

THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPALS ON STAFF REDUCTION IN SCHOOLS

by

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SYNOPSIS

This research project examines the experiences of school principals when implementing the staff-reduction process of the rationalisation policy stipulated by the National Department of Education in 1994. The implementation of this policy has its origins in the Transformation policy of the National government after the first democratic election in South Africa in 1994.

The aim of the rationalisation policy is to bring about equity and affirmative action in the staff provision in schools. Achieving this is a collective agreement between the National Education Department and the teachers' unions where the decision was made that the teacher:learner ratio would be 1:35 in secondary schools and 1:40 in primary schools.

The aim of this research is to determine what principals experience during the staff-reduction process(es) and what impact it would have on the principal as the manager of the institution. The researcher also intends to examine the influence that staff reduction has on the working conditions of the principal as well as how this process affects the teaching and learning culture in a school. Ultimately the researcher intends to make recommendations to assist principals that are affected by staff reduction.

The research concentrates on a selected group of principals, regardless of race, gender or religion (including principals from secondary, middle and primary schools) who are currently busy with their Masters Degree in Education Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria.

A qualitative research methodology is used to exemplify the perceptions and experiences of principals.

The dissertation is divided into five chapters.

Chapter One provides an overview and orientation of the study. The focus is the problem statement and the exposition of the aims of the research.

Chapter Two concentrates on the literature study that is supported by the collection of empirical data with specific reference to the rationalisation process and the resulting staff reduction process in some schools.

Chapter Three discusses the research design and data collection instruments. The focus is on the individual interviews (face to face) done with principals of schools where they air their views regarding the rationalisation process, staff reduction and the impact that the abovementioned has on the teaching and learning process in schools.

Transcriptions are made of the audio recordings of the interviews and field notes have also been included as background information for the interviews.

In Chapter Four the analysis of the collective interviewed data is done and the empirical data is discussed.

Chapter Five is a summary of the research. In this chapter the important findings are discussed and suitable recommendations are made.

SINOPSIS

Hierdie navorsingsprojek ondersoek die ervaringe van skoolhoofde met betrekking tot personeelvermindering tydens die instelling van 'n rasionaliseringsbeleid deur die Nasionale Departement van Onderwys in 1994. Die implimentering van hierdie beleid het sy ontstaan in die Transformasiebeleid van die Nasionale regering, na afloop van die eerste demokratiese verkiesing in Suid-Afrika in 1994.

Die doel van die rasionaliseringsbeleid is om gelyke beregtiging en regstellende aksie ten opsigte van personeelvoorsiening in alle skole te weeg te bring. Om dit te kon regkry is 'n kollektiewe ooreenkoms tussen die Nasionale Onderwys Departement en Onderwysunies bereik waarvolgens die onderwyser-leerderverhouding 1:35 in sekondêre skole en 1:40 in primêre skole sou wees.

Die doel van hierdie navorsing is om vas te stel watter ervaring(e) skoolhoofde beleef het tydens 'n personeelverminderingproses(se) en watter impak dit op die hoof as bestuurder van die inrigting gehad het. Voorts wil die navorser 'n ondersoek loods na die invloed van personeelvermindering op die werkslewe van die skoolhoof asook hoe hierdie proses die onderrig- en leerkultuur in 'n skool beïnvloed het. As einddoel beoog die navorser om aanbevelings te maak, ter ondersteuning van skoolhoofde wat deur personeelvermindering geraak word.

Die navorsing konsentreer op 'n geselekteerde groep skoolhoofde, ongeag ras, geslag, kleur of geloof (met inagneming van sekondêre-, middel- en primêreskole) wat huidig besig is met 'n meestersgraad in Onderwysleierskap en Bestuur aan die Universiteit van Pretoria.

‘n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsmetodologie is gebruik om persepsies en leefervaringe van skoolhoofde aan die lig te bring.

Die projek is in vyf hoofstukke verdeel.

In Hoofstuk een word ‘n oorsig en oriëntering van die studie gegee. Daar word gefokus op die probleemstelling, terwyl die navorsingsdoelwitte uiteengesit en verduidelik word.

Hoofstuk twee konsentreer op die literaturoorsig wat gerugsteun word deur die versameling van empiriese data met spesifieke verwysing na die rasionaliseringsproses en gevolglike personeelvermindering in sommige skole.

In Hoofstuk drie word die ontwerp en navorsingsinstrument bespreek. Daar word gefokus op individuele onderhoude (van aangesig tot aangesig) met skoolhoofde om hulle menings oor die rasionaliseringsproses, personeelvermindering en die impak van bogenoemde op die onderrig- en leerproses in die skool te bepaal.

Daar is klankopnames van onderhoude gemaak waarna dit woordeliks getranskribeer is. Veldnotas is ook gemaak om die onderhoude te ondersteun.

In Hoofstuk vier is ‘n ontleding (analise) van die versamelde onderhoudsdata, asook die empiriese gegewens onderneem.

In Hoofstuk vyf word ‘n opsomming van die navorsing gegee. In hierdie hoofstuk word belangrike bevindinge bespreek en toepaslike aanbevelings gemaak.

KEYWORDS

1. Education Transformation
2. Previously Disadvantaged Schools (PDS)
3. Equity
4. Post Establishments
5. Educator:learner ratio
6. Redress initiatives
7. Rightsizing
8. Staff Reduction
9. Staff Redeployment
10. Discriptive narratives

CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the introduction of a democratic compensation in South Africa in 1994, many transformational changes have been brought about in institutions of learning.

One of the most critical elements in the post-apartheid education system is the transformation process, specifically focusing on redressing the inequalities of the past in schools – better known, within the South African context, as rightsizing. The aim of this strategy is to bring about equity and redress in staff provisioning in all schools.

With the inception of rightsizing, the intention was to ensure that all schools would have sufficient, qualified teachers in terms of the educator:learner ratio (**Department of Education, 1998**). According to the Parliamentary Bulletin (**28 August 1998, no 43:2**), the Educators' Bill will make it easier for the state to continue with the redeployment of teachers from well-resourced schools (previously advantaged schools better known as ex-model C schools) to poorly resourced schools (previously disadvantaged schools). Thus, educators who were in excess were to be redeployed to schools that were under-staffed.

With this rightsizing strategy, the principal is now confronted with increasing management responsibilities, like the implementation of new post-establishments, the administration of staff-reduction processes together with the application of the National Education Department's policy of redress and staff-redeployment. This process has caused much anxiety amongst principals and has contributed to low morale, loss of security, trauma and feelings of incompetence.

The purpose of this research is to examine the experience of principals, as managers of their respective institutions during such a staff-reduction process, with specific reference to:

- Managerialism;
- Climate and Culture in the school;
- Interrelated Communication and Relationships;
- Conflict Management;
- Emotional Intelligence;
- Staff motivation and morale;
- The impact of finances and its eventual influence on effective teaching and learning, and
- Management of ethical leadership in the school.

The aim of this research project is to investigate the process of staff reduction as an integral part of the rightsizing strategy, define the process of staff reduction, investigate how staff reduction impacts on the principal's work and recommend guidelines to assist principals affected by staff reduction.

This chapter will state the research problem and structure of the research project.

In the following paragraph, the rationale for the study is explained in more detail.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

Educational transformation has brought about many changes in classrooms and institutions of learning (**Stronge, 1997:108**). These changes include changed educational philosophies, beliefs and values. Changes in education are also aimed at helping schools to accomplish their respective potential effectively, with specific reference to the previously disadvantaged schools.

With the introduction of the democratic compensation in South Africa in 1994, authority and certain resources at some schools were transferred from state education agencies and school district offices to individual schools.

According to the South African Schools Act, (**no 84 of 1996**), the most important goal of the South African school system is to strive for equality and democratic transformation. Smith, Thurlow & Foster (**1997:128**) emphasised that the South African education system is experiencing a period of massive transformation from a system founded on the “apartheid” paradigm of racial segregation and inequality to a new paradigm, based on equality of opportunity for all learners, regardless of race.

To engage in such a transformation process, the post-1994 government decided to address this matter through means of equity and redress initiatives in schools. This redress meant a redistribution of resources to the previously disadvantaged schools considering the following: parental incomes, parental choice of schools, educator:learner ratios and teacher redeployment, involvement and governance of School Governing Bodies, buildings and facilities, books and materials, resource constraints, school fees, school feeder areas and examination results (**Lemon 2004:269**).

According to Bennett, Crawford & Riches (**1992:10**), change is about altering practice, organisation and the individual’s perception of his/her roles and responsibilities. This very change eventually had an immense influence on education-system-management as well as on educator provisioning in schools. Regardless of the origin of change and transformation within the school system, the principal always plays a key role, either as the initiator or supporter of such change and could be perceived by all role players involved as the key change agent.

Due to transformation in education, the principal is now confronted with increasing management responsibilities, like the implementation of new post establishments, the administration of the rightsizing strategy and the application of the National Education Department’s policy of redress and staff-redeployment.

Redeployment on the other hand is the process whereby educators are moved from a school that has experienced a decrease in the numbers of learners, which eventually results in a reduction of educators, to a school where the number of

learners has increased, thus requiring additional educators
(<http://www.northern-cape.gov.za>. page 1 of 1).

According to a circular dated 2 December 1996 (**Department of Education, Circular 92 of 1996**), of the National Education Department, different categories of educators who have been appointed in a temporary capacity will be dealt with in a specific manner. School principals later understood that this “specific manner” implied the reduction of certain staff members as part of the rightsizing strategy.

Another very important factor, which contributed to the rightsizing process of staff, was the Education Department’s ascertainment of new post establishments. These post establishments were only communicated to schools during the latter part of November of every year for implementation in the January of the following year. This resulted in principals experiencing tremendous stress and trauma when determining which educators should be rightsized.

Staff-reduction remains a comprehensive process that has to be steered by the manager of the school, in this regard, the principal. Being at the spear point of change, it warrants an investigation as to how principals perceive and manage staff-reduction processes in their schools, as well as the influence it has on their relationship with their staff members.

The problem statement will now be discussed.

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Since the introduction of a new transformation process in Education in 1994, many principals have found themselves in trying times when administering the rightsizing process in their schools. The educator:learner ratio is used to determine the post-establishment at the time, which inevitably results in the reduction of staff when some staff members have been declared redundant.

This process eventually cascaded into the redeployment of staff, which is perceived by many a principal as a problem situation, because it can have an immense impact on the work of the principal and staff as well as on the effective teaching and learning process in the school.

Against the background of this discussion, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- (a) How does the principal experience the staff-reduction process in his/her school?
- (b) How does the principal manage the staff-reduction process in his/her school?
- (c) What implication does staff reduction have on relationships in the school?

Now that the research questions have been formulated, the aims of the research will be indicated.

1.4 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aims of the research are to:

- (a) Investigate the challenges that school principals, as managers, face during a staff-reduction process.
- (b) Explore how school principals perceive and manage a staff-reduction process in their respective schools.
- (c) Provide guidelines for the effective functioning of staff reduction in secondary schools.

1.5 METHOD OF RESEARCH

1.5.1 Qualitative Research

According to Creswell (1994:145), qualitative research involves fieldwork where the researcher physically goes to the people, settings, sites or institutions to observe or record behaviour in its natural setting.

The two methods that can be used to conduct social scientific research are qualitative and quantitative approaches. Although each research approach has its own set of advantages and disadvantages, they both play an important role in research and other related fields of study.

In this study, a qualitative approach will be used in order to determine experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process, to examine possible implications for education practice and to obtain a deeper understanding of the topic.

For the purpose of this study the researcher has decided that the most effective way to address the research problem is to engage in a qualitative approach of descriptive narratives with the main focus on an in-depth analysis of the one-to-one interviews with the selected participants.

From the participants' actions one can then derive an in-depth description of a particular individual's actual experiences and consequential actions during such a staff-reduction process.

1.5.2 Respondent sampling

In this study, interviews will be conducted with selected principals, regardless of race and gender, of primary, middle and secondary mainstream public schools, to determine interrelated relationships amongst all the role players in the school.

The primary focus of the study will be aimed at the challenges school principals face during staff-reduction processes, with a secondary focus on how more knowledge with regard to the management of such a process can be procured.

The researcher will use a process of sampling that is known as purposeful sampling in selecting the participants of the focus group with whom the one-to-one interviews will be conducted. Thus sampling in a deliberate way, with some purpose or focus in mind (**Booyse, J.J., Schulze, S., Bester, G., Mellet, S.M., Lemmer, E.M., Roelofse, J.J. & Landman, W.A. 1993:90**).

The principals selected for the interviews are from a group of Masters degree students in Education Leadership and Management, who attended a research methodology workshop at the University of Pretoria. From this group, four principals will be interviewed. All four respondents have experienced and have been involved in the process of staff reduction and/or redeployment and will be able to provide rich data to achieve the aim of the research.

The researcher's intention is to make use of a semi-structured interviewing process whereby the respondents will feel free to reveal their true feelings and elaborate on their personal experiences of a staff-reduction process.

1.5.3 Data collection

According to Creswell (1994:153) the collection and analysis of data are activities that occur simultaneously. This process can be regarded as interactive and focuses on selecting and integrating data.

The researcher will make use of face-to-face individual interviews to collect data from the respondents. The gathering of the research data will be done with the aid of audio tape recordings and, where deemed necessary, field notes. The recordings will be transcribed to support the data analysis process.

During the interview the researcher will conduct acceptable ethical standards through negotiating approval from the interviewee, explaining the purpose and understanding of the topic, confirm willingness to be interviewed and reassure confidentiality.

1.5.4 Literature study

A literature review will be used to investigate current policy and administrative issues with regard to the National Education Department's rightsizing strategy. This study will focus on the impact of staff reduction on the principal as manager of the school, the influence of staff reduction on teaching and learning and recommending supportive structures to assist principals affected by a staff-reduction process.

1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

The research has a limited scope as it concentrates only on a specific number of principals from different provinces. All the selected principals have experienced staff reduction in their respective institutions in the past.

The participants belong to a group of Masters degree students in Educational Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria. These participants have been purposively selected to avoid subjectivity.

The research investigates the experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process, as well as the possible implications for education practice.

1.7 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1 Rightsizing

Rightsizing is the process of ensuring that the right number of people is doing the right type of work. The focus is on the redeployment of human resources to where it is needed most (**Oxford Dictionary: 2001**). In the South African context, rightsizing is also known as staff-reduction and intends to ensure that all schools will have sufficient, qualified educators in terms of the educator:learner ratio (**South Africa: DoE, Employment of Educators Act: 1998**).

1.7.2 Rationalisation

Rationalisation is derived from the word “rationalise” which means to re-organise a process or an industry in order to increase efficiency and reduce waste (**Cowie, 1992:1040**). Thus changes must be made to an organisation in order to increase efficiency and equity.

1.7.3 Staff reduction

This is the process of reducing staff members in an institution and refers to the equitable redistribution of educators in the education system (**Anon, 1996: 1**).

1.7.4 Redeployment

It is the process whereby educators are moved from a school that has had a decrease in the number of learners, which eventually results in a reduction of educators, to a school where the number of learners has increased, thus requiring additional educators (<http://www.northern-cape.gov.za.page> 1/1). The purpose of redeployment is to bring equity as far as staff provisioning is concerned.

1.7.5 Equity

In this education context, equity means fairness in the distribution of resources regardless of race, colour, sex or creed (**Cowie, 1992:406**). From this derives the rationalisation and redeployment policies of the National Education Department to correct the imbalances of the past and to supplement the law (Anon, 1996a: 1).

1.7.6 Redress

Redress means the redistribution of resources from previously advantaged schools to previously disadvantaged schools. Thus redressing the inequalities of the past through democratic transformation.

1.8 PLAN OF THE STUDY

This study consists of five chapters and the order of discussion will be:

1.8.1 Chapter One

This chapter deals with the identification of the problem, purpose of the study, aims of the research, research methods, demarcation, clarification of concepts and the plan of the research.

1.8.2 Chapter Two

In this chapter a literature study will be undertaken to review the relevant research literature available about the experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process and the possible implications thereof for education practice.

1.8.3 Chapter Three

This chapter focuses on the research design, development of the research instrument and sampling methods.

1.8.4 Chapter Four

Chapter four presents the data collected and the analysis and interpretation thereof.

1.8.5 Chapter Five

This chapter contains the summary and recommendations of the research. Conclusions will be drawn and suggestions will be made for possible future research in this field of study.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Creswell (1994:165) believes that the researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, needs, values and desires of respondents. The respondents should be informed of all data collection activities. There should be an agreement of confidentiality with the respondents. They have to be assured of their anonymity and/or that their identity will not be revealed or used for any other purposes.

Respondents are to be informed that they can interrupt the interview procedure at any time to obtain clarity regarding the processes.

1.10 CONCLUSION

To initiate transformation in education in South Africa the post-1994 government introduced a redress programme to address the inequalities of the past.

In Chapter One the researcher introduced the topic, the significance of the problem and the aims of the research.

This research comprises an investigation on how principals experience and manage a staff-reduction process in his/her school.

Chapter One also deals with the research design, and the method of data collection that will be used in this investigation.

A literature study will be undertaken in Chapter Two.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The introduction of this research focuses specifically on the background of the research problem as well as the aims of the research. Thus an in-depth discussion of the challenges principals face during a staff-reduction process, the management processes applied by principals when facing staff-reduction and possible guidelines to promote the effective administration and follow-through of such a process, will follow.

Literature related to these aims and related issues will be reviewed in order to support the research and to develop a theoretical framework.

Since 1994 the post-apartheid education system in South Africa has focused on transformation processes with the main objective to address the imbalances and injustices of the past by implementing new policies, which eventually will promote equity and redress in all educational institutions in South Africa.

In this chapter the focus will be mainly on a discussion of the new education system in South Africa, its historical and political background, defining staff reduction and explaining the purpose of staff reduction, followed by the implementation of such a process. The impact that staff reduction has on the work of the principal and how all of this impedes effective teaching and learning in an education institution will be explored. During such an investigation, concomitant issues such as conflict, communication, motivation and morale, relationships, stress-related activities, financial restrictions, the climate and culture in an institution and the principal's perception of staff reduction and his/her lived experience, will be addressed.

2.2 BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Neo-liberalism and a macro-economic policy

Since the inception of the African National Congress (ANC) in 1994, the main focus has been to contribute to social and political transformation by promoting equity and democracy in all spheres of the community.

The concept of neo-liberalism originated in the 1970's and addressed:

(1) relationships between capitalists, (2) racial inequality, and (3) apartheid (**Schneider, 2003:24**).

Neo-liberal economic policies have their roots in the ANC that introduced a neo-liberal economy theory via the Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programme (GEAR). The main goal of GEAR was to increase the economic growth rate by 4,2% between 1996 and 2000 (**Weeks, 1999:795**). The ANC then introduced an orthodox macro-economic policy to promote deficit reduction through expenditure restraint, together with a tight monetary policy, combined with trade liberation.

At the time the ANC was better known for its predominantly Marxist ideology during the apartheid struggle. Thus with the ANC's neo-liberal economy theory, a new strategy was released whereby they pressed for unregulated markets. The neo-liberal economists were accused of marginalizing the prevailing inequalities and poverty by overlooking the potential benefits of a redistribution strategy (**Schneider, 2003:23**).

Throughout the GEAR programme, the ANC was inundated with accusations of being unsuccessful with the GEAR initiative due to fiscal contraction and high prevailing interest rates (**Weeks, 1999:795**).

Despite the economic initiatives and political changes implemented by the ANC, economic inequality along racial lines was still being experienced. According to

Kantor & Kenny (1976) in Schneider (2003:24), industrialisation brings about certain consequences that will promote change where an increased social and physical mobility for black people as well as employment opportunities should be based on achievement and not on inherited status. The belief by neo-liberals was, that due to market pressure existing racial inequalities in South Africa would eventually erode. Schneider (2003:24) argues that the ideology of apartheid was replaced by the “dangerous fantasy” ideology of the market following a neo-liberal stance that land, income and assets were to be redistributed.

According to Hutt (1964:27), as cited in Schneider (2003:26), apartheid enforced discrimination, which caused a shortage of black skilled labour as well as the increased cost of production. Hutt believed that no distribution of any kind in South Africa was necessary. He believed that if the legacy of apartheid-restrictions were eliminated, the free market would prosper automatically.

Schneider (2003:25) on the other hand, advocates that neo-liberal economists ignore problems created by inequality and ignore economic benefits that could develop the economy from the bottom up. With this perception he incriminates the neo-liberals for the failure of the GEAR programme.

It can therefore be deduced that the neo-liberal economic movement in the post-apartheid era did not particularly accomplish the objectives that it initially set out to do.

As mentioned earlier, the main objective of GEAR was to reduce the legacy of poverty and inequality, especially in the education environment. The perception that economic growth could only be kick-started through expanding private sector investments was at the order of the day (Streak, 2004:272), which failed pitifully due to the private sector investment growth of only 2,7 percent instead of an expected 12 percent annually (Streak, 2004:276).

Although focusing on the above matters, the state still had to deal with the history of segregation and specifically with racial discrimination, where positions of white

workers had been protected through policies of job reservation influx control and other discriminating legislation (**Mubangizi & Mubangizi, 2005:278**).

As far as education is concerned, some inequalities of the past were addressed by the promulgation of the right to basic and on-going education as a human rights law in the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (CRSA) (**Act no 108 of 1996, section 29**).

This provides all South Africans with the right to education with the premise that this act should be the “vehicle” to diminish the high illiteracy rate in the country, especially amongst the black people.

With the support of their Operational Requirements Policy, the National Education Department initiated a concept whereby the job inequalities of the past could be addressed to establish the fair distribution of educators’ posts. This concept was known as the rightsizing process in education, which led to either an increase or decrease of staff in a particular institution. In instances where institutions encountered a loss of educators, all stakeholders perceived the process as a reduction process.

Neo-liberalism further acknowledges and supports distributive justice whereby activities such as affirmative action and redistribution of land and assets are promoted to reduce the injustices of the past (**Kenny in Schneider, 2003:37**).

In the South African education context, transformation could only be justified through a fair distribution of human resources to all education institutions. This distribution process was absolutely imperative in favouring equity and contributing to the erosion of the apartheid legacy.

The neo-liberal movement can thus be perceived as a market-driven economic model that supports a capitalistic system, which eventually will benefit unregulated markets (free markets) fostering increased costs of productivity, money efficiency, prosperity and justice for all (**Butler et al, 1987:7 as in Schneider, 2003,36**).

Although the neo-liberalist ANC movement drives an economic market approach, the National Government prefers to sell this concept to the world and the previously disadvantaged people of South Africa as “apartheid”. It can thus be reasoned that the current legislation is perceived as a political intervention rather than a social correction of the past, relating specifically to economic growth and the creating of jobs to provide income to the poor (**Streak, 2004:271**).

2.2.2 Neo-liberalism: a global perspective

In the international arena, neo-liberalism is particularly eminent in the USA, Scandinavian countries and in Latin America where a social pact exists between the perception of labour and capital. The objective is to minimise social welfare in consideration of education, health, social security, employment and housing (**Wilensky, 1975**) as in Torres, (**2002:367**). This model originates from the inequalities of income distribution with reference to the state lacking to supply unemployment benefits. Neo-liberalism in Latin America refers to a model of privatisation that not only institutions, but also individuals are subjected to checks and balances of political representation and accountability towards the liberal democracy (**Torres, 2002:265**).

According to Offe (**1985**) as in Torres (**2002:365**) the state’s capitalist society promotes an auto-regulating system with specific institutional rules and regulations, whereby the power of the state reflects a class of alliance of an economic, social and moral interest. To the state it is important to showcase a position of power and force within the society.

With this in mind, it is comprehensible that a new liberal democratic state will be striving for the growth of internal markets, promoting import substitution and expanding diversification of the education system. It addresses activities such as educational expenditure, expanding educational institutions, massification of enrolments as well as expanding educational budgets (**Torres, 2002:268**).

In the South African education context, the state does not only determine the level of financing of school education, but also decides on the distribution of education finances across school education in general.

As experienced in the South African public sector, the same neo-liberal notions are globally promoted with reference to open markets, free trade, the reduction of the public sector, the decrease of state intervention in the economy and the deregulation of markets (**Torres, 2002:368**). Through these processes of adjustment and transformation originates a number of policies to support changes.

In South Africa, as in the global world, governments pursue a model of drastic reduction in the State sector, with the main purpose of reducing the size of the fiscal deficit (**Samoff, 1990:21**) as cited in Torres, (**2002:368**).

This has led to the creation of several rationalization programmes in the state sector of which staff reduction in some educational institutions has become the main focus of this research study.

2.2.3 Managerialism

2.2.3.1 What is managerialism?

Wright (**2001:281**) defines managerialism as the value of management where he believes that management should lead to a better world, economically and socially. Wright (**2001:282**) reinforces this statement by saying that managers must have the “right to manage” whereby this right will bring about effective change in the institution. The focus of managerialism should be on the intentions of management originating from the “New Right project” of the British conservative governments of the 1980s and the early 1990s where the emphasis is on the economic transactions of markets.

Managerialism in the public sector is also concerned with the reduction of the public sector’s cost and includes amongst others, education, social services and health (**Wright, 2001:282**) as cited in Bottery, (**1998:8-9**).

Managerialism can thus be perceived as a set of beliefs and values that promotes greater economic productivity, but also justifies the behaviour of individuals in a specific institution.

In the British education environment, good schools prosper whilst schools with poor performances are threatened to be closed down. With this in mind, management teams of schools rather opt for higher academic performances, focusing on higher outputs so that they don't stand to lose learners, with the end result of possible staff losses within a specific institution. In British schools, as in South African schools, the influence of managerialism is regarded as serious business, because it impacts on aspects such as educators' pay, service conditions, hours of compulsory involvement in the normal school day, educational tasks and increased responsibilities of the principal (**Wright 2001: 282**).

Since the inception of the democratic education compensation in South Africa, the Provincial Education Departments (PED) have used a process of the devolution of power where staff management in general and the management of funds becomes the responsibility of the principal, the school management team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB).

With this managerialistic concept in mind, schools, and more specifically principals take calculated measures which will benefit their respective schools with reference to the educator:learner ratio, curriculum needs, staff complement (influenced by the staff provisioning), as well as effective teaching and learning, so that the overall academic performances in schools can be improved (**Wright 2001:284**) as cited in Clarke & Newman, (1997).

What is expected from principals is to strategise a long-term development plan for the school in terms of the vision of the school. This will enable principals to cope with the complexities and the uncertainties of the modern world and will help to manage the unpredictable changes in the education industry (**Wright, 2001:284**) as cited in Hargreaves and Hopkins, (1991).

From this managerialistic concept, a process of the restructuring and rightsizing of the teaching profession in the South African education context has been derived. The purpose is to improve the standards and competitiveness and to grant all schools an equal opportunity to succeed as well as the right to effective education.

The passage of the South African Schools' Act (**Act 84 of 1996**) has brought radical institutional changes through transformation processes and demands a special type of governance of schools by principals.

2.2.3.2 Managerialism and staff reduction

Managerialism is the growing extent of external control and regulation. The roots of managerialism are in the economic principle of lower input and higher output. This has a direct effect on the staff management in schools (**Webster & Mosoetsa 2002:65**). Due to budget constraints, managerialism has now become an economic issue within the staff-reduction process. The budget of the National Education Department does not provide for adequate funds to support the current budget needs. This process is also better known as a managerialistic approach and will eventually result in a process of staff reduction in the attempt of balancing the budget.

Managerialism is a very important aspect when considering any staff-reduction process. Principals prefer to focus on effective teaching and learning instead of complying with the Education Departments' standards, quality assurance and effective appraisal systems when administering change in the school rather than the re-deployment or reduction of the number of teachers in the school.

Managerialism will influence the people in the school because it will influence aspects such as the organisational climate and culture, relationship building in the school, conflict, motivation, professionalism, ethics, emotional intelligence and communication.

2.3 HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

Since the 1994 democratic elections everybody expected to see major changes. With the adoption of the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (CRSA) in 1994, it was envisaged that social injustices of the past, like employment disparities, inequalities in the workplace and unfair labour practices would be addressed immediately to add value to the Bill of Rights of the CRSA and to support the National Government's transformation initiative. This is supported by

the previous Minister of Education, Professor Bengu in his statement that “South Africa has, however, now embarked upon a complex process of transforming the whole society and all its institutions,” (**Anon, 1996a:13**).

Although the post-apartheid regime worked towards a transformation of equity and democracy, the GEAR-policy of the ANC government requires fiscal constraints, which led to the development of education policies which impact in diverse ways on advantaged and disadvantaged schools alike.

According to the African National Congress (**ANC, 1995:7**), policies describe what Governments want to achieve and indicate their intentions. They further state that the purpose of policies is to introduce change, regulate activities, solve problems, implement new ideas, provide new services and prescribe procedure.

De Clercq (**1997:128**) advocates that most of the new policies, which deal with education in South Africa, are:

- (1) symbolic (they carry a commitment to implement action by those who formulated them);
- (2) substantive (they deal with the Government’s intentions), and
- (3) redistributive (where the policy is targeted for a specific group, i.e. schools with special needs).

Due to unfair educator:learner ratios in the past, it was necessary for the new Government to address these injustices by normalising the situation through the principle of rationalisation. This resolution was signed in the Educator Labour

Relations Council by various educator unions. The State had changed the past provisioning scales (**The Shop steward: February – March 1997**).

An education policy is drafted on behalf of the State, though it is written with the intention to lay down reasonable goals and objectives for education (**Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry. 1997:2**).

Due to educator:learner ratio inequalities, the policy on rationalisation and redeployment was formulated to address equity in all educational institutions (Taylor, et al. 1997:3).

2.4 THE SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

2.4.1 Initial Legislation

With the inception of the new Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (CRSA), the National Department of Education (NDoE) developed several legislation frameworks and policies to facilitate change in education. With this in mind the government promulgated, among others, the following initial legislation to support the expected legislative outcomes in education:

- The Labour Relations Act of 1995;
- The South African Schools Act of 1996;
- The National Education Policy Act of 1996;
- The Employment of Educators Act of 1998, and
- The Employment Equity Act of 1998.

This legislation stands to promote and support transformation, democracy, social justice and human rights in education. From this legislation, the NDoE embarked on several school development programmes to ensure that the whole education system was transformed. One of the first issues to be addressed was the imbalance with regard to educator provisioning in institutions. Under the apartheid regime, previously disadvantaged schools (PDS) were disadvantaged with regard to educator:learner ratios of 1:50 or 60 compared to white schools with an educator:learner ratio of 1:18. It resulted in higher educator provisions for white schools, thus an unfair distribution of human resources in PDSs (predominantly black schools) (Anon, 1996a:2).

2.4.2 Rightsizing

In the South African context, the concept of rightsizing can either be experienced as an upsizing or a downsizing strategy of staff members in a specific institution.

When this rightsizing process was administered in conjunction with the NDoE policy of redressing the inequalities of the past, it eventually resulted in either a loss or gain of staff.

The gain of staff was never perceived as a negative issue, obviously due to the immediate benefits a school stands to gain. Opposed to this, the unplanned and unforeseen reduction of staff had an immense impact on the day-to-day management of schools and originated from the NDoE policy to proceed with the termination of certain educators' posts on 31 December 1996. This could also be perceived as the first step to the NDoE redress initiative. This rightsizing strategy intended to ensure that all schools would have sufficient qualified educators in terms of the educator:learner ratio (**Department of Education, 1998**).

Some principals who experienced the rightsizing process admitted that it had an immense influence on human resource management in their respective institutions. This staff-reduction process was experienced by principals as very negative and stressful.

Non-qualifying educators who had lost their jobs had been regarded as the so-called right-sized educators. The growing negative perception of this staff-reduction process originated from the rightsizing strategy where staff members and principals were of the opinion that only the substandard educators had been right-sized and placed on the excess list. Principals perceived educators on the excess list as persons not suitable to be considered or appointed at their schools – specifically in black schools (township schools and farm schools). This negative perception was the rule rather than the exception. The negative influence of this perception on education, as well as the influence it had on principals will be addressed comprehensively later in this study.

2.4.3 Redress Policy

Before 1996, the former NDoE engaged in a practice where temporary educators were appointed into substantive posts, but in many instances they didn't qualify or meet the minimum requirements for permanent appointments, eventually resulting in the termination of their respective posts.

This, in conjunction with the NDoE newly introduced policy of equity and redress, resulted in the rationalisation (also known as rightsizing in the South African context) of certain educators' posts, followed by the inevitable redress and redeployment processes of educators in order to comply with new staff complements as allocated to schools by their respective Provincial Education Departments.

Part of this transformation process has been experienced as a redress programme, which resulted in the inevitable reduction of staff. For the principal as educational manager, the staff-reduction process means the management of a very complex change in the school and demands specific leadership and management skills.

The effective implementation of the redress programme in schools depends on the principal's leadership, his/her attitude and vision, as well as the ability to communicate the redress programme to parents, learners, educators and the School Governing Body so that all stakeholders can be actively involved in this process.

Staff management consists of the following distinctive components, which will have a decisive influence on management, effective teaching and learning and the overall success of the school:

- recruitment and staff selection (this will contribute to achieving excellence and high standards);
- a professional induction programme for newly appointed educators;
- development of staff skills to increase leadership capacity;
- to meet improvement targets and realize the school's vision;
- staff training whereby educators are pro-actively groomed to assume leadership roles in the future;
- high expectations and high performance of staff,
- punctuality,
- classroom presence; and
- supervision and feedback (where the principal acts against staff under-performance).

2.4.4 Staff reduction

The appointment of staff in the workplace is normally perceived and experienced very positively, which evolves into staff members' positive disposition, creativity and an environment of effectiveness and efficiency. The staff reduction process could influence the principal's actions and his/her perception of this process. This could lead to a less acceptable relationship between the principal and his/her staff, as well as between the principal and the community in which he/she serves.

The initial staff-reduction process dealt with teachers that did not comply with the following minimum requirements, which resulted in the termination of many appointments:

- Educators who were not appropriately trained as teachers (thus educators with less than three years of tertiary training);
- Non-South African citizens; and
- Educators who opted for the severance package and volunteered to retire prematurely. Some of these educators indicated that they would like to re-join the educational system at the time. However, their re-appointment was perceived by the NDoE as not being in the interest of the state (**South Africa, NDoE Circular 92 of 1996, Gauteng**).

This staff-reduction process has occurred twice in certain Gauteng schools for the very reasons mentioned above: in 1996/1997 and again in 1998/1999. According to Circular 56 of 2002 (**South Africa, GDE, 2002:5**) of the Gauteng Department of Education (henceforth GDE) operational requirements, as another reason for staff reduction, normally lead to excess staff in institutions. These requirements are based on, but not limited to:

- change in learner enrolment;
- curriculum changes within a specific education institution;
- change to the grading of the specific education institution; and
- the closure or merger of education institutions/sectors.

The above indicators are normally followed by rationalisation and redeployment processes as per instruction to all institutions within the jurisdiction of the GDE by the end of 1998.

Staff reduction, on the other hand, differs from redeployment in the sense that staff reduction makes use of the last-in-first-out principle (henceforth LIFO) in conjunction with the curriculum needs of the school with the main purpose of addressing the equity initiative of the government.

(<http://education.pwv.gov.za/media/speeches.2000/june>)

2.4.5 Redeployment

The latest staff-redeployment process at the end of 2004, involved many more schools throughout the GDE and according to the GDE, this strategy is well intended and aims to improve efficiency in the majority of previously disadvantaged schools where effective teaching and learning was still lacking. With the staff redeployment process, the NDoE aimed to place more educators at previously disadvantaged schools in order to improve achievement in the system. In spite of the good intentions, the process has caused widespread grievances and low morale among teachers in either temporary or substantive posts. Although the former Minister of Education, who, stated in his parliamentary address regarding staff-reduction on 8 June 2000, that *this was a necessary, though painful process, and he was glad to be able to announce that they were in a position to terminate this special equity-driven initiative at the end of that month*, thus meaning the end of June 2000. Teachers still experienced this ongoing process of staff-reduction as a breach of confidence.

(http://education.pwv.gov.za/media/speeches_2000/june_2000/NCOP.htm)

According to a GDE Circular (**Circular 80 of 1997**), all educators who were declared in excess during the rightsizing process of 1996, that had been appointed prior to 1 July 1996 were to be accommodated temporarily into the system pending permanent appointment in a vacant substantive post. With these steps the GDE attempted to ease the immense shortages of experienced educators in scarce subjects like mathematics, physical sciences, English and accounting.

2.4.6 Educators in Excess

According to circular 73 of 2001:6 of the GDE, the following criteria were to be considered in order to identify educators in excess.

- The specific curricular needs and circumstances of the educational institution, i.e. institutions are expected to rationalise their curriculum in line with the new post establishments;
- “Last in first out” (LIFO).

In the process of determining the excess educators, certain procedures had to be followed:

- The District official, together with the principal had to determine the posts in excess;
- The District official had to take the specific curricular needs and circumstances of the educational institution into account. (This seldom happened, because the District official expected the principal to determine the curriculum needs. In many instances the principal was to blame.)
- All principals had to inform their respective staff of the procedures for declaring educators in excess as well as the effect it would have on their respective establishments (**GDE Circular 73 of 2001:7**).

2.4.7 Voluntary Severance Packages (VSP)

The NDoE introduced the concept of a Voluntary Severance Package (VSP) in order to allow educators, who prefer to leave the service, to do so. This would then create room for the absorption of educators who were in excess due to the equity and redress policy of the NDoE. According to this policy it was decided that candidates who identified themselves for voluntary termination of service shall not be re-appointed in any educator’s post (South African Department of Education, 1996a: 1-2).

In the years that followed, the State (in this regard the NDoE) realised that the original arrangement of granting voluntary severance packages at that time, resulted in enormous shortages of educators in scarce subjects like

mathematics, physical science, English and accounting – this had a direct influence on the overall academic achievement of learners and contributed to the smaller number of prospective students applying for certain specialized university courses.

Due to VSP, the NDoE lost about 16 000 educators from the system with an approximate cost of R1,05 billion (**Jansen & Taylor, 2003: 31**) as cited in (**South African Institute of Race Relations, 1997: 156**).

2.5 RATIONALISATION

2.5.1 How did it manifest worldwide?

Educational reform in specific countries is not unfamiliar in comparison to prevailing global trends in a prevailing globally. This reform process occurred in several countries although at different stages, but started specifically in American schools as early as the 1980s.

The initial goals in these schools were to increase graduation requirements and expand the use of student testing (**Baldrige, 1995:1**).

In 2001, Fort McMurray Catholic Schools initiated a process of staff reduction whereby staffing requirements of all schools had been considered in relation to educational priorities and program needs

(<http://www.fmcsd.ab.ca/policies.thml/437htm>). Where the required staff reductions in Fort McMurray Catholic Schools could not be accommodated through normal attribution, the school board compiled criteria for the release of staff from employment where applicable.

With reference to the St Thomas Catholic Schools, a Schools Act (<http://education.pwv.za/media/speeches2000/june2000/NCOP>), section 107, dated April 26, 2000, was promulgated. This education policy's main objective was to reduce the number of professional staff if it believed that such reductions were necessary to ensure effective and efficient functioning of the division. For

the purpose of implementation of the above policy, certain guidelines were instituted.

In September 2001, the Scottish Parliament introduced a new Bill relating to School Education (**School Education [Amendment] [Scotland] Bill, 2001:1**). One of the objectives relates to a restructuring process of vacant promotion posts, better known as the job-sizing exercise. Through this process, the state administered a forced rightsizing and a staff-reduction process, by forcing school boards to set up an appointment committee before any appointments could be finalized.

On 15 May 2006, the Superintendent of the District of Columbia Public Schools implemented a new policy to cater for a process of rightsizing due to diminished space and then formulated specific criteria for school consolidation (**Clifford, 2006:1**).

Apart from rightsizing strategies mentioned above, rightsizing processes were also implemented in countries like India in November 2000 (<http://www.tribuneindia.com/com/2006/20060209/edit.htm>), the United States of America (Louisville, Kentucky in 2004) and in Canada in 2004 (**Schweitzer, 2004:29/30**).

Thus with the inception of a rightsizing process, together with a staff-reduction process in South Africa in 1996, a new compensation of Human Resource Management was introduced which, if read in conjunction with the state's affirmative action plans, is far from nearing its end.

It could be beneficial to the Education System in South Africa to seek advice and expertise from countries worldwide that are on their way to effective teaching and learning in schools.

2.6 IMPACT OF STAFF-REDUCTION ON THE PRINCIPAL

2.6.1 Professionalism

Professionalism, according to Prinsloo (2004:4), refers to the competence, skills and knowledge of a profession/professionals.

The principles of staff reduction imply that a staff member, who is competent as an educator and conducts himself/herself in a professional manner, will stand a better chance of not being rationalized within a specific institution.

According to Chernow & Chernow (1992:38), seizure (taking control and ownership) of education will contribute towards an educator's professional dignity, resulting in limiting bureaucracy and diminishing the appearance of the prevailing good and stable relations within the institution into negative and undermining personal issues. These issues can influence the initial goal-setting of the school in such a way that effectiveness can easily be defeated.

An integral part of managerialism is the professional development or in-service training of all staff members on a continuous basis. This development programme will enhance the adaptation to an environment of change in the organisation. According to Fullan & Stiegelbauer (1991:318), successful change requires great skill, sophistication and persistence in effort. This process of development will be favourable for "growth on the job" for all educators in the organisation and will address change in skills and practices, as well as the understanding and improvement of effective teaching and learning in the school.

2.6.2 Conflict management

Thurlow (2002:6) mentioned that in many schools, teachers, students, principals and sometimes, even parents of the community are in conflict with each other and then the school becomes a battleground. This is normally experienced when the principal of the institution does not communicate effectively with other stakeholders. Only then will they all be able to make an informed decision with reference to rightsizing and staff reduction.

During this rightsizing process in institutions, staff reduction can lead to the deterioration of relationships between the staff and the principal – staff could feel insecure and traumatised due to the uncertain actions that could follow during such a rightsizing process. This can be perceived as one of the main issues and has contributed to much of the conflict between the role players in an affected institution.

If the principal didn't proceed cautiously and within the prescribed educational parameters of the policy, the credibility of trust between staff members and the principal could be irreversibly damaged. This could influence the ethical trust and the moral code in a school in a very negative way. Many educators also experienced this rightsizing process as unfair labour practice and have appealed accordingly.

Within the new approach towards managing schools in South Africa, school managers are expected to assume greater responsibility to administer transformation. For this to take place the school manager has to learn new ways and develop new understandings of people management (**Thurlow, 2002:15**). This will play a distinctive role in diminishing the issues of conflict amongst all staff members and the executive of the school.

If and when staff reduction is applied, intense resistance by staff could still be expected, however staff must realise that no change occurs without sacrifice and adjustment – thus diminishing the psychological resistance to change (**Van der Westhuizen 1997:175**).

Robbins (**1984:394**) is of the opinion that across the board, about twenty percent of a manager's time is consumed by handling conflict situations. In this regard principals should not try to oppress conflict, but rather acknowledge the existence thereof and try to manage it in a proper manner.

Cilliers (**1990:439**) states that conflict is a natural phenomenon and can easily be switched into growth, adventure and creativity. Change is normally associated with conflict, especially within a school system where a staff-reduction process is

going to be administered. It is therefore important for the principal to be prepared for conflict and resistance against the staff-reduction process.

2.6.3 Motivation

As mentioned earlier the principal has to consider all the different stakeholders involved and therefore has to give thought to his/her staff's mixed personalities, establish an acceptable team atmosphere, as well as balance the above teams in the institution. The principal should also take into account his/her staff's day-to-day experiences in the staff room.

Within an environment of constant change, as for example a staff-reduction process, management skills and motivation are necessary elements of reaching specific goals within the school.

According to Donaldson & Scannell (1986:109) motivation is the drive within an individual that incites him or her to action. They reinforce their reasoning by saying that motivation is the inspiration, the enthusiasm or the energy that stirs a human being to perform.

It can be assumed that it is necessary for school leaders to negotiate the effect of change and to find solutions to manage this change.

If and when the principal applies and manages a staff-reduction process, he/she hopes that the staff will still trust him/her, be loyal and committed towards the school, but most of all keep up productivity and effective teaching and learning and possibly bring new innovative ideas and concepts to the table to counter the immediate and long-term effects of a staff-reduction process in the organisation.

According to Charlton (1993:55) as cited in Moller (2001: 262, Chapter 15) the above skills will be able to create a workplace where people find meaning in their work.

It is thus an important management tool that must be used by managers to meet the challenge for motivating educators in the institution, especially where there is a lack of drive and enthusiasm to perform their day-to-day activities after the introduction of a transformation process.

2.6.4 Stress management

According to the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES) April 14, 2000, as cited in Webster & Masoetsa (2002:60), “recent changes in education are blamed for heightened stress levels.” This resulted in stress-related illnesses, anxiety and depression and pursued a route of growing conflict. According to Wojtas (THES, January 19, 2001), teachers fear insecurity at work and it is affecting their health and well-being. This could lead to job dissatisfaction, a low self-esteem, stress-related illness and eventually burnout (Webster & Mosoetsa, 2002:61).

The management and follow-through of either the rightsizing and/or transfer processes (of excess educators) could result in many additional problems as perceived by principals. Such issues could include the management of stress-related influences, trauma, loss of security, a feeling of incompetence, a feeling of redundancy, apprehension of the unknown and eventually, possibly even depression. These are but a few issues, which could have a direct influence on the relationships between the principal and educators.

To diminish or even prevent the above, principals are expected to apply special managerial skills, as well as people skills, to survive the ongoing transformation process in education.

2.6.5 Culture

According to Fons Trompenaars, as cited in Sanchez (2004:2), culture can be defined as “the way in which a group of people solves problems and resolves dilemmas.” Within the organisation, this could determine the way things are done. The culture in a school, influences educators’ behaviour patterns and

encourages or discourages an individual's actions and perceptions (**Atkinson, 1990:6 – 10**) as in (**Prinsloo, 2004:309**).

A healthy school culture will increase educators' productivity and satisfaction and will enhance trust and effective communication amidst all the members of an institution.

According to Sanchez (**2004: 2**), culture looks at the strategy in the school and how resources will be focused and applied to accomplish the institution's mission. It also focuses on the deployment of staff to carry out the required work. Culture expects staff members to be open-minded to new ideas, to apply an innovative spirit and to respond to fast changing needs.

Sanchez (**2004: 2**) continues by saying that culture is the first principle of organisational functioning and can be seen as the heart of the organisation. The culture of the institution should not be change-resistant. Only then will the institution thrive and prosper.

To help shape the institutional culture, the focus should be amongst others, elements like communication, values, training, development, reward systems, benefits performance management and the vision of the institution (**Sanchez, 2003: 3**).

2.6.6 Climate

Kruger (**1996:15**) indicates that climate refers to the following observable effects of all aspects of the school:

- the nature of the work;
- the people;
- the architecture of its buildings and environment;
- its history and culture;
- the organizational structure;
- the management and leadership style, and
- the interpersonal relationships.

Kruger (1996:15) regards school climate as the mutual inter-personal relationships in an organization. From this, one can derive that a positive climate in a school probably determines the success of any development programme within a school, on condition that the principal will be able to administer the process of positive team building, but at the same time, set clear educational goals for the school.

In other words, if the school climate reflects a sincere, warm and friendly atmosphere, it could be perceived as positive, where everyone will be relaxed and will try to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the school. It can be concluded that the personality of the people determines the personality of the institution.

Although the main purpose of an organisation should be to strive for a positive climate at all times, a change in attitude and perception towards each other can be experienced both by staff members as well as the principal when the principal starts administering the staff-reduction process within the organisation. This can cause a negative climate in a matter of hours (**Sanchez, 2004:3**). This easily results in a decline of educators' morale, change in the classroom climate and eventually cascades into a negative environment for effective teaching and learning.

The prevalence of an attitude of openness between educators and management will result in high educator morale and they will be motivated to teach (**Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1993:82**).

In other words, if there is a climate of good working relationships in an institution, it will foster a positive and productive working environment (**Roberts & Roach, 2006: 20**).

2.6.7 Morale

According to Skinner (**1997:49**), redeployment has undermined teachers' motivation, eroded job security and decreased effectiveness and efficiency in the

workplace. These emotions, amongst others, have also been experienced by principals in managing the process of staff reduction.

According to Mthombeni (2002:44) the culture of learning and teaching was affected in many schools. Low morale among educators affected schools in such a way that there was no proper teaching and learning taking place anymore. He further states that most educators were affected by the policy of rationalisation and redeployment in a negative way. Principals and educators lost a sense of security, which caused depression, anxiety and poor performance in the classroom.

The Sunday Times (12 September 1999) referred to rightsizing and redeployment as a long delayed strategy, which many see as effective retrenchment rather than the large scale reshuffling of teachers to needy schools, slicing a path of destruction through schools, ridding them of their most valuable staff members and causing depression, anxiety and poor performance among teachers. Principals went through exactly the same experiences, which left many schools in a dysfunctional state.

2.6.8 Emotional Intelligence

To minimise these pressures, the manager (principal) can enhance any occupational hazard by dealing more directly with the problem of staff reduction. The principal's administration of the process of staff reduction calls for purposeful control of his/her own feelings. The negative or uncertain perceptions that could emanate from a staff-reduction process can easily influence and change the prevailing good and stable relations within the institution into negative and undermining personal issues. These issues can influence the initial goal-setting of the school in such a way that effective functioning can be destroyed.

According to Cooper (1997:31), emotions properly managed can drive trust, loyalty and commitment and many of the greatest productivity gains, innovations and accomplishments of individuals, teams and organizations. Cooper elaborates by saying that the manager often finds himself in a situation where he/she has to deal with things rationally; thus remaining objective. This may be

the ideal scenario, but during the rightsizing process, reality will most probably force a principal to apply subjective, rather than objective, measures. This could lead to a principal not dealing with the situation rationally, resulting in more negative than positive outcomes.

Emotional Intelligence in this regard refers to refraining from dividing emotions and intellect. This will benefit effective workflow and creative insight (**Cooper 1997:32**), which will ease the practical management of the staff-reduction process. Emotional Intelligence involves aspects like intuition, trust (with the ultimate goal of building trusting relationships), integrity, breakthrough solutions, leadership, effectiveness, care, competence and creating the future (**Cooper 1997:32**).

If the principal and his/her staff display high levels of Emotional Intelligence, they will also experience more career success, build stronger relationships, lead more effectively and enjoy better health compared to those staff members with low emotional intelligence.

Within any staff-reduction process in an institution, the above aspects could only favour the administering of such a process. (**Cooper 1997:32**).

According to research done by Mayer & Salovey (**1997:141**) the role players in a school will promote success once they have grasped the desire for success that comes with emotional intelligence.

2.6.9 Teaching and learning

During the transformation stage the South African Education system was caught up in a very negative frame of mind, which was perceived in the same light by many educational stakeholders. This negativity originated from the new dispensation of Outcomes Based Education (henceforth OBE) that had been duly introduced into all public schools by the Minister of Education. Some stakeholders perceived OBE as just another change in the practice of teaching and learning processes in schools whilst others perceived it at the time as an unstructured, unplanned and a limited initiative.

2.6.10 The principal as administrator of the staff-reduction process.

In spite of the prescribed criteria, the task of the principal in administering the rightsizing process was very difficult. The fact that no principal had any experience or training with regard to rightsizing procedures, not only put the principal in an awkward situation, but some principals also experienced it as unfair labour practice as managed by the Education Department.

During the staff-reduction process, the principal's day-to-day responsibilities rapidly increase. The principal will also be expected to cope with unplanned changes, display greater management skills and take full accountability for certain outcomes. This transformation introduces a new era for principals with respect to their involvement in these processes as well as making decisions which affect them and their staff on a continuous basis (**Thurlow 2002:11**).

According to Van der Westhuizen (**1991:132**) the role and responsibilities of principals have undergone a tremendous change due to transformation requirements in the new democratic changes in South Africa. There is an increase of complexity within the institution, whilst principals need to adapt to change in such a manner that curriculum needs and related issues can be managed appropriately and professionally.

The South African Schools Act (SASA) (**South Africa, 1996**) states that the core role of the principals is to undertake the professional management of a school.

It can therefore be argued that the role of the principal, during a period of transformation, is one of integration, reflection on interpersonal relationships, the transfer of information and decision making.

Preedy, Glatter & Levacic (**1997:1**) argues that the task of the principal is characterised by interrelating different tasks such as development and maintenance of education quality to promote processes and outcomes in a school. Preedy, *et al* further advocate that educational quality relates to curriculum quality, which is perceived as the core business of a school with the main objective being learning. In other words, the principal's task, among others,

is to focus on effective teaching and learning, act as an instructional supervisor to assist educators to be more effective with learners and to maintain quality teaching and learning in his/her school. It is thus important for the principal to have control to assure quality of education. In this regard, Van der Westhuizen (1991:232) defines control as a management task that is aimed at ensuring that all planned goals and objectives are attained.

To safeguard the interrelated relations in the institution, Van der Westhuizen (1991:217) advocates that quality control should be done positively and it should be used to ensure that staff members do their preparation so that learners are taught properly. With the rightsizing process in mind, it is even more essential for principals to pursue the road of management control so that the school is not unnecessarily and unfairly harmed, and that all staff members can experience that regardless of which staff are to be made redundant, the principal's intentions are strictly beneficial for the school's effectiveness and smooth running.

When applying a process of staff reduction, several steps should be followed by the principal to activate the process of rightsizing.

At first, the principal should call a staff meeting where the identified staff, as well as the possible vacancies that could occur, will be discussed, considering the curricular needs of the schools and the LIFO-principle.

According to the Employment Educators Act (76 of 1998) it is recommended to consider the LIFO principle per post level, per subject, per phase. Teaching experience, and not qualification, must be used to determine educators in excess.

If and when needed, the state may introduce measures to promote redeployment by allowing educators to retire voluntarily, on condition that the educator concerned is declared in excess and the post stand be abolished. Educators to be declared in excess will then be included in a provincial redeployment list.

The biggest challenge for any school manager is to manage the new social complexities (transformation, rightsizing, staff reduction, HIV, redeployment, etc.)

in his/her school. The above-mentioned societal problems normally impact negatively on interpersonal relationships and morale of the school.

According to Evettes (1991:110) the Education Department expected principals to take the process forward and to make decisions over issues such as identifying excess educators and declaring them in excess. In their research, Gertz & Baptista (1995:20) argues that due to the immense difficulties of downsizing, many principals were stressed, morosed, more cautious and fatigued.

2.7 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that for principals to be able to survive this rightsizing process, they must understand the changes transformation brings as well as other issues that can impact on this process and what influence this will have on the day-to-day running of the school and the effectiveness of teaching and learning.

In Chapter Three the researcher will focus on the research methods by exploiting the research design and the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The preceding chapters provide the background to the research problem with the literature study in Chapter Two as the primary framework of the empirical study. The literature study in Chapter Two also serves as a basis to acquire more information about the topic with regard to principals' experiences during a staff-reduction process.

Neuman (1997:89) believes that a literature review is the knowledge or information that is established by other people and taken for granted to be accepted as the truth. Newman further believes that it is more appropriate for one to read what already exists about the research topic before one can respond positively or negatively. The literature study will also assist in making comparisons, responding to unanswered questions or criticising them.

To support this concept, four goals of conducting a literature-review have been described:

- To demonstrate a close relationship between a body of knowledge and the truth about that information;
- To link the new study to what has been established by previous researchers;
- To integrate any relevant information; and
- To collect additional information from other researchers to enable one to establish new ideas about the study.

The researcher obtained information relating to this research problem through the use of a one-to-one interview process.

For the purpose of this study, data were collected using a qualitative method. According to Cresswell (1998:15) a qualitative paradigm is a process of enquiry concerned with understanding a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting.

This chapter describes the strategy and methodology used in developing the research. By using the selected research strategy, the researcher examined the challenges that school principals face when administering a staff-reduction process. In this chapter the researcher will also address the research strategy, methods of data-collection, data processing techniques, validity, reliability, credibility and trustworthiness of the research.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design serves as a plan and structure of a research in order to maximise the validity of the research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1991:33). Qualitative research thus aims at producing data that are understandable, contextual and rich in detail.

According to Creswell (1994:162) qualitative research is perceived as descriptive because the researcher focuses on the process, meaning and understanding gained through fieldwork which occurs in natural settings where human behaviour and events occur. It is thus important to understand that qualitative research aims to understand the meaning that people attach to everyday life.

According to Strauss & Corbin (1990:19) qualitative methods can be used to understand what are behind the unknown phenomenon, in this case the experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process.

Principals involved in the process of staff reduction are the only ones to provide meaning and an understanding of this phenomenon. Their experiences and increasing management responsibilities during the NDoE's rightsizing strategy can only be known and understood when exploring a specific qualitative strategy.

In this research, the researcher will follow a process described as research management or planning. This process is supported by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:63) in their perception of a research design explaining it as a programme that guides the researcher when collecting, analysing and interpreting the observed facts.

The researcher has made use of an ethnographic design, which is characterised by observation to collect the necessary data. The data have been collected by asking questions to enable the researcher to acquire a better understanding of principals' experiences during a staff-reduction process. As explained by Mertens (1998:15), ethnography is a method designed to describe and analyse the practices and beliefs of different community groups. It is guided by psychological, educational or personal theories of the way things operate.

Neuman (1997:346) describes ethnography as a culture and a way of understanding the lives of the inhabitants of a place. It refers to society's activities, history, geography and structure.

This relates to Denzin & Lincoln's (1994:361) description of an interview whereby they perceive it as a process that involves asking questions and getting answers.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An investigation of experiences perceived by principals during a staff-reduction process has been conducted within a qualitative research paradigm.

Mertens (**1998:159**) explains a qualitative method as a method used to provide an in-depth description of a particular practice. Researchers study and attempt to understand the phenomenon in a natural setting. The data collected from the respondents are later interpreted.

The researcher uses the interviewing technique to conduct this study. The goal is to investigate matters such as the perceptions, experiences and actions of principals when applying the staff-reduction process, relationships between the individuals of the institution (including the principal) as well as other unforeseen factors influencing the day-to-day process of teaching and learning in the school.

Strauss & Corbin (**1990:17**) describe qualitative research as any type of research that produces findings or results by using no statistical methods or other means of measuring quantity and it can be used for gathering information about the functioning of an organization.

According to Macmillan & Schumacher (**1993:372**) qualitative research describes and analyses people's individual and collective social actions, beliefs, thoughts and perceptions. This is supported by De Marais & Lapan (**2004:14**) when they implicated that there are three specific social science research methods, i.e. watching people living their lives; asking people about their experiences and using words to tell stories.

Neuman (**1997: 328**), on the other hand, states that qualitative reports are preferred because of their descriptive nature and colourful details rather than informal, neutral statistical tones. He also believes that when people read qualitative reports, they use people and events in concrete social settings.

The school can be regarded as a very delicate social setting with numerous role players and stakeholders. Any change or transformation process can and will most probably be experienced as a threat, which will have an immediate influence on the management of such a change by all the different

stakeholders. This management activity naturally starts with the principal but will automatically cascade down to all the other levels of interested parties.

Therefore the study in question consists of handwritten field notes, which are based on documents, observations and interviews done with principals who have experienced a rightsizing process.

3.3.1 Literature study

In line with Neuman (1997:89) a literature review will be carried out in order to determine the knowledge or information that is established by other people and taken for granted to be the truth.

According to Creswell (1994:23) the literature is used to frame the problem in the introduction to the study and is again presented at the end of the study. It becomes a basis for comparing and contrasting the findings of the qualitative study.

3.3.2 Face-to-face individual interviews

Face-to-face individual interviews were conducted with individual principals during a research methodology workshop at the University of Pretoria (these principals are all currently completing their Masters degrees in Education Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria).

Maykut & Morehouse (1994:78) define an interview as a joint product of what interviewees and interviewers talk about together and how they talk with each other. Brown & Dowling (1998:60) contend that the purpose of conducting an interview is to probe beneath the surface of events, such as the behaviour (including utterances) of an individual, in order to explore the underlying processes from which these events arise.

This brought about in-depth knowledge and information of principals' experiences with regard to the rightsizing process. Many of these principals have experienced, first hand, the direct influence of a staff-reduction process

within their individual institutions and how it impedes not only on the day-to-day management of the school, but also on the work life of the principal as experienced with regard to increased management responsibilities and the management of new concepts like rightsizing, redress, staff redeployment and staff reduction.

3.3.3 Selection of participants

The participants in the one-to-one interviews were selected purposefully by means of the purposeful sampling method. According to Booyse et al (1993:90) the qualitative researcher searches purposefully for participants who will therefore supply rich and detailed information about the research investigation.

Booyse et al (1993: 90) further advocates that the researcher is interested in an in-depth understanding of the purposeful sampling to achieve his/her research aim.

In this case the researcher purposively selected respondents who are school principals that have experienced rightsizing and a staff-reduction process in their respective institutions and who were personally involved in the process in one way or another.

3.3.4 Data collection strategy

According to Mouton & Marais (1991:43 – 51) qualitative research is an in-depth analysis of a phenomenon in which the researcher collects and interprets the data and reports the findings in a descriptive manner. The researcher will use a narrative format to construct the respondents' real life experiences during a staff-reduction process. Thus resulting into extended quotes when respondents are telling their respective stories.

LeCompte & Preissle (1992:158) argue that the concept “data” can be defined as any kind of information that researchers can identify and accumulate to facilitate answers to their research problems.

According to Creswell (1994:153) the collection and analysis of data are activities that occur simultaneously. He further argues that the researcher is concerned with producing believable and trustworthy findings. This process can be experienced as interactive and is concerned primarily with selecting and integrating data.

Maykut & Morehouse (1994:43) assert that the data of qualitative inquiry consist most often of the words and actions of people and thus requires methods that allow the researcher to capture language and behaviour.

The researcher will gather the data through individual interviews by using field notes and the recording of interviews on digital audiotape. The recording will be transcribed verbatim to support the data analysis process.

The most common categories of data collection methods according to LeCompte & Preissle (1992:158) are:

- Observation;
- Interviewing;
- Research design and instruments, and
- Content analysis of human artefacts.

In this dissertation, the researcher has found that the use of face-to-face individual interviews as a basic method of collecting data was the most appropriate technique. This was supported by an initial observation process to be followed by a comprehensive study.

During the data collection process, the researcher asked open-ended, semi-structured questions which is supported by the statement of Denzin & Lincoln (1994:430) that observation, interviews, documents and modes of collecting

information may be open-ended, unstructured, event-driven or more tightly defined, structured and researcher-driven.

For the respondents to respond freely it is important to know that unstructured or semi-structured interviews can be experienced as formal or informal. However this allows the respondents to answer freely to the interviewer's questions. It also allows the respondents to express their honest feelings during the interview.

The aim of this research is to gain some insight into the respondents' perspective of a staff-reduction process. Interviews on an individual basis promote good human relationships between the researcher and the respondents.

With the above in mind it is sometimes necessary to correct and edit field notes as a primary point of departure, whilst the verbatim transcription of the audiotapes could also need correcting and editing.

3.3.5 Data analysis

Creswell (1994:153) suggests that data analysis can be conducted simultaneously with data collection, data interpretation and narrative report writing. The researcher would like to establish an in-depth exploration of the topic where a descriptive narrative can be utilized and perceived as sufficient and appropriate for this study instead of using a more detailed analysis of index cards, inquiry sheets, numbers, letters, colours, concepts, themes and social structures.

According to Maykut & Morehouse (1994:126) the researcher wants to stay close to the respondents' feelings, thoughts and actions as they broadly relate to the focus of the research.

The purpose of analysing data is to integrate all information gathered from all the interviewees, and to describe what is learned with a minimum of

interpretation. When arriving at certain propositions, the researcher adheres closely to the feelings, thoughts and actions of the respondents as these broadly relate to the focus of the researcher (**Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:126**).

They further argue that the audiotape receives credit for facilitating both the collection and analysis of data. This is an interactive process and is primarily involved with the selecting and the integrating of data.

Creswell (**1994:153**), on the other hand, describes the process of data analysis as an eclectic one. He also suggests that the researcher is allowed to develop categories that suit the study and to make comparisons and contrasts where possible. He also asserts that data analysis requires the researcher to be open to possibilities and able to see contrary or alternative explanations for findings.

With this in mind the researcher will therefore present the data analysis in a simple descriptive way.

The following procedures will be followed in the analysis of this research.

3.3.5.1 Transcribing the interview

Stewart & Shamdasani (**1990:103**) argue that transcribing the interview is when the information contained on an audiotape is rewritten verbatim. They continue by saying that during this process the researcher transcribes the information on the audiotape onto paper, with just enough editing to increase readability, but it is important that the character of the respondents' comments is maintained even if, at times, they use poor grammar or appear confused (**Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990:104**).

With the face-to-face individual interview the researcher acquires a better understanding of the interviewees and their feelings, behaviour, experience and attitudes during the staff-reduction process. From the above information,

the researcher developed specific categories to describe the findings to other people. According to Maykut & Morehouse (1994:128) a perception exists that data analysis is the meaning derived from the words and actions of the participants. From these words and actions, smaller units of meaning in the data will be identified, which will serve as the basis for defining larger categories.

3.3.5.2 The cut-and-paste technique

During the data analysis process, the researcher will pursue a cut-and-paste technique as supported by Stewart & Shamdasani (1990:104) with reference to:

- Going through the transcript;
- Identifying the sections of the transcript that are relevant to the research questions;
- Classifying major topics and issues;
- Identifying materials in the transcript related to each topic;
- Coding or marking different topics between the individual respondents;
- Cutting apart and sorting the coded copy of the transcribed interview so that all the material relevant to a particular topic is put together;
- Treating each topic with a brief introduction;
- Using the various pieces of material as supporting material; and
- Incorporating this supporting material into an interpretative analysis.

3.3.5.3 Data interpretation

When the data has been analysed, the interpretation process follows. This is supported by Patton (1990:144) who attached meaning and significance to the gathered data by explaining the descriptive themes, categories and patterns and looking for relationships and links between the descriptive dimensions and variables of the data.

3.4 THE ROLE OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher is a secondary school principal in a heterogeneous school with extensive experience as an educator and as a principal.

Since the introduction of the rightsizing process in education in 1996 the researcher's school became involved with this process where he has experienced first hand the impact of staff reduction as introduced by the NDoE as part of its transformation policy for education in South Africa.

The main objective of the NDoE with this rightsizing process was to address the racial inequalities of the past to promote democratic transformation and at the same time address related issues like redress and staff redeployment in distinctive institutions.

With this in mind the researcher's interest to undertake this study originate mainly from:

- The transformation process where the principal is perceived as the key agent of change;
- The inexperience of principals with regard to the increasing education-system management responsibilities and the influence of this on the day-to-day management and work life of the principal;
- The fact that principals have not had sufficient training to manage the rightsizing process;
- The reactions of the educators in the school during the introduction and the implementation of the staff-reduction process (the principal and the staff experienced feelings like anxiety, loss of security, incompetence, a low morale and many found themselves traumatised);
- The influence of staff reduction on relations and communication amongst staff members;
- The number of problems reported by other principals during principals' meetings;

- The impact of staff reduction on effective teaching and learning (the reduction of staff due to teacher:learner ratio) resulted in bigger classes and an increase in the workload, eventually restricting effective teaching and learning.

3.5 INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOLS

The four principals in this research project were purposefully selected so that they and their schools would represent a range of different social and economic backgrounds.

Although they range from primary to secondary schools, it can be perceived that they are also similar in a way that all of them play an exceptional role in their communities.

They are known within their communities as “good” schools, characterised by their quality inputs with regard to teaching and learning, managing high overall educational standards, resulting in very high pass rates and follow-through systems for their learners. These institutions are also involved with specific pilot programmes and they are all recognised as centres of learning in their distinctive communities.

3.5.1 School Alpha

This school is located in the northern suburbs of Pretoria and has been in existence since 1956 with a current enrolment of 1250, with 49 educators. Forty educators are paid by the Education Department and nine educators paid by the School Governing Body.

During this time the school has undergone dramatic cultural changes associated with racial integration and the introduction of parallel medium with English and Afrikaans mediums of instruction for Grade 8 and 9. Dual medium of instruction was introduced for Grades 10 – 12 to accommodate all learners with regard to their different subject choices.

School Alpha is known as an ex model-C (previously politically advantaged) Secondary school with a mixed composition of boys (650) and girls (600) of which 15% is English speaking (predominantly black learners) and 85% are Afrikaans speaking (predominantly white learners). The school is achieving a high standard of academic performance every year and is rated under the top achievers in the District with an average pass rate of 97% every year.

Funding for the school is generated through normal school fees, sponsorships and the annual grant from the Provincial Educational Department (PED). The school boasts excellent facilities and is involved with a daily feeding scheme, which involves many underprivileged families of the school. Students in School Alpha come from the immediate feeder zone as well as from some townships in the region.

The current principal was initially appointed as a senior deputy principal. In 1996 he was acting-principal and was officially appointed as principal in 1997. He had been involved in the whole process of rightsizing since the first staff-reduction process started in 1996 and has encountered several staff reductions since.

The principal is currently completing his Masters degree studies in Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria.

3.5.2 School Bravo

This school is located in the countryside in the Mpumalanga Province. The school has been in existence since 1916 with an enrolment of 500 learners. School Bravo is an ex-model C public primary school. The school consists of 90% white learners, 7% black learners and 3% of the learners are coloured. There is an equal number of boys and girls in the school. The staff is composed of 15 educators who are paid by the PED and eight educators who are paid by the SGB.

School funding is generated from the standard annual school fees and in some instances from sponsors. The medium of instruction of the school is Afrikaans.

The school is known in the community for its outstanding annual academic performance and boasts excellent facilities and premises. Students in School Bravo come from the immediate town feeder area and the adjacent township extensions.

The school is currently involved in a development initiative with two other schools in the township where they arrange for the maintenance of the different school premises. The school is also involved as a pilot school for an inclusive education project where learners with special needs are accommodated in the school system. Currently they have 17 such learners, with one such a learner placed in each class. This is a great initiative with high expectations for the future.

3.5.3 School Charlie

This school is located in an inner-city area in the Gauteng Province. The school was founded in 1908. The school has a learner enrolment of 326 learners. Only five learners in the school are not white.

The school is known as an ex-model C, public primary school, offering Grade R to 7. The school has had outstanding academic performance in the past few years, having a 100% pass rate for Grade 7 learners.

The school is involved with several community projects. It operates an orphanage, a centre for the homeless and a feeding scheme at the school. This school was rated as one of the Top Five primary schools in Gauteng in 2005. For this, they have received a grant for staff development from the Gauteng Education Department.

The school depends on fundraising initiatives, standard school fees during the year and the annual grant from the Gauteng Education Department. The majority of the learners come from the East-Rand. The school plans to open a pre-school facility, which is high in demand in the community.

The current principal applied for the post after having been at another school. He was appointed in this promotional post in October 1996 and has been involved with staff-reduction processes twice. He relies heavily on his vast managerial experiences. The principal is currently busy with his Masters degree in Education Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria.

3.5.4 School Delta

This school is located in the northern rural part of the North West Province. The school has been in existence since January 1993 and is a mixed school with 120 boys and 170 girls. This school is a middle public school with its origins in the ex-Bophuthatswana Education Department. All the learners are black with English as the medium of instruction. The feeder zone of the school is outside the immediate rural area. Seeing that there are no specific set barriers for feeder zones, learners are from far and wide.

The school offers Grade 7 to 9 and boasts an over 90% pass rate. All the learners leaving the middle school go to the high school in the village. The facilities are not very good and can be perceived as sub-standard with no gardens or fields. On the other hand, the school offers a fully equipped computer centre with 30 computers. The school is funded by a nominal annual school fee together with the Education Department's annual grant and some fundraising initiatives, among others, the tuck shop.

The principal has been managing the school since its founding, 13 years ago. Since the transformation process in 1994, the principal has been involved with a staff-reduction process once.

Currently the principal is busy completing a Masters degree in Educational Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

According to Bless & Highson-Smith (**1995:100**), the participants have ethical rights that need to be respected by researchers, such as privacy or voluntary participation, anonymity and confidentiality.

The researcher should be honest and objective at all times. The participants on the other hand have to be informed about the research, the purpose of the research, its origin, the aims of the research and the possible application of the research results.

The participants should also be notified in advance that they have a right to privacy and protection from any possible harmful side effects of the research as well as the protection of their identity (**Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:372**).

Further assurance should be given that no participants' responses will be disclosed in public and that confidentiality will be assured by using either pseudo-names or other references. Their status will also not be revealed at all.

3.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the researcher would like to indicate that the above Research Design and Methodology is an overview of the research methods to be used during this study.

In the remaining chapters, the collected data will be analysed and the interpretation discussed regarding the findings and comments of the perceptions of principals during a staff-reduction process.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The researcher indicated in Chapter Three which strategy and methodology will be used in the development of the research. In this chapter the researcher presents the data analysis of the interview data.

The researcher conducted four face-to-face, individual interviews with principals representing primary, intermediate and secondary schools with regard to staff reduction in their respective institutions by using a narrative style to establish their particular feelings and frustrations during such a process. These principals are from different provinces and are all Masters Degree students in Education Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria. They all experienced the initial process of rightsizing and eventually staff reduction.

These principals were all expected to apply staff reduction where it was expected from them to act as agents of change for the implementation and co-ordination of the NDoE transformation process.

The data is organised in to main themes, categories and, where applicable, in to sub-categories. The themes, categories and sub-categories are supported by verbatim quotations to clarify certain issues on the verbatim transcripts.

Table 4.1 represents the identified themes, categories and sub-categories.

TABLE 4.1 THE IDENTIFIED THEMES, CATEGORIES AND SUB-CATEGORIES

THEMES	CATEGORIES	SUB-CATEGORIES
4.2 Principal's experiences of staff-reduction	4.2.1 Influence of the NDoE	4.2.1.1 Transformation Legislation 4.2.1.2 Operational Issues 4.2.1.3 Policies and Circulars 4.2.1.4 District Task Teams and Training 4.2.1.5 Implementation of Legislation
	4.2.2 Work life of the principal	4.2.2.1 The principal as agent of change 4.2.2.2 The principal as co-ordinator of staff reduction 4.2.2.3 The principal as decision maker 4.2.2.4 The principal's perception of staff reduction
	4.2.3 Emotional experiences of the principal	4.2.3.1 Stress 4.2.3.2 Experiences of conflict 4.2.3.3 Impact on the principal 4.2.3.4 Motivation
	4.2.4 Impact on family life	
4.3 Management of staff-reduction	4.3.1 Staff-management	4.3.1.1 Professionalism 4.3.1.2 Staff provisioning 4.3.1.3 Communication with staff 4.3.1.4 Educators employment contract
	4.3.2 Planning	4.3.2.1 Criteria and steps for staff reduction 4.3.2.2 Elements of effective planning 4.3.2.3 Communication with stakeholders 4.3.2.4 Implementation of staff-reduction
	4.3.3 Educational factors	4.3.3.1 Impact on the school 4.3.3.2 Finances 4.3.3.3 Counselling
4.4 Implications on relationships	4.4.1 Communication levels	4.4.1.1 Between the principal, the SMT and staff members 4.4.1.2 Between the principal and staff in

		excess 4.4.1.3 Between the principal and remaining staff 4.4.1.4 Between the principal and the NDoE 4.4.1.5 Between the principal and parents /SGB 4.4.1.6 Between the principal and learners
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The researcher will now present a discussion of themes, categories and sub-categories which are presented in Table 4.1 above, as identified from the interview data.

4.2 PRINCIPAL'S EXPERIENCES OF STAFF-REDUCTION

4.2.1 Influence of the NDoE

Since 1994 the main aim of the ANC was to promote political and social transformation in South Africa. For this to transpire, many transformation challenges were experienced on many levels of society. Educational transformation, however, impacted largely on many people's lives. To support all these changes in education in an acceptable manner, new transformation legislation had to be implemented.

All the respondents accord this transformation process with very different emphasis with regard to certain issues. This is evident in the following presentation:

4.2.1.1 Transformation Legislation

The respondents' first experience of a staff-reduction process was when policy documents relating to rationalisation were formulated in the ELRC and promulgated as official Education policy, addressing the inequalities of the past. This rightsizing strategy of equity and redress by the NDoE had an immense

influence on principals' emotions, especially where they were distributed as provincial circulars and district memoranda to schools and, as perceived by some principals, not addressed properly through means of discussions or notifications at a principals' meeting. These circulars and memoranda determined the manner in which principals managed the whole process of transformation, change management as well as the specific criteria and steps applied in their respective schools. It is evident from the following deliberations:

I was an acting principal at the time which, made it more difficult. I came to the school as one of two deputy principals and at that stage there was no staff-reduction process and all of a sudden we got notified in October 1995. I had no prior history of staff-reduction so it was a blinder coming to my side and we have been notified from Head Office obviously through circulars and we had to go through the process. So we sat as a SMT, school management team and I remember that the first time there were many hiccoughs in the circulars concerning the law and to implement the law, and we had to work through that.

Uhm, there was policy documents to that effect (Yes..), a circular (Yes, a circular..). I read in the circular that... and there after I made some photocopies for each and every educator and we went into a staff meeting where I went through the circular so that at least all of us had a common understanding (..of what's going to happen..) of what's going to happen.

...¹maar ons het probeer en ons het gekyk en ons het die kurrikulum gevat en die kurrikulum hanteer en daarvolgens gekyk watter mense ...wat het ons nodig vir die skool en dit wat ons gesê het ons nie nodig het nie het ons besluit is die oortolliges.

Respondents contest that through applying the criteria of curriculum needs and LIFO, schools stand to lose some of their quality staff. They argue as follows:

You see, that is a sad thing about LIFO, because when you apply LIFO as is, you may lose the better staff member in a school situation and, and what we did, as I

said, we started off with the curriculum needs of the school and then we went into phases as well to see, but you cannot go into the senior phase alone, or the intermediate phase or the foundation phase. We had to look at the whole system of staff at your school, what you have and how you are going to be able to utilize there after. So you need to go back to the job descriptions of all staff members as well to see what they are worth in total for the school. And then you not only go back to the curriculum, because the curriculum is only what you expect them to do in class, but you look at the involvement of the learners as well, because the Primary Phase of Primary School involves more than this.

In some instances, respondents applied the option of voluntary severance packages to comply with the new staff compliment. They comment as follows:

²Toe het ons gekyk wie kan ons oortollik ... wie kan ons sonder mee klaarkom. Ek het dinge geherskuif en geherrangskik. So, die kurrikulumvereistes was die aspek wat ons alles deur gebruik het, maar ek kan onthou daar was ander ook soos Last In ... (daai LIFO-sistees), maar daar was nog 'n derde ding ook wat jy kon gedoen het, daar was drie redes wat jy ... (skeidingspakette).

4.2.1.2 Operational issues

Due to apartheid, education as a whole had a very negative connotation especially within the ranks of previously disadvantaged groups in the education environment. The democratic government then introduced the so-called operational requirements, which refers to issues like equity and redress, redistribution, influence on quality of teaching and learning and an ongoing process of staff assessment. Respondents couldn't understand their operational issues, which are illustrated by the following comments:

¹ But we tried and looked at the curriculum and according to that, determined what people.... what our needs for the school are and that which we don't need, we regarded as to be in excess.

² Then we looked at who can be in excess ... who we could do without. I re-shuffled and re-organised things. We have used curriculum needs as the primary aspect, but I can remember there was also "Last in..." that LIFO system, but there was a third thing that was allowed, there were three reasons that one... Voluntary severance packages were one of the three.

I didn't understand why all of a sudden we were asked to hold this and it is only this year, or late last year, we were told to do it again, but fortunately for us we weren't affected.

Well, the redress at that stage was operational from, from Government side. That's their point of view. That is why they are doing it. Immediately the SMT said that if this happens, what is the impact going to be on the school so we had to assess our staffing distribution as a whole, so to see where everybody is going to fit in, as well as changes and moves of staff-members from the Foundation Phase to the Intermediate Phase to get your staff so that could meet the curriculum needs of the school. But it was not only curriculum in the classes but also extramural activities outside the class.

The reason for this was from an operational view and you had to distinguish between the two.

On financial matters as part of operational issues the respondents have the following to say:

³*Uit die aard van die saak het geldsake ook 'n invloed gehad en begin knyp op die Beheerliggaamskant en ons moes toe, ek moes toe van drie (3) van die nege (9) ontslae raak...*

⁴*Op die ou-end wat gebeur ... toe ons by daai punt kom het ek so gegroei dat ek so baie personeel gehad het nê, maar die finansies het begin breek. (Ja). Toe moes ek nou drie van daai mense laat gaan om my balansstate weer behoorlik te laat klop...*

4.2.1.3 Policies and circulars

To promote the Governments' initiative of transformation in the education system, a strategy of equity and redress had to be implemented in schools. This initiative

³ Of course money also had a big influence and the Governing body felt the pinch and so we had to get rid of three out of nine staff members.

was supported by the inception of several acts, policies, circulars and District memoranda. With regard to the above, respondents have the following to say:

It was also not very easy because you had to relate back to the laws, circulars and memos from the District.

⁵*...ek het my ook self voorgeneem daar was so tien wat ek gesê het, jis ek kan hulle nie verloor nie. Ek het myself voorgeneem en gesê as hulle nou deel van daai drie gaan wees, dan moet dit dan nou maar so uitwerk ... uh, ... net om die proses gelyke beregtiging te gee.*

4.2.1.4 District Task Team and Training

To initiate the concept of staff reduction, and at the same time address the imbalances and injustices of the past, the NDoE realised that implementation could only be successful on condition that all new legislation, policies and circulars be communicated to the respective role players. The respondents felt that this did not happen and express their comment as follows:

Yes, but only when it came to the final decision that had to be made by the principal in any case. The District then communicated this decision based on the facts given by the school, the SGB and the SMT ...

One of the respondents contested differently due to his involvement with the District Task Team and the Provincial Task Team, but also express a concern with regard to proper involvement. He has this to say:

⁶*...omdat rightsizing in ons provinsie 'n jaarlikse proses is ... ons het nie 'n drie-jaarlikse proses nie. In Mpumalanga is dit 'n jaarlikse proses. Jy kry jou*

⁴ In the end, what happened ... when we got to that point, I had such growth, had so many staff, but the finances limited us. In order to balance the books, three of those people had to go.

⁵ I decided that if they were going to be part of those three, then it had to work like that, as long as the process would be applied according to the principal of equality.

⁶ ...because rightsizing in our province is not a three-yearly process. In Mpumalanga it is accepted as a yearly process. You get your staff-compliment. If there are too many educators they are made redundant and have to be moved. I serve on that District Task Team as well as on the Provincial Task Team (**Yes**), now even today we are still shuffling them around.

diensstaat. As jy te veel het word hulle oortollig verklaar of jy moet hulle skuif, of wat ook al. Ek's mos op daai District Task Team en op daai Provincial Task Team (Ja), nou ons skuif nou nog.

Respondents are of the opinion that they have not received any training at all with regard to the staff-reduction process and argue:

No nothing, absolutely nothing. But what we got was a session with District at that stage to say this is the circular, work through the circular and this is the process that you should go through.

I would not call it training.

With the lack of training from the NDoE or the Provincial Department, respondents make the following statement:

Then you had to do some in-service training and motivate so that your staff could understand the two schools of thought in teaching. This still exists today.

The respondents argue that the NDoE or the Provincial Department are both in a position to make a difference by hosting an information session for principals. They highlight the following:

⁷Ek dink ook nie ... baie mense het gesê: "Ja, maar die Departement moet dit doen." My persoonlike gevoel is, hulle kan dit nie doen nie, want uh, ... (korrek), ons by die skool weet wat die behoeftes van die skool is. Ons weet wat kan ons aangaan en wat het ons nie nodig nie, en as die Departement dit gedoen het dan sou hulle 'n hele klomp verkeerde besluite geneem het. Hulle sou mense dalk weggevat het wat die mense nie mee sou klaargekom het nie, wat probleme sou gegee het, so ek het, ek het verkies dat ons dit self doen.

⁷ I don't think ... many people said: "Yes, allow the Department to do it (staff reduction)." It is my personal view that they are not capable because we at the school know the needs of the school. We know what we are capable of and what we don't need and if the Department had to do it, they would have made many wrong decisions. They most probably would have taken people away whom we could not get along with out, so I prefer that we did it on our own.

Participants had a perception that expert advice (not the NDoE in this instance) during the staff-reduction process was extremely essential to help and support all the stakeholders, especially those staff to be made redundant, to cope with this staff-reduction process. The respondents have the following to say:

⁸...toe ek vir (Naam) kry om met hulle te kom werk oor die proses ... toe hy klaar is met hulle, toe ... vir die twee dae ... toe sê ek: “Ek dink ek en jy het ook ‘n sessie nodig,” dat jy net bietjie die deur toemaak dat hy net bietjie met my ook werk. Ek dink nogal hy het vir my ‘n heel ander persepsie gegee.

4.2.1.5 Implementation of legislation

Legalising the redress initiative was perceived just as a primary process, which still needed to be implemented before transformation changes could be perceived as effective and workable within schools. Legislation brought an open mindset with regard to the implementation phase and its impact on the lives of educators. Respondents’ perceptions are echoed by:

...but they also had to look at legal applications. Staff also realized that they must look closely to the circulars because this could impact on them.

Staff was more focused on the legal things in a school. In the past, if the principal tells them, they believed in the principal. Now all of a sudden, they had to think for themselves and to protect their own position...

...and I had to explain in the interview with them we have tried to follow the process as set out; right or wrong and we came out unscathed on the other side...

Some respondents were forced by their Governing Bodies to apply a different focus with regard to staff reduction. They hold different views:

⁸ ...when I got (name) to work with them with regard to the process ... when he finished with them after two days ... I then said: “I think you and I also need a session,” so that you can close the door and work through a session with me. I think he then gave me a total different perception.

⁹*Hulle het vir my gesê jy moet eintlik na ons terugkom met wettige proses, maar sê vir ons hoe het jy hierop besluit en vir ons 'n voorlegging maak oor hoe het jy by daai name uitgekom...*

4.2.2 Work life of the principal

4.2.2.1 The principal as agent of change

Respondents had feelings that the NDoE did not utilise school principals in the correct manner – instead they misused them by expecting them to act on their behalf as agents of change. They say:

¹⁰*Ek weet op daai stadium het baie ouens gevoel maar hulle skuif nou net hulle probleme op ons af...*

We were used to a way of leading and managing your school and now all of a sudden you had to make changes. It brought a bit of negativity into the staff as well...

4.2.2.2 The principal as co-ordinator of staff reduction

The respondents' perception is that principals were not particularly well informed how to manage the process of staff reduction, but were expected to serve as co-ordinators during this process. They contest as follows:

Yes, I was the coordinator of the whole process.

Yes, I was the coordinator and being the principal of the school, it was expected of me. I had to do it but I have to come back to the leadership thing it was not only to manage the process, that was easy.

⁹ They told me to come back to them with a legal process and to tell them how I decided (who was to be made redundant) and present the names of the ones I had decided on.

¹⁰ I know that at that stage, many guys felt that they (NDoE) were just shoving their problems onto us...

To be co-ordinator also had its benefits with regard to better communication, as emphasised by the following:

Until the process is over, then the communication becomes relaxed again and everybody goes for the common goal. It is easier to get back into the system because they then realise they were not the chosen ones to be made redundant, but it was not easy.

¹¹*Ek was die koördineerder wat aan die hoof van alles gestaan het. Dit het dit so moeilik gemaak. Dit was 'n spanningsvolle tyd vir my gewees, baie moeilik...*

4.2.2.3 The principal as decision-maker

The principal, as the most senior manager in the school, had to make the final decision with regard to who should be made redundant. This is evident from the following deliberations:

The final decision was the principal. That was the bad thing about it because we had to get the input of the SMT and as a principal; I am the professional manager and had to make the final decision. The SGB was not involved initially but the chairperson was only notified about the SMT's decision. As I said this was a management decision. So the principal was the guy that had to stand up and say: "This is it," and being criticised.

...that you have to make the decision and say what is in the best interest of the school.

Me and the SMT and then there were a few members of the Governing Body at that meeting.

No, they didn't decide with me. Well it was the SMT, together with the staff members.

¹¹ I was the co-ordinator and was leading the process. That is what made it so difficult. It was a stressful time for me, very difficult ...

Some principals had to make the final decision to maintain productivity and still deliver tasks and functions. This is illustrated by:

¹²*Om die finansies te laat balanseer en nie om die produktiwiteit iewers in te laat boet by die skool nie en om nie iewers te laat slap lê by die skool nie en om funksies en take te doen wat ons nog altyd gedoen het, moet alles nog net so in plek bly, maar die besluit is eintlik deur my geneem en toe deurgegee na die Beheerliggaam toe...*

¹³*Nou op die ou einde dan besluit jy in belang van die skool wat is die behoefte en jy gee nie vir almal wat hulle wil hê nie, maar die mense het begrip daarvoor, so, wat dit aanbetref, ek dink die stelsel het gemaak dat die mense voel hulle is deel van die proses, en uhm ... ons kon dit inkorporeer.*

4.2.2.4 The principals' perception of staff reduction

The respondents felt that because principals were not involved in the initial planning of the staff-reduction process, they therefore formulated their own perception of this process. They denote:

I still didn't understand. You know what I told my people? "Hold them." The Department said they were going to make it easier for us to work. I thought they are going to increase and instead they reduced them. I told them we thought we are going to work like whites because at white schools learners are few in class and there are more educators but then I realised that they wanted to like people to work like us in over crowded classes with less staff members. It was the opposite of what I expected.

¹² To balance the finances and not jeopardise productivity at the school and still deliver functions and tasks (which were always done) to keep everything in tact, the final decision was actually made by me and the School Governing Body was notified later on...

¹³ Then in the end you make a final decision to benefit the school. You determine the needs of the school and don't grant everyone what they want, but the people understood this and related to it. So at the end people felt that they were part of the implementation process and could therefore be incorporated into the new compensation.

¹⁴*Ek was op daai stadium ook nog nie lank by die skool gewees nie. Ek het in September 1994 by die skool begin as senior-adjunkhoof so op daai stadium was ek net so 'n bietjie langer as 'n jaar by die skool gewees. Dit was vir my 'n nagmerrietyd gewees. Dit was een van die moeilikste tye in my lewe gewees, in my skoolloopbaan gewees, want ons het 'n hele klomp mense, ek dink by die tien mense het ons te veel gehad wat ons nou toe moes van ontslae raak en te besluit daaroor.*

¹⁵*Die groot ding van 'n skoolhoof is, ek sien as 'n mens hierdie goed beleef, sien jy dit kom en jy weet hier lê 'n pad voor jou en hier is dinge wat nou gedoen moet word en hoe gaan ... hoe gaan 'n ou keuses maak aan die einde van die dag om te besluit...*

4.2.3 Emotional experiences of the principal

4.2.3.1 Stress

With the inception of the staff reduction process, principals found themselves caught up in emotional turmoil. This is presented in the following comment:

Yes, yes obviously when managing the process. You know, you have to keep it for yourself, lots of stress levels, maybe said something that I shouldn't have said, even in the one-to-one confrontation when notifying the staff members...

Respondents applied a no-nonsense attitude during the staff reduction process but attested to be very emotionally drained, short-tempered and in many instances demonstrated high stress levels. They contend as follows:

Fortunately not. I got a bit short-tempered but that was simply...

¹⁴ I had not been at the school for a very long time. I started at the school in September 1994 as the senior deputy principal, in other words, I was at the school just over a year. I experienced this as a nightmare-period. It was one of the most difficult times in my whole life as well as in my school career, because we had several people that we had to place in excess after deciding over their careers.

¹⁵ When you are a principal and you experience this process, you are capable of seeing what is coming your way – what lies ahead, and that there is something that must be taken care of ... and how are you going to make choices to come to a final decision at the end of the day...

They didn't understand me but later on I realised that it was the stress that was responsible for this. Sometimes I did not even want to talk to my family, yes, I did develop high blood pressure.

Respondents argued that in some instances, principals developed stress-related illnesses. These arguments are confirmed by:

I think I was stressed because, like I am saying that, later on I had realised that I had develop high blood pressure, even though at that time I did not realise or think that I was stressed.

¹⁶*'n Bitter moeilike tyd om deur te gaan. Ek moet eerlikwaar sê ek het sleg geslaap. Ek is nie 'n ou wat probleme het met slaap nie. Ek is rustig, jy weet, ek kan my afsluit van die werk en die probleme af. Maar daai hele tyd, jy't 'n spanning in jousef gehad, jy't 'n onrustigheid in jousef gehad en dis al wat jy aan kon dink. Jy't heeltyd net gedink aan: Hoe doen ek dit? Hoe doen ek dat? En dit het alles, alle denke was daaroor. Jou funksionering as hoof en as mens het alles net daaroor gegaan en jy het basies eintlik die ander goed geïgnoreer.*

¹⁷*...toe dog ek dis 'n grap, ek dog nee dit kan nie wees nie, daar's nie 'n manier wat ons ... ons kan nie met tien onderwysers minder in die skool hê en regkom nog steeds ons werk doen en goeters nie. Maar later het die werklikheid ingesink en besef maar dit is so, en dit was 'n bitter moeilike tyd.*

¹⁸*... hulle het besef dit is vir my 'n baie ernstige saak want dit het ongelooflike stres op my gesit.*

Respondents are of the opinion that the stress principals encountered, was due to their traumatic experience with staff reduction. They have the following to say:

¹⁶ ...a very difficult time to go through. I must be honest, I didn't sleep well at the time, and I am not someone who has trouble sleeping. I am a calm, relaxed person and can easily withdraw from work or problems – but when one is experiencing stress within yourself, showing a constant restlessness, that is the only thing on your mind. All thoughts are focussed on how to manage this staff-reduction process and in the end one ignore other things.

¹⁷ I thought it was a joke ... no way that we could cope without those ten educators and still deliver quality work. Only later I realised that what was happening was not only reality, but also the truth. This was a very difficult time.

¹⁸ ...they realised that for me it was a very serious matter, because it placed tremendous strain on me.

That was the most traumatising experience in my “principalship”.

Because even though they say we are not identifying people, we are identifying the needs (okay, I understand), which are attached to somebody ... we had to identify somebody ... and for me it was very traumatic.

...because the principal at that stage was a very lonely figure – you could go nowhere, accept your District official to speak to, but when it comes to personal stuff, how you feel about it, how you - how you, you know the trauma that goes with it when telling a person, “listen, I am taking your job away from you,” that chairman of the SGB at the stage was very, very, very thoughtful and co-operative with that so I could at least release the stress and talk to him and we could come to some conclusion and say: “Okay, this is the route to follow, and not that”,...

4.2.3.2 Experiences of conflict

Where people are affected due to change in a specific environment, it naturally develops into negativity, which automatically results in conflict for those affected. Respondents highlight the following comments:

¹⁹*...maar die mense wat deur die proses gegaan het en hy’s oortollig verklaar en hulle was nog lank nog kwaad vir my, ten spyte van die feit dat hulle later ingetrek is en permanente poste gekry het.*

We’ve got certain criteria and steps to follow: filling in the documents, they were all there but it involved people, it involved their future. Some of them, three of them, left teaching after this process because they felt that after 15 years in the school “what do I get, what do I get”?

So you had a problem with your staff-members. You had to facilitate that as well and that created some problems, but, but one goes through it.

¹⁹ But the people who went through the process and were eventually declared in excess, they were angry with me, still for a long time, regardless of the fact that they have been accommodated into substantive posts since then.

Yes, they asked: “Why me, why me?” and I had to explain in the interview with them we have tried to follow the process as set out; right or wrong and we came out unscathed on the other side, but as I said, you know, three staff members left teaching after that so it must have had an impact on them so that they could decide that teaching is not for me anymore and that...

...sitting in the staff room, having a cup of tea. That also got very cold and it was manipulated by the staff. So it was on an only need-to-know basis. “I will only speak to you when it is necessary.” (Staff). That sort of thing you know.

In some instances respondents saw differences not particularly as conflict but rather as emotional experiences as perceived by those involved. Respondents believe:

²⁰*Weet jy, ek moet regtig vir jou sê, ek dink omdat ons dit so reg bestuur het, uh ... nie konflik nie, ek dink emosie. (Ja) Dit is ‘n emosionele ding hierdie maar dit is ‘n...*

Yes, it did. But as I said to you, even today, after ten, twelve, thirteen years, I see the people in the street and you always have the eye-look that says: “you are the guy that was responsible for my redundancy. You are the reason that I didn’t stay.” Even years after, if they realise, they will still say: “Why me?” That question will always be there.

By focusing on the solution, instead of the problem, conflict was also perceived in a positive manner. The following statements confirm this assertion:

²¹*Kyk, die konflik wat ek beleef het was soos die een brief ook wat gestuur is. Van die onderwysers wat ook deel van, seker maar deel van die komitee was, wat die gevoel was, uh ... ”my vriendin was ‘n beter onderwyser as daai een, hoekom*

²⁰ You know what, I must say this; I think it is because we have managed properly ... that’s why, no conflict, but rather emotions **(Yes)**. This is a very emotional thing...

²¹ You see, the conflict that I was experiencing, was due to a letter that was sent. Some of the educators who were part of the committee felt at the time that someone else instead of their friends should be made redundant, asking why her and not someone else ... you know they would rather see a switch of places. That to an extent could be perceived as conflict, but I must honestly say there were no more other things and/or other problems originating from this.

moet sy nou gaan en daai een was swakker, hoekom het ...”, jy weet hulle sou eerder ‘n ruil wou gehad het. Dit was in ‘n mate konflik gewees, maar ek kan eerlik sê daar was nie veel ander dinge en ander probleme wat afkomstig was nie.

Yes, to the benefit of the school, because people raised their work level because they knew what is expected from them and what the consequences are if they don’t come to it.

4.2.3.3 Impact on the principal

The principal as the manager of the school had to deal with extreme situations. It was also expected from the principal to manage difficult situations and to make final decisions with regard to staff reduction. This resulted in a situation where a principal had to apply special leadership abilities to cope with extreme emotional experiences.

The respondents were of the opinion that principals’ decisions were not very popular and that principals were blamed for any negative activity that could influence the staff reduction process.

“But sir, you can’t get rid of this educator because of this and this and this and that and that and that.” So you have a lot of that coming towards you, which you had to take and manage, and that also plays a part in you decision-making in the end. But you had to be un-biased; you had to. You must look at the facts of what is to the best interest of the school.

...I think you can gather that it was very difficult. In the beginning it became a cold war but then you have to work as a leader and work it back and put yourself upfront. What I did at the time was to say: “Listen, I had a job to do and I think I did it well, to the best interest of the community and the school, and everybody that is involved in it.” Just live through it, manage it and thereafter, get it back again.

That is part of the game, you had to take it on and even today, if they see me, the question is still there: “Why was it me?” But, but the curriculum needs were

explained and we called the staff-member in, together with the District-official and discussed the matter with the educator.

Respondents maintain that it was a tough time for principals – a time where uncertainty and fear for the unknown prevailed – a time when principals tried to prevent going through such a process again. The following comments illustrate this aspect:

²² *...maar toe die punchline gelewer is en gesê wie dit is kan ek vir jou sê toe's dit traumaties, ek meen daar was emosie by betrokke en alles ...*

²³ *...dit was 'n traumatiese tyd vir my, maar ek dink dit is een van daai happenings in jou skool wat jou baie na aan mekaar gebring het.*

²⁴ *Ja, ek ...weet jy wat doen ek ... ek doen nou alles in my vermoë om dit nie deur te gaan nie.*

*That was the most traumatising experience in my "principalship". Because even though they say we are not identifying people, we are identifying the needs (**okay, I understand**), which are attached to somebody ... we had to identify somebody ... and for me it was very traumatic.*

On Monday I was afraid to go to work ... I haven't had the courage.

I was afraid, because I realised that the school are no longer going to be ... there are no longer going to be stability at the school because if somebody has to go and the problem is I had to get somebody from outside to do it for the change of your life ... but it even affected the educators as well as the workload increased with somebody goes an extra job, an unnecessary extra job that's why I was saying it affected the stability.

²² ...but when the punchline was delivered ... who is going to be right sized ... I can tell you this, then it was traumatic, I mean there was emotions involved and everything.

²³ ...it was a traumatic time for me but I think it is one of those happenings in your school that tends to bring everyone close together.

²⁴ (Uhm) Yes I ... do you know what I am doing... I do everything in my ability not to go through this process.

The respondents contend that apart from high stress levels, fear for the unknown and frustrations with the implementation of the staff-reduction process, principals also experienced the impact of dealing with stress-related illnesses, anxiety, anger, feelings of guilt and a feeling of loneliness. This is best illustrated by the following comments:

...because the principal at that stage was a very lonely figure – you could go nowhere, except your District official to speak to, but when it comes to personal stuff, how you feel about it, how you - how you, you know the trauma that goes with it when telling a person, “listen, I am taking your job away from you,”...

²⁵*Dit was ‘n spanningsvolle tyd vir my gewees, baie moeilik ... met my persoonlikheid ook, ek is nie iemand wat hou daarvan om op die manier ... ek sal eerder probeer ‘n ou te behou en ekstra poste instel as om vir iemand te sê jy moet nou gaan. Dit was vir my bitter, bitter, bitter moeilik.*

Due to traumatic experiences respondents felt that principals were confronted with a number of stress-related illnesses which evidently forced them to make many unnecessary mistakes during the management process of staff reduction. Respondents hold different views:

Yes, yes obviously when managing the process. You know, you have to keep it for yourself, lots of stress levels, maybe said something that I shouldn't have said, even in the one-to-one confrontation when notifying the staff members, etc. etc.

So did we make mistakes, did I make mistakes at the end of the day? You can easily look back and say that she is doing well in the private sector but on the other hand would she have been a successful educator in a closed environment?

On stress-related illnesses, the respondents contend as follows:

Fortunately not. I got a bit short-tempered but that was simply...

²⁵ It was a stressful time for me ... also for me personally ... I am not someone to work in this manner ... I would rather try and keep staff and create an additional post instead of telling someone to leave. This for me was very, very, very difficult to apply.

²⁶ *Nou, stres is as jy hier is en jy weet jy moet nou-nou soontoe gaan maar jy het nie beheer daaroor nie, en daai goed veroorsaak stres by 'n ou in so 'n mate dat ek wil regtig vir jou sê daai goed het my in die nagte uit die slaap gehou. Ek moes op 'n stadium die dokter gaan sien want ons was, ons skool was die heelyd in 'n proses van bou.*

With regard to mistakes made during the staff reduction process, respondents maintain different views and reasons:

²⁷ *Ek dink, maar jy sê dit nie. Foute gemaak in die sin dat jy mens verloor het, ja (Ja) maar dit was die proses gewees. Jy voel jammer om 'n goeie onderwyser te verloor.*

²⁸ *Dan gaan slaap ek vannaand, drie, vier, vyf aande gaan verby dan kom ek terug na die beginsels toe. Dan sien ek, ek het 'n hele paar, klomp foute gemaak ... uh ... ek het 'n hele paar goed ingebring wat eintlik nie behoort nie ... ek het daai blind spots wat ou (Naam) vandag van gepraat het, dan haal ek hulle uit. So, eventually, voor ek die proses na my bestuursspan toe gevat het, of na die beheerliggaam toe gevat het, het ek daai ding seker vyf, ses keer verander om seker te maak ek is deursigtig; om seker te maak ek is deur die hele ding.*

²⁹ *Een van die grootste foute wat ek gemaak het was om dit te ontken.*

4.2.3.4 Motivation

Motivation emerged as a sub-category because it had been emphasised by most respondents during the different interviews.

²⁶ Now, stress is when you are here and you know that you should actually be there, but you don't have control over it and this generates stress in such a manner that it keeps you awake at night. That, I'm telling you, it kept me from sleeping. At one stage I had to see a doctor because our school was just in a growing phase.

²⁷ I think so, but you don't say it ... mistakes made due to losing people, yes (**Yes**), but that was the process. You feel sorry to lose a teacher.

²⁸ ...then I will go to sleep tonight, three, four five days gone by, then I return to the principles, only to see that I made several mistakes... I catered for many things that should not be part of this issue ... just to get rid of all those blind spots ... (what we have spoken about today). So, eventually, before this process was taken to either the management team or the Governing Body, I have gone through it five to six times to assure that I have considered everything and that the process will be transparent,

²⁹ One of the biggest mistakes I made was to deny everything (thus negation).

The respondents believed that due to the fact that staff reduction cannot be finalised overnight, conditions of change had such an immense impact on their motivation. To inspire co-operative motivation and appose negativity, strategies of motivation, together with staff motivational programmes had been instituted in respective schools. The respondents had the following to share:

³⁰*Weet jy wat? Ek dink nogal, deel van ons sukses was dat ons ... wanneer 'n mens groei en ontwikkel is daar altyd 'n mate van stimulasie.*

³¹*Ek het besef hierso is groter dinge wat ... ek moet slimmer ouens kry om my te help om die proses te bestuur, **(Korrek)** ... en ons het 'n goeie ontleding van die personeel gemaak. Uh, ek het nou vir twaalf jaar ... het ek al beginsels oor motivering en daar's vir my 'n beginsel, elke oggend ... in die personeelkamer, het ek elke oggend die motiverings verwoord. Donderdag of Vrydag sal ek die personeel herinner aan sy roeping; sê: "Op 18 jaar het die Here jou geroep om 'n job te kom vermag. Het jy hierdie week daai job nagekom of het jy net 'n klomp kennis oorgedra?"*

When work conditions changed due to transformation legislation, principals were confronted with the reality of change. They had to adapt to changes, apply some self-motivation and arrange in-service training for their staff. The following assertions verify this sub-category:

Well, firstly I had to motivate myself because remember you are getting the kicks. Everybody is looking at you every day and say:" What did you do? Why did you do this?" Everybody is seeking for answers. At that stage, being a young principal, there was still a career path to go and you had to make decisions to say: "I want to be a teacher and I want to be a successful teacher and a manager in teaching as well." And this is part of the process that you must go through. Therefore you had to adapt and make changes. But coming back to the staff, with the leadership

³⁰ Do you know what? I think part of our success was, ... when there is growth and development, there is always a degree of stimulation.

³¹ I have realised that here are bigger things that ... I must get more intelligent people to help me manage the process (**correct**) ... and we have done a proper analysis of all the staff. Every morning for the past 12 years I have applied the same principle of motivation. Every morning in the staff room I have motivated all staff. On Thursdays or Fridays I would remind them of their calling ... for example: "Round about 18 years of age the

thing, even with them as well, you have to do some in-service training as I said on the communication basis; you have to be more direct. Tell them what is expected, what is the reason behind the madness, if you can call it that. And also, it did not happen over night. You had to take them into the mode of thinking to say: "But this is what teaching is all about." And that there is a control arm that is the employer and you are the employees at the bottom, and that the employer is going to take decisions and the employee is also going to take decisions. When one reflects back to that, prior to the staff-reduction process, principals were very close to their staff and the state (government) was away. Now this situation put the principal in a spot where he stood with both legs in the situation; the one with the employer and the other with his staff. The trick came for yourself to play the game: when are you acting on behalf of the one and when on behalf of the other? Now you have to take this message and convey it through to the staff: When is the principal taking the point of the department and when is he supporting the staff? (Employee) And that has to be communicated to your staff.

³² *'n Mens kry altyd in 'n groep mense, ouens wat negatief en ouens wat positief is, dié soort goed. Maar ons probeer 'n groot ding daarvan maak dat ons personeel moet saamstaan, mekaar moet ondersteun, mekaar moet help want met individue kan jy baie minder regkry as wat jy met 'n span kan doen, (Ja) en ek dink daar's 'n hele ... ek dink daar's 'n gevoel ook by die onderwysers by (skool se naam) dat, dis vir hulle lekker om daar te werk, hulle wil daar werk, en dit alles maak dat die moraal beter is en die motivering beter is. Ja, jy het maar jou negatiewe mense, hulle is daar en 'n mens probeer hulle maar te hanteer en positief te beïnvloed met dinge en goeters, maar dis maar 'n persoonlikheid wat jy nie iets aan kan doen nie.*

You know I told them that there is one thing that this encourage about the whole thing. They don't say:" They no longer want you to work". They are saying:" We

Good Lord called upon you for a specific job. Did you live up to that job the past week, or did you just communicate knowledge?"

³² One always gets a group of people, some negative, some positive, with regard to these types of things. But we have tried to make something big of it where the staff could support each other and stand together, help each other where possible, because with individuals you don't achieve the same as with a group (**yes**) and I think there's a whole ...I think educators at (name of school) perceive a positiveness to work here, they would like to work here, and all of this contributes to a higher morale and motivation. Yes, you do have your negative group of people, they are there and one try to influence them positively with some activities, but this is part of a personality type, which sometimes cant be changed.

are moving you from where you are to take you to where your services are more needed, and here we are.”

You know, I am that kind of person who always appreciates what people do. So, if they have done something good I hold them to it. I will tell them: “Ladies and gentleman, this morning I would like to thank so and so for doing one, two, three, to show that I appreciate what has been done. This is for an individual who has done something good. I’ve got an open policy where they do have some input; they are at liberty to do so. I usually agree on their initiatives so they know that their input is appreciated.

4.2.4 Impact on family life

With the principal in the barrage, his/her biggest concern is to manage this staff reduction process in such a way that the school and staff members can be free of any unforeseen harm.

The last thing on the principal’s mind is the impact such a staff reduction process can cause for his/her family members.

Respondents echoed their sentiments with regard to frustration principals experienced through the staff reduction process, by highlighting the following comments:

So she understood the process of schools departure point, but still it made it difficult because I couldn’t go and speak to her, because all of this was in confidentiality. And so it made sort off discussions very difficult and then one tends to get grumpy as well. Because you know you’ve got these things riding on your shoulders and you have to make decisions for five people, which is going to influence their careers and their teaching careers. You are going to make decisions that are going to make them change venues, if they stay in teaching. Those were all factors needed to take into consideration when applying staff-reduction. Even the staff members in this process, one of the ladies, were also in this pool of discussion and we couldn’t decide on her because she was retiring within one and a half year’s time. So you had to take this into consideration as well

what the impact should be on this lady when she goes on pension. That all got loaded on the principal, and then you've to go home. So you have to make some decisions on whether you are going to take this home or not. Sometimes you succeed, but sometimes you didn't because the unwritten word says more than the spoken word, but luckily my wife understood. A very difficult process. My kids couldn't understand. Although one was talking and saying: "It was a bit stressful at work," one had to maintain the family life as well and work on that ... you had to, you had to do that. Just to survive personally, you had to do that.

...because I think at that stage, if I had to apply the LIFO I would have problems, and also one could go home, you know, and just release the stress and as I said earlier to you, just that fact that I had a wife at that stage who was also in teaching at that stage, who could relate to the situation, she also succeeded in it to make it easier and maybe speak to the children and say: "Not today," (Yes), if you understand what I'm trying to say. That helped quite a lot. But it was quite stressful and you had to work through it...

Oh my God, you know, I didn't realise but I was depressed. Number one, I was very bad and I was even shouting at my family.

They didn't understand me but later on I realised that it was the stress that was responsible for this. Sometimes I did not even want to talk to my family, yes, I did develop high blood pressure.

Some of the respondents felt that the staff reduction process did not only influence their families, but eventually resulted in them acting totally out of the norm. They argue as follows:

³³ *...in daai agt tot tien weke, kom ons sê twee maande wat ek deur daai proses moes jaag, ... my vrou het 'n paar keer vir my gesê: "Jis, daar's fout. Jy moet iemand gaan sien, want jy is soos 'n stoere bul." Dit het 'n ongelooflike effek op*

³³ In the next eight to ten weeks, let's say two months, when I had to hurry through the process, ... my wife told me several times that there is something wrong; that I should see someone because I'm like a sturdy bull. It had a tremendous effect on my children, especially my relationship with my children (yes), uh ... and I realised it, I saw it like that. The first two weeks I didn't think something is wrong. I was in search for something ... you

my kinders gehad; my verhouding met my kinders (Ja) uh ... en ek het dit besef, ek het dit gesien. Daai eerste twee weke het ek nie gedink dis dit nie. Ek het allerhande ander goed gesoek, jy weet en gesê: “Stres is twak, stres bestaan nie”. Dan besef jy eintlik jy’s hier ... met ander mense se lewens moes jy deur hierdie hele proses gaan...

³⁴*Dit het ‘n invloed op die familie. Uh, ek is ‘n ou wat probeer om nie my probleme huis toe te bring nie, ek praat so min as moontlik oor probleme by die skool, by die huis. Jy weet, my vrou is partykeer kwaad vir my dan sal sy sê: “Hoekom het jy my nie van dit vertel nie? Hoekom het jy my nie van dat vertel nie?”, en ek dink nie dit is goed dat jy al die moeilikheid en al die probleme huis toe bring nie. Ek probeer dit daar hou, ek probeer dit daar hanteer en as ek huis toe kom, dan is ek by die huis. Maar dit beïnvloed ‘n mens. Jy’s gespanne, jy’s op jou senuwees en dit het ‘n invloed in ‘n mate op jou gesin.*

4.3 MANAGEMENT OF STAFF REDUCTION

4.3.1. Staff management

4.3.1.1 Professionalism

For the principal of a school to act as the leader of that school, he/she should work for the attainment of the objectives of the staff reduction process. Some of these objectives should be utilised to guide the principal to manage and lead in such a manner that the staff will recognise transformation, carry out their professional duties and promote effective teaching. To reach the above, a principal has to propose alternatives with regard to professionalism for his/her staff.

The respondents confirmed these alternatives as the basis for promoting professionalism by responding as follows:

know, I even said that stress is nonsense and doesn’t exist. Then all of a sudden you realise that you’re busy with some other people’s lives and that you have to go through this process.

³⁴ It does have an influence on your family. Uh, I am someone who prefers not to bring my problems home; I talk the minimum about school problems at home. You know, sometimes my wife can get angry with me, asking: “Why didn’t you tell me about this? Why did you not tell me about that?” and as far as I am concern, its no good taking you problems home. I try to take care of it at the office and when I go home, I am at home. But it does influence you; you’re anxious and nervous and this influences your family in a certain way.

³⁵*Nou ons het 'n beginsel in ons personeel; ons praat nooit lelik met mekaar of, nié dat ons nie van mekaar verskil nie, maar veral nie voor die kinders nie. Die kinders mag nie weet daar's konflik nie.*

³⁶*...ek het by my bestuurspan begin. Ek is 'n outjie wat ongelooflik ... my, uh ... my skool funksioneer bietjie anders as ander ouens s'n. Ek het nie 'n adjunkhoof nie – nee ek het 'n adjunkhoof maar (sug) ek werk met afdelingshoofde, maar ek het glad nie ... in naam het 'n adjunkhoof by die Onderwys Departement, maar my hele skool bou ek op ander goed – my hele onderwysleierskapstyl is van so 'n aard ... ek is nie 'n diktator nie, glad nie ... uh ... uh ... ek glo aan morele druk. Ek sit ongelooflike morele druk op my onderwysers en my bestuursraad. Daar gebeur dit dat ons sit en ek sê kom ons maak die somme en hulle eventually sover gevat en gesê: “Neem nou die besluite.” So, daar is die realiteite en dit is wat ons het. Dit is die pad. Mooi gelei en toe besluit hulle ons moet ten minste drie laat gaan.*

When the second process came later, people just used LIFO to make the process easier and they made the management process in such a way that people knew you either produce or be declared in access which is bad on the one side when it comes down to leadership of people.

And then, from a leadership point of view, my point of view, as principal at that stage, the big job was just to get the cohesion back again, just to get them going to the goal at the end of the day: that we are here for the children, to develop them, and so on, and so on. From my side to them: don't worry, the respect is there. You will be covered, ect., ect.

³⁵ Now we have a principle within the staff, we never talk bad with each other, not that we don't have differences, but definitely not in front of the children. The learners are not supposed to know about the conflict.

³⁶ ...I have started with my school management team. I am someone with unbelievable ... uh ... my school functions differently from others. I haven't got a deputy principal; no, ... I do have a deputy principal, but (sigh) ... I haven't got ... only in name I have a deputy principal as far as the NDoE is concerned, but my whole school is built upon something else – my whole leadership style is such ... I am no dictator, not at all ... uh ... I place unbelievable pressure upon my educators and my management team. It then happened that we sat down and I said: “Let's do some calculations.” I took them to a point where they have made a final decision. So there are the realities and that is what we have. This is the road. Well guided. Where after they decided that at least three staff members must go.

What I did at the time was to say: “Listen, I had a job to do and I think I did it well, to the best interest of the community and the school, and everybody that is involved in it.” Just live through it, manage it and there after, get it back again.

With increased management responsibilities, principals had to encourage creativity within the ranks of staff members. Respondents have the following to share:

³⁷ *...’n baie moeilike bestuursproses om die ding te bestuur, maar ek het, om regverdig te wees, almal ... ons het gesê ek gaan nie die kriteria maak nie, ons het die hele lys van kriteria opgestel, daar was agt punte en ons het gewigswaardes toegeken waarin, uit die aard van die saak, die kurrikulum ’n belangrike rol, die belangrikste rol, gespeel het, maar persoonsanalises het ’n rol gespeel. Ek is ’n outjie wat glo aan “Spiral dynamics”...*

³⁸ *...ons het gaan sit en ons het die hele personeel gevat en gekyk en gesê: “Wie het, wie het ons nodig om die skool se rooster te kan maak volgende jaar, met tien mense minder.” En ons het dit gevat en ons hele beplanning gedoen vir ons rooster...*

³⁹ *So, op dié manier kry hulle dan inspraak oor die goeters en dan kom die departementshoofde, hulle beplan ook vir hulself, met die insae wat die onderwysers gee, kom hulle dan na jou toe en ons gaan sit dan en ons kyk hoe kan ons die rooster doen om aan die dinge te voldoen soos die mense wil. Nou, op die ou einde, dan besluit jy, in belang van die skool, wat is die behoefte en jy gee nie vir almal wat hulle wil hê nie, maar die mense het begrip daarvoor, so, wat dit aanbetref, ek dink die stelsel het gemaak dat die mense voel hulle is deel van die proses, en uh ... ons kon dit inkorporeer.*

³⁷ ...a very difficult management process to manage, but I have ... to be reasonable ... everybody ... we have said that I am not going to determine the criteria, so we drew up a whole list of criteria, there were eight points that was given a value to, of which curriculum was very prominent, although personality analysis also played an important role. I am someone who believes in “Spiral Dynamics”...

³⁸ ...we sat down, took the whole staff compliment and said: “Who, who do we need to make the timetable for next year, with 10 less people.” So we took that and planned out total timetable...

³⁹ So this way they can make their inputs with regard to certain stuff; then the Head of Department, after planning for themselves, together with the educators’ inputs, will come to you (principal) to determine how the timetable should be drawn up to accommodate the educators’ needs. So, in the end, you decide what is the best for the school, what are the needs and you don’t grant everyone their wishes, but of cause the people do

4.3.1.2 Staff Provisioning

The immediate impact of the staff reduction process was perceived very negative. The loss of specialist, and in some instances “good” educators, resulted in not only a change of the current staff compliment, but also contributed to an increase of the remaining staffs’ workload and work level, as well as raising their stress-levels. Respondents express the following comments:

You see, that is a sad thing about LIFO, because when you apply LIFO as is, you may lose the better staff member in a school situation...

...I still maintain that it had an influence on the quality of teaching in our country, and specifically in our schools, because it just raised the workload and stress levels...

...because people raised their work level because they knew what is expected from them and what the consequences are if they don’t come to it.

⁴⁰*Ons moes in die proses goeie onderwysers ... moes ons gevra het om ... sê: “Jy’s deel van die oortollige lys,” en dit was die heel moeilikste...*

⁴¹*‘n Mens het goeie onderwysers verloor, dit het ‘n impak gehad op die skool, jy weet, van die mense wat vir jou geliefd was en die akademie? En mens het maar probeer om met, met die minder mense smarter te werk en ons het regtig gaan kyk en ons rooster so beplan dat dit impak op die akademie minder te maak, deur die groepe groter te maak soos ek sê, klasse groter te maak, herverdeel, onmiddellik het dit ‘n negatiewe invloed op die onderwys want waar jy voorheen, kom ons sê dertig kinders gehad het, is dit dalk nou 38/40 (**korrek**) so dit het ‘n definitiewe invloed op die akademie, ook ‘n invloed op die onderwysers ook ...*

understand that, so with regard to that, the system provided in such a way that they felt they were part of the process, and ... when we were able to incorporate it.

⁴⁰ In the process we asked good educators ... we had to ask them to ... told then that they are part of the access list and that was the most difficult thing to so.

⁴¹ One lost good educators, this had an impact on the school, you know, those people who had been seen as “loved ones” as well as the academics ... had a negative influence on the educators, because in the past,

...but it even effected the educators as well as the workload increased with somebody goes an extra job, an unnecessary extra job that's why I was saying it effected the stability.

4.3.1.3 Communication towards staff

The respondents emphasised the importance of effective communication during the staff reduction process.

The value of positive communication could only be established and measured after the staff reduction process was finalised – that was when principals and remaining staff were left behind to cope with the end result of staff reduction.

Never the less, respondents commented on the added value of good communication, addressing issues like the process of staff reduction itself, the reality of change, what to expect, legislation matters and, where necessary, in-service training to promote stability. They had the following to say:

See, what we did, when we got the notification, we set up a staff meeting, just to say: "Okay, this is what is happening. This is the process that needs to be followed as stipulated by the circular at that time," and I gave them the info of what is going to happen. And then, obviously there were pro's and cons, you know, not as such with me, but with the SMT, when we had to decide on the curriculum needs, etc., etc. You always get that people, in this case the staff, tries to secure their own positions but you must "remember this, realise this, remember that what I have done..."

The thing that happens, it brought your staff more to the reality of operational requirements of the department as well as the operation of the school. Staff was more focused on the legal things in a school. In the past, if the principal tells them, they believed in the principal. Now all of a sudden, they had to think for themselves and to protect their own position of employment because the principal could not always do that. So this motivated them not to say: "I'm only a teacher,"

where you had, let us say, thirty learners, it is most probably 38/40 now (**correct**), so it had a definite influence

but they also had to look at legal applications. Staff also realized that they must look closely to the circulars because this could impact on them. That motivates them that they should not be listeners only, but look after themselves – maybe they should think more than what they listen. That took time in the communication process. This did not happen over night and is still happening now.

Uh, there was policy documents to that effect (Yes), a circular (Yes, a circular). I read in the circular that ... And there after I made some photo copies for each and every educator and we went into a staff meeting where I went through the circular so that at least all of us had a common understanding (...of what's going to happen...) of what's going to happen. And then, we chose a date when we are going to identify ... and at that meeting the staff secretary was writing ... (taking notes?) ... yes. And we wrote all our needs and we analysed our needs according to the success areas (I understand) and there after ... (What happened there after...?) I got the experience of the teachers for those subjects (Okay, I understand, so you looked at curriculum needs first?) ...we looked at curriculum needs first.

I have explained that every morning we hold a holy ritual to support our spirit and after the holy ritual we went to assembly and so the others went to class and I went to my office so one of the people who was identified came to my office and said to me: "Mam, I come to thank you, because I have realized that this is your idea not to be biased. Through explaining.... I realised I'm going to be identified so at least it pushed me a bit but they were reasonable.

Some respondents applied different measures of communication like focussing on the realities of the road ahead as well as offering special professional advise. They had the following to say:

⁴²*So, daar is die realiteite en dit is wat ons het. Dit is die pad. Mooi gelei en toe besluit hulle ons moet ten minste drie laat gaan.*

on academics, also influenced the educators...

⁴² So there the realities were, and that is what we've got. This is the road. Well guided, then they decided that at least three must go...

⁴³...daar's vir my 'n beginsel, elke oggend ... in die personeelkamer, het ek elke oggend die motiverings verwoord. Donderdag of Vrydag sal ek die personeel herinner aan sy roeping;

⁴⁴Weet jy wat was die interessante? Ek het ... uh ... ek het hulle drie eerste ingeroep, gelyktydig, en vir hulle gesê ... deur al die prosesse, nadat ek by die beheerliggaam was, al die goeters ... "Ons het julle drie geïdentifiseer om te gaan, maar ek wil julle nou aanbeveel; gaan vakbond toe en verklaar 'n dispuut."

Therefore you had to adapt and make changes. But coming back to the staff, with the leadership thing, even with them as well, you have to do some in-service training as I said on the communication basis; you have to be more direct. Tell them what is expected, what is the reason behind the madness, if you can call it that. And also, it did not happen over night. You had to take them into the mode of thinking to say: "But this is what teaching is all about." And that there is a control arm that is the employer and you are the employees at the bottom, and that the employer is going to take decisions and the employee is also going to take decisions. When one reflects back to that, prior to the staff-reduction process, principals were very close to their staff and the state (government) was away. Now this situation put the principal in a spot where he stood with both legs in the situation; the one with the employer and the other with his staff. The trick came for yourself to play the game: when are you acting on behalf of the one and when on behalf of the other? Now you have to take this message and convey it through to the staff: When is the principal taking the point of the department and when is he supporting the staff? (Employee) And that has to be communicated to your staff.

4.3.1.4 Educators Employment contract

One of the most traumatising effects as experienced by staff in the staff reduction process was the loss of job security, which resulted in either losing ones job and,

⁴³ ...I have this principle that, every morning in the staff room, I motivated them. Thursday or Friday, I will remind the staff of their calling;

⁴⁴ Do you know what was the most interesting? I have ... uh, I have called those three in first, simultaneously, and told them, through all the processes, even after I had been to the SGB, ... everything ... "We have identified you three to leave, but I would like to recommend that you go to your union and declare a dispute."

together with that, maybe also a career or the anxiety that comes with the redress policy of the NDoE.

Principals experienced their concerns of staff members first hand in their schools. The respondents had the following to share:

We had to look at the whole system of staff at your school, what you have and how you are going to be able to utilize there after. So you need to go back to the job descriptions of all staff members as well to see what they are worth in total for the school. And then you not only go back to the curriculum, because the curriculum is only what you expect them to do in class, but you look at the involvement of the learners as well...

...because immediately I had five staff members less, which I had to utilise with the remaining staff. The job description changed, the workload changed, and people were not trained for that. They just had to go, and all of a sudden, they just had to do more. So it took up a lot of their time and made them tired, not only physically, but mentally as well.

...and to change the mindset of the staff as well, that there is a new dispensation with new working relationships coming in that you have to look at. Your employment contract, although it is not a contract, it's just an agreement that you have with the Government, is changing and you have to adapt by that as well. So that was another way of communicating, to give them all democratic and open discussions on documents. In the past you gave what was relevant and left out the rest. Now staff needs to know more in detail. They don't have to read it in the paper; you must communicate it with them before hand. So that was also a very difficult task.

You always get that people, in this case the staff, tries to secure their own positions but you must "remember this, realise this, remember that what I have done..."

Some respondents experienced a very difficult impact of staff reduction on Teaching and Learning. This presents in the following comments:

On the quality of teaching, it was very difficult for the staff to get acquainted to the larger number of learners in the class...

You know, my teachers are very co-operative. Immediately when that person left we made some other arrangements. And you know, you won't believe this (researcher's name) I usually become a role model in the sense that if things are tough, I'm there to help them so if I have other situations if there is some other circumstances and we are experiencing a problem so, because I usually do take the lead. They are all willing to help in any way.

⁴⁵*'n Mens het maar probeer om die impak op die skool en op die akademie so min as moontlik te maak en dis hoekom ek dadelik begin het en die nie-eksamenvakke het ons 'n middeweg gevat, selfs Lewensoriëntering wat ons by Graad 11 en Graad 12 heeltemal gelos... Die feit dat 'n mens die nie-eksamenvakke uit kon haal het dit makliker gemaak, uh, met Rek (Rekeningkunde) ook, gaan kyk na die grootte van die groepe. Ons is ook 'n skool met 'n tegniese afdeling waar van ons tegniese groepe baie klein was en ons het onmiddellik daar begin om die groepe groter te maak met teenkating van die personeel natuurlik, want nou sit jy met baie meer ouens in 'n klas wat dit moeiliker maak, (Ja) maar 'n ou het probeer om dit wat jy gehad het so te hanteer dat die impak op die akademie so min as moontlik sal wees.*

...I still maintain that it had an influence on the quality of teaching in our country, and specifically in our schools, because it just raised the workload and stress levels, because from there-on it became an ongoing process and everybody knew that you either make yourself or put yourself in a position that the school cannot get rid of you...

⁴⁵ One has tried to minimise the impact on the school and the academics and that is why we have started immediately to stop non-exam subjects, even life orientation for Grade 11 and Grade 12 ...the fact that one could remove some non-exam subjects, eased the immediate problem ...uh, also the same with accounting ... we looked at the size of the groups. We are also a school with a technical division and immediately enlarged some classes, ...of course with resistance from the side of the staff, because now one sits with more learners in one class, which is very difficult. (Yes) But we have tried to manage what you've got to minimise the impact on academics.

4.3.2 Planning

4.3.2.1 Criteria and steps for staff reduction

When considering the deliberations from the respondents, one deduces that transformation and change can only be expected to be successful if effective planning together with proper interpretation of the process had been involved from day one. The principals who applied pro-active planning, together with the prescribed criteria and steps from the NDoE, managed to achieve a positive outcome. The respondents echo the following sentiments:

Pro-active. That's why I said we immediately came to the table and said this is the way we are going with staff reduction. Well, the redress at that stage was operational from, from Government side. That's their point of view. That is why they are doing it. Immediately the SMT said that if this happens, what is the impact going to be on the school so we had to assess our staffing distribution as a whole, so to see where everybody is going to fit in, as well as changes and moves of staff-members from the Foundation Phase to the Intermediate Phase to get your staff so that could meet the curriculum needs of the school. But it was not only curriculum in the classes but also extramural activities outside the class.

As I said, we immediately got the SMT involved and then said, let's look at the curriculum needs of the school, as we were a very prominent school in that area, and we had to see how are we going to survive the first round, as you maybe can remember, the first round was quite a shock for the school. We were used to a way of leading and managing your school and now all of a sudden you had to make changes. It brought a bit of negativity into the staff as well, because all of a sudden they sat back. Being an open and democratic process, explaining to everybody who it is going to be, and why, so we had to go through the process very quickly to get the thing out in the open and after we have done that we have decided on the five, two of them on curriculum basis and the other three on LIFO through the various posts of the school. LIFO is quite easy. Last In First Out, that is actually the easiest way to do it, but when you come to discrimination on curriculum basis you need to have all your ducks in a row. So we had to get all the reports and the involvement of the SMT because you can't only go to post level

ones. *In fact at that time it was one deputy, no I mean a HOD and four post-level ones.*

⁴⁶*So, ek dink ons het die kriteria, by die bou van die kriteria (Ja) ... die voorafbeplanning, dink ek, was baie, baie goed gewees. Ek dink ons het dit nogal mooi agtermekaar gesit. Dit was oop, dit was nie ... daar was geen ... ek het, ek het my ook self voorgeneem ... daar was so tien wat ek gesê het: "Jis, ek kan hulle nie verloor nie." Ek het myself voorgeneem en gesê: "As hulle nou deel van daai drie gaan wees, dan moet dit dan nou maar so uitwerk ... uh ... net om die proses gelyke beregtiging te gee."*

⁴⁷*...ek het daar gaan sit en gesê: "Right, kom ons bou nou die kriteria ... dag een ... (sug) uit die aard van die saak het die kurrikulum 'n belangrike rol gespeel, buitemuurse aktiwiteite nie soos die staat s'n nie, maar dit het 'n baie belangrike rol gespeel. Sekere insette wat daai persoon gemaak het ... uh ... persoonsanalises is gedoen van daai nege mense en dit was nogal 'n traumatiese ervaring.*

⁴⁸*Ek het van die begin af die proses gevat, en ek het die dokumente baie goed deurgegaan en ek het besluit, ook as gevolg van die feit, ek ken nie die mense baie goed nie dat ek dit absoluut 100% volgens die letter van die wet gaan toepas, soos wat die dinge is.*

⁴⁹*Van hulle het toe kom vra ... ek het die saak van die begin af oopgestel en gesê: "Wie wil pakette hê? Wie wil dit doen?" En toe't van die Departementshoofde gekom en gesê: "Maar ons sal ook", en gelukkig het dit so uitgewerk dat ons sonder hulle kon klaarkom.*

⁴⁶ ...so I think we had the criteria ... when we establish the criteria (yes) ... I think the prior planning was very good. I think we had it all properly worked out. It was transparent ... it was not ... there was no ... I have ... I have decided, told myself that there are 10 which I can't bare to lose. I then happens to be part of the three, so be it ... uh, ... as long as the process promotes equality.

⁴⁷ On day one, I sat down and said: "Right, lets build a criteria ... (sigh) obviously the curriculum played an important role ... extramural activities too, not the same as for the government schools, but to us it played a very important role ... some imputs that were made ... uh, personality analysis were done for those nine people which was perceived as a very traumatic experience.

⁴⁸ From the beginning ... I took the process and went through all the relevant documents, and then I have made a decision ... also due to the fact that I didn't know the people very well ... but I have done it 100% accordingly to prescribed legislation as it was at the time.

Yes, I did it, I did it alone. I planned on some people's lives ... try to do it.

Yes, I explained the reason why because at that time I was the one to manage the staff-reduction process.

And we wrote all our needs and we analysed our needs according to the success areas (I understand) and there after ... (What happened there after?) I got the experience of the teachers for those subjects (Okay, I understand, so you looked at curriculum needs first?) ... we looked at curriculum needs first.

4.3.2.2 Elements of effective planning

Apart from initial planning, several other issues like the schools' vision, the telling and selling phases (of the staff reduction process to all roleplayers) together with the timescale and the analysing procedure, need to be addressed before the principal could determine who should be made redundant. Respondents express the following sentiments:

⁵⁰*Ek het. Ek het die besluit geneem. Nadat jy met die begrotings gewerk het uh, ... daarna dit vir die Beheerliggaam gegee en vir die Beheerliggaam gesê, dit is die pad wat ek dink ons behoort te loop.*

⁵¹*...uh, ... Hershey en Blanchard se hele storie van "Telling/ Selling" – nadat jy die realiteite besef het en hierdie realiteite by my ingesink het. Ek is nie 'n ou wat sommer oornag met 'n ding op hol loop nie, maar ek het die ding sien kom en ek het gesien dat ek sal ten minste drie ... en ek het aanvanklik gedink vyf (lang sug), maar toe ek die somme mooi maak toe sien ek dit is nou drie en uh, ... ek het by my bestuurspan begin.*

⁴⁹ Some of them came to ask ... I had an open policy, and asked: "Who would like to take the severance packages? Who would like to do so?" Some of the HOD's indicate that they want to do it ... lucky for us it worked out that we could still carry on without them.

⁵⁰ I have. I made the decision. After you worked with the budget ... uh, ... then hand it to the Governing Body and said to them this is the road I think we should pursue.

⁵¹ ... uh, ... Hershey and Blanchard ... their story of "Telling/Selling". After you realised the realities, and you have made it your own, I am not some one that will easily run away with something, but I saw it coming and I saw that at least three ... initially I thought five (sigh) ... but after I've done my calculations, I realised only three and ... uh, ... so I have started with my management team.

I didn't (You did not?) The reason is because there were not any other options. You know what happened? As for the process, we did it on a Friday, and for me, I... Then we informed these people who were identified, because at that point four people were identified but only one person left. The others who remained, they were later on absorbed. So I didn't make any mistake.

⁵²*...ek het vergadering gehou met hulle, die proses verduidelik en ek het ook ... in die begin, wat dit ook moeilik gemaak het, almal was onseker; die hele personeel en kort-kort het iemand ingehardloop: "Maar gaan ek ook? Is ek ook deel van die lys?" en ek het gesê: "Daar's 'n komitee wat dit hanteer," en ek het die ding gehanteer soos wat die prosedure gesê het.*

When dealing with the timescale of this process, some respondents have this to say:

⁵³*Ek kan nie onthou nie. Dit was nie, gelukkig, nie baie lank nie, want soos hulle goed maar werk ... binne twee weke of drie weke moet besluite gemaak word. Ek onthou ook die eerste proses waar ons vir die Departement die name moes gegee het, was nie baie tyd gewees nie, so ons het onmiddellik begin en die vergadering gehou en die inligting gegee en al die dinge en goeters, maar dit was gelukkig nie 'n baie lang proses nie. Dit was vinnig afgehandel omdat hulle onder druk was om dit te doen ook.*

...because from there-on it became an ongoing process and everybody knew that you either make yourself or put yourself in a position that the school cannot get rid of you either on LIFO or curriculum needs.

⁵² ...I held a meeting with them and explained the process ... in the beginning it was tough, because everybody were uncertain ... every now and then, someone of the staff will run into my office asking: "Am I also to go? Am I also part of the list?" I then then told them that there is a committee that will take care of it and that I am managing the procedure as prescribed.

⁵³ ...I can't remember. Luckily it was not that long, because the way their stuff works, ... within two to three weeks, decisions had to be taken. I still remember the first time when we had to submit names to the Department ... not enough time had been allocated so we started immediately with a meeting and communicate the information, and all of that, but luckily for us the process was not drawn out. It was taken care of quickly because they were under pressure at the time.

...may be they should think more than what they listen. That took time in the communication process. This did not happen over night and is still happening now.

4.3.2.3 Communication with stakeholders

For successful management of a staff reduction process, all stakeholders should be informed to be able to play a constructive and instrumental role.

According to the respondents, the keyword is definitely continuous communication to promote cohesion within the ranks of all the stakeholders. This communication had to be consistent and had to consider a repetition of such a process. They contend as follows:

Communication. Communication. Communication. Communication on various levels, and also going back to the staff, maybe at that stage I was overdoing it a bit, but just to say thank you and to let them feel special for whatever they have done; to communicate that through to the staff and to the parents and through to the children. You had to do that, just to say thank you and especially to the parents because what was happening now, all of a sudden there was more children in a class and the personal touch was less, time spent to my child was less, and you know how it is; "it is my child and I want the best for my child and don't make your problem, my problem." We had to communicate that through to the parents. That was an ongoing process and I had been there for one year after this process before I left.

See, what we did, when we got the notification, we set up a staff meeting, just to say: "Okay, this is what is happening. This is the process that needs to be followed as stipulated by the circular at that time," and I gave them the info of what is going to happen. And then, obviously there were pro's and cons, you know, not as such with me, but with the SMT, when we had to decide on the curriculum needs, etc., etc. You always get that people, in this case the staff, tries to secure their own positions but you must "remember this, realise this, remember that what I have done..."

⁵⁴... dink nogal dit was een van die beter besluite wat ek geneem het, om dit met al die rolspelers te kommunikeer. Die effek wat dit gehad het op die beheerliggaam, uh, ... dis 'n realiteitsbegrip.

The SGB was not involved initially but the chairperson was only notified about the SMT's decision.

The respondents furthermore interpret that what is communicated to stakeholders does cause conflict. The following comments illustrate this aspect:

...maybe said something that I shouldn't have said, even in the one-to-one confrontation when notifying the staff members, etc., etc.

But it also closed down, as I said to you, the personal touch of communication, sitting in the staff room, having a cup of tea. That also got very cold and it was manipulated by the staff. So it was on an only need-to-know basis. "I will only speak to you when it is necessary." (Staff). That sort of thing you know. Until the process is over, then the communication becomes relaxed again and everybody goes for the common goal. It is easier to get back into the system because they then realise they were not the chosen one's to be made redundant, but it was not easy. From a leader's point of view, it was not easy to get them going.

I see the people in the street and you always have the eye-look that says: "You are the guy that was responsible for my redundancy. You are the reason that I didn't stay." Even years after, if they realise, they will still say: "Why me?" That question will always be there. But one learns through the years how to handle that. I think one must not focus on the problem. You see, that is how you try to get over it, but principals must make many decisions and they are not always popular ones. In this instance, this was definitely not popular.

⁵⁴...I think that was one of my better decision to discuss it with all the roleplayers. The effect it had on the governingbody uh, ... was like a comprehension of reality for them.

So for the principal, also acting as representative of the NDoE, this process was not easy but with continuous communication it did change the perception of all roleplayers with regard to staff reduction.

4.3.2.4 Implementation of staff reduction

Implementation of staff reduction started the moment when principals were notified about the legislation, together with supporting policies and circulars.

According to the respondents, principals applied different strategies to communicate this process to the stakeholders. Some principals started with their Governing Bodies, whilst others focussed on their staff or the S.M.T. Only later this process was communicated to the parents and the learners. These assertions are confirmed by the following presentations:

So we sat as a SMT, school management team and I remember that the first time there were many hiccoughs in the circulars concerning the law and to implement the law, and we had to work through that. I had to get the Governing Body in and explain to them what is going to happen and obviously after the reduction, the numbers of learners per class went up, so, a change in class-size. At that time we had to declare five staff members in excess.

When the second process came later, people just used LIFO to make the process easier and they made the management process in such a way that people knew you either produce or be declared in excess...

⁵⁵Ek het van die begin af die proses gevat, en ek het die dokumente baie goed deurgegaan en ek het besluit, ook as gevolg van die feit, ek ken nie die mense baie goed nie dat ek dit absoluut 100% volgens die letter van die wet gaan toepas, soos wat die dinge is.

⁵⁵ I took the process from the beginning, after I went through all the documents. Then I decided ... also due to the fact that I didn't know the people that well – therefore I will manage the process 100% according to legislation ... as it is.

4.3.3 Educational factors

4.3.3.1 Impact on the school

According to the respondents, the impact of staff reduction is perceived as having far-reaching implications for schools, with reference to a number of school activities. This is best emphasised in the following presentation:

⁵⁶Dit was moeilik vir hulle om dit te hanteer en bitter moeilik vir baie van die mense wat lank daar skool gehou het, en van die personeel om van hulle afskeid te neem. Dit was bitter moeilik en hulle het dit maar swaar gevat. 'n Mens is saam daar deur, die hele proses het 'n ongelooflike spanning geplaas op die personeel. Elke lid het gedink hy is deel van die proses. Dit het dit baie moeilik gemaak...

Concerned parents phoned the principal, enquiring about people gossiping with regard to staff reduction. Respondents have this to say:

⁵⁷...ek het seker maklik vyftig, sestig oproepe gehad, jy weet toe daar nou 'n dingetjie, 'n kooltjie begin brand, toe begin ouers nou bel en vra: "Hoor hier, maar wat gaan nou daar aan? Ek hoor daar word nou personeel afgesit; uitgesit. Is dit nou die waarheid?" Dit het so half 'n negatiewe effek op jou skool en in so mate dat ek 'n ouervergadering moes hou...

Principals experience that some staff members had difficulty in accepting those changes. Staff posed many unanswered questions, and some of them still didn't understand the reasons for this process. To them, it influenced their workload, changed their job description and it also contributed to bigger classes where staff in excess left gaps. Respondents have this to say:

⁵⁶ It was tough on many educators to handle and accept this process, even more difficult for those educators who had been at the school for a long time and for the rest of the staff to say: "Goodbye". It was very difficult for them and they didn't take it easy. We went through the process together but it placed unbelievable strain upon staff. Every staff member thought that he/she is part of this process. This made it very difficult.

⁵⁷ I have received between 50 to 60 calls ... and as you know, if there is just a small thing ... when a small fire starts, parents start phoning me up, asking: "What is going on? I hear that some staff are going to be asked to leave. Is this the truth or not?" This resulted into a negative perception in the school, in so far that I had to call a parents meeting.

⁵⁸ ...daar is van daai mense wat se moraal toe op daai stadium nogal redelik laag was.

⁵⁹ Ja, verseker. Dit het 'n hengse effek op almal gehad. Uh, ... die hele rooster moes hersien word, werksverdeling moes ... ons moes die hele ding aanpas.

The schools who have more educators in the school because they are going to set the work load for that school is better. At the present moment educators are stressed because the workload has increased. At the present moment I do not have the exact model that I can give to the Department of Education, but the present one is not working at all.

I had to get the Governing Body in and explain to them what is going to happen and obviously after the reduction, the numbers of learners per class went up, so, a change in class-size.

But it was not only curriculum in the classes but also extramural activities outside the class.

The respondents argue that due to staff reduction in schools, the quality of education changed in such a way that it influenced the total quality of teaching. Their arguments are evident from the following:

I think it made us more stand together because even before this with all staff involved we are still to go on to deliver education, so we told ourselves even if this is going to be how hard, we are going to stick together and work hard.

You know, my teachers are very co-operative. Immediately when that person left we made some other arrangements. And you know, you won't believe this (researcher's name) I usually become a role model in the sense that if things are tough, I'm there to help them so if I have other situations if there is some other circumstances and we are experiencing a problem so, because I usually do take the lead. They are all willing to help in any way.

⁵⁸ ...there were some of those people at that stage ... with a very low morale.

⁵⁹ Yes, for sure it had an immense effect on every one ... uh, ... we had to revise the timetable and re-visit the deviations of work ... we had to adjust the whole thing.

Respondents tender different views with regard to the impact of staff reduction on the climate and culture of a school. They echo their perceptions as follows:

It wasn't influenced in any way.

Yes, we've got this other programme that says: "United we stand together."

⁶⁰*Maar ons het dit gesien as 'n realiteit, 'n ou moet dit hanteer, en jy hanteer dit en jy gaan aan. Om te gaan huil nou oor minder onderwysers gaan nie die saak beter maak nie, so ek dink nie ... dit moes ... dit moes 'n invloed gehad het op die skool, die kultuur en die tradisies en die goeters, ja.*

⁶¹*Ek het nogal daaraan gedink; jy weet, as dit nou die klimaat kan staaf, dan het dit 'n defnitiewe demper op die klimaat gehad. Almal was gedemp.*

Ek dink ook nie ... dis meer 'n tipe van 'n skok, 'n skokding wat na hulle toe (Ja) ... dit het 'n invloed op die kinders, so die klimaat speel, uh, ... en jou organisasie-klimaat nê.

Other issues that relates to the impact of staff reduction on the school are where educators are more aware of circulars, memoranda and other legal applications. This, however, can be perceived as being beneficial to staff development, although some staff members were still in the dark and expressed the view of not understanding this process. Respondents express their comments as follows:

Yes, it did. The thing that happens, it brought your staff more to the reality of operational requirements of the department as well as the operation of the school. Staff was more focused on the legal things in a school. In the past, if the principal tells them, they believed in the principal. Now all of a sudden, they had to think for themselves and to protect their own position of employment because the principal

⁶⁰ But we saw this as a reality ... one has to handle it, and you do and you carry on. To weep over less educators is not going to change the situation ... so I don't think it must have, ... yes; it must have had an influence on the school, the culture, the traditions and the odds and ends.

⁶¹ I have given it thought, you know, if this can substantiate the climate, then it definitely suppresses the climate. Everybody were repressed.

I don't think so ... it is more than a shock, a shocking thing that came to them (**yes**) ... it had an influence on the learners, so the climate does play, uh ... and then of course your organisational climate...

could not always do that. So this motivated them not to say: "I'm only a teacher," but they also had to look at legal applications. Staff also realized that they must look closely to the circulars because this could impact on them. That motivates them that they should not be listeners only, but look after themselves – may be they should think more than what they listen. That took time in the communication process. This did not happen over night and is still happening now. There are still teachers that don't understand and will say: "We shouldn't have lost those teachers," didn't want to understand, maybe. The older generation tends to follow what they have been told. The younger ones question everything. In the older days they didn't question. They just followed the route that you gave them.

4.3.3.2 Finances

The impact of staff reduction on the schools' budget differs between the respective schools, in such a way that some of them had staff appointed in Governing Body posts, which had to be phased out, whilst others had to apply new measures to try and fill the gaps left by educators placed on redundancy. Some of the schools were not so fortunate and had to deal with what they have. For the principal as manager of the school, these issues were perceived as very tense and straneous and demand special management skills at the time. Respondents argue as follows:

⁶²As ek nou reg kan onthou, ek dink dis in daai tyd ook gewees dat die kurrukillum-dinge ook bietjie verander het, en ons het, ek onthou ons het dadelik, ons het LO weggevat, want ons LO-man en die dame is albei ge-rightsized. So jy het, sekere vakke het jy gestop en dit het dit makliker gemaak met die werkslading daarmee saam, en uh, dit het 'n finansiële impak want mens het ekstra personeel nodig gehad en mens moes dit finansier uit die beheerliggaamfondse uit.

Dit gebeur, maar 'n mens verander maar in jou begroting, want dis nuwe realiteite wat inkom en 'n ou moet dit hanteer.

⁶² If I can remember correctly, it was in the same time that we had changes in the curriculum, and we have ... I remember we removed the physical education educator, because at the time both the PT-man and women were rightsized. So we put a stop to certain subjects, which made it easier as far as the workload was concern ... and, uh ... this had an impact on the finances because we needed additional staff and they had to be financed from Governing Body funds.

⁶³*Uit die aard van die saak het geldsake ook 'n invloed gehad en begin knyp op die Beheerliggaamskant.*

Nadat jy met die begrotings gewerk het uh, ... daarna dit vir die Beheerliggaam gegee en vir die Beheerliggaam gesê, dit is die pad wat ek dink ons behoort te loop. Om die finansies te laat balanseer en nie om die produktiwiteit iewers in te laat boet by die skool...

⁶⁴*Op die ou-end, wat gebeur? Toe ons by daai punt kom, het ek so gegroei dat ek so baie personeel gehad het nê, maar die finansies het begin breek. (Ja). Toe moes ek nou drie van daai mense laat gaan om my balansstate weer behoorlik te laat klop...*

4.3.3.3 Councelling

The immense stress and -related issues that burdened principals also influenced their decision-making abilities. As a result of decisions taken with regard to other people's lives, principals made several mistakes in managing the staff reduction process. Some of these mistakes resulted in some of the principals attending counselling sessions. It can be reasoned that they were not adequately informed, due to not having effective and proper training.

Respondents have the following views with regard to training:

No, nothing, absolutely nothing. But what we got was a session with District at that stage to say this is the circular, work through the circular and this is the process that you should go through.

So you had a problem with your staff members. You had to facilitate that as well and that created some problems, but, but one goes through it. But training? No, nothing. No, that is not part of "principalship".

⁶³ Of course money also had a big influence and the Governing Body felt the pinch, and so... After you worked with the budget ... uh, ... then hand it to the Governing Body and said to them: "This is the road I think we should persue."

⁶⁴ At the end, what happened? When we got to that point, I had such a growth, had so many staff, but the finances limited us. In order to balance the books, three of those people were removed.

Yes, but only when it came to the final decision that had to be made by the principal in any case. The District then communicated this decision based on the facts given by the school, the SGB and the SMT, but of course you have not been trained for that.

With regard to mistakes made during the staff reduction process, the respondents render their views as follows:

Yes, yes obviously when managing the process. You know, you have to keep it for yourself, lots of stress levels, maybe said something that I shouldn't have said, even in the one-to-one confrontation when notifying the staff members, etc., etc.

⁶⁵*Dan gaan ek huis toe, dan werk ek nou vir my 'n proses uit op die rekenaar. Dan sê ek presies dis nou hoe ek hierdie ding gaan aanpak. Dan gaan slaap ek vannaand, drie, vier, vyf aande gaan verby dan kom ek terug na die beginsels toe. Dan sien ek, ek het 'n hele paar, klomp foute gemaak ... uh, ... ek het 'n hele paar goed ingebring wat eintlik nie behoort nie...*

⁶⁶*Een van die grootste foute wat ek gemaak het was om dit te ontken.*

As mentioned earlier, all of the above added to the principals' stress, and resulted in some of them attending counselling sessions to survive this process. The respondents echo as follows:

⁶⁷*...daai goed veroorsaak stres by 'n ou, in so 'n mate dat ek wil regtig vir jou sê, daai goed het my in die nagte uit die slaap gehou. Ek moes op 'n stadium die dokter gaan sien ... toe hy klaar is met hulle, toe ... vir die twee dae ... toe sê ek: "Ek dink ek en jy het ook 'n sessie nodig, dat jy net bietjie die deur toemaak dat jy net bietjie met my ook werk." Ek dink nogal hy het vir my 'n heel ander persepsie gegee.*

⁶⁵ This I will go to sleep tonight, three, four, five days gone by, then I revisit the principles, only to see that I have made several mistakes ... I catered for many things that should not be part of this issues...

⁶⁶ One of the biggest mistakes I have made was to deny everything.

⁶⁷ ...and that is generating stress, in such a manner that I'm telling you, it kept me awake at night. At one stage I had to see a doctor...

⁶⁸ *'n Bitter moeilike tyd om deur te gaan. Ek moet eerlik waar sê ek het sleg geslaap.*

Oh my God, you know, I didn't realise but I was depressed. Number one, I was very bad and I was even shouting at my family.

They didn't understand me but later on I realised that it was the stress that was responsible for this. Sometimes I did not even want to talk to my family, yes, I did develop high blood pressure.

4.4 IMPLICATIONS ON RELATIONSHIPS

4.4.1 Communication levels

4.4.1.1 Between the principal, the SMT and staff members

It can be deduced that poor communication between all stakeholders resulted in misinterpretations, misunderstandings and frustrations with regard to the staff reduction process.

The staff reduction process was not only perceived as a very traumatic experience, but staff realised that it also impedes upon their rights as educators amongst staff, which jeopardise the cohesion in the staff. Principals, on the other hand, contended that they pursued all possible means to promote effective communication.

With this communication process towards staff members, the educators' morale was also addressed. In some instances it was not good, but as the process was finalised, communication became more relaxed. This is evident of the following:

...when he finished with them after two days, ... I then said: "I think you and me also need a session, so that you can close the door and work through a session with me." I think he then gave me a total different perception.

⁶⁸ A very difficult time to go through. I must be honest, I didn't sleep well at the time.

But you had to be unbiased; you had to. You must look at the facts of what is to the best interest of the school. But it also closed down, as I said to you, the personal touch of communication, sitting in the staff room, having a cup of tea. That also got very cold and it was manipulated by the staff. So it was on an only need-to-know basis. "I will only speak to you when it is necessary." (Staff). That sort of thing you know. Until the process is over, then the communication becomes relaxed again and everybody goes for the common goal. It is easier to get back into the system because they then realise they were not the chosen one's to be made redundant, but it was not easy.

On the quality of teaching, it was very difficult for the staff to get acquainted to the larger number of learners in the class, because immediately I had five staff members less, which I had to utilise with the remaining staff. The job description changed, the workload changed, and people were not trained for that. They just had to go, and all of a sudden, they just had to do more. So it took up a lot of their time and made them tired, not only physically, but mentally as well. And then, from a leadership point of view, my point of view, as principal at that stage, the big job was just to get the cohesion back again, just to get them going to the goal at the end of the day: that we are here for the children, to develop them, and so on, and so on. From my side to them: don't worry, the respect is there. You will be covered, ect., ect.

⁶⁹...daar is van daai mense wat se moraal toe op daai stadium nogal redelik laag was.

...en ons het 'n goeie ontleding van die personeel gemaak. Uh, ek het nou vir twaalf jaar ... het ek al beginsels oor motivering en daar's vir my 'n beginsel, elke oggend ... in die personeelkamer, het ek elke oggend die motiverings verwoord. Donderdag of Vrydag sal ek die personeel herinner aan sy roeping; sê: "Op 18 jaar het die Here jou geroep om 'n job te kom vermag. Het jy hierdie week daai job nagekom of het jy net 'n klomp kennis oorgedra?"

⁶⁹ ...there was some of those people at that stage with a very low morale.

...and we have done a proper analysis of staff. Uh, ... I have, for the past 12 years ... I have principles with regard to motivation ... every morning, to me, there is a principle in the staff room where I have motivated them. Thursday or Friday I will remind the staff of their calling ... for example: "Round about 18 years of age,

4.4.1.2 Between the principal and the staff in excess

It is inevitable for principals to make decisions on which staff members should be rightsized, and not experiencing such staffs' emotional fluctuations.

Emotions like anger, anxiety, disbelief and frustrations, to mention a few, are very prominent throughout this process. Even afterwards, principals still experienced redundant staff to be very hostile and distant towards them.

The respondents express the following comments:

That is part of the game, you had to take it on and even today, if they see me, the question is still there: "Why was it me?" But, but the curriculum needs were explained and we called the staff-member in, together with the District-official and discussed the matter with the educator.

⁷⁰...hulle het gehuil, hulle het emosie getoon ... een het gevra: "Hoekom ek? Wat is die rede, hoekom ek?" Toe sê ek vir haar: "Ek gaan nie vir jou die kriteria wys nie. Jy weet wat die kriteria was. Ek gaan nie vir jou sê hoeveel punte jy gekry het nie ... " maar aan die einde van die dag mooi vir hulle verduidelik wat die proses is...

...ek wil vir jou sê in my skool was dit soos dood in 'n familie. Jy kan niks daaraan doen nie. Dis dood, maar ons is almal hartseer ...

Maar die mense wat deur die proses gegaan het en hy's oortollig verklaar en hulle was nog lank nog kwaad vir my, ten spyte van die feit dat hulle later ingetrek is en permanente poste gekry het.

the Good Lord called upon you for a specific job. Did you live up to that job the past week, or did you just communicate knowledge?"

⁷⁰ ...they cried, they showed emotion, and one of them asked: "Why me? What is the reason? Why me?" I told her I'm not going to show her the criteria – she knows the criteria. "I am not even going to show you your marks" ... but at the end of the day, I did explain the whole process.

...I want to tell you this ... in my school it was like death in the family. There was nothing I could do about it. It is death, but we were all grieving...

4.4.1.3 Between the principal and remaining staff

The impact of the staff reduction process was just as traumatizing for the remaining staff as for those who had been made redundant.

Initially everybody was afraid of what and how the process is going to manifest. After the announcement of who is going to remain, the situation calmed down, but new developments became the new issues. Respondents render different views with regard to remaining staff:

I was getting away from the situation but there would always be the situation of “he was always looking over my shoulder.” In time it disappeared, but at that stage it was: “Don’t say anything, don’t do anything...” The openness was gone, the confidentiality was gone within the internal relationships. That created a problem.

⁷¹Dis vir my ongelooflik interessant om vir jou te vertel. Nadat ek die drie geïdentifiseer het, het die ander ses gekom en gesê hulle is almal bereid om vir minder geld te werk, ons moet nie daai drie laat gaan nie.

The quality of teaching and learning was influenced as well as the workload of the remaining staff increased rapidly. Respondents feel the following:

...I still maintain that it had an influence on the quality of teaching in our country, and specifically in our schools...

The staff in excess left unexpected gaps in the system, forcing the remaining staff to divide the extra workload between them. This also resulted in class sizes to become nearly unmanageable. Respondents have this to say:

But the people who went through the process and were eventually declared in excess, they were angry with me, still for a long time, regardless of the fact that they have been accommodated into substantive posts later on.

⁷¹ To me this was very interesting ... to tell you, after I had determined which three were to be rightsized, the other six came and said they are all prepared to work for less money, as long as the other three don't go.

I had to get the Governing Body in and explain to them what is going to happen and obviously after the reduction, the numbers of learners per class went up, so, a change in class-size.

*⁷²En mens het maar probeer om met, met die minder mense smarter te werk en ons het regtig gaan kyk in ons rooster so beplan dat dit impak op die akademie minder te maak, deur die groepe groter te maak soos ek sê, klasse groter te maak, herverdeel, onmiddellik het dit 'n negatiewe invloed op die onderwys want waar jy voorheen, kom ons sê 30 kinders gehad het, is dit dalk nou 38/40 (**korrek**) so dit het 'n defnitiewe invloed op die akademie, ook 'n invloed op die onderwysers ...*

Although the remaining staff was relieved for not being made redundant, they displayed an attitude of mixed emotions. The respondents have the following to share:

*They were difficult at first (**okay**), because even before this one left we need to encourage them saying it is not the end of the world. As long as we are still a teacher here we will get out of this.*

I think it made us more stand together because even before this with all staff involved we are still to go on to deliver education, so we told ourselves even if this is going to be how hard, we are going to stick together and work hard.

4.4.1.4 Between the principal and the NDoE

Principals' first knowledge of the staff reduction process came from either documentation received or they were asked to attend a meeting, where this information was communicated to them.

In some instances principals perceived this as a threat, whilst other principals saw this coming for a long time. Respondents share their perceptions as follows:

⁷² ...and one tried to work smarter with less people, and we went back to the timetable to see whether these changes could have a lesser impact on academics through enlarging the class size, to redivide classes. It immediately had a negative impact on education, because prior to this process, we had 30 learners per class, which all of a sudden changed to between 38/40 (**correct**). So this had a definite influence on academics as well as on the educators involved.

⁷³*Ek het die middag nog gegaan en vergaderings bygewoon, ek onthou dit baie goed, en ek het 'n koevert oopgemaak, en toe ek die koevert oopmaak, toe sien ek "tien onderwysers", toe dog ek dis 'n grap; ek dog nee, dit kan nie wees nie, daar's nie 'n manier wat ons ... ons kan nie tien onderwysers minder in die skool hê en regkom, nog steeds ons werk doen en goeters nie.*

I was an acting principal at the time, which made it more difficult. I came to the school as one of two deputy principals and at that stage there was no staff-reduction process and all of a sudden we got notified in October 1995. I had no prior history of staff reduction so it was a blinder coming to my side and we have been notified from Head Office obviously through circulars and we had to go through the process.

But, but the curriculum needs were explained and we called the staff-member in, together with the District-official and discussed the matter with the educator. We had a very professional guy who came and explained the process and our decision but you have to have your footwork there.

⁷⁴*Nee, ons het geen opleiding gehad nie. Ons het, wat basies gebeur het, as ek reg kan onthou, ons het 'n vergadering gehad by ... 'n distrikvergadering wat die goed vir ons gegee het, en toe die volgende het ons die goed gekry. Hulle het toe nou 'n vergadering met onself gehad oor die hele proses, hoe dit moet gebeur. Maar dit was ook maar basies; dit wat in die dokumente gestaan het is vir ons gesê," Doen dit so", en dinge is uitgeklaar daar, maar dit was die opleiding gewees.*

4.4.1.5 Between the principal and parents/SGB

Although the Governing Body is the official body that governs a school, the parent members still remain parents. Parents were concerned about what is happening,

⁷³ That afternoon I had to attend a meeting. I can still remember it, and I opened an envelope, and by opening the envelope I saw "10 educators" ... I thought it was a joke and said: "No, this can't be. There's no way we can manage the school with 10 less educators, and still do the work and any other odds and ends."

⁷⁴ Now, we did not have any training. We had ... what basically happened, if I remember correctly, we had a meeting at ... a District meeting, where we were handed the documents. So we received it. They then had a meeting with us with regard to the process, how it should be administered. But it was more or less the same

and were also concerned about the culture of the school. One of the main objectives was to get the parents to buy into ownership of the school. For this to happen, the principals had to communicate all happenings to the different stakeholders.

With regard to parents' involvement, the respondents have the following opinions:

We had to engage in functions and stuff to get the people to come to the school, to take ownership of the school and to walk the mile...

And all of a sudden you get parents coming to you, saying, without you even speaking to them say to you: "But sir, you can't get rid of this educator because of this and this and this and that and that and that." So you have a lot of that coming towards you, which you had to take and manage...

⁷⁵*Die ouers ook nie. Ons het dit nie gevind dat daar enigsins van die ouers se kant af probleme gehad het nie. Die enigste probleem was die een naamlose brief wat Distrikkantoor toe gestuur is. Dit het spanning veroorsaak.*

⁷⁶*Weet jy wat, kom ek begin by die ouers ... ek het seker maklik vyftig, sestig oproepe gehad, jy weet toe daar nou 'n dingetjie, 'n kooltjie begin brand, toe begin ouers nou bel en vra: "Hoor hier, maar wat gaan nou daar aan? Ek hoor daar word nou personeel afgesit ... uitgesit. Is dit nou die waarheid?" Dit het so half 'n negatiewe effek op jou skool en in so mate dat ek 'n ouervergadering moes hou, die hele gemeenskap bymekaar moes kry en ek het amper dieselfde pad geloop wat jy met 'n beheerliggaamverkieping loop, en gesê: "Dis so belangrik dat jy*

as in the documents ... which said: "Do it this way and that way", and any questions and or misunderstandings had been clarified ... but it still was not training.

⁷⁵ Nor did the parents. We did not experience that any of the parents had a problem. The only real problem was the anonymous letter that was sent to the District Office. This caused some tension.

⁷⁶ You know what? Let me start with the parents. I received between fifty to sixty calls ... and as you know, if there is just a small thing ... when a small fire starts, parents start phoning me up, asking: "What's going on? I hear that some staff are going to be asked to leave. Is this now the truth or not?" This resulted into a negative perception in the school, in so far that I had to call a parents meeting to attest their fears. I got the community together, walked more or less the same path as when one runs a governingbody election. I said: "It is so important to be at the school tonight. You must make sure that you'll be there. I then explained to everybody the process and told them that I haven't been going in circles with them, with regard to the schoolfees ... I gave it all to the SGB chair and the financial committee chair, all the detail. We then made a decision to communicate the correct information to parents, so that everyone could know what's going on. Thus transparency. I must be honest with you, I think it changed their attitude, ... and there were a lot of

vanaand by die skool moet wees, jy weet, jy moet seker maak jy's daar.” En ek het vir almal mooi verduidelik, die proses vir hulle verduidelik en vir hulle gesê, ek het nie 'n draai met hulle geloop nie, oor wat is die skoolgeld wat ons inkry, die beheerliggaamvoorsitter en die finansiële voorsitter, vir hulle presies die detail gegee. Ons het 'n besluit geneem, kom ons gee die regte inligting ... nie doekies omgedraai nie, dat almal presies weet waaroor dit gaan. Deursigtig. En ek wil nou eerlik vir jou sê, ek dink dit het hulle hele gesindheid ... daar was 'n klomp negatieweit, tot hulle dit gesien het. Agterna, toe hulle ook hoor ons het 'n ekstra plan gemaak om daai mense weer te akkommodeer, ek dink tóe was daar kwaai waardering.

With regard to the Governing Body and their involvement, the respondents present the following comments:

I had to get the Governing Body in and explain to them what is going to happen and obviously after the reduction, the numbers of learners per class went up, so, a change in class-size.

I tell you one thing; at that time I had the chairman of the SGB, a very successful businessman and, and he had the insight at that stage to take me on, on a very personal level, if you understand what I'm saying – the relationship between me and the chairman of the governing body at that stage, became very, very close, and realise that you have to have somebody that you can just go to and just close the door.

Yes, but only when it came to the final decision that had to be made by the principal in any case. The District then communicated this decision based on the facts given by the school, the SGB and the SMT...

The SGB was not involved initially but the chairperson was only notified about the SMT's decision.

⁷⁷Ek dink die beheerliggaam het dit ook baie positief gevat. Ek kan nie onthou of die beheerliggaam enigsins inspraak in die proses gehad het nie.

Ja, ek dink die beheerliggaam was baie ondersteunend gewees in hulle rol ook en gelukkig, een ding wat ek kan sê van ons beheerliggaam al die jare nog, hulle werk baie mooi saam met die skool. Ons is in 'n vennootskap met mekaar en van hulle kant af het hulle ondersteuning gegee en bygedra. Hulle het dit nie vir ons moeiliker gemaak nie.

⁷⁸In daai tyd het ons ook begin met beheerliggaamposte, ek dink ons het een of twee beheerliggaamposte in daai tyd begin om die belading 'n bietjie ligter te maak.

4.4.1.6 Between the principal and learners

In any school system the focus must be on the learners, the effectiveness of their education and how they can benefit by quality teaching and learning (thus quality education). With the introduction of the staff reduction process (and several afterwards) learners were also influenced negatively by, amongst others, issues like class-size, quality educators, lost of security and moving to other schools.

Respondents showed the importance of effective communication to learners to try and rectify some of the problems, learners experience during this process. With regard to class-size, the following:

⁷⁹...onderwysers ook, dat daar groter klasse is. Invloed op die kinders ook. Hoe meer kinders in 'n klas was hoe meer, al die negatiewe goeters wat daarmee saamgaan.

⁷⁷ I think the Governing Body took it very positive. I can't remember whether they had any input with regard to the process...

...yes, I think the Governing Body were very supportive in their role, also happy, one thing I can say about our Governing Body; all these years they really support the school. We are in a partnership and from their side they always supported us. They didn't make it difficult for us.

⁷⁸ It was during that time when we started with Governing Body-posts, I think we have started with one or two Governing Body-posts at the time, to ease the workload for the other staff.

⁷⁹ ...also that there are bigger classes. Also the influence on the learners. The more learners in per class, the more negative activities that go with it.

The respondents have this to say about effective communication towards learners:

⁸⁰*Die kinders mag nie weet daar's konflik nie, want as hulle dit weet, vat dit hulle geborgenheid weg.*

⁸¹*Die kinders, in daai geval, het ek op 'n Maandagmôre gesê, nadat ek 'n paar oproepe gekry het, toe weet ek dit gaan nou 'n effek op die kinders hê...*

...maar toe die punchline gelewer is en gesê wie dit is kan ek vir jou sê; toe's dit traumaties. Ek meen, daar was emosie by betrokke en alles...

⁸²*...en ek het spesifiek na daai klas toe gegaan en in die klas met hulle daaroor gepraat en dit vir hulle mooi verduidelik uh, ... en ek het nogal gedink dit is te 'n hoë vlak vir hulle, hulle gaan nie verstaan nie uh, ... ek dink nogal dit was een van die beter besluite wat ek geneem het, om dit met al die rolspelers te kommunikeer.*

...because the curriculum is only what you expect them to do in class, but you look at the involvement of the learners as well...

4.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the analysis and interpretation of some empirical data was undertaken whereby the above themes, categories and sub-categories shed a light on the perceptions of principals on staff reduction in schools. The focus of this study reveals the challenges that principals encountered during such a staff reduction process and is supported in detail by all the respondents' views and opinions.

⁸⁰ The learners should not know that there is conflict ... because if they know, it takes away there security in the school.

⁸¹ ...with regard to the learners, I told them the Monday morning, after I receveid several phone calls, then I realised this is going to effect the learners...
But when it was out in the open and I told them who were involved, ... I can tell you this, it was very traumatic. I mean there were emotions involved and all of that ...

⁸² I went specifically to those classes and addressed them with regard to what is happening now ... uh, ... I initially thought that I was talking above their level, ... they are not going to understand, ...uh, ... but I think it was one of my better decisions, to communicate this process with all the rolepalyers.

In Chapter Five a summary of the research will be given, important findings will be discussed and appropriate recommendations will be made. Suggestions for further research will be provided.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this mini-dissertation relates to the introduction of the transformation process in the South African Education system since 1994. The main objective was to bring about equity and redress in staff provisioning in all public schools.

This strategy brought with it a concept of rightsizing and eventually cascaded into a staff-reduction process in some institutions, with far-reaching consequences for the school and education management in general.

In this chapter the researcher intends to give an overview of the research and will highlight the relevance between the literature study in Chapter Two and the empirical study in Chapter Four.

As mentioned in Chapter One, the principal as agent of change is confronted with new management responsibilities and as school manager, administers the Education Department's policy of redress and staff-redeployment.

The researcher would like to present the findings on "The perceptions of principals on staff reduction in schools," with relation to the principal's personal experience of staff reduction, the principal's ability to manage such a process and the implications of such a staff-reduction process on interrelated relationships in the school.

Being the final chapter (Chapter Five) the researcher will recapitulate the salient issues of this research project under the following headings:

- Summary;
- Research findings;
- Recommendations;
- Topics for further research;
- Limitations and
- Conclusion.

5.2 SUMMARY

Chapter One deals with the perceptions and experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process in his/her school. This chapter consists of the introduction, rationale for the study, problem statement, aims of the study, method of research, demarcation of the study, clarification of concepts, plan of the study and ethical consideration of this research.

Chapter Two deals with the literature study which was undertaken to discuss the impact of staff reduction on the principal as manager of the school, as well as to investigate current policies and administration issues relating to the NDoE's rightsizing strategy.

Chapter Three focuses on the research design and research method used to gather empirical data. This chapter discusses the qualitative research technique and the face-to-face individual interviews utilised as the research instrument.

Information was obtained from school principals currently furthering their Masters degree studies in Education Management and Leadership at the University of Pretoria.

In Chapter Four the empirical data is analysed and interpreted.

Chapter Five is a recapitulation of the research as a whole, with special reference to the findings, recommendations and further research topics.

5.3 THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following research findings are derived from the literature review as well as from the face-to-face interviews conducted with school principals with regard to staff reduction in schools.

5.3.1 Principal's perceptions of staff

- The respondents realised that transformation in education was introduced to try and normalise the injustices of the past. This could only be achieved through fair distribution of human resources, which originates from the rightsizing strategy of the NDoE.
(cf. paragraphs 2.2.1, 2.3, 4.2.1.1)
- The respondents perceived the changes in education as affecting all stakeholders, in particular the principal as senior manager and accountable officer of his/her school. To survive these changes, the principal must understand the changes, which transformation brings.
(cf. paragraphs 2.4.2, 4.2.1.1)
- The respondents understood that the rightsizing strategy together with the policy of redress eventually resulted in staff reduction in some schools.
(cf. paragraph 2.4.2)
- Although the respondents were informed of staff reduction through District Task Teams, it is their perception that the NDoE did not know how to manage this process, therefore leaving the principal to make decisions and only later involving his/her SMT and SGB.
(cf. paragraphs 2.4.6, 4.2.1.4)
- The respondents realised that they had no prior training or experience with regard to staff reduction to cope with unplanned changes.
(cf. paragraphs 2.6.10, 4.2.1.4)

- The respondents also realised that if they did not deal with the staff reduction process rationally, it could result in more negative outcomes for the staff, the learners and the management of the school.
(cf. paragraph 2.6.8)

5.3.2 Principals' experiences of staff reduction

- The respondents experienced the staff-reduction process as very traumatic and were perceived by the other stakeholders as highly stressed, short-tempered and morose.
(cf. paragraph 2.6.10)
- Some of the feelings respondents experienced during this process were mental fatigue, a fear of the unknown, a loss of security, feelings of guilt and job dissatisfaction. The initial nervousness changed to stress-related illnesses like anxiety, high blood pressure, depression and a feeling of demoralisation.
(cf. paragraphs 2.6.4, 4.2.3.1, 4.2.3.3)
- In some instances the respondents encountered intense resistance from staff. Accusations towards the principal resulted in disparity within the group. This was not a favourable situation between the staff and the principal.
(cf. paragraphs 2.6.2, 4.2.3.3, 4.4.1.1)
- If the process of staff reduction is not effectively communicated by the principal, all the role players are in conflict with the school. The school becomes a battleground.
(cf. paragraphs 2.6.2, 4.3.2.3)
- If the trust between the principal and the staff has disappeared, the staff will not only perceive the staff reduction as an unfair labour practice, but this will also deteriorate the relationship between the principal and the staff. The respondents felt that this problem could be

resolved by implementing staff motivational programmes and encourage the staff to stand and work together.

(cf. paragraphs 2.6.2, 4.2.3.4, 4.3.1.4, 4.4.1.1)

- Respondents also experienced that due to shortages of educators in schools and above all, quality educators leaving the system as a result of voluntary severance packages, effective teaching and learning could be affected and damaged.

(cf. paragraphs 2.4.7, 4.3.3.1)

- The respondents also experienced that culture and climate influence people's behaviour in an institution. On the other hand, it can be noted that a healthy school culture does improve productivity, which will enhance trust and effective communication. Principals must be aware that the cultures of their schools are not change resistant. This can be changed if the staff displays an innovative spirit and responds positively to changing needs.

(cf. paragraphs 2.6.5, 4.3.3.1)

5.3.3 Management of staff reduction

- In the South African context, as in other countries, respondents experienced an increase in management responsibilities. These responsibilities impact on several issues like service conditions, curricular and extra-curricular tasks and maintaining quality education. In this process, principals take calculated measures to benefit their schools with regard to teaching and learning as well as assisting educators.

(cf. paragraphs 2.2.3.2, 4.3.1.3, 4.3.1.4)

- Principals perceive the unforeseen consequences of staff reduction on the day-to-day management in the school, as having an immense influence on human resource management. They experienced this as very stressful and negative. Principals believe they should be

equipped with special managerial and people skills to manage stress and stress-related issues.

(cf. paragraphs 2.4.2, 2.6.4, 4.3.3.3)

- The respondents realised that to be able to manage staff reduction properly, it should be addressed in a more effective way and must involve the importance of staff development as well as promote professionalism.

(cf. paragraphs 2.6.10, 4.2.2.4, 4.3.1.1)

- The respondents knew that the core role of the principal was to undertake the professional management of the school, thus management control. This includes the establishments of curriculum needs for the school and also considers the impact of budget constraints due to the loss of staff. In some instances principals went through budget cuts to accommodate all educators, including those in excess, to benefit the school, whilst others had to remove non-exam subjects to be able to manage the loss of educators placed in excess.

(cf. paragraphs 2.2.3.2, 4.3.1.1, 4.3.3.2)

- Motivation plays an important role in establishing effective communication channels. The principal must first have the trust of the people, and then he/she must negotiate the effect of change within the institution and try to find solutions. If he/she can manage this, they will be able to establish an acceptable team atmosphere.

(cf. paragraphs 2.2.3.2, 2.6.2, 4.3.2.3)

- The respondents also realised the importance of motivation as a management tool to meet the challenges of change. With no motivation, the principal will experience a low morale amongst staff, which will impact negatively on teaching and learning in the school.

(cf. paragraphs 2.6.7, 2.6.3, 4.3.3.1)

- Respondents realised that effective communication will uplift the staff's morale and automatically enhance good relations between all stakeholders.

(cf. paragraphs 2.2.3.2, 2.4.3, 2.6.7, 4.2.3.4)

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher suggests the following recommendations, based on the findings from the reviewed literature and empirical research.

5.4.1 Training of Principals and other stakeholders

With the inception of the staff-reduction process, it became clear that principals were out of their depth when trying to manage this process effectively.

The NDoE must train all principals initially and thereafter all the other stakeholders involved. The NDoE should focus on issues like:

- Legislation and implementation of the staff-reduction process;
- Effective communication;
- Building of relationships;
- People skills;
- Professional Development;
- Guidelines on managing the process;
- Positive motivation and morale building;
- Budget management;
- Management of needs analysis;
- Strategic planning

5.4.2 Professional Development: Principal and SMT

All the respondents expressed the need for an appropriate professional qualification to guide principals and SMT's in management of change. The recommendation in this regard is that at least all principals and, if feasible, all

SMT members must attain a professional qualification on education leadership and management. It is the researcher's view that this should be made compulsory to all senior staff members (principals and deputy principals) in schools. This will empower them in education management and offer guidelines on how to administer a process such as staff reduction.

5.4.3 Staff development

This topic needs to be addressed on a continuous basis by the principal or a designated official. The idea is to develop staff so that they will be able to cope with transformation in general, with related changes that could develop from this. Part of this development could be for properly structured information sessions by the District Office. This will make staff knowledgeable and will also develop their skills.

5.4.4 Professional guidance for principals

As the senior manager of the school, and also the accountable officer, it is expected from the NDoE that the principal should always act on behalf of the Department. This is not an easy task because the principal is not only an employee of the NDoE, but is also respected as an employer within his/her institution. This sometimes places immense pressure on the principal, which puts him/her under so much strain that it eventually evolves into stress and stress-related illnesses like depression and possibly death. All respondents mentioned the need of professional psychological guidance. The researcher sees this as a definite need in schools and it is his contention that this concept will be beneficial to all principals and their institutions.

5.4.5 Movement of educators

Extreme discomfort was perceived from the respondents with regard to the movement of educators, either through staff reduction or through VSP.

The recommendation is that educators should not be moved or removed from schools. The researcher requests that the NDoE investigates this issue and rather grants additional educators to be placed at schools instead of rightsizing schools according to a specific equity-model.

The advantages of this recommendation are:

- No loss of experience and/or quality educators anymore. This will bring stability and will be favourable for effective teaching and learning.
- Educators will recognise change and will be knowledgeable about it, but will not experience stress so intensely anymore. This will put educators' minds at ease, which means less fighting amongst each other and they will probably act more career responsible.
- This recommendation will also favour the morale of educators and could be instrumental in bettering academic achievements.

5.4.6 Help Desk

Establish a help desk for all stakeholders to make enquiries and to be guided on how to take care of a staff-reduction related issue.

5.4.7 Principals as co-opted members

This recommendation is for principals to be co-opted as part of policy development teams long before such a policy is either accepted or before legislation is passed.

Principals will be equipped with skills and knowledge and will be able to implement new developments.

5.5 TOPICS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

5.5.1 The impact of staff reduction on survivor sickness (e.g. all those educators not to be declared in excess).

5.5.2 The impact of staff reduction on the academic performance of learners.

5.5.3 Perceptions of educators on workload, and how it impedes on effective teaching and learning.

5.5.4 The impact of redeployment in relation to inefficiency in the workplace.

5.5.5 Restructuring education; a career for prospective students.

5.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

This research study is of limited scope. It focuses on a specific group of respondents who are all principals but who can be clustered together due to their involvement as Master degree students in Education Leadership and Management at the University of Pretoria. Due to the size of the sample, the researcher has refrained from generalizing that the findings are relevant to all institutions in all nine provinces.

In this research the following limitations emerged:

5.6.1 Due to the respondents involvement with the academic content of this Master degree course, it is possible that they already dispose of a higher level of knowledge and management skills to apply during a staff-reduction process.

However, it is the researcher's contention that if the respondents were compared to principals with more basic tertiary qualifications, it would show that these principals would apply different perceptions and less competent management styles during such a staff-reduction process.

This is a very relevant limitation that could influence some of the outcomes if the research were to be undertaken in all nine provinces, preferably using a quantitative research instrument.

5.6.2 The second limitation refers to a language limitation where principals are not particularly familiar with all the different nuances in the English or Afrikaans language during the interview phase. This issue can be perceived as an emotional drawback by these principals who did not have the opportunity to communicate in their vernacular or home language. Instead, due to circumstances, they were forced to use a second or third language as a medium of communication. The same principle applies for the respondents who answered the questions in Afrikaans. During the translation, some of the meanings may be lost; hence, I used the original Afrikaans version in the text with a translation as a footnote.

5.6.3 Another limitation could be the researchers' subjective involvement, being a principal himself for the past 10 years, and being personally involved with the staff-reduction process three times.

5.7 CONCLUSION

This research project has identified the experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process as well as the issues that impede upon effective management.

This study states clearly that principals can no longer function or operate in isolation or without the involvement of the NDoE and all the other relevant stakeholders.

The NDoE has entrusted upon principals the power to make decisions with regard to effective teaching and learning in schools by implementing the latest education-related policies with the main objective to strive for equality and democratic transformation.

Research identified the need for an effective and acceptable staff-reduction system that requires the collaboration and commitment of all the different stakeholders. The outcome of such a process will enhance the Government's rightsizing strategy but it will also ensure the promotion of quality education.

These issues become a challenge for principals, who will hopefully utilise this research document to administer and manage future staff-reduction processes.

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ANNEXURE A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The interviews were organised according to a number of relevant questions and, where and when applicable, supported by some follow-up questions. The follow-up questions were not necessarily the same for all four interviews. Interviews were furthermore structured according to interview Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta for the respective participants.

INTERVIEW ALPHA

Background

This research originates from the National Education Department's policy of addressing the inequalities of the past through equity, staff reduction and the process of redress to justify a democratic transformation with-in education.

This research particularly focuses on experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process.

Researcher: You have heard what this is all about and particularly how the principal manage and experience staff reduction. But before we carry on, please give me some background about yourself.

Participant: Let me tell you. I've studied teaching, finished in the 80's, started teaching in the West Rand, became a HOD in 1987 and eventually in 1994, became a deputy principal and an acting principal for two years. In October 1996, I became a principal officially of a school in Kempton Park. Not a very big school, plus minus 350 learners with Afrikaans medium of instruction - a

very interesting community, of which the top 2% make up 80% of the school community. There's no body, but a small tail. The school is not multi-cultural, but it is an open school, but you can say it is an Afrikaans-medium school. The government grants us not enough educators, so we're hiring in some extra. From a management point of view it is very nice.

Researcher: So you don't have a specific problem with parents that don't pay.

Participant: No, you've got it always. We've got about 84% of parents paying, and plus minus 16% that we normally seek to balance the books.

Researcher: Okay, I understand.

Participant: Yes, it is those small things that keep us very busy.

Researcher: (Participant's name), there is some information that I would like to communicate with you. I'm going to discuss several matters with you, with regard to staff reduction. I'm going to refer to some topics on which you can respond. The first heading is about effective leadership. At the end of 1995 and the beginning of 1996, all principals in Gauteng were notified of a staff-reduction process. What I would like to know is, were you a principal at that time and, tell me, how did you experience it?

Participant: I was an acting principal at the time, which made it more difficult. I came to the school as one of two deputy principals and at that stage there was no staff-reduction process and all of a sudden we got notified in October 1995. I had no prior history of staff reduction so it was a blinder coming to my side and we have been notified from Head Office obviously through circulars and we had to go through the process. So we sat as a SMT, school management team and I remember that the first time there were many hiccoughs in the circulars concerning the law and to implement the law, and we had to work through that. I had to get the Governing Body in and explain to them what is going to happen and obviously after the reduction, the numbers of learners per class went up,

so, a change in class-size. At that time we had to declare five staff members in excess.

Researcher: Now how did you determine that and where did you start?

Participant: As I said, we immediately got the SMT involved and then said, let's look at the curriculum needs of the school, as we were a very prominent school in that area, and we had to see how are we going to survive the first round, as you maybe can remember, the first round was quite a shock for the school. We were used to a way of leading and managing your school and now all of a sudden you had to make changes. It brought a bit of negativity into the staff as well, because all of a sudden they sat back. Being an open and democratic process, explaining to everybody who it is going to be, and why, so we had to go through the process very quickly to get the thing out in the open and after we have done that we have decided on the five, two of them on curriculum basis and the other three on LIFO through the various posts of the school. LIFO is quite easy. Last In First Out, that is actually the easiest way to do it, but when you come to discrimination on curriculum basis you need to have all your ducks in a row. So we had to get all the reports and the involvement of the SMT because you can't only go to post level ones. In fact at that time it was one deputy, no I mean a HOD and four post-level ones.

Researcher: So you haven't had any training prior to that on handling staff reduction?

Participant: No, nothing, absolutely nothing. But what we got was a session with District at that stage to say this is the circular, work through the circular and this is the process that you should go through.

Researcher: But you were the co-ordinator of the whole system of staff reduction at the time?

Participant: Yes, I was the co-ordinator and being the principal of the school, it was expected of me. I had to do it but I have to come back to the leadership

thing it was not only to manage the process, that was easy. We've got certain criteria and steps to follow filling in the documents, they were all there but it involved people, it involved their future. Some of them, three of them, left teaching after this process because they felt that after 15 years in the school "what do I get, what do I get"?

Researcher: Absolutely.

Participant: So you had a problem with your staff members. You had to facilitate that as well and that created some problems, but, but one goes through it. But training? No, nothing. No, that is not part of "principal ship".

Researcher: You didn't find, at the time, although you had to implement LIFO, that there were people, staff members that came in on the LIFO, which actually helped you in your immediate curriculum needs?

Participant: No.

Researcher: But how did you manage that?

Participant: You see, that is a sad thing about LIFO, because when you apply LIFO as is, you may lose the better staff member in a school situation and, and what we did, as I said, we started off with the curriculum needs of the school and then we went into phases as well to see, but you cannot go into the senior phase alone, or the intermediate phase or the foundation phase. We had to look at the whole system of staff at your school, what you have and how you are going to be able to utilize there after. So you need to go back to the job descriptions of all staff members as well to see what they are worth in total for the school. And then you not only go back to the curriculum, because the curriculum is only what you expect them to do in class, but you look at the involvement of the learners as well, because the Primary Phase of Primary School involves more than this.

Researcher: Now, did you do any planning prior to this, because I believe at the time we received a document like a notice, a circular from the District Office notifying us of what is going to happen now? At that time when you received this, what were your immediate actions?

Participant: Pro-active. That's why I said we immediately came to the table and said this is the way we are going with staff reduction. Well, the redress at that stage was operational from, from Government side. That's their point of view. That is why they are doing it. Immediately the SMT said that if this happens, what is the impact going to be on the school so we had to assess our staffing distribution as a whole, so to see where everybody is going to fit in, as well as changes and moves of staff-members from the Foundation Phase to the Intermediate Phase to get your staff so that could meet the curriculum needs of the school. But it was not only curriculum in the classes but also extramural activities outside the class.

Researcher: Did you understand the operational activities of the Education Department at the time?

Participant: I did, I did understand it, but to my point of view, if you reflect on that today, after, what is it, nearly 20 years, no 12 years back, if you reflect on that, I still maintain that it had an influence on the quality of teaching in our country, and specifically in our schools, because it just raised the workload and stress levels, because from there-on it became an ongoing process and everybody knew that you either make yourself or put yourself in a position that the school cannot get rid of you either on LIFO or curriculum needs. When the second process came later, people just used LIFO to make the process easier and they made the management process in such a way that people knew you either produce or be declared in excess which is bad on the one side when it comes down to leadership of people.

Researcher: But actually also to the benefit of the school?

Participant: Yes, to the benefit of the school, because people raised their work level because they knew what is expected from them and what the consequences are if they don't come to it.

Researcher: Now who identified the people to be made redundant? Who made that final decision?

Participant: The final decision was the principal's. That was the bad thing about it because we had to get the input of the SMT and as a principal; I am the professional manager and had to make the final decision. The SGB was not involved initially but the chairperson was only notified about the SMT's decision. As I said this was a management decision. So the principal was the guy that had to stand up and say: "This is it," and be criticised.

Researcher: Absolutely, absolutely.

Participant: That is part of the game, you had to take it on and even today, if they see me, the question is still there: "Why was it me?" But, but the curriculum needs were explained and we called the staff-member in, together with the District-official and discussed the matter with the educator. We had a very professional guy who came and explained the process and our decision but you have to have your footwork there.

Researcher: But the District was also involved?

Participant: Yes, but only when it came to the final decision that had to be made by the principal in any case. The District then communicated this decision based on the facts given by the school, the SGB and the SMT, but of course you have not been trained for that.

Researcher: Did you make mistakes during that first time?

Participant: Yes, yes obviously when managing the process. You know, you have to keep it for yourself, lots of stress levels, maybe said something that I

shouldn't have said, even in the one-to-one confrontation when notifying the staff members, etc., etc.

Researcher: Have you had confrontation from the staff, notifying them?

Participant: Yes, they asked: "Why me? Why me?" and I had to explain in the interview with them we have tried to follow the process as set out; right or wrong and we came out unscathed on the other side, but as I said, you know, three staff members left teaching after that so it must have had an impact on them so that they could decide that teaching is not for me anymore and that, uh, one of them went into the private sector and gave private lessons, then she opened a business and it went very well. So did we make mistakes, did I make mistakes at the end of the day? You can easily look back and say that she is doing well in the private sector but on the other hand would she have been a successful educator in a closed environment? But once she had the freedom to do her own thing, she excelled.

Researcher: I understand.

Participant: So that's the positive side of staff reduction. Maybe it is the easiest to say, "Okay, it worked out fine," but, but what if ... you see that's the question to ask.

Researcher: But of course you had these five people that went through the redundancy process, and they are in the one pool. What about the others who didn't go through staff reduction, which are in the other pool? What was their relationship towards you? This is now the other group.

Participant: Very relieved. That's why I say being a deputy principal I still reflect on myself that I think it was a blessing in disguise that just after this process, I got promoted as a principal to another school. I was getting away from the situation but there would always be the situation of "he was always looking over my shoulder." In time it disappeared, but at that stage it was: "Don't say anything, don't do anything..." The openness was gone, the confidentiality was

gone within the internal relationships. That created a problem. But, I think through years comes experience but the first process was a total lack of experience. We never had planning for this. We didn't even know it was coming. The normal process of staff coming and leaving was easy to handle but the fact was: you are the lengthening arm of the Government and now you must declare people redundant.

Researcher: Mm, that was scary, that was very scary at the time.

Participant: *Yah, it was.*

Researcher: How did it influence the institution at the time? If you take the school in total and you are the principal, the manager of the school, when you actually started the process and after it had been finalised, how did it actually influence the school?

Participant: *On the quality of teaching, it was very difficult for the staff to get acquainted to the larger number of learners in the class, because immediately I had five staff members less, which I had to utilise with the remaining staff. The job description changed, the workload changed, and people were not trained for that. They just had to go, and all of a sudden, they just had to do more. So it took up a lot of their time and made them tired, not only physically, but mentally as well. And then, from a leadership point of view, my point of view, as principal at that stage, the big job was just to get the cohesion back again, just to get them going to the goal at the end of the day: that we are here for the children, to develop them, and so on, and so on. From my side to them: don't worry, the respect is there. You will be covered, etc., etc.*

Researcher: How did you get the cohesion back?

Participant: *Communication. Communication. Communication. Communication on various levels, and also going back to the staff, maybe at that stage I was overdoing it a bit, but just to say thank you and to let them feel special for whatever they have done; to communicate that through to the staff and to the*

parents and through to the children. You had to do that, just to say thank you and especially to the parents because what was happening now, all of a sudden there was more children in a class and the personal touch was less, time spent to my child was less, and you know how it is; “it is my child and I want the best for my child and don’t make your problem, my problem.” We had to communicate that through to the parents. That was an ongoing process and I had been there for one year after this process before I left. And in that year we had to communicate, we had to work with the parents, more than in the past. We had to engage in functions and stuff to get the people to come to the school, to take ownership of the school and to walk the mile and to change the mindset of the staff as well, that there is a new dispensation with new working relationships coming in that you have to look at. Your employment contract, although it is not a contract, it’s just an agreement that you have with the Government, is changing and you have to adapt by that as well. So that was another way of communicating, to give them all democratic and open discussions on documents. In the past you gave what was relevant and left out the rest. Now staff needs to know more in detail. They don’t have to read it in the paper; you must communicate it with them before hand. So that was also a very difficult task.

Researcher: I hear from you that you had a difficult time experiencing the whole leadership activity. But how did this process impact on your family?

Participant: Fortunately my wife is also a teacher.

Researcher: At the same school?

Participant: No, a different school. So she understood the process of schools departure point, but still it made it difficult because I couldn’t go and speak to her, because all of this was in confidentiality. And so it made sort off discussions very difficult and then one tends to get grumpy as well. Because you know you’ve got these things riding on your shoulders and you have to make decisions for five people, which is going to influence their careers and

their teaching careers. You are going to make decisions that are going to make them change venues, if they stay in teaching. Those were all factors needed to take into consideration when applying staff-reduction. Even the staff members in this process, one of the ladies, were also in this pool of discussion and we couldn't decide on her because she was retiring within one and a half year's time. So you had to take this into consideration as well what the impact should be on this lady when she goes on pension. That all got loaded on the principal, and then you've to go home. So you have to make some decisions on whether you are going to take this home or not. Sometimes you succeed, but sometimes you didn't because the unwritten word says more than the spoken word, but luckily my wife understood. A very difficult process. My kids couldn't understand. Although one was talking and saying: "It was a bit stressful at work," one had to maintain the family life as well and work on that...you had to, you had to do that. Just to survive personally, you had to do that.

Researcher: You already mentioned something on communication by rendering the situation through effective communication. I need to know, at the time, how did this process impact on the communication levels between the principal and the staff members.

Participant: See, what we did, when we got the notification, we set up a staff meeting, just to say: "Okay, this is what is happening. This is the process that needs to be followed as stipulated by the circular at that time," and I gave them the info of what is going to happen. And then, obviously there were pro's and cons, you know, not as such with me, but with the SMT, when we had to decide on the curriculum needs, etc., etc. You always get that people, in this case the staff, tries to secure their own positions but you must "remember this, realise this, remember that what I have done..."

Researcher: Yes, yes I hear what you say.

Participant: And all of a sudden you get parents coming to you, saying, without you even speaking to them say to you: "But sir, you can't get rid of this educator because of this and this and this and that and that and that." So you have a lot

of that coming towards you, which you had to take and manage, and that also plays a part in your decision-making in the end. But you had to be unbiased. You had to. You must look at the facts of what is to the best interest of the school. But it also closed down, as I said to you, the personal touch of communication, sitting in the staff room, having a cup of tea. That also got very cold and it was manipulated by the staff. So it was on an only need-to-know basis. "I will only speak to you when it is necessary." (Staff). That sort of thing you know. Until the process is over, then the communication becomes relaxed again and everybody goes for the common goal. It is easier to get back into the system because they then realise they were not the chosen one's to be made redundant, but it was not easy. From a leader's point of view, it was not easy to get them going. The HOD was easy, that was LIFO. That was not difficult on the HOD level. Post-level one, we applied curriculum needs and extra curricular needs and LIFO for the others. But we went through the processes and maintained that it is not easy, even in the current situation, to do it when you have your staff establishments and they come and tell you," Listen you have to lose one." The smaller your staff gets, the more difficult it gets, because what you are getting now is, you get specialists in their fields who is getting out of the system and if your Governing Body is not in a position to employ somebody from outside to help carry the load, if you only making use of the ones given to you by Government, then you've got a bit of a problem, because then they really get specialised. You cannot lose an English teacher, you cannot lose a maths teacher, you cannot lose an Afrikaans teacher, you cannot lose the male at the school, although he's the last one employed, for the purposes of the extra curricular. So then it becomes a very difficult situation, who to loose or not.

Researcher: Yes, this is very difficult.

Participant: Then people tend to take LIFO and unfortunately it does not always work and then it comes back to the principal again, that you have to make the decision and say what is in the best interest of the school. To come back to the communication, I think you can gather that it was very difficult. In the beginning it became a cold war but then you have to work as a leader and work it back

and put yourself upfront. What I did at the time was to say: “Listen, I had a job to do and I think I did it well, to the best interest of the community and the school, and everybody that is involved in it.” Just live through it, manage it and there after, get it back again.

Researcher: Did the conflict subside later on?

Participant: Yes, it did. But as I said to you, even today, after 10, 12, 13 years, I see the people in the street and you always have the eye-look that says: “ You are the guy that was responsible for my redundancy. You are the reason that I didn’t stay.” Even years after, if they realise, they will still say: “Why me?” That question will always be there. But one learns through the years how to handle that. I think one must not focus on the problem. You see, that is how you try to get over it, but principals must make many decisions and they are not always popular ones. In this instance, this was definitely not popular.

Researcher: I like what you have said with regard to the communication that you actually changed the system by communicating on a more frequent basis to all role players, direct and indirect. Was that also part of your motivation? How did you utilise motivation to get them on board again?

Participant: Well, firstly I had to motivate myself because remember you are getting the kicks. Everybody is looking at you every day and say:” What did you do? Why did you do this?” Everybody is seeking for answers. At that stage, being a young principal, there was still a career path to go and you had to make decisions to say: “I want to be a teacher and I want to be a successful teacher and a manager in teaching as well.” And this is part of the process that you must go through. Therefore you had to adapt and make changes. But coming back to the staff, with the leadership thing, even with them as well, you have to do some in-service training as I said on the communication basis; you have to be more direct. Tell them what is expected, what is the reason behind the madness, if you can call it that. And also, it did not happen over night. You had to take them into the mode of thinking to say: “But this is what teaching is

all about.” And that there is a control-arm that is the employer and you are the employees at the bottom, and that the employer is going to take decisions and the employee is also going to take decisions. When one reflects back to that, prior to the staff-reduction process, principals were very close to their staff and the state (government) was away. Now this situation put the principal in a spot where he stood with both legs in the situation; the one with the employer and the other with his staff. The trick came for yourself to play the game: when are you acting on behalf of the one and when on behalf of the other? Now you have to take this message and convey it through to the staff: When is the principal taking the point of the department and when is he supporting the staff? (Employee) And that has to be communicated to your staff. It was also not very easy because you had to relate back to the laws, circulars and memos from the District. The reason for this was from an operational view and you had to distinguish between the two. Then you had to do some in-service training and motivate so that your staff could understand the two schools of thought in teaching. This still exists today.

Researcher: You just told me earlier that the change took time. Did the motivation also come later (in time)?

Participant: Yes, it did. The thing that happens, it brought your staff more to the reality of operational requirements of the department as well as the operation of the school. Staff was more focused on the legal things in a school. In the past, if the principal tells them, they believed in the principal. Now all of a sudden, they had to think for themselves and to protect their own position of employment because the principal could not always do that. So this motivated them not to say:” I’m only a teacher,” but they also had to look at legal applications. Staff also realized that they must look closely to the circulars because this could impact on them. That motivates them that they should not be listeners only, but look after themselves – may be they should think more than what they listen. That took time in the communication process. This did not happen over night and is still happening now. There are still teachers that don’t understand and will say: “We shouldn’t have lost those teachers,” didn’t want to understand, maybe. The older generation tends to follow what they

have been told. The younger ones question everything. In the older days they didn't question. They just followed the route that you gave them.

Researcher: How did this impact on you as principal? Demoralizing you? Did you need to go for counselling? How did you experience it? Was it necessary or not?

Participant: I tell you one thing; at that time I had the chairman of the SGB, a very successful businessman and, and he had the insight at that stage to take me on, on a very personal level, if you understand what I'm saying – the relationship between me and the chairman of the governing body at that stage, became very, very close, and realise that you have to have somebody that you can just go to and just close the door.

Researcher: Yes.

Participant: So he had insight in the school, which enabled him to distance himself...

Researcher: True

Participant: ... because the principal at that stage was a very lonely figure – you could go nowhere, except your District official to speak to, but when it comes to personal stuff, how you feel about it, how you - how you, you know the trauma that goes with it when telling a person, "Listen, I am taking your job away from you," that chairman of the SGB at the stage was very, very, very thoughtful and co-operative with that so I could at least release the stress and talk to him and we could come to some conclusion and say: "Okay, this is the route to follow, and not that", (Yes) because I think at that stage, if I had to apply the LIFO I would have problems, and also one could go home, you know, and just release the stress and as I said earlier to you, just that fact that I had a wife at that stage who was also in teaching at that stage, who could relate to the situation, she also succeeded in it to make it easier and maybe speak to the children and say: "Not today." (Yes), if you understand what I'm trying to say. That helped

*quite a lot. But it was quite stressful and you had to work through it, and look at yourself, spend a lot of time playing golf, being on your own and get your mind going. That's basically it, you know, it had a, it had a, ... it had a ... huge impact. It even changed, I think if I look back to that today it even changed my strategy on leadership as well where I tend to be ... in the past, I tend to be a bit rigid **(Yes)** this is the law, this is the rule, this is how we are going to do it. It made one a little more flexible on the human side of it, come and speak to me, a little more open to, to, to, take the post of principal and weave it into the staff as well and say: "Okay, I'm part of you, with a specific job description and a specific role to do". Sometimes you must understand the one leg is now with the government or with the provider and the other one is now on the other side so I feel the brunt as well and one had to do that so that your staff can know as well. But it had a very, very, very big impact on my own personally **(Yes)** because it changed my leadership style, my management style concerning school...*

Researcher: Other stress-related illness type of things that maybe occurred or escalated from this?

Participant: Fortunately not. I got a bit short-tempered but that was simply...

Researcher: That is part and parcel of a principal...

*Participant: That is part and parcel of a principal, maybe a bit more at that stage, you know, "Don't come to me with nonsense, bring me the solution, let's finish it and get it over with, **(Yes)** because there is other things that is more important than what you are coming with now," so one even there ... one had to...*

INTERVIEW BRAVO

Background

This research originates from the National Education Department's policy of addressing the inequalities of the past through equity, staff reduction and the process of redress to justify a democratic transformation within education.

This research particularly focuses on experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process.

Navorser: Vertel my bietjie van jouself. Ek weet absoluut niks van jou nie.

Deelnemer: Right, mmm (gee ongemaklike hoesie) ... ek is by (naam van skool) en (naam van dorp). Die skool is so 650 ... uh, ... dit is nie al nie; dit is my 12de jaar dat ek skoolhoof is.

Navorser: Jy ken al die myle, jy't dit al bietjie gestap.

Deelnemer: Ja, (skuif) ek is al 12jr daar, so (snuif) ... uh, ... ek is 'n Pretorianer, kom uit Pretoria uit, ek is...

Navorser: Hoor hier, jou skool is eintlik 'n voederskool vir die hoërskool daar op (dorp se naam).

Deelnemer: Ja

Navorser: (Naam van deelnemer), ek wil graag nader beweeg aan die doel van vandag. Ek doen die hele ding rondom personeelvermindering. Jy is 12jr hoof van 'n skool, dan het jy seker ook deur van hierdie prosesse gegaan. Ek gaan kyk na wat is die hoof se ervaring. Hoe het hy dit beleef? Daar is baie navorsing oor

personeel en oor die Onderwys Departement geskryf, maar relatief minder inligting is beskikbaar oor die hele proses van gelykheid, personeelvermindering en “redress” in die onderwys. Jy is ‘n ervare hoof vir 12jr en ek wil graag gaan kyk na hoe was effektiewe leierskap in die tyd toe die kennisgewing (dokument) vanaf GDO gekom het om te sê dat ons nou moet personeel verminder (staff-reduction). Hoe het jy dit hanteer, vertel my jou storie. Hoe het jy dit beleef?

Deelnemer: Okay, kom ek gaan jou net ‘n bietjie my agtergrond gee. Ek het nie ... uh, ... ek het daai skool gekry op 300. In die drie rondtes het ek nie ‘n vermindering gehad nie a.g.v. groei, maar ... ek kwalifiseer vir 18 departementele personeel en ek het ‘n beginsel 1:24 in ‘n klas en ... uh, ... toe moes ek daardie beginsel later jare skuif en die Beheerliggaamposte verminder, mense deel van die personeel. (Ja) Dit ... kan ek jou my verhaal vertel (Ja). Ek is nie so betrokke, so nou betrokke nie, maar ek kan jou vertel van die deel van die skool as hoof. Ek is deel van die District Task Team, ek is deel van die Provincial Task Team van personeelvermindering (Ja), so van die unie (vakbond) se kant af, op ‘n ander manier as ... uh, ... kom ons begin by my, dit is dalk die belangrikste dat ek jou vertel wat met my gebeur het. Ek het ... uh, ... soos ek jou nou gesê het, ons is 1:24. Uit die aard van die saak het geldsake ook ‘n invloed gehad en begin knyp op die Beheerliggaamskant en ons moes toe ... ek moes toe van drie (3) van die nege (9) ontslae raak – (sug) en ... uh, ... ek het hierdie ding al gesien kom in Juniemaand. Die groot ding van ‘n skoolhoof is, ek sien as ‘n mens hierdie goed beleef, sien jy dit kom en jy weet hier lê ‘n pad voor jou en hier is dinge wat nou gedoen moet word en hoe gaan ... hoe gaan ‘n ou keuses maak aan die einde van die dag om te besluit? So ek, ek dink tog dit is ‘n moerse intense ding. Ekskuus vir die lelik praat.

Navorsers: Wie’t die besluit geneem? Wie moes finaal besluit? Het jy dit alleen gevat?

Deelnemer: Ek het. Ek het die besluit geneem. Nadat jy met die begrotings gewerk het ... uh, ... daarna dit vir die Beheerliggaam gegee en vir die Beheerliggaam gesê: “Dit is die pad wat ek dink ons behoort te loop.” Om die finansies te laat balanseer en nie om die produktiwiteit iewers in te laat boet by die skool nie, om nie iewers te laat slaplê by die skool nie en om funksies en take te doen wat ons nog altyd gedoen het, moet alles nog net so in plek bly, maar die besluit is eintlik deur my geneem en toe deurgegee na die Beheerliggaam toe (sug) en op daai stadium toe ek met hulle praat, toe het ek vir hulle gesê dat minder personeel is ook reg. Om ‘n lang storie kort te maak, ek het die besluit gemaak, hulle het nêrens vir my kom sê hier is ‘n dokument of voorskrifte van hoe gemaak nie of selfs ‘n Onderwysdepartement se dokument van “gaan uit en gaan kyk nie”. Hulle het vir my gesê: “Jy moet eintlik na ons terugkom met ‘n wettige proses, maar sê vir ons hoe het jy hierop besluit en vir ons ‘n voorlegging maak oor hoe het jy by daai name uitgekom, dan sal ons (SBL) die finale besluit neem”, wat toe eventually so gewerk het. Dit was die ouers wat ek toe ... nie ek alleen besluit nie, maar ek en my bestuurspan. Ja, ek sal jou nou vertel wat het gebeur. Die hele proses het begin; dit is ‘n ongelooflike emosionele ding (sug) ... uh, ... Hershey en Blanchard se hele storie van “Telling/Selling” – nadat jy die realiteite besef het en hierdie realiteite by my ingesink het. Ek is nie ‘n ou wat sommer oornag met ‘n ding op hol loop nie, maar ek het die ding sien kom en ek het gesien dat ek sal ten minste drie (3) ... en ek het aanvanklik gedink vyf (5) (lang sug), maar toe ek die somme mooi maak toe sien ek dit is nou drie (3) en ... uh, ... ek het by my bestuurspan begin. Ek is ‘n outjie wat ongelooflik ... my uh, ... my skool funksioneer bietjie anders as ander ouens s’n. Ek het nie ‘n adjunkhoof nie; nee ek het ‘n adjunkhoof maar (sug) ek werk met afdelingshoofde, maar ek het glad nie ... in naam het ‘n adjunkhoof by die Onderwysdepartement, maar my hele skool bou ek op ander goed – my hele onderwysleierskapstyl is van so ‘n aard ... ek is nie ‘n diktator nie, glad nie ... uh, ... ek glo aan morele druk. Ek sit ongelooflike morele druk op my onderwysers en my bestuursraad. Daar gebeur dit dat ons sit en ek sê kom ons maak die somme en hulle eventually sover gevat en gesê: “Neem nou die besluite.” So, daar is die

realiteite en dit is wat ons het. Dit is die pad. Mooi gelei en toe besluit hulle ons moet ten minste drie laat gaan.

Navorsers: Nou wat was julle kriteria gewees? Hoe het jy besluit moet dit kurrikulum wees of wat?

Deelnemer: Aanvanklik die besluit ... wil jy hê ek moet sê hoe ons besluit het?

Navorsers: Ja, hoe het julle tot 'n besluit gekom oor wie dit moet wees en wat moet dit wees?

*Deelnemer: Ja, ons het 'n proses gevat (sug) toe besluit ons nee, goed. Dit is nadat ek hulle sover gekry het om te besluit daar is drie wat nou moet gaan, en hier sit ons nou met almal goeie mense. Toe het ons 'n proses gevat en ek het hulle weggevat vir twee dae na Vrede, in die Berge. Hulle het besef dit is vir my 'n baie ernstige saak want dit het ongelooflike stres op my gesit. Wat ek moet werklikwaar vir jou sê, van die nege (9), het ek geweet van een wat ek wil laat loop (**Maar nie drie nie?**), maar nie drie nie, (**Ja**), en dit het my heelyd nie ... wat ek toe gedoen het is, toe vat ons die hele proses, ons het toe al nege (9) gevat, nie net een of twee uitgehaal nie en toe gaan kriteria maak. Ek het hulle daar in die berge ingevat, vir twee dae, my hele bestuurspan – ons is ses – en ek het vir hulle gaan sê die heel eerste dag het ons net gesit ... maar hulle het toe nou geweet waarna toe stuur ons af, want ek het met hulle die hele proses gelei na 'n bepaalde plek toe ... het vir hulle gesê ons moet nou drie mense laat gaan. Ek het, voordat ons daar ... ek het nie gekom met die kriteria nie ... ek het daar gaan sit en gesê: “Right, kom ons bou nou die kriteria ... dag een ... (sug) uit die aard van die saak het die kurrikulum 'n belangrike rol gespeel, buitemuurse aktiwiteite nie soos die staat s'n nie, maar dit het 'n baie belangrike rol gespeel. Sekere insette wat daai persoon gemaak het ... uh, ... persoonsanalises is gedoen van daai nege mense en dit was nogal 'n traumatiese ervaring omdat een van die nege was die adjunkhoof se vrou ... waar hy*

teenwoordig was, jy weet **(oe, okay)**, so dit was nogal 'n mo... 'n baie moeilike bestuursproses om die ding te bestuur, maar ek het, om regverdig te wees, almal ... ons het gesê ek gaan nie die kriteria maak nie, ons het die hele lys van kriteria opgestel, daar was agt punte en ons het gewigswaardes toegeken waarin, uit die aard van die saak, die kurrikulum 'n belangrike rol, die belangrikste rol gespeel het, maar persoonsanalises het 'n rol gespeel. Ek is 'n outjie wat glo aan "Spiral Dynamics", ek weet nie of jy hulle ken nie? **(Mm, nee)** Cowen en Back, ek is 'n groot ... ek is nie 'n ou vir Jean-Jacques Rossouw se goed nie (sug). Ek het ... uh, ... in elke graad het ek vier klasse en ek glo daaraan dat as ek in elke graad 'n rooie het wat kan skep en ontwikkel en bou, dan moet daar drie bloues saam met hom wees of 'n groene of 'n oranje. Elkeen het nou sy positiewe punte en elkeen sy ... so ek sien 'n graad as 'n klein skooltjie en elke graad moet 'n hoof hê en dis die kreatiewe ou, die ou wat skep, die ou wat ontwikkel, wat bou, maar ook in daai graad moet daar 'n bloue wees en daai bloue is baie belangrik want dit is hy wat die job kan doen, want daai rooie kan nie roetienewerk doen nie, maar daar moet 'n bloue wees wat die roetienewerk kan doen en so bou ek my hele spannetjie in die graad op. (sug) Ons het daai goed gedoen, ons het alles gedoen, ons het gesê wat se gewigswaardes koppel ons aan elkeen van daai kriterias. En op die einde van die dag het ons ... uh, ... onafhanklik daai kriteria gaan toepas; nié as 'n groep nie. Ek het hulle in ses verskillende vertrekke laat sit en gesê: "Hier's die nege mense, hier's die kriteria, nou gaan jy uit buitekant toe en jy gaan sit nou en sê vir my waar pas wie in hierdie verhaal. Jy gee vir al nege daai ouens punte vir die kriteria wat ons gebou het, met die gewigswaarde daarby." En ek het op die ou einde gekom, (Navorser se naam), en ons het ... uh, ... eventually toe ons dit nou klaar gedoen het, so vir twee ure, het ons om 'n tafel gesit en gesê: "Alright, nou (naam) jy tel vir ons die punte op en ons gaan ons nie laat lei deur die punte nie maar dit gaan vir ons 'n goeie aanduiding wees om te sien. Dan gaan ons daarvanaf bespreek en hier gee ons nou die persone se name ... die eerste keer ... dit was omtrent 'n dag en 'n driekwart, toe kom ons by die persone se name eers uit **(okay)**. So, om 'n lang storie kort te maak, toe ons om die tafel sit en ons het nou die

somme gemaak ... uh, ... dis vir my ongelooflik interessant dat ... uh, ... by vyf van die ses, was al drie presies dieselfde, en uh, ... uit die aard van omstandighede was die adjunkhoof se vrou een en hy't haar ook onder die eerste drie gesit wat moet gaan, agv die samestelling. So, ek dink ons het die kriteria, by die bou van die kriteria **(Ja)** ... die voorafbeplanning, dink ek, was baie, baie goed gewees. Ek dink ons het dit nogal mooi agtermekaar gesit. Dit was oop, dit was nie ... daar was geen ... ek het, ek het my ook self voorgeneem ... daar was so 10 wat ek gesê het: "Jis, ek kan hulle nie verloor nie." Ek het myself voorgeneem en gesê: "As hulle nou deel van daai drie gaan wees, dan moet dit dan nou maar so uitwerk ... uh, ... net om die proses gelyke beregtiging te gee."

Navorsers: Hierdie nege; het hulle nie gevoel maar ... uh, ... "hoekom moet ons in die spêrvuur staan en daar is tien teen een van die ander wat deur die Departement ondersteun word, of dan gedra word, wat dalk deel van hierdie groep moes gewees het in plaas van sekere van hulle van hierdie nege?"

Deelnemer: Kom ek vir jou sê, wat ek gedoen het is; (keel skoonmaak) reg in die begin het ek ... van hierdie hele proses het ek daardie nege ingeroep, saam met die hele bestuurspan, en ek het vir hulle gesê hulle poste is in gedrang. So ek het van dag een af ... daar is van daai mense wat se moraal toe op daai stadium nogal redelik laag was.

Navorsers: Voordat hulle gehoor het of op die stadium wat jy dit gesê het?

Deelnemer: Nee, toe ek dit vir hulle sê. Toe ek vir hulle sê: "Hoor hier, dit kan wees ... hier gaan drie van julle moet gaan en ongelukkig gaan ons nou moet kriteria moet bring..." 'n Belangrike konsep wat ek net vir jou wil sê is, voor ons weg is op die naweek, het ek daai kriteria met daai nege deurgewerk. So, ek het die kriteria wat ek aanvanklik gedink het ons gaan gebruik, ek het ses gebou, toe't ek met hulle deurgewerk. Op die naweek daar het ons bestuursspan nege gebou, maar die ses was ingesluit **(Ja)**,

maar toe nog drie bygesit en ek het daai ses kriteria met daai nege personeellede voor die tyd deurgewerk en gesê dit is die manier waarnatoe ons gaan kyk ... wie gaan ons hou (sug) en dit het regtig nie gegaan oor ... uh, ... ek het probeer, sover moontlik, om nie in 'n situasie te beland om te sê: "Jy's voor en jy trek agter **(mm)** en jy doen dit nie." **(mm, mm)** Dit het oor 'n kombinasie van goed gegaan, die nege kriterias. Dit was 'n tawwe storie, hoor. Die invloed wat dit op my gehad het is flippen fenominaal.

Navorsers: Is dit? Vertel my daarvan.

Deelnemer: Ek sê vir jou, ek is 'n outjie wat senuweeagtig is oor sulke goed. Ek is 'n ou wat daarvan hou ... my bestuurstyl is van so aard dat as ek iets kan verander, as ek die beheer daarop kan uitoefen, is dit maklik, maar die oomblik as ek nie beheer oor goed kan hê nie, daai onbekende-stresfaktor, **(Ja)** ... uh, ... ek het 'n ou spreekwoord om mooi vir my uit te werk wat is stres. Nou, stres is as jy hier is en jy weet jy moet nou-nou soontoe gaan, maar jy het nie beheer daaroor nie, en daai goed veroorsaak stres by 'n ou, in so 'n mate dat ek wil regtig vir jou sê, daai goed het my in die nagte uit die slaap gehou. Ek moes op 'n stadium die dokter gaan sien, want ons was, ons skool was die heelryd in 'n proses van bou. Ons kom van 300 af. Daar was 300 kinders in daai skool...

Navorsers: Jy't nou gebou na 650?

Deelnemer: Ja, ons is nou 650 en ek is ... ons is heelryd aan die groei. Dit is maklik om te groei, maar jy kom op 'n plafonvlak in 'n dorp soos (naam van dorp) ... ek hoef nie vir jou te vertel nie. As jy 'n plafonvlak bereik het, jy sê daar gaan 101 Gr1's skool toe, ek vat 95 en die ander vyf wil in elk geval nie by my wees nie want hulle is tradisioneel verbind aan 'n ander skool, **(Ja)** want jy weet jy kan hom nie verder uitbou nie. Toe ek 35 Gr1's gekry het, toe ek daar gekom het, het ek besef, jislak, hier is 'n potensiaal van 70. Hier's werk om te doen. Ons kan goed ontwikkel en bou en skep, kreatief wees en bemerking op sekere maniere doen om 35,

volgende jaar 50 te maak, dan voel ons goed daaroor. As jy by 90 gekom het en daar is net 105 in die dorp...

Navorser: ...dan besef jy, jy is by die plafon.

Deelnemer: Dan besef jy, jy's by die plafon en die skool was heeltyd in die ontwikkelingsfase, in 'n groeifase en op die einde, wat gebeur? Ekskuus ...

Navorser: Nee gaan rustig, ek kyk maar net.

*Deelnemer: Op die ou-end, wat gebeur? Toe ons by daai punt kom, het ek so gegroei dat ek so baie personeel gehad het nê, maar die finansies het begin breek. **(Ja)**. Toe moes ek nou drie van daai mense laat gaan om my balansstate weer behoorlik te laat klop en ... uh, ... ek sê nou vir jou, ek het al Juliemaand gesien hierdie ding gaan kom ... dis nou in 2004 ... die ding sien kom, en ek het eers Septembermaand in werklik om die tafel gesit, toe ons begin met die begroting of toe ons die begroting finaal vasmaak. En dan moet jy weet van daai hele tydperk ... **(vat jy stres?)** ... ek moes dokter toe gaan dat hy vir my slaappille gee ... uh, ... en ek is 'n outjie wat vier keer 'n week squash speel...*

Navorser: Hoe raak jy ontslae van jou stres?

Deelnemer: Ja, ek het maniere hoe ek goed doen, en ewe skielik het daar goed oor my gekom wat ek nie geken het nie en moes ek metodes inbou om daai goed te bestuur. Ek moes vir myself goed kry om daai stres te kan bestuur.

Navorser: Ja. Wat het jy gedoen?

Deelnemer: Ek het genuïne ... wat ek jou wou sê is (naam) ek dink persoonlik, jy het my nou al 'n paar keer gevra wat die ergste goed is wat

ek beleef het in 12 jaar en ek dink dít staan by my ongelooflik, ongetwyfeld uit.

Navorsers: Hoe beïnvloed hierdie hele ding ... want ek hoor jy praat oor motivering, ek hoor jy praat oor moraal. Hoe het dit jou personeel ... het dit hulle in twee kampe gegooi?

*Deelnemer: Weet jy wat? Ek dink nogal, deel van ons sukses was dat ons ... wanneer 'n mens groei en ontwikkel is daar altyd 'n mate van stimulasie. Wanneer jy ewe skielik ophou groei, hierdie plafon bereik ..., uh, ... moet 'n ou genuïne, as 'n skoolhoof, moet jy vir hom mooi bestuur, want dit kan veroorsaak ... want die vrae kan altyd gevra word: "Wanneer breek jy? Wanneer word daar twee kampe gemaak"? En, veral as sulke goed op die tafel kom. **(Ja)** Dis wanneer daar sulke goed gebeur ... ek was nogal goed bewus daarvan. Ek het onder andere met 'n bedryfssielkundige gesels voor ek in daai proses in is ... uh, ... Sassenburg ... ek is nie ... ek probeer my nie slim hou nie. Ek het besef hierso is groter dinge wat ... ek moet slimmer ouens kry om my te help om die proses te bestuur, **(Korrek)** ... en ons het 'n goeie ontleding van die personeel gemaak. Uh, ... ek het nou vir 12 jr ... het ek al beginsels oor motivering en daar's vir my 'n beginsel, elke oggend ... in die personeelkamer, het ek elke oggend die motiverings verwoord. Donderdag of Vrydag sal ek die personeel herinner aan sy roeping; sê: "Op 18 jaar het die Here jou geroep om 'n job te kom vermag. Het jy hierdie week daai job nagekom of het jy net 'n klomp kennis oorgedra?" Ek's in 'n Laerskool waar opvoeding 'n kardinale rol speel en nie so seer kennis soos julle by die Hoërskole nie, en ... uh, ... ek dink ek vervul my job as opvoedingstaak; nié dat ek sê ek dra nie kennis oor nie ... ek het baie goed gedoen. Ek was in Nieu-Seeland en Australië, my beheerliggaam het my soontoe gestuur. Ek het daar gaan kyk hoe lyk ... dis hoekom my skool ook heeltemal anders funksioneer as ander Suid-Afrikaanse skole. Ek het teruggekom; ek het 'n kurrikulumstelsel gebou. Jy sal sien, hier is meer as 150 skole in die land wat dit gebruik. Daar's drie modelle; die Wonderboom-model, die uitkomsgebaseerde een, dan's*

daar *Future Entrepreneurs*, dan's daar die (naam van die dorp)-model. Dis maar my model en ons verkoop daai goed (**Ja**) so ons maak groot geld ... die personeel maak geld; nie ek nie, die skool. Personeel skryf boeke ... uh, ... ek het 'n hele groeiing ingebou oor motivering (**Ja**), en ek dink op die ou einde van die dag is ... ek doen baie snaakse goed wat nie vertel nie ... weird goed wat ek alles in die buiteland gesien het wat werk. Ek het 'n klomp twak daar gesien en genuine'n klomp goeie goed. Een, onder andere daarvan, in Christchurch het ek 'n personeelmotiveringsprogram gesien. Hulle het 'n personeelmotiveringsprogram en oor hoe hou jy hierdie hele familie bo. Die personeel is familie en as een van hulle seerkry dan kry almal seer. En as een van hulle puik presteer ... en ek dink ons kon dit in die afgelope 10 jaar regkry om regtig die familie so te bou ... hulle sê: "Bloed is dikker as water", maar ek wil tog vir jou sê as jy dit sover kan kry met motivering, want dit is die grootste ding.

Navorsers: Hoe't jy gemaak toe julle nou op die punt kom dat julle die aankondiging maak? Hierdie drie mense; is die drie wat gaan? Wat was die personeel se gesindheid teenoor jou as hoof? Wat was julle verhouding toe?

Deelnemer: Weet jy wat was die interessante? Ek het ... uh, ... ek het hulle drie eerste ingeroep, gelyktydig, en vir hulle gesê ... deur al die proses, nadat ek by die beheerliggaam was, al die goeters, "ons het julle drie geïdentifiseer om te gaan, maar ek wil julle nou aanbeveel; gaan vakkond toe en verklaar 'n dispuut."

Navorsers: Het hulle?

Deelnemer: Nee.

Navorsers: Wat was hulle gesindheid teenoor jou daar? Daai drie.

*Deelnemer: Ongelooflik. Weet jy wat het gebeur, dis nogal baie interessant ... uh, ... daai drie se gesindheid, het ek gedink, gaan totaal en al verander. Dis my belewenis wat ek gedink het gaan gebeur. Die teendeel was waar; ek dink die familieband was net ongelooflik so sterk dat ... hulle het gehuil, hulle het emosie getoon ... een het gevra: “Hoekom ek? Wat is die rede, hoekom ek?” Toe sê ek vir haar: “Ek gaan nie vir jou die kriteria wys nie. Jy weet wat die kriteria was. Ek gaan nie vir jou sê hoeveel punte jy gekry het nie ...”, maar aan die einde van die dag mooi vir hulle verduidelik wat die proses is en ek wil aan die einde van die dag sê, net daarna het ‘n ander een, wat nie geïdentifiseer was nie, se man is verplaas en toe het dit die som eintlik baie maklik gemaak. Een wat toe derde was het net gebly. **(Ek verstaan)** So, toe het ek haar weer ingeroep en gesê: “Jy bly nou,” en ... uh, ... ek het toe ‘n ander roete gevolg. Die catch lê daarin, wat ek wel gedoen het is, die volgende jaar, 2005, Januarie, was hulle al agt weer terug by die skool. Daai ander twee het ingekom en vir my gesê, waar ek hulle ook al gaan nodig hê, hulle sal inval. **(Amazing)** Dis vir my ongelooflik interessant om vir jou te vertel. Nadat ek die drie geïdentifiseer het, het die ander ses gekom en gesê hulle is almal bereid om vir minder geld te werk, ons moet nie daai drie laat gaan nie.*

Navorsers: Het jy dit toe so toegepas?

*Deelnemer: Wat ons toe gedoen het was, ek het teruggegaan ... toe een bedank het ek teruggegaan na die beheerliggaam, toe sê ek: “All right, kom ons stel hulle in deeltydse poste aan.” Hulle was altwee senior primêr, hulle het net bepaalde vakke gegee. Ek het hulle toe teruggevat met ‘n baie verminderde salaris. Maar ek het die ander op hul pakette gehou, maar die feit dat ek weer daai myl vir hulle geloop het, om vir hulle weer eventually werk te gee ... binne drie maande is ... uh, ... nog een verplaas, ook nie een van die geïdentifiseerdes nie en het ek een van die geïdentifiseerdes onmiddellik weer in die pos aangestel. Eventually het ek net een oor. **(Ek verstaan)** En, ek dink die feit dat jy daar vir daai ouens bewys het jy’s bereid om vir hulle ‘n myl te loop en nog ‘n myl-en-‘n-half te*

loop ... dit was 'n traumatiese tyd vir my, maar ek dink dit is een van daai happenings in jou skool wat jou baie na aan mekaar gebring het. En daai drie, ek sê vir jou, hulle is vandag my grootste supporters. As ek daai oefening nou weer moet doen...

Navorsers: Jy't nie na 2004, weer in 'n situasie gekom nie, want in Gauteng het hulle aan die einde van 2004 hoofde weer deur so 'n staff reduction proses gesit.

Navorsers: Ek, ek, ek gaan nou daar wees. Nou. (Julie 2006) Die einde van dié rondte, met my adjunkhoof.

Navorsers: Hoe voel jy oor dit?

Deelnemer: (Sug) Ja, ek ... weet jy wat doen ek? Ek doen nou alles in my vermoë om dit nie deur te gaan nie. Ek ... uh, ... ek het hom nou laat ... ek het jou nou-nou gesê sy vrou is op my personeel. Hy's 'n baie goeie adjunkhoof. Ek het hom nou sover, hy is al vier-en-'n-half jaar my adjunkhoof ... ek het hom nou sover dat ek probeer my bes om hom uit die sisteem uit te kry, om hom 'n hoofpos te laat kry en ek dink ... ek dink 80% ek gaan suksesvol wees. Ek doen enige maatreël, 'n ander maatreël, hoor mooi wat ek sê, 'n ander maatreël, dat ek nie weer deur daai selfde proses moet gaan nie.

Navorsers: Wat doen jy as voorsorg?

Deelnemer: Ek maak seker ... ek het kontak gehad met 'n bepaalde skool se beheerliggaam; ek weet nou presies ons is 64 Laerskole in Mpumalanga. Ek is ondervoorsitter van ons vakbond in ons provinsie, ek dink nogal ek lei die beheerliggame op namens ons vakbond. Ek ken elkeen van daai beheerliggame, ek ... uh, ... hou een keer in twee maande vergadering met al ons vakbond-hoofde, Laerskole en Hoërskole, ek ken elkeen by die naam ... uh, ... ek's 'n verkose leier, so ek is nie net

‘n leier wat myself aangestel het nie, en ek het in ‘n proses beland wat ek seker, amper seker is ek gaan my adjunkhoof nou geskuif kry.

Navorsers: Wat sê jou adjunkhoof daarvan?

*Deelnemer: Ek het hom ook gemotiveer. Ek het vir hom gesê hy’s nou 44 en hy is ‘n goeie drie jaar ouer as ek. Ek het vir hom mooi laat verstaan: “Kyk ou maat, as jy nog ‘n jaar aangaan, gaan jy nie ‘n hoofpos kry nie. Daar’s klomp elemente en goed wat op ‘n adjunkhoof inspeel **(Ja)** en as jy oor ‘n bepaalde ouderdom gaan moet jy weet niemand soek so ‘n ou...”*

Navorsers: (Naam) met hierdie geweldige proses waardeur jy gegaan het, en jy het alreeds vir my genoem dit was geweldig traumaties, en dis baie stres, die Engelse praat van stress-related, stresverwant, wat uit dit kom. Het jy foute gemaak?

*Deelnemer: Mm, ... weet jy wat? Ek het baie keer die proses driekeer en vierkeer hersien. Self. Dan gaan ek huis toe, dan werk ek nou vir my ‘n proses uit op die rekenaar. Dan sê ek presies dis nou hoe ek hierdie ding gaan aanpak. Dan gaan slaap ek vannaand, drie, vier, vyf aande gaan verby dan kom ek terug na die beginsels toe. Dan sien ek, ek het ‘n hele paar, klomp foute gemaak ... uh, ... ek het ‘n hele paar goed ingebring wat eintlik nie behoort nie ... ek het daai blind spots wat ou (Naam) vandag van gepraat het, dan haal ek hulle uit. So, eventually, voor ek die proses na my bestuurspan toe gevat het, of na die beheerliggaam toe gevat het, het ek daai ding seker vyf, ses keer verander om seker te maak ek is deursigtig; om seker te maak ek is deur die hele ding. So, ek dink nogal, ek wil persoonlik sê ek dink stres het nogal ‘n ongelooflike effek op ‘n mens. **(Ja)** Nie net op jou as mens nie, maar ook jou hele gesin, op jou vrou...*

Navorsers: Dis een van my volgende punte wat ek graag wou aangesny het. Hoe’t dit ‘n impak gehad op jou familie?

Deelnemer: Ja, verseker. Jislaaik, ek was 'n, en is glad nie normaalweg 'n nors outjie nie. Ek is nie 'n nors bul nie, ek is 'n ... ek speel vier keer 'n week squash, ek speel ligas en allerhande sulke goed en my sport het my nogal baie aan die gang gehou. In daai tydperk, wil ek vir jou sê, daai agt weke wat ek deur daai proses is, het my kinders en my vrou ... het ... jy swot ook ... jy weet as daar hectic tye kom ... is hulle maar bietjie op die agtergrond (Ja). Ek het jou nou-nou gehoor; ek het klein kindertjies. Daar's nog 'n mannetjie in Gr2, en ek doen 110 dinge gelyk. Jy weet, ek boer ook nog 'n bietjie en ek doen allerhande goedjies saam, so wanneer die stres regtig op is, dan dink ek nogal kry ek dit goed bestuur. In daai agt tot 10 weke, kom ons sê twee maande wat ek deur daai proses moes jaag, ... my vrou het 'n paar keer vir my gesê: "Jis, daar's fout. Jy moet iemand gaan sien, want jy is soos 'n stoere bul." Dit het 'n ongelooflike effek op my kinders gehad; my verhouding met my kinders (Ja) ... uh, ... en ek het dit besef, ek het dit gesien. Daai eerste twee weke het ek nie gedink dis dit nie. Ek het allerhande ander goed gesoek, jy weet en gesê: "Stres is twak, stres bestaan nie". Dan besef jy eintlik jy's hier ... met ander mense se lewens moes jy deur hierdie hele proses gaan, en toe ek die personeel sover kry om hulle nou ... toe ek vir (Naam) kry om met hulle te kom werk oor die proses ... toe hy klaar is met hulle, toe ... vir die twee dae ... toe sê ek: "Ek dink ek en jy het ook 'n sessie nodig, dat jy net bietjie die deur toemaak dat jy net bietjie met my ook werk." Ek dink nogal hy het vir my 'n heel ander persepsie gegee. Een van die grootste foute wat ek gemaak het was om dit te ontken.

Navorsers: Jy't gesê: "Daar's nie fout nie?"

Deelnemer: Ek het gesê die goed het nie 'n effek op my nie ... uh, ... nadat ek die klanke van my vrou gehoor het en die klanke van die personeel gehoor het, my bestuurspan, ek het 'n baie noue familieverhouding met hulle, dat van hulle vir my sê: "Jis, meneer, jy's nie jouself nie. Wat pla jou?" en ek het nie 'n woord met hulle gepraat oor die vermindering van personeel nie. Ek het gedink ek gaan eers met hulle praat die dag as ek doodseker is dis my proses; dis my plan (Ja), hier's

my hele set-up, dan gaan ek met hulle praat. In daai eerste twee weke het twee van my departementshoofde vir my kom sê: (Vir jou kom sê daar's fout?) "Wat's fout? Jy's nooit so nie. Wat krap? Is daar fout?" Jy weet, "is daar fout by die huis? Pla iets op die plaas?" En ... uh, ... ek's een van daai ouens wat totale commitment gehad het, so ek dink die grootste fout wat ek gemaak het, ek het dit ontken ... en ek dink nogal ek het iemand soos (Naam) nodig gehad om dit net vir my ... nie deur 'n sielkundige proses te vat nie, (Net vir jou perspektief te gee?), net perspektief te gee en te sê: "Pêl, jy's besig om goed ... jy's die een wat nie slaap in die nag nie. Het jy altyd slaapprobleme gehad? Nee. Hoekom sal jy nou ewe skielik slaapprobleme hê?"

Navorsers: Nou (naam) voor die tyd, kom ons sê die proses voor die tyd wanneer jy die besluit moes neem, want jy't gesien dit kom, het jy nou-nou gesê, en in die tyd wanneer julle die proses gehanteer het, en ek wil selfs sê die tyd daarna, toe die ding nou sy deurvloei gehad het van hierdie personeelvermindering, hoe het dit jou inrigting, jou skool, geraak in totaal?

Deelnemer: Weet jy wat, kom ek begin by die ouers. Soos ek nou-nou vir jou gesê het, ons was die heelyd in 'n groeifase gewees en dit was altyd vir hulle ... hulle was trots om te kan sê ons het volgende jaar soveel Gr1's of ons het só groot geword hierdie jaar en so, en ... uh, ... ek het seker maklik 50, 60 oproepe gehad, jy weet toe daar nou 'n dingetjie, 'n kooltjie begin brand, toe begin ouers nou bel en vra: "Hoor hier, maar wat gaan nou daar aan? Ek hoor daar word nou personeel afgesit; uitgesit. Is dit nou die waarheid?" Dit het so half 'n negatiewe effek op jou skool en in so mate dat ek 'n ouervergadering moes hou, die hele gemeenskap bymekaar moes kry en ek het amper dieselfde pad geloop wat jy met 'n beheerliggaamverkiesing loop, en gesê: "Dis so belangrik dat jy vanaand by die skool moet wees, jy weet, jy moet seker maak jy's daar." En ek het vir almal mooi verduidelik, die proses vir hulle verduidelik en vir hulle gesê, ek het nie 'n draai met hulle geloop nie, oor wat is die skoolgeld wat ons inkry, die beheerliggaamvoorsitter en die finansiële voorsitter, vir hulle

presies die detail gegee. Ons het 'n besluit geneem, kom ons gee die regte inligting ... nie doekies omgedraai nie, dat almal presies weet waaroor dit gaan. Deursigtig. En ek wil nou eerlik vir jou sê, ek dink dit het hulle hele gesindheid ... daar was 'n klomp negatieweit, tot hulle dit gesien het. Agterna, toe hulle ook hoor ons het 'n ekstra plan gemaak om daai mense weer te akkommodeer, ek dink tóe was daar kwaai waardering. Op die kinders se part, jy ... uit die aard van omstandighede, ek het 'n beginsel by my skool, as twee personeellede baklei, om watter rede ook al, soos 'n man en 'n vrou in 'n huwelik, dit gee geborgenheid vir kinders. As jy en jou vrou skei en groot moeilikheid en konflikte het voor kinders, vat jy die kinders se geborgenheid weg. Nou ons het 'n beginsel in ons personeel; ons praat nooit lelik met mekaar of, nié dat ons nie van mekaar verskil nie, maar veral nie voor die kinders nie. Die kinders mag nie weet daar's konflik nie, want as hulle dit weet, vat dit hulle geborgenheid weg. Dis dieselfde beginsel in 'n huisgesin, dieselfde beginsel in 'n skool, en het daai roete gevolg en, eventually, toe dit by die ouers kom, het dit by die kinders uitgekóm, en ... uh, ... ek dink die kinders was nie baie geborge nie, in so mate dat ek in saalopening op 'n Maandagmôre weer eens ... ek dink ek het een of twee goed reggekry; ek het dit nie vir myself gehou nie en ek het dit met almal, die rolspelers, gekommunikeer. Die kinders, in daai geval, het ek op 'n Maandagmôre gesê, nadat ek 'n paar oproepe gekry het, toe weet ek dit gaan nou 'n effek op die kinders hê, al praat niemand daarvan nie en ek dink die personeel het dit ongelooflik waardeer en weer eens die effek ... ek sê altyd mens skep eerder groter moeilikheid; jy skep die prentjie baie donkerder en as 'n ou dan kan help, dan het almal soveel waardering, maar toe die punchline gelewer is en gesê wie dit is kan ek vir jou sê; toe's dit traumaties. Ek meen, daar was emosie by betrokke en alles...

Navorsers: Kinders ook?

Deelnemer: Kinders ook. 'n Ongelooflike effek, in so 'n mate dat ek daai drie juffrouens, dis twee in die seniorafdeling en een in die juniorafdeling, die seniorafdeling nie so erg nie, die juniorafdeling baie erger ... dit was

hulle juffrou gewees, maar ek het haar nie in die middel van die jaar laat gaan nie, maar hulle het nou geweet dit is hulle juffrou wat nou volgende jaar nie by die skool gaan wees nie ... Gr2's ... en ek het spesifiek na daai klas toe gegaan en in die klas met hulle daaroor gepraat en dit vir hulle mooi verduidelik ... uh, ... en ek het nogal gedink dit is te 'n hoë vlak vir hulle, hulle gaan nie verstaan nie ... uh, ... ek dink nogal dit was een van die beter besluite wat ek geneem het, om dit met al die rolspelers te kommunikeer. Die effek wat dit gehad het op die beheerliggaam ... uh, ... dis 'n realiteitsbegrip. Dit gaan oor rand en sent, en nadat een toe nou gegaan het en ons die ander twee nou weer kon terugbring met deeltydse salarisse, ek sal vir jou sê daai ouens het daai aand toe ons daai besluit neem, ek het 'n spesiale vergadering uitgeroep oor daai spesifieke aangeleentheid. Ons het gewerk van 16:00 daai aand af tot 00:45 die môre. Ons het op allerhande 50 ander plekke gaan sny, goeters gelaat doen om daai twee juffrouens ... almal het hierdie, dis nie simpatie nie, hierdie empatiese ding, iemand in die familie is besig om seer te kry, maar ek dink nogal dit het 'n, die beheerliggaam ook in 'n proses gesit. Ek het, ek het nooit die departement geken in die saak nie, want dit het hulle nie geraak nie ... uh, ... so ek doen alles in my vermoë, nou (sug) ek gaan 'n adjunkhoofpos verloor ... uh, ... ek doen alles in my vermoë ... ek het twee rigtings waarin ek werk; een is, daar's een skool by ons wat nou parallel is. Ons het drie Afrikaanse Laerskole, en een het nou parallel gegaan en daar's nog so 120 kinders oor en dan verklap ek nou eintlik my geheime hierso maar ek doen nou alles in my vermoë om die ander 120 kinders uit daai skool te vat, want daar's nie 'n plafon nie, en daar gaan 96 Gr1's volgende jaar in (dorp se naam) skool toe en ek gaan 75 van hulle kry, dit weet ek klaar. Maar daai skool het nou swart gegaan, hulle soek nie meer blankes nie. Hulle is basies in daai fase dat hulle verlede jaar vyf Gr1 Afrikaanse kinders gekry het en hoe kan jy nou vyf kinders in 'n klas hê (jy kan nie).

Navorsers: (Naam) ja, ek hoor oor die ding van kommunikasie, ek hoor oor motivering. Jy't 'n groot saak rondom motivering. Maar was daar ekstreme konflik?

Deelnemer: Weet jy, ek moet regtig vir jou sê, ek dink omdat ons dit so reg bestuur het ... uh, ... nie konflik nie, en dink emosie. (Ja) Dit is 'n emosionele ding hierdie maar dit is 'n ... ek dink as 'n ou nou instap en ek, ag ek dink 'n ou kan, ek leer ook nog in die proses. Ek het baie ouens gebel, dit het ek nogal met 'n klomp ouens gedoen; uit die aard van my betrokkenheid by die vakbond het ek 'n klomp ouens gebel. Van (naam van 'n hoof) regdeur tot almal ... gesê: "Hoor hier, het jy al personeel verloor en wat het jy gedoen?" Het gesê: "Wat het gewerk by jou?" Ek het seker 15, 20 oproepe gemaak voordat ek daai proses gevat het (Okay) en ek het geweet ek gaan hom my eie maak maar ek wil nie die wiel weer uitvind nie.

Navorsers: Maar jy't nie, jy't nie opleiding in dit gehad voor die tyd nie? Daar was nie kennis van hoe moet ek wat, dis regtig maar, soos jy nou pas genoem het, geskakel met ander hoofde; trail en error?

Deelnemer: Ek het toe my eie ding gaan doen en gesê, want ek beseef jy weet jou skool is uniek en anders. Elkeen se omstandighede is anders, alhoewel ons 'n paar verbintenisse met mekaar het en strukturele dinge wat met mekaar inpas, die manier hoe jou personeel by jou in mekaar gesit het en die manier en effek wat dit op jou gemeenskap gaan hê; ek wil vir jou sê in my skool was dit soos dood in 'n familie. Jy kan niks daaraan doen nie. Dis dood, maar ons is almal hartseer (Ja) en ek dink daar speel hoofde ook nogal 'n rol. Ek het dit by (naam) in (dorp) geleer; hy't dit vir my vertel ... uh, ... "moenie probeer dood speel nie, moenie probeer dink..." die meeste hoofde probeer hierdie nice guy wees of hierdie tawwe ou wees deur te sê: "Dit raak my nie," ... uh, ... half afsydig, ag onemosioneel, onbetrokke by, jy weet, hou jou eenkant, weg. Ek weet nie; hy het my 'n ding geleer. Vir my vertel hy's deur 'n proses en hy't vir my gesê hy het emosioneel betrokke geraak en dit was die beste ding in die wêreld. Toe sê ek: "Nou hoe so?" Toe sê hy: "Nee, die dag toe hy vir sy mense sê, 'jy loop,' toe huil hy saam met hulle. En ek dink hy het vir my iets, 'n ander kant van die saak gegee. As jy nou die besluitnemer is en jy staan nou eenkant dan probeer jy nou bietjie besluite regverdig, en

dit laat nie die ding deurkom dat dit omstandighede is wat dit veroorsaak. Wanneer die hoofpersoon emosioneel betrokke is, saam deel van die proses is, dan dink ek skets dit vir die personeel, die wat agterbly ... onthou dis nie net daai wat gaan nie (Dis die wat agterbly...) dis daai wat agterbly wat die krisis veroorsaak en sien maar hoor hier, hierdie ou was deel van die proses. Hy was nou wel die hoofbesluitnemer, maar hy was ook deel daarvan. Dit is omstandighede wat gelei het dat ons in hierdie situasie beland het. Dis nie omdat hy nie van mense gehou het nie.

Navorser: Maar dit sou ook 'n herverdeling van pligte beteken het op daai stadium.

Deelnemer: Ja, verseker. Dit het 'n hengse effek op almal gehad. Uh, ... die hele rooster moes hersien word, werksverdeling moes ... ons moes die hele ding aanpas. Gelukkig het dit darem mooi uitgewerk dat ons op die ou end een minder is (Ja), nou weer uitgewerk dat ... ons het nou net enetjie wat nou ... dis 'n juffrou by die Gr2-pos, maar sy's nog by die skool en dit gaan goed.

Navorser: Jy het vir my reeds gesê oor verhoudings, jy het vir my gesê oor die stresverwante aktiwiteite, jy vir my gesê hoe dit die onderwys *teaching and learning* geraak het, dit die onderrig- en leerproses geraak het, jy het vir my baie mooi gesê oor die moraal, die klimaat in die skool, want ek verstaan van wat jy sê dat julle 'n baie spesiale kultuur in die skool het en dit moet 'n invloed op 'n manier gehad het op die kultuur van die skool.

Deelnemer: Ek wil net vir jou sê (naam), ek dink persoonlik ... uh, ... ons het in daai tydperk ... het ons krieket gespeel. Nou ... uh, ... ek het Van der Merwe gespeel. Ek het nogal daaraan gedink; jy weet, as dit nou die klimaat kan staaf, dan het dit 'n definitiewe demper op die klimaat gehad. Almal was gedemp. Ons het ... uh, ... dit was in ons vierde krieket-game dink ek van daai seisoen, maar ons het teen (naam van skool) dink ek daai week gespeel. Uit die aard van omstandighede is ons 'n klomp, agt

skole, in die liga. En ek het daai Maandag, die Dinsdag, het ek dit gedeliver ... gesê van die drie en ons het ... uh, ... tot op daai punt het ons die groot kanonne laat val ... (skole se name) ons het hulle almal gespeel met ons eerste span, en met ons o/11's en met ons tweede span en ons speel toe daai Donderdag teen (skool se naam) en ons eerste span het verloor teen die Melkkoeie en die o/11's het ook verloor.

Navorser: Groot invloed op die kinders gehad?

Deelnemer: Ek dink nogal dit het 'n demper op alles gehad. Dit het ... uh, ... nogal ... so die klimaat was nogal bietjie heel swak.

Navorser: Hoe't jy dit omgedraai?

*Deelnemer: Weer eens, ek dink, met goeie kommunikasie. Nadat ons ... daai volgende week het ons weer teen (skool se naam) gespeel, teen 'n sterk skool en ... uh, ... was hulle weer hulleself (**Ek verstaan**). Ek dink ook nie ... dis meer 'n tipe van 'n skok, 'n skokding wat na hulle toe (**Ja**) ... dit het 'n invloed op die kinders, so die klimaat speel ... uh, ... en jou organisasie-klimaat hê. Ewe skielik is daar 'n ding, dis so half of jy 'n bom gelos het en nou moet hierdie bom ontketen.*

Navorser: As jy nou ... jys' deur die proses en ek het die hoogste agting vir wat jy vir my sê. Jy weet, ek het eintlik gehoop dat 'n mens kan iemand kry wat met jou gesels het as jy deur die proses gaan, waar ons, as nuwe hoofde, in die proses ingekom het en dit onmiddellik gekry het, en niemand praat met jou en niemand sê jou want niemand weet nie. Hoë agting daarvoor, baie dankie, want ek hoor wat jy sê. Dit kom regtig uit die diepste uit wat jy vir ons vertel. As jy nou enige aanbevelings kon maak, want ek meen hier staan jy nou, 12jr verder, as 'n hoof. Watse aanbevelings sal jy maak vir, en ek praat nie van ons ervare ouens dalk nie, maar in 'n mate ook vir ons ervare ouens wat skielik deur so 'n proses weer moet gaan van rightsizing. Wat sal jy aanbeveel?

Deelnemer: Ek sal 'n paar goed sê. Hierdie "Principalship" wat hulle nou begin, dink ek is ongelooflik belangrik en in die hele proses, omdat rightsizing in ons provinsie 'n jaarlikse proses is ... ons het nie 'n driejaarlikse proses nie. In Mpumalanga is dit 'n jaarlikse proses. Jy kry jou diensstaat. As jy te veel het word hulle oortollig verklaar, of jy moet hulle skuif, of wat ook al. Ek's mos op daai District Task Team en op daai Provincial Task Team (Ja), nou ons skuif nou nog. Die Model C-skole het 'n tendens, jy weet, hy vat 'n dip, dan maak ons hom gelyk, dan skuif ons daai personeel van hulle of ons verklaar hulle oortollig of wat die geval ook al mag wees. Uh, ... dan bly hy so vir twee of drie jaar stabiel, dan vat hy weer 'n dip. So, dis die normale proses wat ons by hierdie ... maar by die swartskole is dit 'n jaarlikse tendens. Vanjaar het hulle 700, volgende jaar het hulle 300 dan is hulle in elk geval met 20 te veel. Dan moet jy van hulle ontslae raak. Ek sou sê, met die "Principalship", daar dink ek as ek 'n aanbeveling kan maak, jis, die bestuur van personeel dink ek word onderbeklemtoon. Ek sou vir 'n jong hoof vandag sê, jou alles, jou begin en jou einde, hang van jou jökkies af wat in die klas is. Die manier hoe jy daai personeel van jou bestuur, gaan die sukses van jou skool bepaal. (Ja) Nie ... nie so seer die juffrou se job in die klas wat ... nie so seer die juffrou se job in die klas nie. Die interne verhoudinge wat daar onder personeel bestaan. Ek ag dit as so belangrik dat ek 'n kliniese sielkundige sal vat. Liebenberg, Johan Liebenberg, laat ons vir twee, drie dae ... ek plaas 'n baie hoë premie op personeelontwikkeling ... om 'n tafel gesit en ek maak gebruik van daai tegniek van stilbly. Nou ... uh, ... ons is daar deur prosesse en daar het mense opgestaan en daar gesê: "Ek is so omdat ek so grootgeword het", en dan sê ander personeel: "Maar jy moenie verander nie, jy moet so bly," en mense het mekaar se agtergronde leer ken. Jy verstaan wat ek bedoel. So ek dink nogal daar, dis 'n belangrike ding. Baie belangrike, direkte goeters is goeie kommunikasie. Les nr1: as ek enige ou moet raad gee, moenie, ... as dit jou normale manier is, hanteer dit self. Goeie kommunikasie na al die rolspelers toe; ek dink dit is premium belangrik. Nr 2 is, ek dink elke skoolhoof wat deur daai proses gaan, het hulp nodig. Buitehulp, want dis 'n ontkeningsproses (Ek verstaan), so, ek sou vir elke hoof wat deur so

*ding moet gaan sê: “Hoor hier, kry hulp van buite af, van jou keuse.”
Bedryfsielkundige, sielkundige, maar jy moet weet wat alle ander
skoolhoofde se krississe is, ‘n ou ontken. Staan weg en sê, ek kan
hierdie, ek kan hierdie hou vat, maar eintlik kan jy nie, want jy besef eers
later jy het oor mense se lewens besluit en jy het polisse doodgemaak wat
moet elke maand betaal moet wees **(Korrek)** wat nou nie meer daar gaan
wees nie. By die departement het hulle nog ‘n opsie ... uh, ... hulle kan
ge-redeploy word na ander plekke.*

INTERVIEW CHARLIE

Background

This research originates from the National Education Department's policy of addressing the inequalities of the past through equity, staff reduction and the process of redress to justify a democratic transformation within education.

This research particularly focuses on experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process.

Navorsers: (Naam), dankie vir jou tyd. Jy weet waarom gaan hierdie inligting. Dit gaan eintlik spesifiek oor die, en ek gaan dit in Afrikaans met jou hanteer, en ek sal ook dit graag so versoek dat jy dit met my in Afrikaans kan doen, ons gaan dit ook so opteken. Dit gaan oor die ... uh, ... personeelverminderingsproses wat in plek gekom het hier teen die einde van 1995 en dan uiteindelik hier so in die begin van 1996 rond het dit nou regtig deurgegaan, en ek dink veral jy, wat in daai tyd reeds in 'n bestuurspos was ... uh, ... het dit nou direk geraak, so ek wil graag gaan kyk na die ervaring wat die hoof beleef het. Hoe het dit die hoof geraak? Ek wil niks eintlik van die ander personeel weet nie, maar eintlik hoe dit die hoof raak op verskeie terreine. Hoe swaar het hy gekry? Hoe swaar het hy nie gekry nie? En dan gaan ek kyk na 'n paar dissiplines ... uh, ... onder andere wil ek gaan kyk na bestuur, ek wil gaan kyk na die klimaat en die kultuur en na kommunikasie, ek wil kyk na konflik, ek wil kyk na motivering en na emosionele intelligensie wat eintlik aansluit by motivering en moraal ... uh, ... ek wil so na 'n paar van daai goeters gaan kyk. Miskien moet ek net eers so vra dat jy vir my agtergrond gee van jouself ... uh, ... wat ek dalk nou nie van jou weet nie. Ek weet nou wie jy is, waar jy is, by watter skool is jy, maar gee my bietjie agtergrond; jou pad wat jy gekom het tot waar jy nou is.

Deelnemer: Ek is nou al meer as 20 jaar in die onderwys. Ek is nou so nege jaar hoof by (skool se naam) en voor dit het ek by (skool se naam) 10 jaar gewees, en ek het in 'n B Com-rigting gestudeer met handelsvakke, ekonomie en rekeningkunde en bedryfseksonomie as vakke, en ek gee maar nog die hele tyd skool in Pretoria. Ek was maar nog altyd hier gewees.

Navorsers: Daar waar jy nou tans is, by (skool se naam), gee jy nog fisies klas?

Deelnemer: Ek help 'n bietjie. Hierdie jaar het ek begin. Ek het so vier periodes wat ek ... uh, ... loopbaanontwikkeling en persoonsoopvoeding doen met die Gr12's, eintlik, wat noem jy dit nou?

Navorsers: Lewensoriëntering. Ek dink maar die meeste van die hoofde kyk maar daar. (Naam), nee dankie man, 'n klomp veranderinge in onderwys die afgelope tyd. Goeters wat ons raak aan ons lywe, wat partykeer nie lekker is nie, dit is sekerlik maar so. Ons gaan nie op 'n ander manier daarmee wegkom nie, dit is maar nou net eenvoudig so. (Naam) in, ek dink dis 1996, eintlik 95/96, daar rond, eintlik ... dit het in 95 al begin, maar hier in 96 het hulle nou hulle eende in 'n ry gekry, die Onderwys Departement, en toe met dokumentasie gekom deur middel van sirkulêre ... wat's die goeie Afrikaanse woord vir omsendskrywes? En 'n klomp goeters het skielik hoofde geraak as dit gekom het by, "Moet ek personeel verloor? Moet ek nie personeel verloor nie?" Dit het gegaan oor die Equity Redress program wat hulle gehad het, so, gelyke beregtiging vir almal en ek dink die Departement, Onderwys Departement van die dag het toe besluit dat daar is een manier hoe ons gaan wegvat van die ouens wat te veel gehad het oor jare heen, en ons gaan vir die ander ouens gee wat nie gehad het nie en dit het onmiddellik 'n invloed, veral op die eks Model C-skole gehad. Nou eintlik is die konsep bekend as rightsizing. Dit beteken elke skool is ge-rightsized. Jy het of mense weggeneem of jy't mense bygekry. En daai rightsizing was eintlik maar die Equity en Redress program wat hulle in

plek gestel het. Vertel vir my hoe't jy dit ervaar? Hoe jy dit beleef want jy het self deur die prosesse gegaan? Praat met my gemaklik.

Deelnemer: (Naam) dit was vir my deels 'n moeilike proses want ek het toe waargeneem as hoof. Ons hoof het 'n ander pos aanvaar, hy's vinnig weg en, toe die ding kom by die skool, toe't ek net begin waarneem. So, dit was vir my, as waarnemende hoof, 'n groot nagmerrie gewees. Ek was op daai stadium ook nog nie lank by die skool gewees nie. Ek het in September 1994 by die skool begin as senior-adjunkhoof, so op daai stadium was ek net so 'n bietjie langer as 'n jaar by die skool gewees. Dit was vir my 'n nagmerrietyd gewees. Dit was een van die moeilikste tye in my lewe gewees, in my skoolloopbaan gewees, want ons het 'n hele klomp mense, ek dink by die 10 mense het ons te veel gehad wat ons nou toe moes van ontslae raak en te besluit daaroor. Ek het van die begin af die proses gevat, en ek het die dokumente baie goed deurgegaan en ek het besluit, ook as gevolg van die feit, ek ken nie die mense baie goed nie, dat ek dit absoluut 100% volgens die letter van die wet gaan toepas, soos wat die dinge is. Ek het van my kant af baie moeite gedoen. Ek dink dit het die proses ook vir ons makliker gemaak dat 'n mens probeer het om die proses positief te bestuur met die mense. Jy het van die begin af probeer, omdat dit 'n verskriklike emosionele ding is, want toe ons vir die personeel ook sê maar ons het 10 poste te veel, het almal gedink hulle gaan ... elke dag ... en ek het vir die mense gesê ook hoe die proses ... ek het vergadering gehou met hulle, die proses verduidelik en ek het ook ... in die begin, wat dit ook moeilik gemaak het, almal was onseker; die hele personeel en kort-kort het iemand in gehardloop: "Maar gaan ek ook? Is ek ook deel van die lys?" en ek het gesê: "Daar's 'n komitee wat dit hanteer," en ek het die ding gehanteer soos wat die prosedure gesê het. Ons het dit absoluut volgens die voorskrifte gedoen en dit het dit bietjie makliker gemaak en ek het glad nie toegelaat dat subjektiwiteit enigsins betrokke raak nie. Ons moes in die proses goeie onderwysers ... moes ons gevra het om ... sê: "Jy's deel van die oortollige lys," en dit was die heel moeilikste, want 'n mens wil graag, jy wil graag ontslae raak van die dooie hout, want alle skole het maar die dooie hout wat dit moeilik maak en in 'n mate het mens dit seker reggekry ook, waar jy getwyfel het en na rede

gesoek het ook om van die dooie hout ontslae te raak. Ek dink by al skole was dit maar so, maar ons het probeer en ons het gekyk en ons het die kurrikulum gevat en die kurrikulum hanteer en daarvolgens gekyk watter mense ... wat het ons nodig vir die skool en dit wat ons gesê het ons nie nodig het nie, het ons besluit is die oortolliges. In die opsig was dit 'n bietjie makliker gewees want ek het, ek het in my gemoed oortuiging gehad dat ons doen die regte ding, en ons het niemand te na gekom nie. Ons het niemand benadeel in die proses nie en die probleem daarmee bly maar dat jy, as hoof, ... dis 'n komitee wat die goeters besluit, maar jy, as hoof, is nog steeds die ou wat verantwoordelik gehou word. Daar word gesê: "Maar die hoof wil my nie hê nie," of "Die hoof hou nie van my nie, en dis hoekom ek...", ek kan met alle eerlikheid sê dit was nie so gewees nie. Jy weet, 'n ou het regtig probeer om dit volgens die, die behoeftes van die skool te doen, en dit is al hoe ons dit kon doen.

Navorsers: Maar jy was steeds die koördineerder gewees?

Deelnemer: Ek was die koördineerder wat aan die hoof van alles gestaan het. Dit het dit so moeilik gemaak. Dit was 'n spanningsvolle tyd vir my gewees, baie moeilik ... met my persoonlikheid ook, ek is nie iemand wat hou daarvan om op die manier ... ek sal eerder probeer om 'n ou te behou en ekstra poste instel as om vir iemand te sê jy moet nou gaan. Dit was vir my bitter, bitter, bitter moeilik.

Navorsers: Het jy dit gesien kom, (naam)? Het jy verwag dit gaan kom?

Deelnemer: Nee, dit was uit die bloute uit. Woeps, toe's dit daar en ek het my boeglam geskrik. Ek het die middag nog gegaan en vergaderings bygewoon, ek onthou dit baie goed, en ek het 'n koevert oopgemaak en toe ek die koevert oopmaak, toe sien ek 10 onderwysers, toe dog ek dis 'n grap; ek dog "nee, dit kan nie wees nie, daar's nie 'n manier wat ons ... ons kan nie 10 onderwysers minder in die skool hê en regkom, nog steeds ons werk doen en goeters nie." Maar later het die werlikheid ingesink en besef maar dit is so; en dit was 'n bitter moeilike tyd. Ook wat dit ook moeilik gemaak het, ook in

die situasie, is dat ... dat een van die personeellede het ook 'n naamlose brief Distrik toe gestuur, na ons IDSO toe met klagtes van hoe onregverdig ons proses was en 'n hele klomp verskriklike negatiewe aantuigings en goeters. Dit het my meer seergemaak as wat ek kwaad was daaroor.

Navorser: Was jy toe op daai stadium ... julle het nooit geweet wie nie?

Deelnemer: Nee, die brief het gesê sy's 'n kollega van een van die wat ge-richtsize is, en dit was al wat daar gestaan het. Onmiddellik bring dit weer spanning, want nou kom hulle na jou skool toe en hulle hou 'n ondersoek en kyk ... en hulle kyk hoe dit gedoen word. Gelukkig het ons ... die goed was so volgens die reël gedoen en al die goeters dat hulle gesien het ... dit kan net probleme... (Geen verdere kommentaar nie)

Navorser: Waarvan ek wel hou wat jy vir my sê (Naam), en dit is dat jy, dat julle die ding eerstens volgens die letter van die wet gedoen en ek, soos wat ek aflei wat jy nou vir my sê, het julle 'n baie deeglike beplanning eers gedoen voor die tyd, want ek dink as dit nie sonder die beplanning was nie, het 'n ou 'n groter krisis.

*Deelnemer: Omdat dit so baie was ... ons het gaan sit en ons het die hele personeel gevat en gekyk en gesê: "Wie het, wie het ons nodig om die skool se rooster te kan maak volgende jaar, met 10 mense minder." En ons het dit gevat en ons hele beplanning gedoen vir ons rooster (**Ja**), toe't ons dit gedoen en gesê: "Maar ons kan met hierdie mense." Toe het ons gekyk wie kan ons oortollig ... wie kan ons sonder mee klaarkom. Ek het dinge geherskuif en geherrangskik. So die kurrikulumvereistes was die aspek wat ons alles deur gebruik het, maar ek kan onthou daar was ander ook soos Last In ... (**Daai LIFO-sisteem**), maar daar was nog 'n derde ding ook wat jy kon gedoen het, daar was drie redes wat jy ... (**skeidingspakette?**)*

Navorsing: Ja, die skeidingspakette vir ouens wat naby aan ... dis eintlik wat hulle wou gehad het in daai tyd, die ouens wat naby aan aftrede was, dat hulle eintlik eers sou gaan.

Deelnemer: Gelukkig, wat ons proses makliker gemaak het, by die Departementshoofde was daar drie of vier wat moes gegaan het. Van hulle het toe kom vra ... ek het die saak van die begin af oopgestel en gesê: “Wie wil pakette hê? Wie wil dit doen?” En toe’t van die Departementshoofde gekom en gesê: “Maar ons sal ook”, en gelukkig het dit so uitgewerk dat ons sonder hulle kon klaarkom; ons kon op ‘n manier die ding so werk. Toe’t ek ... by hulle was dit bietjie makliker maar by die onderwysers was dit moeiliker. So dit was ‘n bitter moeilike proses gewees.

Navorsers: So die wyse waarop julle dit gedoen het dan, as ek jou reg verstaan, julle het eers die deeglike beplanning gehad. Julle het ‘n komitee saamgestel. Dan nou op die stadium toe julle die komitee saamgestel het, was dit nie dalk ook van die ouens wat ook moes geherrangskik word nie, wat deel van die komitee was nie?

Deelnemer: Uh, ... ek kan nie die detail daarvan onthou nie ... uh, ... as dit so was dan sou ons, kyk ons werk ook mos so; as daar dan mense betrokke is dan sal ons hulle geskuif het, maar ek kan nie onthou of dit nodig was nie. Ek dink dit het gelukkig so gewerk dat by ons, die komiteeledede was van die ouens wat agtergebly het. Ek kan nie onthou nie.

Navorsers: Het jy foute gemaak, (naam)?

Deelnemer: Ek dink, maar jy sê dit nie. Foute gemaak in die sin dat jy mens verloor het, ja (Ja) maar dit was die proses gewees. Jy voel jammer om ‘n goeie onderwyser te verloor. Gelukkig ook wat in ons proses was, wat ‘n ou moet besef, daar was drie onderwysers wat toe nie dadelik geplaas is nie, wat nog vir lank by ons was, seker nog vir twee jaar. Ons kon vir twee van die drie, kon ons later absorbeer, soos wat mense die onderwys verlaat het (Ja, ja) so dit was ook maklik. Maar die mense wat deur die proses gegaan het en hy’s oortollik verklaar en hulle was nog lank nog kwaad vir my, ten spyte van die feit dat hulle later ingetrek is en permanente poste gekry het.

Navorsers: Moeilik. Hoe bestuur jy ... hoe bestuur jy so proses, want hierdie ouens is nog vir 'n tyd van twee jaar ten minste by jou, maar met die kwaadheid in die hart van: “Ek is een van die ouens wat ge-rightsized word?”

Deelnemer: Ek het, maar ek het ook die moed gehad, ek het ook regdeur die proses vir almal dit baie duidelik gestel dit is geen persoonlike ding gewees in die proses nie. Ons het regtig probeer om 'n objektiewe ding wat ons vir die mense gegee het, gesê hier's die redes; hierso, dis nou so en so, dis nou die redes hoekom ons die mense nie meer kan hanteer nie, en dis al wat ons kon doen. So, die proses self het ek nie enige probleme gehad nie, ek dink ons het dit reg hanteer, soos ons dit hier gehanteer het en daar was 'n redelik mate van rustigheid onder die personeel oor die manier wat ons dit gedoen het. Ons het regtig probeer oopstel en vir die mense heelyd in te lig en te sê wat gebeur en wat gebeur waar nie, so dit was 'n oop proses. Daar was nie geheime agendas nie.

Navorsers: Nou, uiteindelik toe die personeel nou gegaan het, ek dink soos jy ook terreg vir my gesê het, die eerste sessie is maklik, maar nou verwag 'n ou nie daar moet 'n tweede sessie kom nie, en toe jy jou oë uitvee, hier's die tweede sessie.

Deelnemer: Die tweede sessie was toe makliker want ons skool het bietjie gegroei in daai tyd en ons het ook 'n multikulturele skool, parallelmediumskool geword wat ons gehelp het dat ons getalle nie gedaal het nie. (Ja) Ons het eintlik basies van 'n 1000 leerlinge geskuif na 1300 toe. So, met die tweede proses (...het julle eintlik 'n groei gehad), het ons 'n groei gehad in getalle en ... uh, ... dit het gemaak ... ek dink ons het net ... as dit een persoon was, dan was dit baie gewees, maar ek dink nie ons het die tweede rondte iemand gehad nie.

Navorsers: Ek sal graag wil fokus op die eerste rondte, want ek dink dit is 'n nuwe proses. Het jy opleiding gehad, hoe om dit te doen?

Deelnemer: Nee, ons het geen opleiding gehad nie. Ons het, wat basies gebeur het, as ek reg kan onthou, ons het 'n vergadering gehad by ... 'n distrikvergadering wat die goed vir ons gegee het, en toe die volgende het ons die goed gekry. Hulle het toe nou 'n vergadering met onself gehad oor die hele proses, hoe dit moet gebeur. Maar dit was ook maar basies; dit wat in die dokumente gestaan het is vir ons gesê, "Doen dit so", en dinge is uitgeklaar daar, maar dit was die opleiding gewees.

Navorsers: Moeilik ... uh, ... sou jy gevoel het, of voel jy so dat ... uh, ... die Onderwys Departement dalk hulle taak oorgeplaas het na die hoof toe, om nie self in die moeilikheid te wees om dit te kan hanteer nie?

Deelnemer: Ek dink ook nie ... baie mense het gesê: "Ja, maar die Departement moet dit doen." My persoonlike gevoel is, hulle kan dit nie doen nie, want ... uh, ... **(Korrek)**, ons by die skool weet wat die behoeftes van die skool is. Ons weet wat kan ons aangaan en wat het ons nie nodig nie, en as die Departement dit gedoen het dan sou hulle 'n hele klomp verkeerde besluite geneem het. Hulle sou mense dalk weggevat het wat die mense nie mee sou klaargekom het nie, wat probleme sou gegee het, so ek het, ek het verkies dat ons dit self doen. Ek weet op daai stadium het baie ouens gevoel maar hulle skuif nou net hulle probleme op ons af, **(Ja)** maar ek dink dit is die regte manier want ons, op grondvlak, ons weet wat kan die skool doen en wat kan hy nie doen nie. Ek dink nie dit kon anders gewees het nie.

Navorsers: (Naam), nou ek wil so bietjie meer na 'n persoonlike rede toe gaan want dit wat ons so pas met mekaar gesels het is eintlik maar "hoe werk dit in die bestuurskomponent" en hoe word die leiding geneem en ook leiding gegee, en hoe kry jy dat die proses aangespreek word, afgehandel word en klaar. Maar op 'n mens self is hierdie ding 'n groot invloed. Jy, as individu, as persoon, hoe't dit vir jou geraak, weg van die personeel af, hoe't dit vir jou geraak as persoon?

Deelnemer: Soos ek gesê het aan die begin, dit was vir my bitter moeilik gewees. Ek het in my gewonder: "Maar jissie, hoekom moet dit nou met

mens gebeur?” Jy kom by ‘n nuwe skool en dan is jy skaars daar dan kom so iets in jou hande wat jy moet hanteer. ‘n Bitter moeilike tyd om deur te gaan. Ek moet eerlik waar sê ek het sleg geslaap. Ek is nie ‘n ou wat probleme het met slaap nie. Ek is rustig, jy weet, ek kan my afsluit van die werk en die probleme af. Maar daai hele tyd, jy’t ‘n spanning in jouself gehad, jy’t ‘n onrustigheid in jouself gehad en dis al wat jy aan kon dink. Jy’t heeltyd net gedink aan: “Hoe doen ek dit? Hoe doen ek dat?” En dit het alles, alle denke was daaroor. Jou funksionering as hoof en as mens het alles net daaroor gegaan en jy het basies eintlik die ander goed geïgnoreer.

Navorser: Nou, hoe lank het dit geneem?

Deelnemer: Ek kan nie onthou nie. Dit was nie, gelukkig, nie baie lank nie, want soos hulle goed maar werk ... binne twee weke of drie weke moet besluite gemaak word. Ek onthou ook die eerste proses waar ons vir die Departement die name moes gegee het, was nie baie tyd gewees nie, so ons het onmiddellik begin en die vergadering gehou en die inligting gegee en al die dinge en goeters, maar dit was gelukkig nie ‘n baie lang proses nie. Dit was vinnig afgehandel omdat hulle onder druk was om dit te doen ook.

Navorser: Die skool self? Hoe’t die skool ... het die skool swaar gekry in die proses? Julle het nie aanvanklik dadelik 10 verloor nie, julle het toe uiteindelik agt verloor.

Deelnemer: Mettertyd, ja. Die goed was sleg, want tot hierdie stadium, en dit is vandag nog so dat die personeel van (skool se naam) is baie na aan mekaar. Daar is ‘n bonding tussen hulle, daar’s ‘n gevoel van “Dis ons plek en ons werk saam.” Dit was moeilik vir hulle om dit te hanteer en bitter moeilik vir baie van die mense wat lank daar skool gehou het, en van die personeel om van hulle afskeid te neem. Dit was bitter moeilik en hulle het dit maar swaar gevat. ‘n Mens is saam daar deur, die hele proses het ‘n ongelooflike spanning geplaas op die personeel. Elke lid het gedink hy is deel van die proses. Dit het dit baie moeilik gemaak, daai hele spanning wat

daar was en die mense wat, soos ek nou-nou gesê het, kort-kort kom daar iemand en sê: “Maar is my naam ook op die lys? Is ek ook deel van hulle?”

Navorsers: Nou weet jy ook dat in so ‘n skoolopset is daar verskeie rolspelers, en nie net onderwysers en die hoof aan die eenkant nie, maar die beheerliggaam is deel daarvan. Die kinders self, wat fisies in die skool moet wees, skielik het hulle nie meer onderwysers nie en ook die ouergemeenskap. Hoe was hulle gesindheid gewees? Hoe het hulle dit hanteer?

Deelnemer: Ek dink die beheerliggaam het dit ook baie positief gevat. Ek kan nie onthou of die beheerliggaam enigsins inspraak in die proses gehad het nie. As ek reg kan onthou was hulle nie deel van dit gewees nie.

Navorsers: Wat ek eintlik wil weet, al hierdie rolspelers, (naam), het hulle met jou direk geskakel want dit kon weer ‘n invloed op jou as persoon gehad het?

Deelnemer: Ja, ek dink die beheerliggaam was baie ondersteunend gewees in hulle rol ook en gelukkig, een ding wat ek kan sê van ons beheerliggaam, al die jare nog, hulle werk baie mooi saam met die skool. Ons is in ‘n vennootskap met mekaar en van hulle kant af het hulle ondersteuning gegee en bygedra. Hulle het dit nie vir ons moeiliker gemaak nie. Die ouers ook nie. Ons het dit nie gevind dat daar enigsins van die ouers se kant af probleme gehad het nie. Die enigste probleem was die een naamlose brief wat Distrikkantoor toe gestuur is. Dit het spanning veroorsaak.

Navorsers: Ja, wat van ‘n onderwyser se kant af gekom het. (Naam), op jou familie, hoe raak dit jou familie, want jy kom met al hierdie moeilikheid van die skool af kom jy uiteindelik huis toe?

Deelnemer: Dit het ‘n invloed op die familie. Uh, ... ek is ‘n ou wat probeer om nie my probleme huis toe te bring nie, ek praat so min as moontlik oor probleme by die skool ... by die huis. Jy weet, my vrou is partykeer kwaad vir

my dan sal sy sê: “Hoekom het jy my nie van dit vertel nie? Hoekom het jy my nie van dat vertel nie?” en ek dink nie dit is goed dat jy al die moeilikheid en al die probleme huis toe bring nie. Ek probeer dit daar hou, ek probeer dit daar hanteer en as ek huis toe kom, dan is ek by die huis. Maar dit beïnvloed ‘n mens. Jy’s gespanne, jy’s op jou senuwees en dit het ‘n invloed in ‘n mate op jou gesin.

Navorsers: En ‘n mens speel ook nie so lekker gholf nie?

Deelnemer: Aag nee, dit het my nie gepla nie, jy weet.

Navorsers: Maar dit het ten minste ‘n invloed.

Deelnemer: Dit het ‘n invloed. Dit was nie, dat ‘n mens kan sê dit is oor wat gebeur het nie.

Navorsers: Een van die belangrikste fasette wat ‘n mens seerskerlik in ‘n skool kry is kommunikasie, en nou kan ek dadelik dink toe daar uiteindelik besluit is wie’s hierdie 10 mense wat moet gaan, dat dit die kommunikasie tussen jou, as hoof van hierdie 10, onmiddellik ‘n ander rigting geneem en die res wat gebly het, se kommunikasie natuurlik ‘n ander rigting geneem het. Gesels ‘n bietjie met my oor die kommunikasie.

Deelnemer: Soos ek sê ons het probeer, in die proses het ons regtig probeer om die ding nie ‘n geslote ding te hê nie, ons het die mense heeltyd geken in dit. Die oomblik toe ons die besluit geneem het dat dit is die mense wat nou gaan, het ons onmiddellik eers met hulle self kontak gemaak en gesê ... jy het hulle ingelig voor ons dit vir die groter personeel deurgegee het. Dit bly maar moeilik. ‘n Mens wonder of dit nie makliker is om in ‘n groot vertrek te sê, maar dit is nou die 10 wat gaan en die ander bly. Maar ons het probeer om die kommunikasie oop te hou na die personeel toe en heeltyd, in die hele proses het ons heeltyd vir mense gesê: “Maar kom praat as jy probleme het,” en ek dink die feit dat ons, die manier hoe ons die ding gedoen het, het

meeste dit aanvaar. Ek het nie werklik beleef dat mense nou kwaad was vir my nie. Hulle het verstaan en ons kon vir hulle gesê het maar dit is die beginsels wat ons toegepas het. Dit is die redes wat ons toegepas het. Die mense ook; hulle kon rasideel daarna kyk en kon begrip daarvoor hê, al het hulle elkeen gevoel “Maar vakonderwyser is die beste onderwyser en hy moes bly en hy is beter as die ander onderwysers en hoekom moet ek gaan en daai ou, wat slegter as ek is, bly?” So, die ... ons het probeer om die kommunikasie oop te maak en heeltyd te kommunikeer en te sê, alles wat gebeur het, die mense ingelig gehou en op datum gehou met die goeters en dis deel van die proses wat ook mense laat glo hulle word geken in die saak ook.

Navorsers: Aansluitend hierby (Naam), nee, dankie vir daai inligting. Aansluitend hierby gebeur dit natuurlik so, as jy 10 mense verloor, 10 mense se werk moet iewers inverteel word en nou kom ek dadelik by die konsep van motivering. Hoe motiveer jy nou hierdie personeel wat oor bly om die 10 mense wat gegaan het se ekstra taak wat hulle gehad het te herteel na hulle toe wat bly?

Deelnemer: Dit was nie maklik nie want om skielik ‘n groot hap uit jou personeel, dit was amper ‘n vyfde van die personeel gewees wat gegaan het, as dit nie ‘n groter persentasie was nie. Onmiddellik het dit ‘n impak op jou werkslading van jou onderwysers, en ons het die ding ook probeer bestuur. Ons het ‘n stelsel by ons skool waar die personeellid ook deel in die hele werksverdelingsgoeters, ook selfs met die skoolvakke. Ons proses gaan dat ons vir hulle vra, vir hulle sê: “Gee vir ons ‘n aanduiding van watter vakke en klasse wil jy hê volgende jaar?” En die versoeke rig ... gee hulle dan vir die departementshoofde; sê “ek wil Gr12 Rekeningkunde graag hê, ek wil dié vak en dié klas en graad en goeters hê.” So, op dié manier kry hulle dan inspraak oor die goeters en dan kom die departementshoofde, hulle beplan ook vir hulself, met die insae wat die onderwysers gee, kom hulle dan na jou toe en ons gaan sit dan en ons kyk hoe kan ons die rooster doen om aan die dinge te voldoen soos die mense wil. Nou, op die ou einde, dan besluit jy, in belang van die skool, wat is die behoefte en jy gee nie vir almal wat hulle wil hê nie,

maar die mense het begrip daarvoor, so, wat dit aanbetref, ek dink die stelsel het gemaak dat die mense voel hulle is deel van die proses, en ... uh, ... ons kon dit inkorporeer. En ek dink ook die feit dat ons het maar probeer op 'n positiewe manier te kommunikeer; te sê dat die wat nou agterbly is 'n groter las op ons, wees dankbaar dat jy deel is van die ouens wat bly, dat jy nie deur die proses gegaan het nie, want dit maak nie saak nie, enige onderwyser wat in die proses gaan, hy word weer geholpe. Van hulle is na ander skole toe, ander plekke toe, en baie gelukkig, en vandag nog daar. (Ja) So, dit het ook gebeur, dis nie net sleg nie. Mense se ervaring van dit het gewerk; ook vir hulle.

Navorsers: Maar die groep wat agtergebly het se motivering; moeilik aanvanklik aan die begin?

Deelnemer: Ons het vir hulle gesê: “Daar’s nou ‘n groter verantwoordelikheid.” Ons is nie ge-rightsized nie, so ons moet uit dankbaarheid nou besef maar ons gaan meer werk hê. Mense deelmaak van die proses om te besluit oor die werksverdeling en dit beklemtoon, onthou dit wat ons hierdie jaar gehad het is verby; dit kan nie weer so wees nie, en dit het die saak beklemtoon. Ek het net gaan sit en jy doen die ding en jy sien jy kan dit doen. Ons het nie gedag ons gaan dit regkry nie maar ‘n mens het dit reggekry. In daai tyd het ons ook begin met beheerliggaamposte, ek dink ons het een of twee beheerliggaamposte in daai tyd begin om die belading ‘n bietjie ligter te maak.

Navorsers: Die mense het toe nou nie in daai stadium, toe die werkslading hoër word, alhoewel julle dit baie deeglik gekommunikeer het soos wat ek hoor wat jy sê, het daar nie van die ouens wat agtergebly het na jou toe gekom en gesê: “Maar ek is ook nou nie meer lus vir hierdie goed nie ... uh, ... ek gaan dit nie so vat vir die volgende jaar of vir die volgende 10 jaar nie,” en dan ook besluit het om te gaan nie?

Deelnemer: Nee, ons het nie sulke dinge gehad nie.

Navorser: So die gesindheid was reg gewees?

Deelnemer: Die gesindheid was positief gewees. 'n Mens het ook ... ook maar 'n bietjie sielkunde ook gebruik. Jy sê vir hulle: "Goed, dit is nou die proses", maar dit is nie die einde nie en jy weet nie wanneer gaan die volgende proses kom nie. Almal het besef op daai stadium die redes daarvoor, dat ons in 'n bevoorregte posisie was en 'n mens het maar probeer, op 'n manier, om na die ouens deur te dring, maar daar is weer 'n kans dat dit kan gebeur. Dit is nie die einde van die storie nie (Ja). Net dit saam het die mense so half 'n bietjie bang gemaak vir 'n volgende proses en hulle laat besef maar "ek beter my kant bring".

Navorser: Maar nou sit jy eintlik met twee groepe op die stadium toe dit nou klaar besluit en bestuur is en die hele ding nou afgehandel is, en sê: "Okay julle is die groep mense. Julle is die 10 wat gaan, en die res van julle, julle is die ouens wat bly." Maar nou is daar konflik. In 'n mate moet daar konflik wees. Hoe't jy die konflik ... of kom ek vra eers so, was daar konflik?

Deelnemer: Kyk, die konflik wat ek beleef het was soos die een brief ook wat gestuur is. Van die onderwysers wat ook deel van, seker maar deel van die komitee was, wat die gevoel was ... uh, ... "My vriendin was 'n beter onderwyser as daai een, hoekom moet sy nou gaan en daai een was swakker, hoekom het..." jy weet hulle sou eerder 'n ruil wou gehad het. Dit was in 'n mate konflik gewees, maar ek kan eerlik sê daar was nie veel ander dinge en ander probleme wat afkomstig was nie.

Navorser: Ek dink dit is omdat julle dit so goed bestuur het. Dit is baie belangrik. Jy het baie van hierdie goeters ontloot wat moontlik 'n probleem kon gewees het. (Naam), 'n ou gaan deur stress. Jy't aan die begin vir my gesê, jy het agterna weer herhaal dit was vir jou 'n baie stresvolle tyd, 'n moeilike tyd, en hoe het jy jou stresvlakke gehanteer. Eers angsstres; waardeur het jy beweeg? Het jy eintlik nodig gehad om iemand te gaan sien, met iemand te praat? Ek sê nie noodwendig

professionele hulp nie, maar hoe het dit jou geraak, direk met jou angste en jou stres?

Deelnemer: (Naam), ek kan ... ek is 'n ou wat redelik stres en spanning en goeters kan hanteer. So, wat dit aanbetref, het dit my nie ... dit raak 'n mens, maar dit was nie so dat ek probleme gehad het daarmee of ge-crack het nie. Ek het dit hanteer. Ek het gelukkig, van skooldae af, in 'n bestuursposisie gewees en leiersposisie gewees en ek het baie ondervinding daarvan gehad, so 'n ou leer om dinge te kan hanteer en te aanvaar dit wat daarmee saamgaan, so ten spyte van die feit dat ek maar net 'n jaar by die skool was en dinge moes hanteer het, dink ek ons het dit redelik hanteer en ... uh, ... ek kan nie sê dat daar spesifiek stres was of 'n probleem was nie. Dit was 'n stresvolle tydperk.

Navorsers: Ek wil nou nie sê daar is 'n probleem iewers nie, ek wil vra: “Jy't nie dalk om 'n stadium gevoel dat die druk is so groot dat jy moet medikasie kry (nee) of jy moet ekstra aanvullers neem nie, net om jou deur die dag te kan vat nie?” Ek dink jy het dit gemaklik hanteer.

Deelnemer: Nee, dis nog nooit ... dis nie deel van my mondering nie.

Navorsers: Verhoudings met die personeel ... uh, ... want jy sal dadelik vind, ek dink jy het gesê jy het dit ook ervaar, dat daar in 'n mindere of meerdere mate is daar “clicks” wat gevorm het, want as ek op die komitee moes wees en my vriendin is dalk nou een van die ouens wat ge-rightsized moet word het ek onmiddellik 'n click-vorming sodat ek kan beskerming, daar wat vir my belangrik is. Hoe was die hele kwessie rondom die verhoudings van jou en die personeel? Ek praat nou van albei groepe, want dis in twee poele eintlik.

Deelnemer: Ek het ... een van my groot dinge wat ek dink die rol van 'n hoof ... is dat die bou van verhoudings is vir my 'n absolute ongelooflike groot en belangrike ding. Ek glo as jy goeie verhoudings met jou mense het, dan maak dit jou werk as hoof makliker ook en ek gaan van die standpunt uit dat,

en ek hanteer dit ook so, dat 'n mens werk hard; jy hanteer dinge wat moeilik is. Dis nie asof jy weghardloop van jou probleme af nie, maar 'n mens probeer dit op so manier doen dat jy altyd 'n wenner uit die ding uit kry, maak nie saak wat dit is nie. Dis nie altyd moontlik nie, so, verhoudinge is vir my ongelooflik belangrik. Ek was nie lank by die skool gewees nie, maar ek dink in die tydjie wat ek daar was het die mens my aanvaar ook en die feit dat ons die ding so kon gehanteer het dat hulle kon gesien dit was 'n objektiewe proses ... en dit het dit makliker gemaak wat dit aanbetref.

Navorser: Ek hoor wat jy sê. Finansiëel? Invloed op finansies; want 10 onderwysers skielik weg, ek hoor jy sê ook in die tyd daar rondom het julle gaan kyk na twee beheerliggaamaanstellings. So daar moet tot 'n mate 'n finansiële implikasie wees.

Deelnemer: As ek nou reg kan onthou, ek dink dis in daai tyd ook gewees dat die kurrukulum-dinge ook bietjie verander het, en ons het, ek onthou ons het dadelik, ons het LO weggevat, want ons LO-man en die dame is albei gerightsize. So jy het ... sekere vakke het jy gestop en dit het dit makliker gemaak met die werkslading daarmee saam, en ... uh, ... dit het 'n finansiële impak want mens het ekstra personeel nodig gehad en mens moes dit finansier uit die beheerliggaamfondse uit.

Navorser: Nou, jy moes dit fisies hanteer het, want jy moes dit uiteindelik, jy't dit gekry (ja) en dit soortvan bestuur en dan moet jy dit gevat het beheerliggaam toe.

Deelnemer: Ja, gelukkig daar by ons skool is die samewerking tussen die beheerliggaam en die bestuur baie goed en ons het 'n oop verhouding daar en dinge loop mooi, so die behoeftes is aangedui en dit is aanvaar deur die beheerliggaam, sonder dat daar teenkanting was.

Navorser: Ek hoor wat jy sê, en ek kan hoor ook daar is 'n baie groot positiwiteit daarin, maar 'n ou het nie begroot daarvoor aanvanklik nie

(nee) en skielik moet jy kom en dan moet jy jou begroting, of jy moet die begroting soortvan verbygaan om nuwe dimensies in plek te kan sit.

Deelnemer: Dit gebeur, maar 'n mens verander maar in jou begroting, want dis nuwe realiteite wat inkom en 'n ou moet dit hanteer.

Navorser: Dankie (naam), ek dink een van die belangriker dinge, seersekerlik, en dit is waaroor die hartklop van 'n skool gaan, gaan oor die onderrig- en leerprogramme, en die kinders is direk betrokke by die onderrig en leer, maar ook die onderwysers aan die anderkant van die muntstuk is ook direk betrokke, nou vat jy 10 onderwysers weg. Wat se invloed het dit gehad op die onderrig en leer? Ek dink nie dalk op 'n langer termyn nie, want op 'n langer termyn kon julle dit bereedder deur dit ... deur die werkslading te verhoog, maar op 'n onmiddellike effek.

*Deelnemer: 'n Mens het maar probeer om die impak op die skool en op die akademie so min as moontlik te maak en dis hoekom ek dadelik begin het en die nie-eksamenvakke het ons 'n middeweg gevat, selfs Lewensoriëntering wat ons by Gr11 en Gr12 heeltemal gelos en later weer moes inbring toe ons besoek gekry en gesê het: "Maar julle moet die goed hê." Maar ons het dadelik gaan sit, besluit maar wat is belangrik vir die akademie van die skool en probeer daaraan aandag gee in die proses. Die feit dat 'n mens die nie-eksamenvakke uit kon haal het dit makliker gemaak ... uh, ... met Rek(eningkunde) ook, gaan kyk na die grootte van die groepe. Ons is ook 'n skool met 'n tegniese-afdeling waar van ons tegniese groepe baie klein was en ons het onmiddellik daar begin om die groepe groter te maak met teenkating van die personeel natuurlik, want nou sit jy met baie meer ouens in 'n klas wat dit moeiliker maak, **(Ja)** maar 'n ou het probeer om dit wat jy gehad het so te hanteer dat die impak op die akademie so min as moontlik sal wees. 'n Mens het goeie onderwysers verloor, dit het 'n impak gehad op die skool, jy weet, van die mense wat vir jou geliefd was en die akademie? En mens het maar probeer om met, met die minder mense smarter te werk en ons het regtig gaan kyk in ons rooster so beplan dat dit impak op die akademie minder te maak, deur die groepe groter te maak soos ek sê, klasse*

groter te maak, herverdeel, onmiddellik het dit 'n negatiewe invloed op die onderwys want waar jy voorheen, kom ons sê 30 kinders gehad het, is dit dalk nou 38/40 (korrek) so dit het 'n definitiewe invloed op die akademie, ook 'n invloed op die onderwysers ook, dat daar groter klasse is. Invloed op die kinders ook. Hoe meer kinders in 'n klas was hoe meer, al die negatiewe goeters wat daarmee saamgaan.

Navorsers: Ek het nou nog nie daaraan gedink nie (Naam), maar jy, jy maak nou nuwe deksels vir my oop hierso. Uh, ... met die dat jy nou dadelik meer kinders in 'n klas sit, het ouers dalk van hulle kinders toe weggevat en gesê: “Maar, my kind kan nie deur hierdie proses gaan waar onderwysers ge-rightsized is nie?”

Deelnemer: Ons het dit nie beleef nie, ons het dit nie beleef nie. Ons het ook, soos ek sê, in '95 het ons die skool oopgemaak. In '96 het die ding begin. Aanvanklik het ek gedink, “wow, hier gaan ons moeilikheid kry,” maar ons het, waar ons in '95 nog 'n 1000 kinders was, het ons binne twee/drie jaar gegroei tot 1300 toe ... uh, ... as gevolg van ook dat die Engelse kinders bygekam het. Ons blanke kinders het ek gedog gaan daal, ons gaan minder kry, ouers ... dis 'n redelike konserwatiewe omgewing vir ons ouers. Ons het gedog, “wow, hier gaan mense ons verlaat,” maar dit het nie gebeur nie. Inteendeel, ons blanke kinders het 'n bietjie gestyg.

Navorsers: Ek dink dit is belangrike goed wat julle daar gedoen het, maar ek dink die hele bestuursplan van die begin af, dit was die regte ding. (Ja, ja) (Naam) ... uh, ... ons het netnou gepraat oor motivering, en ek dink by motivering sluit aan ook die moraal van die onderwysers, en jy het al vir my so ietsie gesê, sodat as die, as die motivering half reg was, dan beteken dit inherent dat die moraal van die onderwysers reg was. Ek weet nie of daar uitspringers was by jou, waar die moraal dalk, miskien aanvanklik nie heeltemal lekker was nie maar later bietjie beter geword het.

Deelnemer: 'n Mens kry altyd in 'n groep mense, ouens wat negatief en ouens wat positief is, dié soort goed. Maar ons probeer 'n groot ding daarvan maak dat ons personeel moet saamstaan, mekaar moet ondersteun, mekaar moet help want met individue kan jy baie minder regkry as wat jy met 'n span kan doen, (Ja) en ek dink daar's 'n hele ... ek dink daar's 'n gevoel, ook by die onderwysers by (skool se naam), dat dis vir hulle lekker om daar te werk, hulle wil daar werk en dit alles maak dat die moraal beter is en die motivering beter is. Ja, jy het maar jou negatiewe mense, hulle is daar en 'n mens probeer hulle maar te hanteer en positief te beïnvloed met dinge en goeters, maar dis maar 'n persoonlikheid wat jy nie iets aan kan doen nie.

Navorsers: Ek verstaan, ek hoor wat jy sê. Die klimaat en kultuur in 'n skool is sekerlik baie belangrike goeters. As jy 'n kultuur of 'n leerkultuur in 'n skool, of 'n kultuur van tradisies het, dit sluit noodwendig baie nou by mekaar aan; klimaat en kultuur. Het hierdie hele verandering van skielik 10 minder onderwysers, het dit 'n invloed gehad, 'n onmiddellike of glad nie?

Deelnemer: Dis moeilik om te kon bepaal het, ek dink nie mens het eintlik gaan kyk, en kyk wat die invloed was nie. Dis maar die realiteit gewees, dit gebeur en 'n ou moet dit hanteer. Ek dink nie ons het werklik gaan kyk na wat is die effekte daarvan en die invloede van die goeters, en as mens werklikwaar meer bedag was en gaan waarneem het, dan sou mens meer dinge raakgesien het. Maar ons het dit gesien as 'n realiteit, 'n ou moet dit hanteer, en jy hanteer dit en jy gaan aan. Om te gaan huil nou oor minder onderwysers gaan nie die saak beter maak nie, so ek dink nie ... dit moes ... dit moes 'n invloed gehad het op die skool, die kultuur en die tradisies en die goeters, ja.

Navorsers: Nou, ek wil 'n laaste vragie aan jou vra, (naam), en ek wil eintlik byvoorbaat vir jou sê, dankie vir jou tyd. Uh, ... dit gaan ... dit wat jy beleef het is 'n beleefde ervaring. Ek dink die Engelse praat van 'n *Life Experience*. As jy nou vandag terugkyk, na hierdie tyd, dis 10 jaar gelede. Sou jy enige aanbevelings gemaak het? Kan jy dalk ... kan jy

aanbevelings maak wat hierdie proses kan draai, dat 'n ou nie deur dieselfde krisisse moet gaan nie?

Deelnemer: Dit gaan maar oor ... oor bestuur en beplanning. Uh, ... 'n mens moet as hoof heelyd beplan, dinge raaksien, en as jy sien “wag, wow, hier's is daling in getalle” en daar's 'n moontlikheid dat jy poste kan verloor, dan moet jy voorsiening maak daarvoor. Mens probeer maar vooruit beplan en, ek weet dit het 'n paar keer gebeur dat ons kwalifiseer vir poste en dat ons weet maar ons gaan dit nie lank kan instand hou nie, dat 'n mens die pos nie adverteer nie en dan los, en dan help dit later dat jy nie iemand hoef te rightsize of te verloor in die proses nie. So, 'n ou probeer maar die ding ook so te hanteer met die beste implikasie vir die skool. So, dit beteken soms dat jy 'n ekstra onderwyser kon gehad het vir 'n tydjie. Maar uh,...

Navorsers: Maar dit los nie die probleem regtig op nie.

Deelnemer: Nee, dit los nie ... die probleem is, dit gaan oor getalle, en as ons getalle daal, dan gaan ons mense moet verloor. (Ja) Dis die realiteit. Dis net, op daai stadium was dit 'n proses met 'n klomp mense wat gelyk...

Navorsers: Hulle het nou, aansluitend met dit, (naam) jy het ook nou, julle het in '96 verloor, toe't julle nou in '99 nie verloor nie, want julle het 'n groei gehad, ek verstaan, en toe dink ek daar was weer in 2004 die volgende rightsizing gewees. Het julle toe iets verloor?

Deelnemer: Ons moes daar een pos verloor het.

Navorsers: En dit het toe maar weer half opgevlam?

Deelnemer: Ja, hy't gelukkig, wat daar gebeur het, een van die personelede het toe self kom sê: “Maar ek wil gaan, ek wil afgaan, ek wil bedank,” of wat ook al, of afgetree het, ek kan nie meer onthou wat dit was nie. So ons was toe nie deel van die proses gewees nie.

Navorser: O, okay ja, dit het darem gehelp.

Deelnemer: Wat gebeur het daarso is ons kon dit hanteer het sonder dat jy vir iemand hoef te gesê het, ek kan nie presies onthou wat die rede was nie, ek weet net ons het ... iemand het kom sê...

Navorser: Dink jy hoofde moes opleiding kry om te kan weet hoe om dit regtig makliker te kan hanteer?

*Deelnemer: Joeg, ek dink nie opleiding gaan vir jou baie help om die situasie te hanteer nie. Ek dink riglyne, ja, waar hulle vir jou kan sê “Hanteer dit so, en dit so”, dat mens basies meer opgelei kan word in die hantering, die mensvaardighede, menseverhoudinge en hoe om dit te hanteer, bietjie van ‘n lyn van hoe dink mense en as jy dit doen, wat doen hulle daar. Dis maar ‘n proses, ‘n leerproses en as mens eenkeer deur die ding gaan, dan leer jy ongelooflik baie daaruit en dit maak dit vir jou vorentoe makliker om dit weer te hanteer (**Ja**), maar ek weet nie of hulle ... of opleiding, in wese, jou sou gehelp het om dit beter te kan hanteer nie. Dit was maar ‘n objektiewe proses, die prosedure wat mens sekerlik sou gaan doen het. Ek dink as hulle kon, riglyne kon gegee het hoe om die situasie te hanteer, ‘n ou bietjie ... dalk sielkundige hulp, nie sielkundig nie, maar hulp kan gee in die hantering van mense, hoe hanteer jy mense as dit gebeur, dat ‘n mens bewus kan wees daarvan.*

Navorser: (Naam), ek wil dankie sê vir jou tyd. Ek het regtig waardering.

Deelnemer: Nee dankie, ek is bly ek kon jou gehelp het.

Navorser: Ek is net bekommerd as die volgende rightsizing moet kom ... voor hulle die hoofde wegvat.

Deelnemer: Nee, dis ‘n baie moeilike situasie, maar dis ‘n realiteit. Dis ‘n realiteit.

Navorsers: Ek sê: “Baie dankie.”

INTERVIEW DELTA

Background

This research originates from the National Education Department's policy of addressing the inequalities of the past through equity, staff reduction and the process of redress to justify a democratic transformation with in education.

This research particularly focuses on experiences of principals during a staff-reduction process.

Researcher: Were you a principal at the time when we experienced staff reduction, when it was implemented?

Participant: Yes, I was.

Researcher: Okay great ... the first time, I think that was round about 1995/1996. (Ah, yes...) Tell me your story. How did you manage that process?

Participant: That wasn't an easy process. (Yes...)

Researcher: What happened? How did you manage it?

Participant: Uh, ... there was policy documents to that effect (Yes..), a circular (Yes, a circular...). I read in the circular that ... and there after I made some photo copies for each and every educator and we went into a staff meeting where I went through the circular so that at least all of us had a common understanding (of what's going to happen?) of what's going to happen. And then, we chose a date when we are going to identify ... and at that meeting the staff secretary was writing ... (taking notes?) ... yes. And we wrote all our needs and we analysed our needs according to the success areas (I understand) and thereafter ... (what happened thereafter...?) I got

the experience of the teachers for those subjects (okay, I understand, so you looked at curriculum needs first?) ... we looked at curriculum needs first.

Researcher: I'll come to that later, but first, were you the co-ordinator of the whole process or how did it work?

Participant: Yes, I was the co-ordinator of the whole process.

Researcher: Okay and how did you feel about it?

Participant: Oh, my God.

Researcher: Was it bad?

Participant: That was the most traumatising experience in my "principalship."

Researcher: Why would you say that?

Participant: Because even though they say we are not identifying people, we are identifying the needs (okay, I understand), which are attached to somebody ... we had to identify somebody ... and for me it was very traumatic.

Researcher: Can I ask you, have you had training in this regard ... how to do it?

Participant: Yes, and I become as objective as possible and leave all the bias.

Researcher: Have you gone through any training or not at all?

Participant: I would not call it training.

Researcher: But the District notified you how to do it.

Participant: We went to a meeting and the district explained how to do it. When you hear something for the first time you are not sure as to whether you understand, so for me to understand I had to go through the circular and read it.

Researcher: Can I ask you something else? Do you think you have made many mistakes during this time?

Participant: I didn't (You did not?) The reason is because there were not any other options. You know what happened? As for the process, we did it on a Friday, and for me, I... Then we informed these people who were identified, because at that point four people were identified but only one person left. The others who remained, they were later on absorbed. So I didn't make any mistake. On Monday I was afraid to go to work ... I haven't had the courage.

Researcher: How did your staffmembers experience it?

Participant: I have explained that every morning we hold a holy ritual to support our spirit and after the holy ritual we went to assembly and so the others went to class and I went to my office so one of the people who was identified came to my office and said to me: "Ma'am, I come to thank you, because I have realized that this is your idea not to be biased. Through explaining... I realised I'm going to be identified so at least it pushed me a bit but they were reasonable.

Researcher: Did you do any planning before this ... before the implementation of the right-sizing process?

Participant: Yes, I did it, I did it alone. I planned on some people's lives ... try to do it.

Researcher: So you have made arrangements in time with yourself to decide these are the staff members to be rightsized and then you've done your planning according to that?

Participant: Yes, I explained the reason why because at that time I was the one to manage the staff-reduction process.

Researcher: But who identified the staff members? Did you do it or did your Governing Body do it with you?

Participant: Me and the SMT and then there were a few members of the Governing Body at that meeting.

Researcher: Did they decide together with you who will be made redundant?

Participant: No, they didn't decide with me. Well it was the SMT, together with the staff members.

Researcher: Okay, so the staff were involved and they all gave their consent that who must be the ... (yes) okay I understand what you say. Now, what were your immediate reactions, or actions then, when you realised the staff reduction is reality? What were your immediate actions?

Participant: I was afraid, because I realised that the school are no longer going to be ... there are no longer going to be stability at the school because if somebody has to go and the problem is I had to get somebody from outside to do it for the change of your life ... but it even effected the educators as well as the workload increased with somebody goes an extra job, an unnecessary extra job that's why I was saying it effected the stability.

Researcher: Yes, I understand. Now, I would like to ask you this; the Government at the time, actually the Educational Department at the time told us via the circulars that this whole staff reduction, the whole reduction of staff had to do with the operational activities of the department. Did you understand that?

Participant: I didn't understand why all of a sudden we were asked to hold this and it is only this year, or late last year, we were told to do it again, but fortunately for us we weren't affected.

Researcher: Did it affect you again the second time around?

Participant: No, not again.

Researcher: But you were prepared this time?

Participant: It didn't because our role had increased, so I didn't lose any educators.

Researcher: I understand that. So, initially you did not understand the operational activities of the Education Department because they said it was due to the attributes of the economical activities in the country and also the previously disadvantaged schools that must get more educators where they haven't had any educators...

Participant: I still didn't understand. You know what I told my people? Hold them. The Department said they were going to make it easier for us to work. I thought they are going to increase and instead they reduced them. I told them we thought we are going to work like whites because at white schools learners are few in class and there are more educators but then I realised that they wanted to like people to work like us in over crowded classes with less staff members. It was the opposite of what I expected.

Researcher: The District Office, were they involved when you made the decision of who you are going to be right sized?

Participant: Yes they were involved. I made it a point that I did not leave them out. I made it as open as far as possible ... so that at least we do this in a fair manner.

Researcher: Now have you had any confrontation from your staff at the time?

Participant: No.

Researcher: Nothing, they just accepted because you took them into consideration initially?

Participant: Not at all, not at all. That is why one of them came to me and said: “Ma’amwe are faithful and thank you for your healthy the very same person who were rightsized.”

Researcher: How was your remaining staff’s attitude towards you?

Participant: They were difficult at first. (okay), because even before this one left we need to encourage them saying it is not the end of the world. As long as we are still a teacher here we will get out of this.

Researcher: So your people stood together?

Participant: Yes, they stood together.

Researcher: That is brilliant. That is why you are a principal for 13 years. You have the experience to cope with this. How did this whole thing of staff reduction, rightsizing, how did this influence your institution?

Participant: I think it made us more stand together because even before this with all staff involved we are still to go on to deliver education, so we told ourselves even if this is going to be how hard, we are going to stick together and work hard.

Researcher: So it actually builds a family amongst the staff. I would like to pursue now more on your personal experiences. I’m talking to you as a principal now because we have discussed several matters with regard

to the whole school system, how they have experienced it, who were involved, etc., etc. But for you as a principal, how did it impact on your family?

Participant: Oh my God, you know, I didn't realise but I was depressed. Number one, I was very bad and I was even shouting at my family.

Researcher: And they didn't understand why?

Participant: They didn't understand me but later on I realised that it was the stress that was responsible for this. Sometimes I did not even want to talk to my family, yes, I did develop high blood pressure.

Research: What about the communication between you and your staff? You said the communication was still very good?

Participant: Yes.

Research: And what about conflict? Have you had any conflict with your staff members or not?

Participant: Not at all.

Researcher: You were actually in a very fortunate position there.

Participant: In fact when they realised I was down. They picked me up.

Researcher: And how did you motivate your staff, because I presume that some of the ones that had been left behind, they must have been very afraid that something of this manner will come again? How did you motivate them?

Participant: You know I told them that there is one thing that this encourages about the whole thing. They don't say:" they no longer want you to work".

They are saying: “we are moving you from where you are to take you to where your services are more needed, and here we are.”

Researcher: But the mere fact that you took the stand and that you showed an example of how it should be done, your people just follow.

Participant: Yes

Researcher: Did you give them any incentives or change their working conditions to motivate them or not?

Participant: You know, I am that kind of person who always appreciates what people do. So, if they have done something good I hold them to it. I will tell them: “Ladies and gentleman, this morning I would like to thank so and so for doing one, two, three, to show that I appreciate what has been done. This is for an individual who has done something good. I’ve got an open policy where they do have some input, they are at liberty to do so. I usually agree on their initiatives so they know that their input are appreciated.

Researcher: Tell me about stress. Did you have stress-related illnesses? How did this demoralise you?

Participant: I think I was stressed because, like I am saying, that later on I had realised that I had develop high blood pressure, even though at that time I did not realised or think that I was stressed.

Researcher: And finances? Did you have any problems with finances in the school? Did it influence the finances in your school or not?

Participant: No, only my normal financial problems give me grief.

Researcher: And on teaching and learning? Did you have any influence because if you lose a teacher there’s a gap?

Participant: You know, my teachers are very co-operative. Immediately when that person left we made some other arrangements. And you know, you won't believe this, (researcher's name), I usually become a role model in the sense that if things are tough, I'm there to help them so if I have other situations, if there is some other circumstances and we are experiencing a problem so, because I usually do take the lead. They are all willing to help in any way.

Researcher: The climate and the culture in your school, did it change or not? Was it influenced?

Participant: It wasn't influenced in any way.

Researcher: Yes, because you took the stand as a manager, that's why.

Participant: Yes, we've got this other programme that says: "United we stand together."

Researcher: This programme of yours, it also had an influence on the morale. It kept up the morale?

Participant: Yes.

Researcher: We're heading towards the end of this and I would like to thank you for your time. There is only one other thing I would like to ask you. Are there any recommendations, if you have to face this situation again, are there any recommendations you would like to give to the Education Department so they could run this in a proper manner?

Participant: The recommendation that I can give is, don't move around teachers because that defertilises the school. Instead they could be hiring other teachers who are unemployed and leave the schools as they are. The schools who have more educators in the school because they are going to set the work load for that school is better. At the present moment educators are

stressed because the workload has increased. At the present moment I do not have the exact model that I can give to the Department of Education, but the present one is not working at all. I would recommend that they should leave the teachers at the school the way they are and search for something else.

Researcher: Thank you so much for your time. I really do appreciate it.