionate and believes in the decision-making he/she articulates to all stakeholders.

A visionary leader inspires others together with the triad of self-confidence, self-awareness and empathy attuned to the transparent values shared by the people they lead. The competence of transparency is crucial because it means the removal of boundaries, barriers or smokescreens within the organisation. I, therefore, contend that the more people are exposed to and involved with the constitutive meaning of education transformation, the greater and deeper will be the understanding and contextual contribution towards educational transformation in schools.

3.5 EXAMINING THE ELEMENTS OF CONNECTEDNESS BETWEEN VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION IN SCHOOLS

What comes to the fore most strongly connecting visionary leadership and educational transformation is the importance and high value placed on the people in the organisation, as well as the external network of contributing

stakeholders. The elements that will be highlighted are change, quality, equality, knowledge, empowerment, collaboration, social justice, respect, passion, freedom, liberty, people power and relationships. Social justice is a strong element whereby the inclusion of all stakeholders is imperative to developing a transformative educational landscape. Visionary leadership offers guidance in a way that gives people a visual picture, sense of clarity and direction in their work encouraging flexibility and freedom to use their initiative. This develops latitude in the organisation based on the core democratic concept of equality of all stakeholders. It is evident that employees who feel upbeat will go the extra mile to please and in so doing will improve their attitude and the bottom line of quality service to the institution. Quality in education being the other core concept of democratisation in schools in relation to visionary leadership directing, guiding, coaching and supporting staff, parents and learners will enhance the school situation creating opportunities for personal initiative in a divergent comfortable environment (Goleman *et al.* 2003). The visionary leader needs to be attuned to people's feelings moving them in a positive direction where sound personal and organisational values can be shared by means of articulating the vision, inspiring people and creating enthusiasm and energy in the school. Participatory transformation will reflect greater role-player accountability, responsibility and commitment to the school if people feel empowered. A visionary leader has a democratic responsibility towards staff, parents and learners by uplifting, empowering and directing them by means of educating, expanding their knowledge skills and attitudes aligned with the vision. Change has to be lead by

someone but not in an autocratic way where power is invested in one person. Rather, power sharing through greater participatory management skills and contributions from all role-players should be encouraged. This will develop greater collaboration. What is important, however, is the management style and relationship of the leader and the ability to persuade, collaborate, build a rapport, find common ground and handle conflict situations amicably to empower people; a situation whereby appreciation and respect for human dignity and liberation of thought is encouraged. Such a transformative environment seems to be linked to the Habermasian theory emphasising participation, liberation and emancipation of people in developing growth within the institution.

Visionary leadership has a positive impact on people and works well in many situations, but it is particularly effective when a school goes adrift and needs a turnaround or is in dire need of a refreshing vision. The visionary mode comes naturally to educational transformation, as it requires radical change for the organisation. However, a leader who misreads people and has a dogmatic approach to the visioning concept will create a breeding ground for poor performance. Developing equality of collaboration among staff, parents and learners is so important as a wealth of knowledge can be gained, creating attitudinal changes as well as enhancing positive relationships. Networking with people will expand the horizon to understand cultural difference and so fine tune the vision in line with the democratic principles of the school. A democratic approach works best when a leader negotiates, deliberates and consults with

stakeholders in the decision-making future concerning quality, equity, growth, development and success for the organisation. The importance of teamwork, collaboration, influence and conflict management is essential elements reflecting transformation involving the school community.

The devolution of decision-making powers at school level is another educational transformative element of visioning crucial for the community to exercise its rights as citizens and in particular making a valued contribution at school level. A proactive approach as opposed to a reactive approach, whereby removing inequalities in access and resources, democratizing education and providing quality of education in schools based on decentralization has major implications for the position of educational leaders. For instance, a positive relationship between the SGB and the principal would benefit the process of participatory problem-solving, and the enhancement of quality education. The democratic discourse offers spaces for equality, liberty, plurality, difference, dialogism, solidarity and power dispelling dominant minority groups, promoting different social groups developing their own culture and identify in a process of collective empowerment within the greater society (Pendlebury 1998).

3.6 SUMMARY

In conclusion the critical connection and significance of educational transformation and visionary leadership is the distinctive driving force for change

in schools. Strong visionary leadership has the ability to democratically transform education structures at schools. The empirical inquiry in the following chapter will determine democratic outcomes of educational transformation taking place or not at selective schools in East London area.

The notion of educational change has strong connective elements between visionary leadership and transformation as it takes a visionary to understand and realize the necessity for change and transform the school within the democratic context of decision-making at a decentralised level of governance. The core democratic concepts forming the backbone of change are equality in access and quality of education as national imperatives determining the depth of democratisation and educational transformation in school practices, resonating throughout the school community. In essence, equality and quality form the pillars for visionary leadership and will determine the success or ineffectiveness of a school in the 21st century based on the policy frameworks for developing as an educated democratic society.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is based on an empirical approach focusing on the interrelatedness between visionary leadership and educational transformation taking place at six different schools in East London. The critical issue and aim of this study is to understand how educational leaders are managing to deal with educational transformation within their school communities.

The sampling strategy applied was interviewing six principals at vastly different schools in the East London area. The selection made included principals from primary schools (Grade 0 to Grade 7) as well as high school principals (Grade 8 to 12). All six schools are demographically and culturally divergent. The latitude of this empirical study extends from semi-rural to urban school communities. All the educational leaders referred to, as school principals were males. The size of the schools ranged from 650 to 1660 learners considered as medium to large schools. Three of the principals are nearing retirement within the next year or two whereas the other three principals at present have between two to eight years of experience as principals of their schools.

The school communities are vastly different adding to the richness of this empirical study. The interviewing method applied was setting up interview dates that were convenient for both the interviewer and interviewee. The interview setting was structured, as I had presented the questions to the six principals in advance so that they could prepare themselves for the interview. An informal/semi-formal approach was applied. The intention was to stimulate the thought processing of the principal based on the Habermas theory of emancipatory thought and critical inquiry, re-affirming the personal and professional role of the school head.

4.2 IMPLICATIONS OF VISIONARY LEADERSHIP FOR EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

It is quite evident that through this empirical methodology there is an entanglement that binds visionary leadership to educational transformation. This was confirmed by all six principals who agreed that change, redress and restructuring of schools cannot take place if there is no vision driven by the leader, spilling over onto the staff. The historical baggage of South Africa has laid heavily on the hearts of school principals quite evident during the interviewing session where constant reference was made to the past and present educational dispensation. The comparison of the past apartheid regime and the present democratic government was highlighted where uncertainty and insecurity in the overload of change in the new dispensation is resulting in confusion at interface

level. The implication and driving force behind educational transformation at schools has required a strong presence for visioning and visionary leadership to guide the school through the process of change and redress. The Constitution, SASA and numerous policy documents are intended to form the backbone to support leadership in schools.

On the contrary, the national frameworks have rocked the boat at schools, a feeling of turbulence and seasickness particularly amongst the principals nearing retirement whereas the younger principals are unsettled by the lack of departmental co-operation and support. One of the younger principals interviewed sees little future in education due to the failure of national and provincial bodies in their service delivery commitment to schools. Educational transformation according to the SASA is to eradicate the injustices of the past where equality and quality in education are practiced. The essence of this assignment is to validate that educational transformation requires leadership which is futuristic and progressive taking the school to the next level of excellence redressing and developing the democratic principles of equality and quality in education based on personal values and human dignity for all. Any form of redress requires a visioning for the future based on personal and professional change and structured accordingly to prevent chaos.

All six principals confirmed their belief in the notion of visionary leadership for their schools. They also re-affirmed that the new education dispensation requires

visionary leadership as a notion for educational transformation to become effective in schools.

4.3 CASE STUDY: HOW DO SCHOOL LEADERS AT SIX DIFFERENT SCHOOLS VIEW VISIONARY LEADERSHIP? DATA COLLECTION AND QUESTIONS

The potential contribution of this assignment lies in the variety of schools selected and the difference in approach by the six leaders of their respective schools. Strong emphasis was laid on the school community where each school presented itself in a unique way encapsulated on arrival at the school. The diversity and dynamics within each institution could be felt. All six principals were most accommodating and took an interest in what they termed “a new approach to leadership”. They also welcomed the insight and references to leadership that was shared with them and the response being that of “someone has arrived to help us lead our schools effectively”. Which was not the case. I critically analysed this statement and grappled with the premise that educational leaders lack “transformational leadership skills” as a notion to develop effective change at their schools to reflect the progression of the 21st century.

There were agreements on certain questions but different approaches to effective educational leadership based on the school and the infrastructures of the particular community and their specific needs as an educational institution.

4.3.1 WHAT IN YOUR OPINION IS A VISIONARY LEADER?

Principal 1: A person loyal to the school, who envisions developing a top school, creating keen parents and visioning and developing a model school.

Principal 2: Someone imaging the future but negative influences impact on your vision.

Principal 3: Leadership with good vision, not for self, placing the people of the area before self.

Principal 4: A principal who looks ahead and positions the school aware of what is happening such as changes taking place in education.

Principal 5: Visionary leadership requires global visioning. Empowering staff. Giving away the leadership to staff to prove their leadership ability. Easier to lead a big staff because there is a leader at every level and weaknesses are overshadowed by the strengths of the majority.

Principal 6: A person adaptable to situations and change, a flexible person but being firm if necessary.

4.3.2 WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACING VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AT YOUR SCHOOL?

Principal 1: Local economic problems – poverty of parents. Vandalism and lack of security provided by the education department. The school intervened in a

positive way and is using the community to guard the school, creating jobs. 1660 learners at present attend the school whereas it was built for 1200.

Principal 2: Department of Education's lack of commitment, such as the non-payment of teachers. The expectation by the DoE whereby schools are paying for general maintenance and upkeep, as well as causing a financial drain on the finances. Monies spent on teacher salary payment and maintenance should be used to build a hall, upgrade the library but the school is covering the department's responsibilities at school expense. This principal feels strongly that the rights of the learner have been violated. The democratic appropriate to resources such as an environment conducive to teaching and learning, clean toilets and adequate resources. The rights of schools to auxiliary and support staff, which is the responsibility of the DoE, budgeted for and allocated to schools. These pertinent issues have all landed in the laps of school communities and become the responsibilities of schools.

Principal 3: Not enough accommodation because only 7 classes are in a satisfactory condition. 2002 floods destroyed 4 classes. Overcrowding, i.e. 95 Grade 2's in a classroom suited to a maximum of 35 learners. Lack of finances, as school fees are only R50.00 per year. The humanitarian approach towards the community is important and this principal, considers as a way visioning to get the parents on the side of the school and see each other as support systems within the community.

Principal 4: Redeployment – lack of clear, defined information from the DoE. Lack of delivery from the department and the support structures are not there.

OBE is a new curriculum approach but there was a lack of training for teachers. This principal believes that the vision requires self-sufficiency as a notion of retaining standards and quality of education.

Principal 5: Inability to advertise posts, post provisioning and staff establishments seem to be a huge problem. This principal mentions the cost involved in school maintenance. The forcing of OBE on schools. The demands by the parents. The negative impact of redeployment which took away staff allocation to various positions at the school.

Principal 6: Staff ignorance – educators are not capacitated enough and a feeling of skepticism about education and teaching exists. The dropping of standards because of the migration of top learners to ex-Model C schools. Lack of departmental resources such as the totally unequipped library and science laboratory. This being a school built in 1998 and only occupied in 2001. An ultra-modern school with inadequate resources. Staff provisioning was obtained from the redeployment list. Parental illiteracy and level of understanding pose a huge problem causing a vacuum between the school requirements and requests and the level of literacy of the parents within the community.

4.3.3 HOW BENEFICIAL CAN VISIONARY LEADERSHIP BE IN DEVELOPING ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURES WITHIN THE SCHOOL?

Principal 1: Organisational structures are necessary such as roles, functions and responsibilities of Deputy Heads and Heads of Departments as the managers of

the school. The lack of parental involvement and support DoE's do not help to boost the organisational structures and as a result there is a breakdown between the school and the home.

Principal 2: This principal made a comparison between the old and new educational dispensation. The old system defined the role of the leader and the leader could reach his/her vision. People were also dedicated and committed. The new dispensation has dampened the enthusiasm and morale of teachers due to a lack of resources, which is the responsibility of the education department. During the old dispensation there were regular bulletins and posts were advertised and the department paid substitutes. Not so today. Legal reasons are used for poor service delivery.

Principal 3: Organisational structures involved with the SMT – the principal acknowledges that it is not ideal for the school but has given the Deputy Head greater responsibility to create structures within the school. As a visionary leader the principal learns to read teachers and how they think and use staff expertise according to their abilities. Organisational structures are used to build and develop the school holistically. Organisational structures help to motivate staff and develop commitment. This principal believes in promoting staff, give them an opportunity to take the lead and organise.

Principal 4: There is a visionary leadership system amongst staff and staff is committed to the responsibility. There are vertical and horizontal heads with defined organisational structures in the school according to the role and function of the educator in the schools organogram. There are different heads and

subdivisions of responsibilities e.g. learning areas, timetabling, and student counselling. Using the SGB number of portfolios as well as the PTA, parent organisations are all organisational structures working within the best interest of the school. The National Education Policy Act is an organisational structure imposed on schools but so much change has resulted in information overload.

Principal 5: Organisational structures have always been in place at the school and reference has been given to the roles, functions and responsibilities of the Head, Deputy Head, Head of Department, Grade Heads, and Learning Area Heads. This principal believes in finding the talent on the staff and developing it within the organisational structures. Through organisational structures the leader can also anticipate and foresee problematic situations arising and defuse such issues.

Principal 6: The importance of the principal's involvement with the organisational structures of the school as a need to empower the SMT. This principal feels that the schools organisational structures are interrupted at district level because of constant training of principals and staff. A suggestion was to use school holidays for training and not interrupt the structures set up within a school so that it can function effectively and efficiently.

4.3.4 WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS AN EFFECTIVE APPROACH TOWARDS LEADERSHIP?

Principal 1: This principal mentioned that this is a personal question, but asserts being a very charismatic leader is important. An effective approach towards leadership is developing the participation of as many staff members in the school organisation as possible. In other words, staff involvement is necessary.

Principal 2: Principals' personal drive and commitment to the school – the principal has a big influence over people and sees changing the mindset of teachers, parents and learners.

Principal 3: This principal feels that a normal tone, openness and always having a smile, treating people with respect and appreciation. This principal states that being “honest with your heart” is important as well as making staff feel at home, pay them complements and praise them, showing your appreciation and gratitude.

Principal 4: Know where you are going with your school – effective leadership approach is all about dealing with people, designing and selling your structures and making them work. Staff development is essential and so staff leadership and initiative emerges establishing structures in various areas of the school. The essential need for the principal to listen carefully to what staff members are saying.

Principal 5: Entice staff and intellectually uplift staff – this principal feels that the move from an autocratic to a democratic leader has had a profound effect, empowering staff to think positively.

Principal 6: Allow people a level of trust – this he further explains as the trust between the education department and the principal allowing the principal to have the ability to take stock and be innovative and not have everything sanctioned by the department. The DoE must believe that the principal has the ability to run his or her school in an effective way. Greater principal autonomy is needed.

4.3.5 WHAT TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGES HAVE BEEN MADE AT YOUR SCHOOL SINCE 1994?

Principal 1: Redeployment – the school lost teachers and it caused great changes in the school not imposed by the school but from the department of education because the department implemented redeployment. The number of learners has remained the same, i.e. 1660 learners but the number of staff was down sized from 70 to 54 of which 2 of the 54 are paid by the school due to the lack of salary commitment by the education department.

Principal 2: Affected by redeployment – as there were 43 staff, but now 34 for a total of 1 284 learners. The art room, library and handwork classes have been transformed into classrooms to accommodate the learners. The school has

become self reliant, without departmental assistance, that is, own maintenance from school fees.

Principal 3: Initiated sport – attitudinal change of staff seems to be more positive. Developed a relationship with neighbouring schools whereas before there were barriers between schools. A Grade R class has also been registered.

Principal 4: Development of multi-cultural education – a vision to appoint the first multi-cultural staff member as a Mathematics educator in 1994, was part of the principal's vision for the future of education at the school. There are greater racial issues as part of transformation. The recruiting of good teachers to reflect the school community has been through creating SGB teaching posts where appointments have been made by the SGB.

Principal 5: Entice staff – keeping abreast and ahead through visioning where change is taking place. The vision of this school is to “be big” and to make a difference to entice a particular learner group to the school by means of varied facilities, extended aftercare development, intense interest in school readiness . Being as progressive as possible.

Principal 6: This school was built in 1998 by the Nelson Mandela's Presidential Fund and occupation took place in 2001. Staff was deployed to the school from the secondary section of the school next door and the completed complement from the redeployment list, as there was a need for a high school in the area. There are at present 651 learners and 17 educators. Redeployment was a major failure causing a problematic staff that is resistant to change because of the

redeployment process, therefore, not embracing the educational ethos of the school.

4.3.6 IS VISIONARY LEADERSHIP ESSENTIAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL?

Principal 1: A person cannot just plod on but needs vision otherwise there would be stunted personal and professional growth. Vision building is important where guidance is given to staff. A strong disapproval of the constant nit picks from the district education department officials in the new dispensation.

Principal 2: Absolutely, because visionary leadership guides you to know where you are heading and so prepare accordingly. This principal's comment was that finances is always a problem and the lack of the support from the department blurs the vision and good intention of the development for the school

Principal 3: Yes, difficult to be a leader because you must change to develop the vision you have for the school. The change required at this school is to see all staff attending classes and the need for more classrooms, as the latter is the DoE responsibility to quality of education, equality and democratic principles.

Principal 4: Yes, because a visionary leader projects and foresees a future for the school.

Principal 5: Visionary leadership is about the leader thinking "big". A leader needs to be practical and staff must experience leadership for themselves. You need to develop your success by seeing your success. If unsuccessful, then the

leader must accept and suffer the consequences. The principal must have confidence to “go into a classroom and the learners will judge” your leadership qualities, abilities and acceptance.

Principal 6: Yes, definitely no organisation can function without a visionary leader. Such visioning was the introduction of commerce to the school. However this principal cannot see a future for himself in education. He is turning his interest to a corporate business direction where he feels that defined structures and professionalism would suit him better.

4.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THIS STUDY FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This case study substantiates the notion that educational transformation requires visionary leadership as revealed through the interviews. Each principal shared their expertise of personal experience, commitment, emotional intelligence and the empowering ability required to lead schools into the 21st Century. The down side reflected through these interviews is the lack of financial and resource support on behalf of the DoE. The lack of parental support are concerns of four out of the six school interviewed.

Two principals felt that greater freedom was given to appoint staff where the school community has taken on the responsibility of selecting the best staff to meet the needs of the school. Vandalism posed a huge problem at four of the schools, whereas the other two schools have high-powered security systems and

sound building and maintenance financing to avoid vandalism and destruction to the school.

Too many educational changes and policy overload is felt. Lack of social transformation and isolation of schools is quite evident throughout this study. The injustices of the past have not eradicated itself and both quality and equality in education is not democratically visible in schools on an equal footing. Environmental structures are totally different and the different school communities are so alienated from each other. The notion of disparity poses the question for future research as I critically question the long-term vision that principals have for their schools. A concerted effort on behalf of the educational department to assist previously disadvantaged schools has reached boiling point. What emerges from this empirical inquiry is that democratic schooling embodies both nuances of democratic principles and visionary leadership. It is with such an understanding of educational transformation in mind that I initially questioned the visioning of principals for their schools. The instances of critical inquiry in the form of interviews identified a crucial weakness to the understanding of the constitutive meaning of transformation and the unpreparedness of leaders at schools to re-create and form new visions for their schools to encapsulate the challenges within their schools.

The wealthy schools are marginally aware of the democratic changes in schools, but financially have augmented those problems, creating a bigger gap in the

system because of their autonomy of self-sufficiency. The socio-economic injustices were so conspicuous at the six schools I visited. This imbalance is based on the Freireian theory of the suppression of deep-rooted inequalities, which persist to surface at schools. In defence, the school leaders are all leading their schools as best they can but the quality of education does not reflect the democratic principles of transformation and redress adequately.

A critical judgement lies in the inadequate leadership training that the principals so desperately need in areas of policy framework, managerial skills, organisational skills, human resource development and interpersonal skills development. There appears to be big gaps and spaces of transformation in all six schools. The less affluent schools being totally dependent on the educational department to play its role in providing the schools with adequate facilities and needs in order to become fully functional schools attempting to take the school to the next level of excellence. All six principals strongly voiced their opinions about the lack of support from DoE and felt that it is the failure at schools. School leaders are frustrated by the demands made on schools where policy documents are laying down the law but not supporting the rights of the learner to quality education and equality to access. There is no coherence between the DoE and the schools. Critical evidence reveals that there is a lack of leadership and management organisation at national and provincial level, which has resulted in endless frustration for school principals.

All six the principals acknowledged that visionary leadership is essential for the progression of the school. Each principal took on a personal “the inner principal” approach based on personal philosophies and sound values for their school. Each focused differently on the visionary needs of their particular school and school community. Principal 1 and 2 highlighted the impact of the community and the lack of departmental support to sustain the schools. Principal 3 had a far more humanistic approach towards the understanding of social transformation amongst learners, staff and the parent community. Principal 4 emphasised the empowerment of staff and the necessity of structure in order for schools to function effectively with the strong support of the parent community. Principal 5 believes in a democratic approach where elevating staff to prove their leadership ability was necessary to develop their personal expertise. This principal emphasised the impact of global standards on education and the progressiveness of the school to either be abreast or ahead of times. This principal clearly depicts the image of a futuristic visionary leader. Principal 6 was strongly sensitive to the breakdown in the DoE support to schools and the lack of professionalism on behalf of the education department. A young principal who sees the demise of education and feels that education holds no future for him when faced with so much adversity. This principal believes that a structured corporate world is best suited to him.

The characteristics that these leaders displayed are all typical Habermasism based because they are self-reflective and personal as well as developing

emancipatory thinking amongst the staff. Allowing visionary leadership through staff empowerment to be fostered at their schools seems to be a major objective for principals. These principals clearly indicated that the appropriate vision for the appropriate context is essential. All the interviewees strongly agreed with sound organisational structures and strategies in supporting the vision. The importance that the appropriate vision matters must be a shared belief from a macro level through to every learner.

The principals were dissatisfied with the lack of visioning at macro and meso level thus clouding the vision at school level, and hampering the success of quality education. It is evident that the relationship between the principal and staff is crucial in the success of achieving the vision at the school. This was evident by the atmosphere created when entering the school. Principal 4 emphasised that quality management is necessary in a school to ensure that the delivery of education is of the highest standard. Emphasising that quality management is the responsibility of those in operational and managerial roles as role-players in the school and the parent community.

Economic issues were emphasised by all principals as the demise of the education system due to the lack of service delivery, post provisioning, resources and maintenance of school buildings as barriers to developing excellence in schools. Democratic changes reflecting cultural diversity was evident at two of

the schools whereas the other four schools did not reflect the rich diversity of cultures as reflective of a rainbow nation.

The pressure from national level has left a bitter taste in the mouths of principals as the demands to meet the democratic requirements as embodied in the SASA is not forthcoming from the very people involved with policy. The implementation thereof is far removed from the realities and expectations of the policy frameworks. District officials are incompetent and inefficient. A need for sound leadership and management structures are essential within the provinces to develop equality and quality of education that is required at school based level.

It appears that socio-economic injustices are plainly visible in the six schools visited as they are all operating as islands not reflective of a unified education system. Standards and values are not measurable and, therefore, each school is functioning within its own nucleus or perception of what quality and equality is definitely not fully reflective of a new democratic society in South African schools as yet.

The strong influence of political pressure is definitely felt by all the principals. The overcrowding of schools and the racial tensions experienced at schools are constraints placed on educational leaders by government and policy documents, but realistically being totally impractical due to the lack of space in schools.

Economic pressures and financial constraints to maintain schools was a major concern expressed by all six principals. The technological and technocratic developments were also issues of concern and Principal 2 felt the financial pressure of running photostat machines, risographs, computers, printers, etc places a drain on the school coffers.

The societal challenges facing schools was another constraint as parents of four of the six schools could not afford to pay the basic fee. The lack of parental co-operation was strongly felt by five of the six interviewees. The sixth school felt that the parents made demands and so upheld the ethos of quality of education for its community. The unemployment of the school community has created severe problems at two of the schools, less strongly felt by two other schools, whereas the other two schools tried to retain and uphold standards set within the school but at a price. Vandalism at four of the six schools had become a huge issue.

4.5 SUMMARY

None of the principals mentioned any racial issues or elaborated on futuristic technological advancements taking place at their schools. They all referred to the school community that reflected the success or demise of the school. The new dispensation has created semi-privatisation in some schools; others impoverished and lack financial assistance to meet basic resources necessary to

function adequately on a daily basis. All the principals mentioned that schools are dependent on the education department to support them especially concerning staff establishment, provisioning and salary payments. All interviewees felt that the department had failed in its delivery of service, thus hampering the progression of schools towards adequate transformation. Good staff was lost due to redeployment imposed by the DoE on schools.

There are vast democratic disparities in schools due to a lack of financing. Underprivileged schools are based in squatter settlement areas, creating problems, illiteracy and poverty as opposed to an affluent urban school totally supported by the parents with more than adequate facilities to boost its successes. This research reflects the total diversity of the six schools visited, which are worlds apart, yet we serve under a single education system. Each principal had a different visionary leadership perspective and no school focused on the same needs.

Critically analysing the situation, it is evident that restructuring and transformation is a continuous process. The restructuring through redeployment failed as it focused on downsizing of staff but has led to an over-crowding of learners. A future without visionary leadership does not seem to be democratically uplifting as quality of education cannot be sustained under such circumstances. Therefore, the acceleration of the delivery of services in accordance with the principles of democracy as espoused in the Constitution would be beneficial to all

schools. Schools need to feel a sense of security where a post-provisioning model is structured and permanent placement of educators into vacancies can be made.

The visionary future of education looks bleak in schools in the Eastern Cape and principals are not motivated by the insensitivity of government structures because they simply cannot be implemented practically. However addressing democratic principles of social justices, non-racism, non-sexism have changed in schools to a small degree. The quality and equality of standards are questionable which hamper the visioning for principals. The international pressure is a concern as schools should be preparing learners for lifelong learning in a global arena based on global standards.

Growth and development in the new dispensation is evident through the redress, restructuring and transformation as formulated by policy documents and frameworks. The OBE curriculum, ECD provision, skills development and teacher upgrading, improving educational access are reflective of democratic changes in the educational system.

Transformation is a continuous process. Basing the curriculum and education system on global standards supporting the economic viability of the school community and promoting equity redress and quality of education in schools are essential. Adequate training for leaders and school managers at all levels, i.e.

macro, meso and micro levels are required. Negotiations, developing and implementing workable policy documents through constant monitoring and evaluation are needed. Developing the capacity of women to lead schools is lacking in this research, as all the interviewees were males.

Regarding the further development of visionary leadership to enable principals to implement education policy, greater initiative on the part of leaders, managers, staff and the school community is necessary for educational transformation to become democratically effective in our schools. In essence, educational transformation has a two-folded goal of enhancing the individual, as well as the school community and these two entities embrace the ultimate visioning for creating an effective democratic school environment.

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