

# Capacity Building and School Management Development: A study of principles and practices of selected Norwegian and South African schools.

## Chapter 1

### 1.1 Introduction

“At every level of management, across the spectrum of our institutions, whether government, business, education, armed forces, or the church, we need a rediscovery of the value of the individual imagination and rekindling of that passion for human purpose which is the authentic light of leadership. To manage is to lead, and to lead others requires that one enlists the emotions of others to share a vision of their own. If that is not an art, then nothing is”, (Bolman & Deal, 1994:77).

The smooth and effective functioning of any organization is dependent essentially upon those responsible for managing it. The kind of leadership and guidance provided by those who are in charge, in the ultimate analysis, determines the effectiveness of that organization.

Schools, says Hansen (1985:1), are perhaps the most complex of all our social institutions. He attempts to justify this statement by making two assertions. Firstly, like other formal organizations, the school must deal with the task of structuring, administering and giving direction to a complex mix of human and material resources. Secondly, unlike most other formal organizations, the school's output is a human product that gives rise to unique problems of management. The body charged with these responsibilities is the school management team comprising of the principal, deputy principal and head of departments.

A distinct relationship is observed between a healthy climate in an organization and the team spirit that prevails. There exists a positive correlation between morale and performance of personnel.

Key factors determining high group morale are effective leadership, a predominantly democratic leadership style and competent management, (Grouden & Dayaram, 1990:310).

## **1.2 Orientation**

This study will be mainly focussed on Capacity Building and its connection with Leadership Development as well as School Management Development. This research will also be a study of principles and practices of some schools in Norway and South Africa. This study will focus on different leadership styles, problems that may occur in the management structures and capacity building. It will look at what has been done, what still needs to be done and whether there is a need, or more than one need, that School Management feels it needs to address. It will also focus on how to solve the problems that may occur.

## **1.3 Problem statement**

The problem of this research will focus on the following questions:

- i) What are the most important leadership skills?
- ii) What are the most important components of Capacity Building?
- iii) What are the most important problem areas in School Management?
- iv) How does South African and Norwegian primary schools compare on Leadership and Capacity Building?

## **1.4 Aims and objectives**

With this study in question I aim:

- 1.4.1 To explore/probe/investigate the underlying skills for effective leadership in South African and Norwegian primary schools.
- 1.4.2 To explore/probe/investigate Capacity Building in South African and Norwegian primary schools.
- 1.4.3 To identify the most important problem areas in School Management in South African and Norwegian primary schools.
- 1.4.4 To compare (point out differences and similarities) South African and Norwegian primary schools on Leadership and Capacity Building.

## **1.5 Research methods**

The researcher has utilized the following research methods:

- Literature survey: implemented to support aims 1.4.1 and 1.4.2.  
The literature survey is of a descriptive nature and describes what Education Leadership is. The suitable components of Capacity Building are addressed by means of the literature survey. The literature survey includes books, journals, research reports and research articles.
- Qualitative research: implemented to support aims 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3 and 1.4.4.

This form of research deals with descriptions of the schools, the people and situations. Qualitative research can be described as a spiraling,

circular movement between theory, suppositions and data throughout the entire fieldwork.

- Personal interviews have been implemented to support aims 1.4.1, 1.4.2, 1.4.3 and 1.4.4. Selected primary school principals were interviewed. These interviews were formal and structured, because the researcher made use of a questionnaire. After the completion of the questionnaire, however, the researcher has conducted an informal conversation with each of the respondent principals about matters that have arisen from the questionnaire.
- Comparisons between schools in Norway and South Africa have been implemented to support aim 1.4.2. With reference to the research findings, the researcher will indicate the existence of similarities, and thereafter the differences, which might exist between some selected schools in South Africa and in Norway with regard to Capacity Building and Management Development.
- Questionnaires and a combination of the qualitative and quantitative research methods have been implemented to support aims 1.4.1, 1.4.2 and 1.4.3

## **1.6 Clarification of concepts**

The following concepts have been used in this research report and therefore needs further clarification.

### 1.6.1 Capacity

Capacity building is a crucial component of reform. Capacity is a general term, referring to the power or ability to do some particular thing, such as reaching the goals of systemic reform (Floden, Goertz, & O' Day, 1995:19).

### 1.6.2 Leadership

#### 1.6.2 Leadership

Leadership is a political activity, bringing people with conflicting points of view together to work out their differences in order for the organization to be productive (Bolman & Deal, 1994:82).

### 1.6.3 Communication

#### 1.6.3 Communication

Communication stems from the Latin word "communico", which means, "to share". Kindred (1984:74) defines communication as "..... the transfer of thoughts and feelings from one person to another".

### 1.6.4 A role

#### 1.6.4 A role

"A role is defined as an organized set of behaviors belonging to an identifiable office or position. Individual personality may affect **how** a role is performed, but not **that** it is performed. Actors, managers and others play roles that are predetermined, although individuals may interpret them in different ways," as defined by Mintzberg (1973:54).

in this study leadership has been defined as the reciprocal learning process that enables participants in a community to construct meaning toward a shared purpose (Lambert, 1998:18)

### 1.6.5 Management

“Management is defined here as the accomplishment of desired objectives by establishing an environment favorable to performance by people operating in organized groups” (Koontz & O’Donnell 1964:1).

### 1.6.6 Educational Management

“Creating an environment for effective teaching and learning.” As defined by the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development – December (1996:27).

### 1.6.7 Education Management

“Management is a process of managing the professional administration of an institution. It entails managing, controlling, supervising, directing and providing guidance by a manager (Oxford Dictionary 1992: 927).

### 1.6.8 Purposing

“That continuous stream of actions by an organization’s formal leadership which has the effect of inducing clarity, consensus, and commitment regarding the organization’s basic purposes” (Sergiovanni, 1991: 340).

### 1.6.9 Constructive leadership

In this study leadership has been defined as the reciprocal learning process that enables participants in a community to construct meaning toward a shared purpose (Lambert, 1998:18).

### 1.6.10 Quantitative researcher

Isolates and defines variables and variable categories. These variables are linked together to frame hypotheses, often before the data are even collected, and then to test it upon the data. The quantitative researcher looks through a narrow lens at a specific set of variables (Brannen, 1997:4).

### 1.6.11 Qualitative researcher

Begins with defining very general concepts, which, as the researcher progresses, change their definition. For the former, variables are the vehicles or means of the analysis. The qualitative researcher is said to look through a wide lens, searching for patterns of inter-relationships between a previously unspecified set of concepts (Brannen, 1997:4).

### 1.6.12 Empowerment

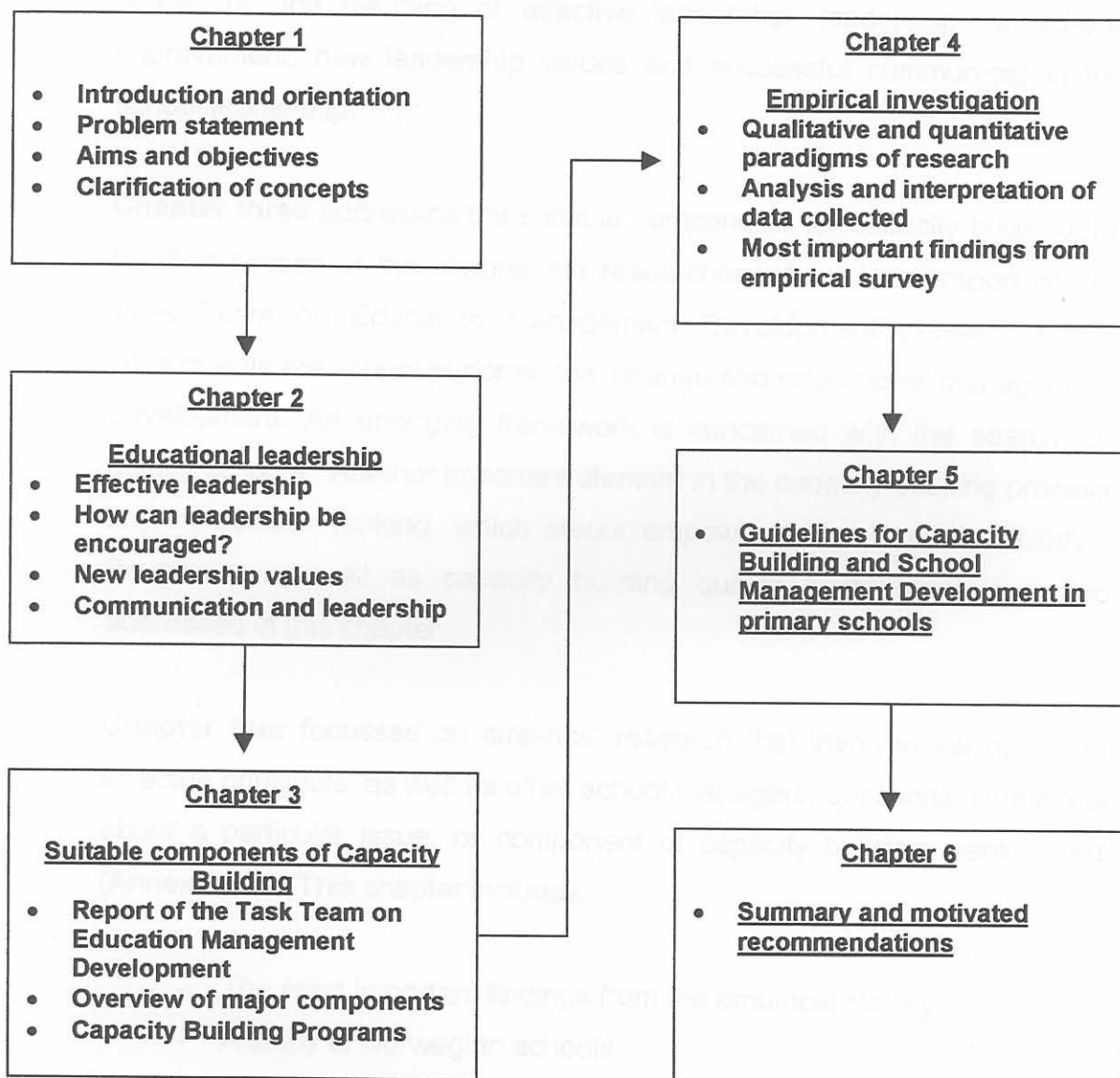
Empowerment, in this study, has been defined as “the fundamental transfer of authority whereby teachers are treated as professionals. It includes the following: the process by which teachers make decisions regarding assigned tasks; teachers’ involvement in creating ways to maintain a productive and satisfying work environment and their involvement in daily problem-solving and decision-making” (Steyn, 1998:132).

Chapter one deals with the following aspects

- Question
- Problem statement
- Aims and objectives

## 1.7 Research program

The research program or design that was followed by the researcher can be schematized as follows:



**Chapter one** deals with the following aspects:

- Orientation
- Problem statement
- Aims and objectives



- Research methods
- Clarification of concepts
- Research program

**Chapter two** describes what educational leadership is. A high priority is placed on the meaning of effective leadership, leadership for school improvement, new leadership values and successful communication for school leadership.

**Chapter three** addresses the suitable components for capacity building. In the first section of the chapter the researcher refers to the report of the Task Team on Education Management Development (1994). Other components are school performance, change and educational management development. An emerging framework is concerned with the search for quality schools. Another important element in the capacity building process is joint decision-making, which steers empowerment. Capacity Building Programs, as well as capacity building quality contributors, are also addressed in this chapter.

**Chapter four** focusses on empirical research that involves asking some selected principals, as well as other school managers, questions. Questions about a particular issue, or component of capacity building were asked (Annexure 1). This chapter includes:

- The most important findings from the empirical survey
- A study of Norwegian schools
- A picture of schools in Bergen
- The similarities and differences between selected schools in South Africa and Norway with regard to Capacity Building and School Management Development

**Chapter five** attempts to point out the necessity of competence and to determine the major and minor needs for capacity building in selected South African and Norwegian primary schools. This chapter provides guidelines on how to go about building capacity in schools.

**Chapter six** gives an overview of the research as well as addressing the research problem. Motivated recommendations with regard to capacity building will be given. Opportunities for further research will be exposed.

## **1.8 Conclusion**

There is a mutual relationship between empowerment and capacity building. It is therefore difficult to talk about one element without referring to the other. Empowerment and capacity building arise as a result of transformation, which involves every aspect of South African life. Major steps are being taken to transform economy so as to promote growth with equity and justice. In each sphere there is a need to change, not simply the scale of provision and access to services, but the nature of those services and the way they are conceptualized, resourced and delivered. Therefore empowerment and capacity building are means that are used to address the imperatives for change in education.

### **2.2 What is effective leadership?**

Burns & Deal (1994:78-79) said that trying to pinpoint the significant characteristics of successful leadership is a slippery, risky, and often unproductive enterprise.