

LEADERSHIP DISTRIBUTION IN
GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
NIGERIA: FACT OR FICTION?

BY

RAPHAEL ISIBOR IMONI

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Abstract

There are established notions about the importance of distributed leadership in school leadership practice. Theory and research on this currently popular leadership model mostly emanate from western contexts, notably Australia, UK and the USA. It has been portrayed as an emergent model, with professionals choosing to initiate leadership in schools and classrooms. It is closely linked to teacher leadership, because distribution invariably involves teachers.

This thesis focuses on leadership practice in selected secondary schools in Nigeria, from a distributed perspective. It is based on research in Edo state, using a multiple case study design. Nigeria has a centralised education system and schools tend to have a typical hierarchical structure. This raises the question about whether and how distributed leadership can operate in such a hierarchical context. The findings show that distribution occurs in the four case study schools but that it is largely allocative, rather than emergent, with school principals allocating tasks and, to a lesser extent, roles, to teachers and leaders. The case studies indicate that hierarchical distribution of school leadership can be accomplished through such allocative distributed leadership, with distribution occurring to those who occupy both formal and informal leadership roles. The research raises questions about the differences between this mode of distribution and established notions of delegation and explores this distinction.

The thesis examines a globally significant leadership model and applies it to the under-published context of Nigerian secondary schools. The research is likely to be relevant to other centralised systems considering whether and how to adapt their leadership and management practice.

Declaration

I hereby declare that this unpublished thesis is entirely the product of my own research and has not been submitted for an academic degree at another university.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Leadership is context-dependent ((Hallinger, 2017; Hallinger and Mammad, 2017; Hallinger, 2016; Crawford, 2014; Kuada, 2010; Bolden and Kirk, 2009; Oplatka, 2004) and context influences practitioners' notions of leadership. Although it is acknowledged that there are good schools with good leaders, what constitutes good leadership varies from context to context (Spillane et al. 2004). Research also shows that successful schools are linked to the leadership strategies and actions adopted by principals and staff (Reed and Swaminathan, 2016; Beabout 2014; Sammons et al. 2011; Muijs, 2011; Day et al. 2007).

This study is focused on distributed leadership in Nigerian secondary schools. Ideas about leadership in education have increasingly been borrowed from other parts of the world (Phillips and Ochs, 2003), and this is also true of distributed leadership. Bush (2004a; 2004) observes that the study of educational leadership and management has assumed global significance, supporting the notion of policy borrowing but also highlighting the danger of applying Western models in different contexts, especially in countries from Africa and Asia (Bush, 2014). Scholars also note that the practice of 'policy borrowing' is inevitable because countries tend to learn from one another, as lessons learned in one setting are applied to a different context (Keller, 2015; Levin, 1998). This global trend of school leadership also applies in Nigeria (Scott and Asuga, 2014; Olatokun and Utulu, 2012; Nakpodia, 2012). This thesis focuses on conceptualizing distributed leadership in this context, the debates surrounding it, and its international implications, particularly in Africa. There is a substantial body of literature focusing on school leadership by principals and other staff (e.g. Harris, 2003) but little evidence of such research and literature in Nigeria (Bush (2014, 2016). This provides the warrant for this research on distributed leadership in this West African state.

Distributed Leadership

In the current discourse of educational leadership, distributed leadership features prominently and is often claimed to contribute to sustained school improvement (MacBeath, 2005). Harris (2008) suggests that distributed leadership does not mean that everyone leads but that everyone has the potential to lead under the right circumstances.

Harris (2007:315) also indicates that ‘distributed leadership has captured the imagination of those in educational leadership and is appealing to policymakers, researchers and practitioners alike’. This suggests a shift from heroic leadership, commonly associated with transformational leadership, to leadership distribution that creates opportunities for school improvement and the development of school leaders (Leithwood et al, 2006; Harris, 2000; Muijs and Harris, 2003).

Nigeria school leadership practice seems to differ from that in Western countries. The limited research suggests the need for leadership development for school principals for the effective administration of their schools (Adegbemile, 2011). Nwanga and Omotere (2013:169) support the notion of teams. Their study showed that school leadership included the principal, deputy principals and HODs, who comprise the senior management team. Their findings showed that ‘school managers find it difficult to meet the new managerial expectations that are brought about by the transforming educational environment’, probably because of the lack of leadership distribution (Nwangwa and Omotere, 2013:169). This view is supported by Olujuwon and Perumal (2016), who argue that there is lack of preparation for teachers to undertake leadership positions grounded in leadership distribution. They further argued that there is a lack of leadership distribution and insist that the ‘established criteria for promotion as well as the recognition of the principal as the sole leader influence teacher leadership practices in schools’ (Olujuwon and Perumal, 2016:20), linked to hierarchical influence in leadership associated with authority and power (Olujuwon and Perumal, 2015).

Gronn (2002, 2003) suggests that the hierarchical model of leadership, that perceives the leader as a hero, is becoming unpopular. He recommends leadership that devolves responsibilities to many members of the organisation. This view is supported by Arrowsmith (2007:21) who argues that the 'headteacher's job descriptions ... were among the most diverse and demanding of any senior executive across the business and education spheres'. He adds that this 'role was becoming unsustainable and distinctly unattractive to many senior staff who would, in a quieter age, have aspired to the role (Ibid, 21). The author argues that distributed leader opens ways for the inclusion of staff in leadership because every member feels valued. These views give more weight and support for distributed leadership in schools. This also supports the notion that distributed leadership in schools may be replacing the single or solo leader (Gronn, 2003). The present author's study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on distributed leadership, in the under-researched context of Nigeria.

The Geopolitical and Socio-economic Context

Nigeria is located in West Africa and shares land borders with Chad and Cameroon in the east, Niger to the north, and the Republic of Benin in the west (History of Nigeria, 2013). Nigeria, covering a landmass of about 356,668 square miles, twice the size of California and three times the size of Britain (Falola and Heaton, 2008, Imoni, 2013).

This study is focused on Edo State, which is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. It is located in the South-South geo-political region of Nigeria, with a population of about 3,233,366 (Edo State, 2014a). Its capital is Benin City, and it is bounded to the north by Kogi, Delta State to the South and Ondo State to the West. The state has an abundance of natural resources, such as crude oil, natural gas, limestone and marble (Edo State, 2014b).

The state plays an important part in the Nigerian Federation because of its rich natural resources. Authoritative data on Nigeria's Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

are difficult to ascertain (Hinchliffe, 2002). This is partly because the Federal government's figures are restricted to publications that are scarcely available to the public (Hinchliffe, 2002). However, Nigeria's current GDP growth was speculatively positioned at around 0.26% in 2012 (Okonjo-Iwela, 2012). Nigeria is thought of as an emerging economy (Enweremadu, 2013). There is a projected growth of about 4.91% per annum by 2050 (BBC News, 2014). Okonjo-Iwela also noted that, by September 2008, Nigeria's foreign-exchange reserves stood at \$60 billion. This suggests that Nigeria is making progress economically.

Global Context of Education Reform Initiatives

The need for a critical review of education programmes and practices had been felt globally before Nigeria began to initiate action to do so. Adegboye (2013) commends the influence of international study in a highly traditional setting, such as Nigeria, suggesting that this would boost academic literature in such a developing nation. The international mobilization effort can be traced to the World Conference on Education for All (EFA) which was organized by the United Nations, through its agencies; UNESCO, UNICEF and the World Bank. The conference in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, brought together development partners from developed and developing countries to initiate strategies to help the developing nations achieve 100 percent education for all their citizens by 2015. In 2000, the donor agencies and world leaders met in Dakar, Senegal, to examine the level of progress attained (Ajayi and Adeyemi, 2011). The review showed that the planned targets were not being met by the developing countries. With specific reference to secondary education, it was expected that, through EFA:

- (a) Gender disparity in access to secondary education would be eliminated by 2010.
- (b) The quality of education would be improved.
- (c) Excellence in learning outcomes would be attained.
- (d) All youths will have free access to basic education up to at least age 15 years.
- (e) There would be strategic planning by stakeholders in education and attention

to the quality of education by school leaders.

Although much progress has been made, enrollment in Nigerian secondary schools is far from the 100% expected by 2015. The transition rate in 2003 was only about 60% (FME 2004), and the female share of enrolment has ranged between 43% and 45%.

Reforms in the education sector are also driven by the United Nation's establishment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs for Sub-Saharan Africa, from which Nigeria developed its own home-grown NEEDS (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy), are summarized as:

1. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger.
2. Achievement of free Universal Primary Education (UPE);
3. Reduction of the child mortality rate.
4. Improvement of maternal health
5. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other killer diseases.
6. Promoting gender equality.
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability.
8. Establishing global partnerships for development.

As already indicated, Nigeria developed its own strategy for attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The acronym, NEEDS, was intended to focus on major developmental initiatives for the Nigerian people. The government made education the driving force for the eradication of poverty, economic progress, and improvement of the quality of life for its citizens. Consequently, the government made the achievement of the following seven educational objectives as its top priority (NERDC 2007):

1. Ensuring access to education for all.
2. Promoting gender equality at all levels of education.

3. Improving the quality of education at all levels
4. Use education for skills acquisition and job creation and consequently empower people to improve their quality of life.
5. Periodically review the secondary school curriculum to meet NEEDS expectations and specifications.
6. Promote information and communication technology in society through ICT skills acquisition in education at all levels.
7. Mobilize development partners, donor agencies, private enterprise and communities to fund and support education at all levels.

The next section discusses the policy context for education in Nigeria.

The Nigerian Policy Context for Education

The Nigerian education system has grown appreciably since the nation gained political independence in 1960 and there has been a significant increase in the number of educational institutions at all levels. Enrolments have been increasing from year to year, often resulting in overpopulation, crowded classrooms, and high pupil-teacher ratios.

In the last twenty years, especially during the era of military regimes, it appeared as if Nigeria was merely expanding the education system with little regard for quality, educational processes, and students' learning achievements. In response to the growing concerns and criticisms, the National Policy on Education of 1977 was revised in 1981, then in 1998 and again in 2004. In 2005, another review of the policy was started, and a final draft was ready by early 2007. In 2005, a committee on 'New initiatives for Quality Education' was set up by the Federal Ministry of Education (FME 2005). The committee made 43 major recommendations for improving the education system. This includes the establishment of a new approach to teaching and learning to increase educational opportunities. Teachers were encouraged to participate in school leadership (FME, 2008). But the modalities to achieve these principles were left vague. This suggests that, despite the

recommendation of the committee, leadership practice was left to the prerogative of each school leader, in discussion with staff members and the Ministry of Education. These bodies together form the administrative authority for school management (Ajayi and Adeyemi, 2011). Thus, the National Policy on Education aimed to bring about change, including leadership practice. However, there seems to be a lack of support from the government which apparently has the machinery to establish effective school leadership.

The former Federal Minister of Education, Professor Badalola Borishade (UNESCO 2002, viii) said: ‘Today, ordinary people and governments all over the world have many concerns about education. They boil down to three key issues. The first is access, the second is quality, and the third is cost. I think the tensions between these three indices are the eternal triangle of education’. However, there seems to be a lack of leadership to coordinate action to carry out educational objectives (Eleweke 2002). Unit (2009) and Uwakwe et al (2008) both attribute failure, or the poor implementation of the National Policy of Education, to limited funding in all sectors of educational provision in Nigeria by the government. However, Fabunmi (2005) advocates a participatory model of school leadership, including government and policy makers.

Challenges of the Reform Agenda for Secondary Education in Nigeria

This section focuses on the issues and challenges involved in the secondary education reform programme. The list below is adapted from NERDC (2007), which has served as a consultant for the Federal Ministry of Education.

The challenges inherent in the ongoing reforms in secondary education include the following:

1. Providing free compulsory JSS (as part of UBE Scheme).
2. Restructuring JSS curriculum to reflect UBE objective.
3. Disarticulation of JSS and SSS as separate schools.
4. Review of secondary school textbooks to reflect the changed curriculum.

5. Achieving a teacher-pupil ratio of 1: 35 in JSS classes.
6. Achieving 100% transition from primary to JSS
7. Establishment of School Management Committees for Unity Schools.
8. Merging Federal Inspectorate with UBE Commissions.
9. Encouraging community involvement initiatives for management accountability.

These challenges form the background to the author's study of distributed leadership in Nigerian secondary schools.

Reform Strategy

The strategy for reform was initiated by the Federal Ministry of Education (FME). The reform process includes the establishment of a National Education Support Strategy for Nigeria. This Strategy focused on school improvement from 2006 to 2015. To address this agenda, the Federal government of Nigeria approved agencies and parastatals to focus on education development and improvement by the year 2020 and to develop a new vision for schools. The responsibilities of the agencies included initiating a process of reform to equip teachers and school leaders with adequate knowledge appropriate for school leadership. The Federal Ministry of Education also set up a body with responsibility for teacher quality, standards and accountability (FME, 2008). The government also recognised that reforms cannot be achieved without highly qualified, competent and motivated school leaders. Thus, a National Institute for the training of teachers, and for professional development, was introduced (FME, 2008).

Secondary Education in Nigeria

This section focuses specifically on the reform process in Nigeria in respect of secondary education, the setting for this study. Many of the issues in the reform agenda have been at times confusing and controversial, arising from government bureaucracy and their implementation policies (Bolaji et al., 2015). Questions about whether the reforms have been well planned and publicized have been raised by

some critics (e.g. Okoroma, 2006). There is also debate about whether some of the reforms are capable of bringing about the desired improvements, or whether they are cosmetic changes that may become counter-productive or unsustainable (Labo-Popoola et al., 2009; Omokhodion, 2008).

The National Policy on Education in 1977 ushered in the 6-3-3-4 system of education. The new system split secondary education into a junior secondary school (JSS) three-year course followed by a senior secondary school (SSS) course of three years. The 6-3-3-4 system of education represents six years spent in primary school, three years in junior secondary school, three years in senior secondary and four years of tertiary education. Before 1977, the duration of secondary education was five years. Those graduates who passed well and had the means and the opportunity for sixth form or higher school courses, went into the very few elite secondary schools which offered the courses. The NPE led to the rapid establishment of many secondary schools with funding shared between Federal, State and local governments. Education was intended to be free and compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 15 years. This is a major reform initiative for secondary education in Nigeria.

The broad goals of secondary-education, according to the National Policy on Education (NPE) (FRN 2004) are to prepare individuals for:

- a. useful living within the society; and
- b. higher education

Eight specific objectives were identified:

1. Providing a higher level of education for all primary school leavers
2. Offering diversified curricula to cater for all
3. Providing sub-professional manpower in science, technology, and commerce;
4. Developing and promoting Nigeria languages, art and culture,
5. Inspiring desire for self-improvement and achievement
6. Fostering national unity in our diversity.

7. Raising citizens who can think and respect the views of others.
8. Providing technical knowledge and vocational skills.

The purpose of the reform agenda is to raise the level of consciousness and dedication among all stakeholders towards the realization of national secondary education aspirations. The reforms in Nigerian education are intended to address the challenges in Nigerian secondary schools (Aluede, 2006). However, critics believe that Nigeria has generally fallen short of these expectations (Unit 2009, Nduka 2006, Obamwonyi and Aibieyi 2014; Nwangwu 2014).

Structure of the Nigerian Education System

The responsibility for educational institutions is shared among Federal, State, local government, communities and private organizations (Moja, 2000). The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) described the broad goals of Secondary education as the preparation of the individual for: -

- a. National development through education and
- b. Acquisition of skills and competence for self-development

The purpose of NPE 'is to make individuals economically and socially capable' (Uwaifo and Uddin, 2009: 82). This view is supported by Akhuemonkhan et al (2014, 2014a), who argue for the harmonisation of policy objectives with their implementation.

The senior secondary school (SSS) phase is outside the 'Universal Basic Education' (UBE) level which, by the Education Law (FRN 2004), is free, universal and compulsory. The SSS is neither free nor compulsory by law. Leadership at this level can come from inside or outside the school but is strongly influenced by the hierarchical structure (Arikewuyo, 2009). This is because there are many stakeholders interested in how well senior secondary schools are managed. Several bodies, agencies, and individuals have a vital role to play in achieving the goals and objectives of these schools.

Participants in the organisation of Nigerian senior secondary schools include the following:

- The Federal Ministry of Education and its parastatals such as the National Council on Education,
- the Federal Inspectorate of Education, and the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC).
- State Ministries of Education and their boards.
- School Principals and assistant leaders, such as the vice-principals, heads of departments, bursars, and school prefects.
- Public Examination Bodies, including the West African Examination Council (WAEC), the Nigerian Examinations Council (NECO), and
- the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) now University Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME).

These bodies play linked roles in the organization and administration of senior secondary schools in Nigeria. As already indicated, much of the leadership is external to the school. The pressure exerted on internal school leaders by external leaders can be significant. This arises from both reward and coercive power, for example by putting ‘more emphasis on supervision or inspection at all levels’ (Moja, 2000:21), as provided by the law (FRN, 2004). The external bodies control and determine the allocation of staff, funds and other material resources to the schools. Some also have disciplinary control over staff, including internal school leaders, as well as the power to inspect, supervise school activities, and determine staff promotions.

The Federal Ministry of Education

The Federal Minister of Education is the Chief Executive of the Ministry, who reports directly to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The leadership provided by the Minister on all education matters, including organization and administration of senior secondary schools, deals mainly with educational policy

formulation and implementation for the whole country (FRN, 2004). Anho (2013) argues that it is the Federal Government's responsibility to give leadership and direction to the educational sector. It is the Federal Ministry of Education, through its bureaus, such as the National Council on Education (NCE), and the Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE), which determines the structure of senior secondary school education.

State Ministry of Education

The Constitution conferred on the Federal Government the power to make laws on education, including secondary education, and also gave it the power to establish educational institutions. State governments were similarly given powers to make laws and build secondary schools within their territories. However, the state ministry of education provides the modalities for the educational administration of state schools. These include the formation of policies and their implementation (Edo State, 2014c). The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria indicates that both Federal and state governments can legislate in respect of schools (FGN,1999). Some of the schools established by the Federal government are run by the state Ministry of Education. The essential difference between the state role and the Federal role is that, while the Federal government is the overall body for policy formulation, the state acts to disseminate and implement government policies. State governments also bring education nearer to the people (Imam, 2012). This suggests a form of grassroots participation in schools. The state also fosters community participation through the establishment of parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and similar bodies.

The school principal

The principal provides executive leadership for the school. S/he has significant responsibilities, but insufficient power, authority and resources to lead effectively. Akinsola (2012:42) comments that 'judging from the functions of the secondary school principals, no single administrator can single-handedly supervise all staff [and] students'. Consequently, the principal needs assistant leaders to manage

effectively. Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008) explain that school principals experience difficulty in carrying out their leadership responsibilities and in exercising their duties. S/he needs to delegate some of their authority and responsibility but remains the central visible leader of the school (Enueme and Egwunyenga, 2008). In senior secondary schools, principals have vice-principals, heads of departments and school prefects to assist them in performing specific functions in the school.

Problems and challenges for school leaders

According to Ayo and Adebisi (2008), the Nigerian educational system was greatly influenced by developed countries. Studies on comparative education by Aladekomo (2004) have shown a connection between education policies in Europe and the policies in Nigeria. Afe (1994) blamed lapses in educational management on the long-standing military despotic rule in Nigeria, which saw the closure of schools for several months. Similarly, Okoroma (2006) attributed the failure of education policy in Nigeria to 'lack of will' by politicians.

Principals often have difficulties in sharing leadership functions with their colleagues as a result of the politicians performing short-lived roles, leading to policy shifts. Conflicts of interest often occur (Obioma 2008). As noted by Bush and Glover (2013), the bureaucratic model of leadership is common in Africa, including Nigeria. This leadership style is often associated with the traditional leadership model where teachers have no real leadership role to play (Moore and Suleiman, 1997). In order to avoid conflict, Fasasi and Oyeniran, (2014), claim that 'quality assurance is a function of all stakeholders within the school system'. One way to achieve this is for principals to put in place approaches and mechanisms for coordination of teachers and other members of the school for effective leadership collaboration, for example through delegation (Fasasi and Oyeniran, 2014).

Nwagwu (2011:241) identified 'devolution of responsibility in the management of education in Nigeria' as not properly articulated to ensure effective performance and

reduction of inefficiency. Many school leaders are not sure of the limits of their authority and responsibility. Adegbemile (2011:18) advocates ‘instructional leadership skills’ in order to develop basic leadership expertise by principals. Leadership also requires the free flow of information among the participating leaders. However, in Nigeria, data may not be available and accessible, mainly because the application of ICT is still in its infancy in the schools, especially those located in rural areas (Olayemi and Omotayo 2012). This led Etudor-Eyo et al. (2011) to advocate that both students and teachers should be trained in the use of ICT.

There is a significant shortage of staff, funds and facilities in Nigeria’s senior secondary schools (Okoroma, 2006a). Nwagwu (2008) adds that there are ‘shortages of everything except students’. Co-ordination and effective performance of inter-dependent leadership roles are difficult in such a work environment, where important decisions have to be made on a regular and continuing basis (Adegbesan, 2013).

A study by Bush and Glover (2016), for UNESCO, revealed a number of problematic practices in the Nigerian school system, ranging from poor preparation for school principals to the appointment of untrained principals. Arikewuyo and Olalekan (2009), and Ibukun et al., (2011), advocate the training of those appointed to school leadership positions to increase the number of competent principals.

Aims and Research Questions

This research aims to establish the extent and nature of distributed leadership in selected Nigerian secondary schools. It seeks to explore how leadership is practiced and whether and how it links to providing better education delivery in schools. The researcher also intends to investigate whether global views on distributed leadership apply to Edo State, Nigeria with particular reference to its classification and scope, and whether and how distributed leadership operates in Nigeria. The justification for this emanates from studies carried out on school leadership which seems to

suggest a lack of collaborative leadership practices among school heads in Nigeria (Imoni, 2013; Obadara, 2013; Ollie, 2013). The following research questions arise from the aims:

1. What is the nature of school leadership in Nigerian secondary schools?

This research question seeks to explore the features of leadership as practiced and perceived by school leaders and teachers in [selected secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria](#). The professional competence of school leadership comes into focus as a factor influencing student outcomes. Principals and other leaders are expected to set the direction and goals of the school while trying to understand and address problems and to provide professional guidance to teachers. School leaders manage and influence the affairs of the school and provide structures and processes through which school goals might be achieved (Bush and Glover, 2003; Leithwood et al., 2004). The study also intends to assess both formal and informal leadership. While formal roles are specified for all schools, other individuals and groups may exercise leadership and this possibility is explored in this study. Crow and Møller (2017) maintain that the narratives of individual school leaders are critical to understanding the nature of school leadership. These considerations provide the background to understanding and addressing this question.

2. How is leadership enacted in Nigerian secondary schools?

Leadership enactment in Nigerian secondary schools is conditioned by the limited autonomy available to principals. Previous research suggests that school autonomy is linked to teachers' organizational commitment and that it enlarges the leadership role of principals (Dou et al. 2016; Evans, 2002). This suggests that school principals require significant influence to lead schools effectively and to impact on student outcomes (Leithwood et al. 2008, Hallinger et al. 1996).

The literature suggests that the behaviour of principals is important for the achievement of organisational goals (Ekundayo, 2010; Oyegoke, 2012). Leadership is not just a function of the principal (Lumby, 2009), but may be practised by

individuals and groups, working in collaboration with the principal and other senior staff. This suggests that there may be many ways in which leadership is enacted (Akomolafe, 2012). For example, Arikewuyo (2007) suggests that secondary school leadership in Nigeria is enacted through curriculum development, instructional improvement, creating conditions for the realisation of human potential, and supervising instructional activities within the schools.

One way to understand leadership enactment is through what Scibner and Crow (2012) describe as professional identity. This includes what sense leaders make of their roles. In other words, ‘what influences a leader’s behaviours and what drives a leader’s willingness and ability to take on and enact creative and effective leadership in a high-stakes, dynamic knowledge society’ (Scribner and Crow, 2012: 245). There is a growing concern that leadership need not be located only in one person but in a number of people (Day et al, 2000b; MacBeath 1998). This suggests that there is potential for improvement if school leaders, including principals and teachers, utilise the expertise that each individual has to improve and develop leadership capacity.

3. *What is the balance between solo and shared leadership in schools?*

To address this research question, the relationships between the various leaders within the school will be examined, together with consideration of the roles of different leaders. As Lumby (2017: 7) argues, ‘a characteristic claim of distributed leadership is that it diminishes the power of the solo leader, enabling others also to take a leadership role’. Evidence from western literature (for example Harris, 2013) suggests that there are multiple sources of leadership influence. There is a shift of focus from individual or solo leadership to an approach which involves a number of individuals in leadership activity (Crawford, 2012). Lumby (2003), for example, suggests the emergence of leadership practice involving shared commitment between the principal, the deputy and heads of departments in schools. However, some authors argue for an accommodation between solo and shared leadership since it provides a variety of practice for different educational situations. Gronn (2003)

calls this 'hybrid leadership'. This provides the conceptual background for exploration of these issues in Edo State.

4. How, and in what ways, is leadership distributed in the case study schools?

The success of school organizations cannot be attributed solely to the leadership style of the principal who is perceived as the chief administrator of the school (Gunter et al. 2013). The extent to which leadership is distributed could be inferred from the manner of collaboration in terms of shared practices (Hallinger and Heck, 2010). Such practices build leadership capacity within the school that may underpin school improvement and enhanced learner outcomes. It involves a process of influencing others to take initiatives (Gronn, 2000, Gunter et al. 2013, Harris, 2013).

It is important to examine if principals and their colleagues share a commitment to distributed approaches and, if so, in what ways they execute this form of leadership. For example, the literature suggests a number of ways in which leadership can be distributed in terms of shared leadership practice, in teams working together, and in collaborative decision making, as well as participation in devising and implementing the school curriculum (Bush and Glover 2012, Day et al. 2009, Lumby, 2013). Lumby (2013) notes that distributed leadership is popular because it is more inclusive than other models of leadership. This view is supported by Harris and Muijs (2002:2) who say that distributed leadership helps 'teachers to develop expertise by working collaboratively'. Crawford (2012) argues for a move beyond the one-dimensional type of distributed leadership to include a form of hybrid leadership, a notion echoed by Townsend (2015; 2013). This research question seeks to establish which modes of distribution, if any, apply in the case study schools in Edo State. However, there are very few studies which address distributed leadership in Nigeria and this research appears to be the first to focus directly on this theme. Bush and Glover's (2016) systematic review of the literature on West Africa shows that academic literature is mainly focused on managerial leadership, and the role of the hierarchy, with little attention to shared or distributed approaches.

Positionality

The author of this research is a Catholic priest. His role as a priest includes providing spiritual and pastoral care to students and staff of secondary schools, which have some Catholic students. During this period, he became acquainted with some of the principals and teachers, some of whom are Catholics. The participants' previous knowledge of the researcher may have affected responses even though the case study schools are government schools, which have no obligation to the researcher, and the author stressed that his research was unconnected to his pastoral role.

Overview

This chapter provides the contextual background to this study of secondary school leadership in **selected secondary schools in Nigeria's Edo State**. School leadership in Nigeria has been greatly influenced by the hierarchical model, which arises from colonial and military influences. This background led to a centralised system of school governance and leadership, but principals and teachers also retain significant influence. Stakeholders also include government bodies, senior management, and members of the educational community, represented through the PTA (PTA) and/or the school based management committee (SBMC). The principal is the administrative head of the school, with responsibility for the smooth implementation of government policies. This suggests a managerial approach to school administration, but the researcher intends to establish if there is evidence of distributed leadership in the case study schools. The aims and research questions are focused on establishing the nature of leadership and management in **selected secondary schools** in Edo State, and the extent to which this may be shared or distributed.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

There is a common understanding about the impact of leadership on school outcomes. Bush, Bell and Middlewood (2012: 6) assert that ‘interest in educational leadership and management has grown during the past few years and there is widespread recognition that leadership is secondly only to classroom practice in terms of impact on school and student outcomes’. However, school leadership is complex, ‘posing significant challenges that are potentially overwhelming for the individual school leader’ (Barnett and McCormick, 2012:653). This suggests that the type of leadership required for effective schools needs to be creative, flexible and without restricting structures and boundaries (Harris, 2008). Barnett and McCormick (2012: 654) add that stakeholders in school leadership are ‘shifting from leader centred to team centred leadership, sharing leadership responsibilities and building leadership capabilities of executive staff.

Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) stress the quality of school leadership which, in turn, impacts on quality education. The nature of student outcomes and performance is underpinned by good leadership (Hallinger and Heck, 1996; Marks and Printy, 2003). This is why Hallinger, Bickman and Davis (1996) add that there is a continual emphasis on the effectiveness of school principals. Bush (2013:127) adds that ‘in many countries, these leaders are judged on student outcomes as measured by public examination and test results’.

Constituents of leadership

To understand the nature of leadership, it is important to explore leadership models and what constitutes leadership. Macbeath and Townsend (2011: 3) explain that ‘the qualities of leadership have proved harder to pin down than the less elusive functions of management, but have, nevertheless, provided a rich and growing seam of literature’. Yukl (2006:8) defines leadership as ‘the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives’.

Bush (2008:276) adds that 'leadership may be seen as having three main characteristics:

- Leadership as influence.
- Leadership and values.
- Leadership and vision'.

The focus on 'leadership as influence' can be articulated from many perspectives. For example, Spillane (2006: 11-12) notes that:

Leadership is 'stretched over' people. We define leadership as 'activities tied to the core work of the organization that are designed by organizational members . . . or that are understood by organizational members as intended to influence their motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices'.

Similarly, linking the notion of leadership influence to shared leadership, Pearce and Conger (2003) argue that leadership is 'dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organizational goals or both. This influence process often involves peer, or lateral, influence and at other times involves upward or downward hierarchical influence'.

Yukl (2002: 3) argues that 'most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that it involves a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person [or group] over other people [or groups] to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organisation'. Yukl (2002) implies that leadership can be exercised by individuals or groups. This notion of leadership influence is also implied by Dimmock (1999) who argues that leadership is about 'influencing others' actions in achieving desirable ends. Leaders are people who shape the goals, motivations, and actions of others. It also involves getting people to work together to make things happen (Ejimabo, 2013). According to Crawford (2014), the role of the leader includes working together in the particular context they find themselves

because ‘school leadership takes place in a myriad of contexts around the globe’ (Crawford, 2014:7).

Leithwood and Reihl (2005) argue that leadership, apart from influencing followers, also requires setting direction while developing people within the organisation. School principals continue to be major sources of influence (Smith and Amushigamo, 2016). Spillane (2006:11-12) claims that leadership:

‘refers to activities tied to the core work of the organization that are designed by organizational members to influence the motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices of other organizational members or that are understood by organizational members as intended to influence their motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices’.

Despite its importance, it is difficult to define leadership (Leithwood and Riehl, 2005, Oduro 2004). Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) note that the ways in which leadership influence is exercised has either a direct or indirect impact on people. Various theories on leadership and management of education have been proposed by Bush (2011), and these will inform the framework for this study.

Distributed Leadership: Concepts and Evidence

Defining distributed leadership (DL)

The purpose of this section is to review the literature on distributed leadership and related concepts. Bennett et al. (2003: 13) argue that defining distributed leadership is complex. They argue that it is best ‘to consider distributed leadership as a way of thinking about leadership, rather than as another technique or practice’. Of the several models of leadership advanced by Bush (2011), distributed leadership is linked to the collegial model.

Woods et al. (2004), suggest that the collegial model is a characteristic of distributed leadership. They argue that distributed leadership facilitates teaching and learning

as well as enhancing mutual respect for members of school organization. Distributed leadership is also linked to an open culture, as noted by Jones et al 2011: 22-23):

‘It is an open culture within and across an institution. It is an approach in which reflective practice is an integral part, enabling action to be critiqued, challenged and developed through cycles of planning, action, reflection and assessment and re-planning. It happens most effectively when people at all levels engage in action, accepting leadership in their particular areas of expertise’.

Bolden et al. (2008: 360) add that leadership is seen as potentially dispersed, and as ‘a contextually embedded process emerging from the dynamic relationship between various actors’.

Literature is replete with discussion of the origins of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership has ‘become the normatively preferred leadership model in the twenty-first century’ (Bush, 2011, 88), allowing other leaders and teachers to interact and engage with school management, giving openness to the boundaries of leadership and the use of a variety of expertise – not just the principal’s.

Distributed leadership can be traced to the work of authors such as Bush and Glover (2012), Gronn (2000, 2002a), Harris, 2009 and Spillane, 2006. Gronn (2002a) notes that the concept was first used in the field of psychology in the 1950s. Heikka et al. (2012) argue that research on distributed leadership emerged in the 1990s. However, these authors established that the era of attributing heroic leadership to the principal has been substituted by new collegial forms of leadership. Heikka et al (ibid) also note the ambiguity in the concept of distributed leadership. They contend that ‘the conceptual confusion or ambiguity in defining distributed leadership has also given rise to diverse nomenclature being used in literature’ (Ibid: 31). This suggests why Leithwood et al., (2009) assert that the definition of distributed leadership is varied. According to Harris (2004), the definition ranges from normative to descriptive

which is why context plays a significant factor in its understanding and interpretation (Gosling et al., 2009; Spillane and Diamond, 2007a).

Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) refer to two misconceptions about what constitutes distributed leadership concepts and practice. First, equating distributed leadership with the notion that everyone leads, and second, by assuming that there must be a particular distributed leadership model to follow. Distributed leadership essentially means that those best equipped or skilled or positioned to lead should do so, in order to fulfil a particular goal or organizational requirement. Distributed leadership does not imply that everyone is a leader or that everyone leads.

While Timperley (2005:2) maintains that ‘the term means different things to different people’, Harris (2009) contends that, while distributed leadership is a welcome idea, it does not provide a blueprint for leadership but rather provides a lens through which leadership could be viewed. In other words, distributed leadership does not imply that everyone could be a leader, but that leadership occurs at different levels in an organization. Harris (2013) notes that distributed leadership ‘...can involve both formal and informal leadership; it is not an ‘either/or’ way of doing things (Harris, 2013:548). However, ‘it is not the same as dividing task responsibilities among individuals who perform defined and separate organizational roles and practices (Timperley,2005:2), but rather comprises a dynamic interaction between leaders and followers.

Spillane (2006) discusses distributed leadership as a practice. He observed that school leadership in the 1990s witnessed a shift from the self-styled leadership of schools to a more decentralized form of leadership. Self-styled leadership is known as ‘heroic leadership’ (Harris, 2005, 2007; Harris and Spillane, 2008; Spillane, 2006).

For Harris and Spillane (2008: 33), distributed leadership ‘is a way of getting under the skin of leadership practice, of seeing leadership practice differently and

illuminating the possibilities for organizational transformation'. Similarly, Bennett et al (2003:3) say that 'distributed leadership is not something 'done' by an individual 'to' others, or a set of individual actions through which people contribute to a group or organisation... [it] is a group activity that works through and within relationships, rather than individual action'. This suggests that, although distributed leadership is not a solution to leadership practice at the organizational level, it does offer support for those who seek genuine transformation. Spillane (2006) suggests using distributed leadership as an analytical lens for exploring leadership practice, thereby giving room for more empirical research. Despite the appeal of distributed leadership in leadership discourse, 'a distributed perspective provides part of the picture of practice but by no means the entirety of it' (Gronn, 2009a: 383).

Conceptualising distributed leadership

Distributed leadership is receiving wide attention from scholars (e.g. Bush, 2011; Gronn, 2000; Harris, 2004; Spillane, 2006) while, at the turn of the century, Gronn (2000:333) asserted that distributed leadership is 'an idea whose time has come'. Crawford (2012: 617) argues that 'the lure of leadership as a key dynamic could be one of the reasons that distributed leadership has acquired such a strong hold on school leaders, much as solo leadership did in the 1990s. It may also reflect the changing reality of schooling, with at least some realization that, if an organization is to be dynamic, then it needs leadership flowing throughout it'.

Harris (2004: 13) seems to favour distributed leadership theory more than other related concepts. She sees it as 'engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal role or position (2004:13), but she adds that more empirical evidence would be needed to substantiate this position. The concept of distributed leadership may also be linked to the notion of shared, participative or collaborative leadership. Harris (2013: 546) argues that, in the discussion of the concept, the issue of 'power, authority and equality loom over distributed' leadership. Leithwood et al. (2004: 59) argue that 'the concept of distributed leadership overlaps substantially with shared collaborative and

participative leadership concepts'. Crawford (2014: 15) adds that 'leadership is concerned with ... how... leaders relate to the organizational structure'.

The 'heroic leadership' concept was recently 'supplemented' by the concept of 'distributed leadership' (Bush and Glover, 2012; Spillane, 2008). However, a commonly accepted feature of distributed leadership is that leadership influences are exercised within the school to work positively towards agreed goals. Spillane (2006: 3, 7) refers to it as 'leadership plus'. He states that 'a distributed perspective on leadership involves two aspects-the leader plus and the practice aspects'. Spillane's (2006:3) notion also includes a leadership dynamic in which a 'distributed view of leadership shifts the focus from the school principals and other formal and informal leaders to the web of leaders, followers, and their situations that gives form to leadership practice'. As Harris and Lambert (2003: 313) note, this field of study is particularly relevant to the motivation, ability, and practice of teachers, because 'there are some important connections and overlaps between distributed leadership and teacher leadership'.

Leithwood et al. (2006) note that concepts such as shared, collaborative, democratic and participative leadership appear to be similar, but it should not be taken to mean that they are the same form of leadership. Similarly, Bolden et al (2011:256) argue that there is a 'tendency to conflate similar perspectives, leading to the possibility that distributed leadership may become a label for all attempts to share or devolve leadership to others'. Muijs, West and Ainscow (2010) are in favour of leadership networking, a form of distributed leadership that takes account of all shades of social relationships in a collaborative style within the school. Harris (2013: 545) enlists distributed leadership theory as a 'powerful empirical lens on a familiar theme'. Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2001:25) note that 'the execution of leadership tasks is often distributed among multiple leaders'.

Gronn (2002) drew a number of theories from an analysis of several studies. He proposed a reframing of leadership in such a way that it 'is more appropriately

understood as a fluid and emergent, rather than as a fixed phenomenon' (Gronn, 2000:324). Arrowsmith (2007: 22) adds that 'distributed leadership (DL) is an emerging form of power distribution in schools which extends authority and influence to groups or individuals in a way which is at least partly contrary to hierarchical arrangements'. Bolden (2011), and Bennett et al (2003), contend that distributed leadership is an emergent property in which an individual or group or a network of individuals exercise their expertise for the benefit of the organization. Timperley (2005: 3) believes that 'leadership in schools is almost inevitably distributed, and the issues to be considered are how the leadership activities are distributed and the ways in which this distribution is differentially effective'.

Distributed leadership and vision

Distributed leadership is also perceived to be based on a common vision (Harris, 2003b). Vision has been described as an essential component of leadership (Bush 2008, Leithwood et al. (2009). Visionary leadership assumes the collective responsibility of school leaders in articulating the direction of the school. Harris (2003) suggests that involving staff at the outset assists in developing a common vision and thus enhancing a whole-school approach to implementation. Sergiovanni (1990) contends that a shared vision is capable of creating a bond amongst school leadership and eliciting shared commitment within a group, to achieve school goals and values.

Timperley (2005: 23) suggests the ways that vision can be accomplished through a staff meeting. 'When the meeting activities were structured in this way for the teachers, blaming the problems, and looking for solutions outside of the classroom, disappeared. The vision-in-action, as evidenced in the meetings, became far more powerful than any written statements of desirability'. She adds that school vision is communicated to staff members at meetings. 'By situating leadership activities in an interactive web of actors and artefacts, rather than focusing on the attributes of a particular leader, a rich picture of the causal connections between leadership

activities and the visions teachers held for students and their responsibilities is conveyed (Timperley, 2005:15).

Several studies link visionary leadership to leadership distribution. For example, Bush (2007), Day et al. (2000), and Leithwood (1992), believe that the idea of communicating a clear purpose and a sense of direction to the school community is vital in leadership distribution. Leithwood et al (2006) suggest that school leadership has a greater influence on schools and students when it is widely distributed. Berson, Waldman, and Pearce (2015) describe this as ‘shared vision’. ‘Shared vision is most likely to be achieved when shared leadership processes are occurring, involving input into vision formation on the part of members of a collective, beyond the formal or hierarchical leader...lack of shared vision, might be negatively predictive of the realization of organizational learning through absorptive capacity’ (Berson, Waldman, and Pearce, 2015: 182-184).

According to Noman et al (2016), communication of vision varies, and depends on school context. This implies that ‘contexts are unique to schools and are thus highly variable between schools, even within the same geographic location’ (ibid: 2). They explain that some principals work in a more pressured environment, making them adopt an approach appropriate for their school settings. Murphy and Torre (2015) add that, in creating school vision, goals must be established.

Distributed Leadership and Related Concepts

Bolden (2011) identified concepts comparable to distributed leadership and analyzed them within the framework of organizational goals. ‘Consideration was given to the similarities and differences between distributed leadership and related concepts, including ‘shared’, ‘collective’, ‘collaborative’, ‘emergent’, ‘co-’ and ‘democratic’ leadership’ (Bolden, 2011: 251). The many ways of understanding distributed leadership and related ideas led Hartley (2007: 202) to describe this as ‘conceptual elasticity’. Bolden maintains that, despite the related concepts, there

remain significant differences in how the various concepts are utilized in school leadership.

Distributed leadership and shared leadership

Distributed leadership is one example of shared leadership. Crawford (2012: 611) explained the shift from a focus on management to leadership, which subsequently witnessed 'a clear move from solo leadership to various forms of shared leadership'. Leithwood and Mascall (2008: 530) explain the notion of shared leadership in terms of functions and practices of 'collective leadership'. Barth (2001: 445) states that:

'If there ever was a time when the principal could ride in alone on a white horse, like John Wayne or Joan of Arc, and save a troubled school, those days are certainly over. I don't know of any administrator who doesn't need help in fulfilling his or her impossible job description'

Heikka et al. (2012:31) note that the 'terms distributed leadership, shared, team, are frequently used interchangeably and uncritically'. Distributed leadership may be defined as a process where the leader involves designated individuals who, by their knowledge and experience, are experts in certain areas of administration and together arrive at equitable decisions in keeping with the goals of the organization. Distributed leadership is referred to as 'shared' (Mintzberg, 2006). Distributed leadership challenges traditional leadership which assumes that leadership should reside in a single individual. The concept of distributed leadership recognises that the pressure and stress that people in leadership positions face are enormous and therefore it is unlikely that one single person can provide the necessary leadership, knowledge and skills, talent and abilities on all issues. This reinforces the need for sharing mutual responsibilities that create a distribution of leadership (Lumby, 2003). Spillane (2006: 102) suggests that 'the appeal of distributed leadership lies in the ease with which it can become all things to all people'.

Solo and shared leadership

Leithwood et al (2009a), and Burke et al (2006), claim that studies of distributed leadership provide evidence of applying expertise where it exists while enhancing and promoting student outcomes. They believe that it is unlikely that a single individual can lead, given the complexity of modern organisations. This links to the notion that an individual cannot possibly possess all the knowledge and skills required for effective leadership. It therefore suggests the need for professionals to integrate the expertise of others to fulfil leadership roles (Barnett and Weidenfeller, 2016; Pearce, Manz, and Sims, 2009; Carson et al., 2007; Pearce and Manz, 2005; Day, Gronn, & Salas, 2004).

As Gronn (2003), and Muijs and Harris (2003), indicate, the concept of leadership is understood mostly as an individual role and linked with organizations. However, recent studies support the shift away from traditional, hierarchical models of school leadership to those that support the practice of distributed leadership (Crawford, 2012; Elmore, 2000; Spillane and Diamond, 2007).

The idea of solo heroic leadership is becoming increasingly obsolete, according to Crawford (2012) and Timperley (2005). Effective leaders embrace a collaborative culture and delegate both responsibility and authority (Bennett et al., 2003; Copland, 2003). They realize that they must develop the leadership of others by giving them opportunities to learn and grow through the process of leading. Allowing others to be empowered requires the leader to have a willingness to relinquish their own power. The job of administrative leaders is primarily enhancing the skills and knowledge of people in the organization (Elmore, 2002). Elmore adds that:

in a knowledge-intensive enterprise like teaching and learning, there is no way to perform these complex tasks without widely distributing the responsibility for leadership among roles in the organization. Distributed leadership becomes the glue of a common task or goal, improvement of

instruction, and a common frame of values for how to approach that task (Ibid: 2).

Holm and Fairhurst (2017) examine the relationship between shared leadership and hierarchy, suggesting the possibility of shared practice through the hierarchy. However, they add that ‘scholars of shared leadership have implied, but never fully fleshed out, the emergent character of shared leadership’ (Ibid: 2017: 4). Akbari, Kashani, and Chaijani (2016) contend that shared leadership has a direct and indirect effect on members of a group and can positively increase team performance (Day et al, 2004). Alvesson (2017) also supports the notion of shared and collective practice between formal and informal school leaders.

Some authors link shared leadership to power and authority in an organization (e.g. Gronn, 2002, Spillane et al, 2007; Fitzgerald and Gunter, 2006; Gronn, 2010a). Holm and Fairhurst (2017) argue that attributes of shared leadership practice such as participative decision making, leadership role-sharing are evident in hierarchical and shared leadership. Their study suggests that principal releases control or authority while providing support and at the same time, giving teachers and staff shared responsibilities and ownership. It indicates also how principal move beyond shared authority or power and focuses on shared responsibility and decision making to enhance student learning.

Ross, Lutfi and Hope, (2016:166) argue that ‘there is a need for principals to empower teachers and involve them in decision making’. They add that ‘principals who engage in DL allow teachers to lead teams and make decisions, providing them with valuable leadership experiences, which prepare them for future formal leadership (Ibid: 166). They assert that distributed leadership could be a significant influence in enhancing principal and teacher rapport, and enhancing school organizational commitment, because it enables teachers to participate in decision making (Ross, Lutfi and Hope, 2016).

Despite the attraction of shared leadership, it is believed that, in practice, power and control are dominated by principals (Gunter, 2013; Harris, 2013; Lumby, 2013, 2017; Hatcher, 2005). For example, Harris (2013: 546) asserts that ‘inevitably, issues of power, authority and inequality loom over distributed leadership as they do in any other form of leadership and its associated practice’. This is because the responsibility of providing shared and distributed leadership remains the prerogative of the principal. Gunter (2013: 558) asserts that:

A focus on positions enables the purposes of the work to be opened up to scrutiny where, for example, functionalism is about describing the situation as a means of eradicating the dysfunction, and where the need to bring about a change can be highly normative, in comparison to socially critical purposes which seek to alter the power relations that have an interest in focusing on those dysfunctions.

This may suggest why Gronn (2009a) argues that it is difficult to categorize leadership by attributing concepts such as ‘shared’ or ‘distributed’ leadership.

Team leadership

Day et al (2004) suggest that there is an increasingly common expectation for employees to be able to work effectively in teams, especially where there is often no formally appointed leader. This notion leads to exploring the nature of team leadership in this research. Bush and Glover (2012) claim that effective teams enhance leadership density in that there is a greater participation in leadership rather than relying on a single individual. Day et al. (2004) argue that team work is one manifestation of shared leadership.

Drawing on Gibb (1954), Akbari, Kashani, and Chaijani (2016) assert that leadership in the team can be exercised in two ways; namely through a centralized and distributed process. They explained that the centralized leadership process occurs when leadership is allocated to one person, while the distributed leadership

method occurs ‘when two or more people share the roles, responsibilities, and functions of leadership’ (Akbari, Kashani, and Chaijani (2016: 545).

Day et al (2004) argue that shared leadership facilitates and intensifies team performance and add that team work is one manifestation of shared leadership. Karriker et al. (2017) note that it is essential to understand team characteristics in order to understand how the team operates. Their study suggests that shared leadership can aid pedagogy because it enables ‘designing the team-based components of their syllabi’ (Karriker et al, 2017: 513). This view is supported by many authors (e.g. Lai and Cheung, 2015; Marks and Printy, 2003). Day, Gronn and Salas (2004) add that team members engage in shared leadership practice and, in the process, leadership emerges from the team itself. It moves the focus away from the principal to other members of the school.

Barnett and McCormick (2012) point to the functional approach of leadership in which team members help to bring about a shared purpose. Drawing on Burke et al’s (2003) work, Barnett and McCormick (2012) highlight four important processes that enable task performance in a team: ‘cognitive (for example, shared mental models), motivational; (for example, cohesion and collective efficacy); affective (for example, team climate); and coordinative (for example, backup and performance monitoring) processes’ (Barnett and McCormick, 2012: 655). This suggests that the nature of team leadership depends largely on context as schools differ in many ways, including size. The capacity for team leadership may depend on the ability of principals and other school leaders to share power and resources. Team leadership appears to be a critical determinant of team performance. Day et al (2004) suggest that team dynamics can be articulated from two perspectives. Team can be seen as an influence, a capacity to motivate others; and as attributes that members bring about desired goals at different stages of task performance. Salas et al (2005: 562) define team leadership as ‘two or more individuals with specified roles interacting, adaptively, interdependently and dynamically toward a common valued goal’.

Barnett and McCormick (2012) explain that shared team practice encourages the use of democratic principles in school leadership but warn that this might be seen as a normative approach to the notion of team leadership. Despite this criticism, they argue that the role of the principal remains crucial because it is s/he who accomplishes ‘the role of team leader applying leadership functions flexibly to enable team development, management and effectiveness. In most circumstances, principals still bear ultimate responsibility for their schools. The sharing of leadership functions should not be a shedding of, but rather an enhancement of, principal leadership. Effective vertical and shared leadership processes are likely to be intertwined and complementary’ (Ibid: 668). Barnett and McCormick (2012) used the concept of shared leadership and teams interchangeably to mean forms of leadership distribution. It suggests team and shared leadership as multiple sources of leadership that involve both formal and informal leaders (Harris: 2009).

Distributed and collaborative leadership

Leithwood et al. (2004:59) claim that ‘the concept of distributed leadership overlaps substantially with shared, collaborative and participative leadership concepts’. Distributed leadership is often conceived as a network of practice because ‘leadership is dependent on interactions between people’ (Townsend 2010:268). Cowan, Swearer and Sheridan (2004: 201) argue that collaboration can be seen as ‘working together toward a common goal or set of goals’. It is the principal that sets the formal conditions to support and nurture collaborative learning (Harris and Lambert, 2003). Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that a substantial body of literature is concerned with the role of the principal, and thus evidence regarding school leadership has come largely from the perspective of the principalship. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001, 2004) suggest that collaborative practices engender and broaden relationships between principals and teachers, as well as encouraging participation in decision making, but in different capacities. Consequently, ‘collaboration requires leaders to develop a new compendium of skills and adopt new “mind-sets” and “ways of being”’ (Slater, 2005:332).

Distributed leadership and activity theory

Engestrom (1999), Timperley (2009), and Spillane et al (2001), all establish a connection between distributed leadership and activity theory. As Harris (2004:15) notes, ‘distributed leadership results from the activity, that product of a conjoint activity such as network learning communities, study groups, inquiry partnerships, and not simply another label for activity’. Accordingly, ‘activity theory can contribute to understanding of how agency and structure mutually constitute each other at micro-social level through the ongoing flow of activities’ (Hatcher, 2005: 256). Drawing upon ‘activity theory’ (Engestrom, 1999), ‘democratic leadership functions as a means of engendering compliance with dominant goals and values and harnessing staff commitment, ideas, expertise and experience to realizing these’ (Woods, 2004:4).

Activity theory is defined in this context as a ‘flow of mediated activity, a process of ever-moving relationships between technologies, nature, ideas, person and communities in which the focus of action circulates to one person, then another, according to the social and environmental context and the flow of action within this’ (Woods, 2004: 5-6). This suggests that, rather than being taken as a leadership model in itself, the democratic leadership model should be conceived as an analytical model for conceptualizing distributed leadership. Activity here implies a social distribution of leadership practice within an organisation (Reed and Swaminathan 2016).

Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001, 2004) address similar aspects of administrative responses. For example, Spillane et al. (2004), identify ‘distributed cognition’ and ‘activity theory’ as the conceptual basis of their account of distributed leadership. As Camburn, Rowan and Taylor (2003: 348) suggest, there are other nuanced conceptualizations supporting distributed leadership as an activity to replace the notion of ‘a single “heroic” leadership where school leaders stand atop a hierarchy, bending the school community to his or her purposes’. This supports the notion of distributed leadership in terms of activities and interactions which are

distributed across several people and situations (Camburn, Rowan and Taylor, 2003; Copland 2003, Spillane et al. 2004).

Distributed leadership may be analyzed through the lens of activity theory (Ho, Chen and Ng, 2016). They add (2016: 816) that this is the ‘concept of multiple leaders with different leadership roles and includes an outcome’. Ho and Ng (2017: 223) demonstrate how activity theory is deployed in educational leadership. They note that ‘the distribution of leadership is dynamic with the centrality of leadership shifting between multiple levels of leaders as they interact in intersecting activity systems’.

Hirsh and Segolsson (2017: 2) link activity theory to leadership. They claim that ‘activity theory addresses human action as part of a system in’ schools. They also believe it to be collective leadership practice that is context based. Their study shows how change can be accomplished over time according to a model that alters organizational structures and strengthens the middle leader’s role (Hirsh and Segolsson, 2017:18). This understanding suggests the participation of school leaders in various leadership activities (Spinuzzi, 2015).

Accordingly, ‘activities are *‘multiperspectival’* in that different persons who are involved in the same activity tend to perceive different aspects of it and consequently tend to pulse the shared object in different ways, with different tempos, using different configurations of the resources’ (Spinuzzi, 2015: 6). This suggests that leadership distribution takes place within an organization as a relationship and an interaction (Ho and Ng, 2017). Consequently, Ho and Ng (2017) view activity theory as an analytical lens for understanding distributed leadership. In some cases, activity theory is understood as a dynamic relationship in that it elicits the participation of organizational members in aspects of democratization, as we shall see in the next sub-section. Yuen et al (2016: 832) claim that ‘the focus in activity theory on the social-cultural aspect of any leadership activity is useful in the examination and understanding of distributed leadership’.

Distributed and democratic leadership

Raelin (2012) describes the dynamic relationship within an organization as democratic leadership in which the collective participation of stakeholders is sought. Raelin describes the approach as 'leaderful practice' decision-making which accommodates dialogue and deliberation over and above rank and status. Raelin's (2012) study affirms the view of Woods et al. (2004:445) that democratic leadership is a form of 'distributed leadership as concerted action through relationships [that] allow for strong partnerships which at the same time entail power disparity between partners'.

Woods (2005) adds that democratic leadership is not normative but another way of using democratic principles within the school community. Schmuck and Schmuck (1990), and Mahony (1998), suggest that democratic participation has little to do with school life, but they acknowledge that there are instances where staff members are collectively engaged in routine administration. They describe the notion of school democratic leadership as superficial. They argue that ideas about school leadership are mostly initiated by school principals and superintendents, which suggests that leadership is top down. They claim that one of the ways for leadership to spread across stakeholders is to involve more staff members in decision-making. However, Hartley (2007: 205) contends that, rather than being democratic, distributed leadership 'runs counter to the democratic requirement for logical and empirical critique'.

Hartley (Ibid: 205) also claims that the notion of distributed leadership, 'like other discourses of legitimation, such as empowerment and ownership, appears to incorporate democratic procedures, but it arguably does no such thing'. Hartley further notes that distributed leaders attain their positions, not as a result of an election, but through appointment, suggesting the notion of allocative distribution.

However, there is a body of scholarship that supports using democratic principles in leadership (Naidoo, Mncube and Potokri, 2015; Subba, 2014; Mncube 2009; Bush

and Heystek 2006; Ryan, 2005; Harris 2003; Henderson, 2001). For example, Henderson, (2001) argues that school curriculum is enhanced by the application of democratic values by school leaders. Naidoo, Mncube and Potokri, (2015) established that school principals appear to shift away from the authoritarian leadership approach towards democratic leadership. They argue that a democratic leadership style includes collaborative planning and shared decision making. This seems to support distributed leadership theory that schools ‘decentre’ the leader and ‘opens up the possibility for a more democratic and collective form of leadership (Muijs and Harris, 2003: 339). Barnett and McCormick, (2012: 667) supports the notion of applying democratic principles to school leadership in that human values are respected as well as making ‘the idea of shared leadership intrinsically attractive’. Democracy in school leadership is seen as a form of empowerment that might be expressed and interpreted from different perspectives (Woods and Gronn, 2009).

Spillane (2005: 149) argues that ‘democratic leadership’ is not a synonym for distributed leadership. Rather, distributed leadership is acknowledged to be ‘a set of diagnostic and design tools’ that could be employed in the exercise of leadership practice (Spillane, 2006: 94). This notion is also reinforced by Jones et al., (2014). However, Kufod (2006) argues that the application of democratic leadership principles enhances distributed leadership practices.

Distributed and teacher leadership

At the heart of distributed leadership is the concept of ‘teacher leadership’ (Torrance and Humes, 2015; Berg, Carver, and Mangin, 2014; Muijs and Harris 2007; Grant, 2006; York-Barr and Duke, 2004). This notion has increasingly been applied to distributed leadership in schools since it is ‘complex and multifaceted, involving many different sub roles and activities’ (Boylan, 2016:2). This is also linked with teachers’ curriculum leadership (Spillane et al. (2007). It is the ‘core element in the drive to breathe new life into the teaching profession after so many years of centralised reform. It offers the means to rebuild schools as learning communities

(Frost and Harris, 2003: 494). This is probably because it brings about engagement and collaboration amongst members of the school organization (Ibid).

Muijs and Harris (2007: 115) define teacher leadership as teachers' 'involvement in decision- making and [their] ability to initiate activities'. They add that teacher leadership empowers teachers. Bush (2016) sees teachers' participation in school leadership as a form of collaboration. He adds that this model 'assumes that teachers have common values that facilitate collaboration and lead to consensual decision-making (Bush, 2016: 872).

There is a large body of scholarship that supports the notion of teacher leadership (e.g. York-Barr and Duke, 2004; Harris, 2003; Marks and Printy, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1998). Lai and Cheung (2015: 688) suggest that 'developed teacher leadership is characterized by the involvement of all teachers in decision-making in the school and [provides] strong support for teacher initiative'.

Onyekuru and Ibegbunam (2013) argue that effective teachers are able to adapt themselves to the prevalent conditions of the school so as to achieve organizational goals, a view held also by Muijs and Harris, (2006). According to Crawford (2014), becoming an educational leader is a complex business because of the interplay of roles, including the role of classroom teachers. Several scholars refer to this role as 'teacher leadership' (Boylan, 2016; Daly, 2009; Daly and Chrispeels, 2008; Harris, 2004a, 2004b; Frost and Durrant, 2003; Frost and Harris, 2003). Daly (2009: 209) note that 'empowering and involving teachers to lead innovation and have ownership of decisions may entail an alignment of perceptions between teachers and administrators'.

Crawford and Cowie (2012: 177) assert that 'it is important that people are encouraged to want to do the job [teaching] and that opportunities are provided to allow teachers to develop confidence in their leadership and management capabilities and to acquire appropriate knowledge, understanding and skills'.

Facilitating teachers' involvement in leadership creates a sense of ownership (Mifsud, 2016; Mbokazi, 2015). This suggests that they are able to understand their own demands and thereby collaborate in providing necessary skills that may be required in various situations (Crawford and Cowie, 2012). The skills are provided in teaching and setting directions for students. Crawford and Cowie (ibid) add that such leadership is lacking in most schools due to poorly trained teachers. 'The need to adhere to a defined standard may encourage aspiring heads to configure their professional identities in ways that are consistent with the features of 'new managerialism' (Crawford and Cowie, 2012: 184). This suggests the need to train teachers for effective leadership (Rhodes and Brundrett, 2008; Murphy, 2005).

Berg, Carver, and Mangin (2014: 211) caution that 'moving expert teachers into roles that take their attention away from the classroom is counterproductive if attention is not also paid to ensuring they can make a real difference in those roles. Teacher leadership roles require a range of leadership skills that lie far beyond the skills that teachers bring from the classroom'. The research by Ghamrawi, (2010) shows the extent to which teacher leadership is exercised and enables various aspects of distributed leadership:

'The clearest message to emerge from this study is the very critical role played by subject leaders at establishing, promoting and nourishing teacher leadership in schools. As subject leaders' roles expand to include tasks that have been traditionally attributed to senior management, they become in a very powerful position, enabling them to craft the establishment of teacher leadership' (Ibid: 318).

Harris (2003:314) contends that, despite the many views supporting teacher leadership as one of the processes of distributed leadership, the idea has been dismissed as another label for continuing professional development. She adds that it is being rejected because the term teacher leadership situates teachers in the hierarchy of leadership within the school system. In spite of the opposition, Harris

(2003:315) insists that teacher leadership 'is a form of agency that can be widely shared or distributed within and across an organisation', even though this seems to challenge conventional leadership practices. Harris (2002) further identified some aspects that mutually support the themes of teacher leadership, including notions of influence and empowerment. Lai and Cheung (2014: 677) add that 'teacher empowerment entails the sharing of power by principals with their schools' teachers, which gives teachers legitimacy to take on leadership roles and to participate in the leadership process, such as initiating new practices and mobilizing other teachers to join them with the goal of improved teaching and learning practices'.

The notion of teacher empowerment is also suggested by several other authors (Freire and Fernandes, 2016; Mbokazi, 2015; Barnett and McCormick, 2012; Hallinger and Heck's, 2010a; Woods, 2004, Muijs and Harris, 2003; Day et al, 2000). These authors argue that, through teacher leadership, teachers are empowered, and leadership decentralized. Muijs and Harris, (2003a: 448) argue that 'teacher leadership is centrally concerned with forms of empowerment and agency which are also at the core of distributed leadership theory'. Bush (2015: 43) adds that 'teacher leadership indicates lateral structures as teachers work collaboratively with colleagues to initiate change'. However, some critics warn against the challenge of conflating teacher leadership with distributed leadership (Torrance and Humes, 2015). They argue that, if leadership at all levels is to become a positive reality for school communities of practice, a 'clearer articulation is required' (Ibid: 2015:805).

Smylie and Eckert (2017) argue that, despite the importance of teacher leadership, attention has not been made to develop it as a conceptual framework for practice. The research by Muijs and Harris (2007) suggests some insights into how teacher leadership might be conceptualised. They link teacher leadership to many aspects of school leadership, including decision-making processes that affect teaching and learning, and student outcomes. However, Smylie and Eckert (2017: 16) warn that

‘teacher leadership development can become such a compelling focus that it is easy to forget the important role that principals play in its success or failure’.

Similarly, Duze (2012) suggests that the changing role of school leadership demands that principals develop the capacity for collective leadership through teacher leadership to achieve students’ outcomes. She asserts that ‘the principal is the pivotal point within the school who affects the quality of individual teacher instruction, the height of student achievement, and the degree of efficiency in school functioning’ (Duze, 2012:133). The collaboration between principals and staff leads to school improvement through the significant role teachers play through pedagogy. She also problematizes hierarchy as an impediment to effective school leadership. Consequently, ‘teacher leadership is often based on the traditional view where teachers' work was seen as passive and must wait for directives and guidance from the higher authorities before proceeding. Moreover, teachers do not appear to have their own voice because they seem answerable to superior authorities’ (Ibid: 114). This view is also corroborated by Enueme and Egwunyenga (2008).

Participative decision-making processes

Lai and Cheung (2015: 689) argue that, at ‘the core of teacher participation, are opportunities for teachers to make decisions on curricular and pedagogical practices. This includes the multiple ways people articulate the work of school leaders, such as participative, democratic, transformational, moral, strategic, and administrative (Grootenboer and Hardy, 2017; Bush, 2016; 2011). Bush and Middlewood (2005) link participation and decision making to the collegial model. They say that ‘an alternative to hierarchy is collegial structure. In this model, structures are flattened, and communication tends to be lateral rather than vertical, reflecting the view that all teachers should be involved in decision-making and “own” the outcomes of discussion’ (Bush and Middlewood,2005:66).

One of the fundamental elements of distributed leadership model is the engagement of teachers and professionals in dialogue. As Harris (2008: 180) notes, ‘both teacher

and student morale levels improved where teachers felt more included and involved in decision making related to school development'. This suggests that participation in decision-making provides an opportunity for feedback and, at the same time, encourage participants to take ownership of a wide range of issues.

Stegall and Linton (2012: 63) reinforce the importance of decision making:

'For teachers to become effective leaders, administrators must create the appropriate environment. This includes providing opportunities for teachers to make appropriate instructional decisions for the school, processes for building trust and rapport, opportunities to collaborate with peers in order to build shared capacity, and occasions to make decisions regarding resource allocations and school processes'

This view suggests that principals have to create an enabling environment that encourages participation of staff in the leadership process. Similarly, Lai and Chung, (2014: 674) indicate the need for 'active participation and collaboration in making curricular and pedagogical decisions to provide quality learning for students'. Muijs and Harris (2007: 113) suggest that an increase in teacher participation in decision-making creates 'opportunities for teachers to take initiative and lead school improvement'.

The participative leadership model brings teachers into the mainstream of school leadership. Thus, the principal may involve teachers and stakeholders in decision-making (MacBeath, 1998; Leithwood et al., 1999; Frick, 2009). There is some evidence that participative leadership is linked to successful school leadership (MacBeath, 1998; Leithwood et al., 1999; Frick, 2009). Through this model, teachers are offered the opportunity to contribute their ideas and decide collectively on important issues affecting the school.

Casburn (1996) sees decision-making as a structure for maintaining school standards and continuity. Mackenzie (2005) also supports participative decision-making, including elements of team collaboration, but he notes that conflict can arise. He refers to ‘major philosophical differences with regard to the purposes of schooling and the appropriate way to honour democratic ideals of education both within the school and in the community at large’ (Ibid: 27).

A similar view is that ‘the core of teacher participation is opportunities for teachers to make decisions on curricular and pedagogical practices (Lai and Cheung, 2015: 689). Participation in decision-making facilitates collaboration as well as indicating a collegial model of school leadership which involves both the leader and subordinates (Bush, 2016). It implies that the principals respect and value the contribution of other members of the learning community by creating opportunities for shared decisions.

Distributed leadership and hierarchy

Drawing upon Weber’s (1989) understanding of leadership structure, Bush (2015) links hierarchy to the leadership structure. He adds that ‘an important starting point for understanding distributed leadership is to uncouple it from positional authority’ (Bush, 2015: 39). Woods (2004: 6) notes that, ‘although leadership may be distributed, it does not necessarily imply an absence of hierarchy. This is evident . . . [as] distributed leadership may comprise teams, informal work groups, committees and so on, operating within a hierarchical organization’. This notion of formal structure within an organization can be linked to allocative distributed leadership (Bolden et al. 2009).

Referring to Leithwood, Jantzi, & Steinbach, 1999), Bush (2016: 37) explains that ‘authority and influence are allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of those positions in the organizational hierarchy’. As Harris (2004:13) suggests, ‘distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role’. This

suggests an acknowledgement of the shift from solo leadership (Crawford, 2012) to participative leadership (Bush, 2015).

Gronn (2009: 383) notes that, ‘despite... reaction to individualist approaches to leadership, solo leaders continue to figure prominently in accounts that purport to be distributed and that distributed leadership apologists have not adequately clarified the role and contribution of individuals as continuing sources of organizational influence within a distributed framework’. The individual influence in leadership is usually top-down. Bush (2015: 42) argues that ‘in centralised systems, the structure is vertical, and accountability is to the next level in the hierarchy, within and beyond the organisation. The positions in the structure are predominant and there is little attention to individual variables’. He maintains that the participative leadership model differs from other styles of leadership because it offers a lateral approach (Ibid). As Bennett, Harvey, Wise, and Woods (2003) argue, leadership distribution could arise from a variety of influences regardless of leadership models. This led Bush (2016:34) to suggest that ‘distributed leadership resists the conventional distinction between vertical and horizontal structures and may include elements of both approaches, depending on the specific context’.

Bolden et al (2009) add that a lateral approach to school leadership could be allocative distribution. However, Lumby (2017) links authority with bureaucracy and argues that bureaucracy is often neglected as an effective means of distributed leadership. Furthermore, she contends that bureaucracy is associated with authority, suggesting that both are necessary processes of leadership. Thus, authority and bureaucracy aid shared leadership practice if the school organization is to be transformed (Lumby, 2017). Lumby (2017) adds that, although bureaucracy is not included in the definition of distributed leadership, it remains a vital process of distribution since the definition of what constitutes distributed leadership remains elusive. Thus, ‘a particular focus of critique has been the relationship of distributed leadership and power’ (Lumby, 2017: 6).

Linking delegation with distributed leadership

Ritchie and Woods (2007) argue that some aspects of leadership distribution may include designed and designated roles, some of which might be through an ad hoc delegation of tasks, all of which contribute to successful school leadership. There are different views on the relationships between distributed leadership and delegation. Gunter (2013: 204) refers to distributed leadership as ‘the effective delegation of work’. Harris, (2003:319) argues that, ‘while distributed leadership does not equate with “delegation”, it also does not represent a form of leadership that is so diffuse that it loses its distinctive qualities’. Spillane (2006), and Harris (2005), suggest that distribution of responsibility may emerge through design, default and even out of crisis (desperation), but this does not necessarily mean delegation.

For Harris (2003), the problem is how leadership is distributed. ‘If it remains the case that the head distributes leadership responsibilities to teachers, then distributed leadership becomes nothing more than informed delegation’ (Harris, 2003: 319). This seems to suggest that delegation could be considered as a form of distributed leadership.

The expression ‘delegated leadership’ has been used interchangeably with shared and democratic leadership (Hairon and Goh, 2015), although it is not the same construct as distributed leadership, as defined for example by Spillane (2005). Kwan and Li (2015), and Bennett et al (2003), link delegated leadership to authority, power and decentralization. Decentralization is one focus of distributed leadership (Bennett et al. 2003; Gronn, 2002). This suggests that the aim of delegation is to decentralize top-down leadership. ‘Along with the delegation of authority comes an accountability system in which various stakeholders participate in order to protect their own interests, on the one hand, and to oversee school performance on the other’ (Kwan and Li, 2015: 320). However, the degree of delegation varies across contexts. The devolution of power and authority, together with accountability, seems to transmit power from the centre to the lower levels of leadership. This could express

itself in the form of a power shift from principals to heads of departments, and to teachers and other stakeholders.

Yukl (2013), adds that by delegating tasks to a subordinate, participants are given substantial autonomy to deal with problems without interference. This process creates the opportunity to contribute to the organizational leadership process. The notion of delegation also appears to link to the idea of allocative distributed leadership. It has also been argued that, by delegating authority to subordinate leaders, senior management creates “stretch opportunities” (McCauley et al., 1994; McCauley and Brutus, 1998). However, Harris and DeFlaminis (2016) argue that this notion reflects misunderstanding, misinterpretation and distortion of the fundamental meaning of distributed leadership. In contrast, Woods (2016) notes that ‘hierarchies may emerge, based on different forms of authority’. As noted earlier, hierarchy is associated with leadership delegation.

Although some critics argue against the inclusion of delegation in distributed leadership discourse, it is worth noting that the definition of distributed leadership remains elusive. Spillane (2006: 25) argues that distributed leadership ‘puts leadership practice centre stage’ and shifts the focus from the traits of the leader to shared functions. Therefore, appears that practices such as delegation fit the description of leadership practice, although it is more often used in management discourse. For example, Bolden et al, (2009), who argue that delegation differs from distributed leadership, also note that it can still be applied by design. It implies that leadership roles and tasks can be allocated to staff members within and outside the institution. This suggests the notion of allocative distributed leadership, a concept that may be relevant for highly centralized systems.

Linking distributed leadership with school improvement

With the increasing emphasis on school improvement, and the need for leadership distribution, Lambert (2002: 37) contends that ‘the days of the lone instructional leader are over’ and that ‘substantial participation of other educators’ is essential.

Numerous studies link leadership to school improvement (Timperley, 2009; Lambert, 2006, 2003; Hallinger and Heck 1999; Stoll and Fink 1996). School improvement is at the core of much of the literature on educational leadership and management due to the links between leadership and teaching and learning (Robinson et al., 2008; Southworth, 2002; Hallinger and Heck, 1996). Day et al. (2010:16) claim that ‘there is a connection between the increased distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities and the improvement of pupil outcomes’. Bolden, Petrov and Gosling (2012) present evidence of distributed leadership as a practice that aids school improvement in England.

The focus on school improvement has changed over the years with a more recent emphasis on best practices aimed at turning the school around. Harris and Lambert (2003: xv11) argue that ‘the role of the “leader” in this scenario is to harness, focus, liberate, empower and align that leadership towards common purposes and, by so doing, grow, release and focus its capacity’. This supports the notion of a more decentralized school leadership while maintaining the leadership role of the school head. Brighouse and Woods (1999:47) suggest that, for leadership to be distributed, ‘what these leader-heads, or heads of department, or curriculum coordinators, or teachers, are seen to do, what they show interest in, how they notice effort, commitment and quality, all vitally affect their schools’. Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins (2008) believe that leadership has a strong impact on school and student outcomes.

Harris (2008) argues that distributed leadership practice serves as a catalyst for effective and harmonious working relationships among colleagues. She claims that ‘this could manifest itself in the work of subject departments, cross-curricular groupings, action learning sets, and school improvement groups. In short, where teachers are working together to solve particular sets of pedagogical problems, they will occupy a leadership “space” within the school and will be engaging in leadership practice’ (Harris, 2008: 178). Copland (2003: 394) adds that ‘experiences suggest that the distribution of leadership functions across a school, given adequate

time and personnel to handle the tasks, can provide the capacity, coherence and ownership necessary to sustain and deepen reforms' for school improvement. This is supported by Hopkins et al. (1994) who assert that the development of a collaborative culture is the key to bringing about, as well as sustaining, school improvement.

Obadara (2013) notes the relationship between distributed leadership and school improvement. He argues that:

School improvement is a distinct approach to educational change that enhances student outcomes as well as strengthening the school's capacity for managing change. School improvement is about raising student achievement through focusing on the teaching-learning process and the conditions that support it (Obadara, 2013: 68).

Schools need to adopt distributed leadership model because school organizations are so complex and tasks so wide-ranging that no one person can manage all (Ibid: 73).

He further states that schools should embrace distributed leadership to bring about success in handling problems as well as bring about change (Ibid). In this way, he implied the notion of leadership distribution across schools and suggests that distributed leadership is a strategy for school improvement. He further argued that an effective leader uses a number of approaches to enhance leadership.

Critiques of distributed leadership

The literature also includes critiques of distributed leadership. Gunter (2013), and Lumby (2013), argue that distributed leadership became a normative choice for policy-makers in England. This is because heads of schools feel under pressure and therefore call for shared responsibility. Gunter (2013: 202) adds that distributed leadership is a form of managerialism that encourages people to do more work. It

has also been argued that the motivation for distribution may have arisen partly from the growing recognition that principals and other senior members of school management appear to be overloaded, predominantly in education systems with high levels of decentralization to the school level. This suggests why Hartley (2010: 27) argues that 'its popularity may be pragmatic: to ease the burden of overworked headteachers'.

Hall et al. (2011:32), similarly, argue that the attention given to the distributed leadership model was propaganda about 'good practice' by a Government department, thus claiming arguing that this model is prescriptive. Hall (2012) further critiqued the approach to policy making which favoured the distributed leadership model within government agencies. This led Bolden (2011:263) to contend that 'a purely descriptive approach is of limited use in enhancing leadership practice, while a normative approach may inadvertently end up promoting inappropriate and potentially unethical practices'. There seems to be no consensus on the construct of distributed leadership. For example, Fletcher and Ka'uffer (2003: 22) contend that shared leadership processes are 'distributed and interdependent'.

Lumby (2013) claims that theorizing distributed leadership was a choice for many, rather than questioning what purpose it served. She also challenges 'the unequal inclusion in power' where issues of power, race and gender are relegated in the literature about distributed leadership. While recognising the contribution of Spillane et al. (2004), Lumby (2013:582) argues that distributed leadership was 'offered as a heuristic tool, not a type or prescription for practice'. As a result, she suggests that theorizing distributed leadership gives credence to the use of power by individuals with the ability to control, rather than a group of people embodied with power.

However, Gronn (2010), and Lumby (2013) argue that their studies are not final statements in the area of distributed leadership. Conceptualizing distributed leadership, as well as defining it, remains problematic. Lumby (2013) proposes that

one way of exploring the concept is to examine a range of factors behind the study, such as the choice of theory and power in distributed leadership. Crawford (2012), for example, suggests a form of hybrid leadership that makes it possible for leadership to be shared. Clifton (2017:301) describes this hybridity as ‘making relevant to the interaction hybrid presences’ of actions ‘that allow certain organisational players to influence the communicative construction of the organisation’. Gronn (2009a: 379) adds that ‘hybridity has been chosen deliberately to contrast with the notion of ‘one-size-fits-all’’. Hartley (2009) argues that there is a lack of discussion about the use of power and contends that, even though leadership is distributed, power and control remain centralised.

Distributed Leadership in Nigeria

Limited evidence about distributed leadership in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa

There is only limited evidence of academic sources on distributed leadership in Nigeria and most of sub-Saharan Africa (Bush, 2014; Bush and Glover, 2013; Bush and Oduro, 2006). Most literature on school leadership in Nigeria seems to focus on the style of leadership of principals relating to supervision and curriculum, while also addressing hierarchy and accountability (Eacott and Asuga 2014; Enueme and Egwunyenga, 2008; Bennell and Akyeampong, 2007; Adelabu, 2005; Ofoegbu, 2004a).

Empirical data on distributed leadership in Nigeria is very limited (Bush and Glover, 2016; Bolden and Kirk, 2009) and Ugwulashi (2012) notes that studies of leadership and management in Africa are greatly influenced by Western literature. Naicker and Mestry (2013) claim that school leadership in Africa is complex, requiring a variety of approaches. They further argue that distributed leadership should be one of the approaches because it has become a global phenomenon in school leadership (Naicker and Mestry, 2013). However, Oplatka (2004) notes a lack of research and literature on ‘distributed leadership’ in Nigeria. This provides the warrant for the present author’s research.

The Nigerian policy context

The concept of distributed leadership, although limited in Nigerian literature, could be inferred from policy documents. Nigeria's National Policy on Education (1981:12; 2004) spells out a more formal leadership structure and distribution. The document forms part of the framework for discussion of school leadership in Nigeria. It also discusses the leadership structures within the Nigerian school system. This might be seen as distributed system leadership, but it does not refer to distributed leadership in schools.

Overview of leadership styles in Nigeria

Ofoegbu et al. (2013:67) centres attention on which leadership style is most appropriate for school management, Obadara (2013) identifies a decline in collaborative practices among principals and teachers, adding that these affected curricular activities in schools within Lagos, Nigeria. Nakpodia (2011) sees the actualisation of school leadership capacity in terms of team work. In Nigeria, this role appears to be hierarchical and centralized (Bush and Glover, 2016).

Evidence of distributed leadership in Nigeria

As noted earlier, there is only limited evidence of distributed leadership in Nigeria. Ofoegbu, (2004a: 331) believes that school leadership can assume many forms, including school supervision. She argues that supervision is the process of ensuring conformity with organisational goals and identified such features as 'staff meetings' and the 'individual teacher conference' as a form of collaborative strategy 'for bringing out the best in individual staff'. Ofoegbu claims that participation of teachers in such practices is a form of leadership distribution (Ofoegbu, Ibid). Adeyemi (2010) links participation of staff in decision-making processes to school democracy which enhances staff participation in school leadership. He argues that 'the democratic style of leadership emphasizes group and leader participation in the making of policies' (Adeyemi, 2010:85).

Ali and Yangaiya (2015a) investigated the influence of distributed leadership on school effectiveness. Their survey sampled 301 teachers in public junior secondary schools in Katsina State. Their findings 'indicate that teachers' commitment mediates the relationship between distributed leadership and school effectiveness (Ibid: 171). They believe that distributed leadership contributes to school effectiveness and teacher commitment. Similar survey research was carried by Yangaiya and Ali (2013), involving 499 teachers from 227 secondary schools, also in Katsina State. Their findings indicate some form of distributed leadership through participative decision-making, led by school principals.

Nwagwu (2004) suggests that decision-making needs careful planning and should involve a number of people. This was further supported by Efanga and Usen (2010), and corroborated by (Ugwulashi 2012:435), when he stated that 'the school administrator needs to adopt facilitative and supportive (participatory) processes and adapting good human relations skills by appropriately using an equal mix of high task and high relationship inputs to determine situation favourableness'.

Efanga and Usen (2010) suggest that, despite the top-down leadership approach prevalent in the Nigerian school system, distributed leadership is crucial to promote educational excellence. The authors also argue that distributed leadership has a significant influence on school leadership and contributes to the academic achievement of students and school improvement. They argue that universal basic education in Nigeria would attain greater success if leadership was distributed in schools. The study acknowledged the importance of adapting the leadership practices in Nigeria to suit the ever-changing world. This includes the notion that 'effective leaders and effective organizations rely on multiple frames and perspectives, it can be enormously liberating for administrators to see that there is always more than one way to respond to any organizational problem (Efanga and Usen, 2010: 297). They linked supervision to shared leadership distribution in that the 'burden of leadership will be less if leadership functions and roles are shared among experienced professional colleagues (Ibid: 297).

Evidence about related styles in Nigeria

Certain studies, while not focusing on distributed leadership, address similar concepts. For example, Pearce, Wassenaar, and Manz (2014) discuss notions of 'shared leadership' as opposed to hierarchical leadership, but not directly linked to education. Using semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, Olujuwon and Perumal (2016) discuss the influence of current school practice on teacher leadership in Nigerian public secondary schools, with references to theories of distributed leadership. The study was conducted in Lagos, and involved nine teachers, three principals, and a vice-principal, as well one district education officer. The authors argue that teacher leadership is essential to school improvement, but their findings show little evidence of leadership distribution. They claim that 'teacher preparation, professional development and classroom management techniques influence teacher leadership practice in schools' (Ibid: 20). However, they argue that there are some micro-politics within the leadership of schools that seem to impede leadership distribution (Olujuwon and Perumal, 2016). They suggest that this issue be addressed by appointing well trained and competent individuals in leadership positions and that this will lead to the commitment of stakeholders to school leadership.

Arikewuyo (2007, 2009) highlights the challenges for school principals in Nigeria. He refers to structures as ways of improving school leadership, implying the significance of hierarchy. In their review of school leadership literature, Amanchukwu et al. (2015) advocate the use of educational theories to ensure a stable educational system in Nigeria, and to facilitate school improvement. They conclude that 'success is certain if the application of the leadership styles, principles and methods is properly and fully applied in school management' (Ibid:13). Uwazurike (1991) contends that poorly trained individuals are appointed as principals. He asserts that, 'given the fact that those who are supposedly trained are not adequately exposed to pertinent theories of educational leadership, untrained administrators have over the years made claims to effective management with or

without formal training. This has not been healthy to the Nigerian school system' (Ibid: 263).

Oplatka (2004) notes the lack of training for professionals, which has had adverse effects on the basic understanding of school leadership. Similarly, Uzohue et al. 2016; and Amanchukwu et al. 2015) argue in favour of the application of specific leadership theories in schools, along with leadership preparation, to address the challenges faced by school leaders.

Allocative distributed leadership in Nigeria

Even though there is a paucity of literature on distributed leadership in Nigeria, Anho (2013) argues for a democratic model of leadership and links leadership to notions of hierarchy within a centralized system. Arikewuyo (2009) notes the selection of candidates to the position of principals by the ministry of education. He argues the lack of proper training of secondary school principals before arbitrarily appointing them to leadership positions. He further states that, in Nigeria, 'new employees typically start in the lower ranks, but when they prove to be competent in the task to which they are assigned; they get promoted to a higher rank, which in some cases are managerial' (Arikewuyo:77). This suggests a form of allocative distribution within the wider system, as well as reinforcing the notion of hierarchy in the Nigerian centralized school system.

Adegbemile (2011) proposes the engagement of professional colleagues in the leadership process. He also advocates allocative distributed leadership as a skill required by the principal for effective leadership. Oluniyi (2011:59) implies the use of allocative distributed leadership when he says that 'teachers are assigned by the school principal to monitor the class in terms of activities such as marking attendance and ensuring the general cleanliness of the classroom, among others, monitoring the progress of each child in the class'. Even though this is routine school administration, it may imply leadership distribution. He sees this as participatory school leadership.

Extended distributed leadership: Parents and community

Olibie (2014) notes the problem of boundary spanning and questions the extent to which parents are involved in school leadership. The objective of his study was to identify the collaboration between parents and community, to enhance school improvement. Olibie (2014: 49) concludes that ‘effective curriculum implementation requires the concerted efforts of schools and associations, especially the parents’. Ekundayo and Alonge (2012) also acknowledge the importance of the relationship between secondary school principals and local communities. They argue that the participation of parent teachers’ associations (PTAs) in school leadership is a democratic process in which collaboration is entrenched. They add that:

‘[The] PTA has been participating on matters affecting education in Nigeria. It is to be noted, however, that virtually all the secondary schools in the country have the PTA in place. Despite the laudable roles of the PTA in secondary schools, it appears that the problems of the schools still thrive. It, therefore, presupposes that the roles of the PTA can be strengthened in order to enhance better community participation in the schools’ (Ekundayo and Alonge, 2012:17).

This is consistent with the Federal Government of Nigeria’s policy on local level participation in school leadership (FRN, 2013: 41) which encourages the ‘close participation and involvement of the communities, at the local level in the administration and management of schools’. Akpan (2014) described the parents’ association as school-based management (SBM) whose remit includes ‘integrating the voices of parents, teachers, students and other stakeholders in school management in a formal manner’ (Akpan, 2014: 530). Ekundayo and Alonge (2012), and Olibie (2014), both suggest that the PTAs in their studies perceive their participation in school leadership as an aspect of team work. These studies link various connotations of extended leadership distribution to school improvement.

Research by Fajoju (2016), and by other authors (Oluniyi and Olajumoke, 2013; Olatoye and Ogunkola, 2008), suggests that parental involvement significantly influenced pupils' academic achievements. Fajoju (2016) notes the participation of parents in school meetings and in decision-making. Olatoye and Ogunkola (2008: 33) add that 'parental involvement in education included contributions to their children's home-based activities...attending parent-teachers' association meetings, [and] parent-teacher conferences'. Olibie (2014: 42) comments that the rationale for parents' participation in education is student achievement. She argues that the PTA's involvement in school leadership includes 'decision-making, influencing policy enactment and implementation, enforcing discipline, negotiating and collaborating in curriculum, supervision and monitoring of school processes, and providing staff, funds and facilities. She argues that, through these various processes, parents engage in school leadership.

Ikoya and Ikoya (2005) suggest that decentralization within schools is intended to encourage community participation. This suggests involving staff in decision-making, collaboration and participation in teaching and learning for students' achievement (Obadara, 2013). Collaboration between parents and schools may also be seen as an ad hoc form of leadership. The partnership between parents and schools, and between parents and the wider community, can be seen as collaboration. This partnership is also linked to student outcomes and school improvement. Community participation in schools can also be regarded as one aspect of leadership practice in Nigerian schools.

The discussion in this section shows that there is only limited literature on distributed leadership in Nigeria. This 'gap' reinforces the need for research on distributed leadership in Nigeria and provides the warrant for the author's study.

Overview

Many concepts underpin the notion of distributed leadership but there is no commonly agreed definition of the term. Related concepts include teacher

empowerment, collective leadership, teacher leadership, leadership delegation, democratic leadership, allocative distributed leadership, shared leadership, and team-work. The growing popularity of distributed leadership has led to various interpretations. These include allocative distributed leadership, which seems particularly well suited to centralised countries such as Nigeria, where distributed leadership assumes the form of leadership delegation, informed by accountability within a hierarchical school system. The concept is relatively new in Nigeria, and the pattern of distribution appears to be top-down', linked to the emerging theme of allocative distributed leadership.

There are two interrelated, but competing, notions of distributed leadership. First, leadership is perceived to be an emergent process, through various forms and practices. Second, distributed leadership links to delegation, with power being devolved within the hierarchy, leading to allocative distributed leadership. While established distributed leadership theory suggests that it is emergent, in centralised contexts, such as Nigeria, allocative distributed leadership may be more apposite.

The next chapter discusses the research design, methodology, and research methods, utilised in this study.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter explains and justifies the research design and methodology chosen for this study on the nature of school leadership in Edo State, Nigeria. It is widely understood that methodology and methods should be fit for purpose (Bryman, 2008; Cohen et al., 2007; Morrison, 2007). Cohen et al. (2007:78) assert that ‘the purposes of the research determine the methodology and design of the research’. This chapter begins with a discussion of the author’s chosen research paradigm, followed by consideration of various aspects of method. As outlined earlier, the research questions are:

1. What is the nature of school leadership in Nigerian secondary schools?
2. How is leadership enacted in Nigerian secondary schools?
3. What is the balance between solo and shared leadership in schools?
4. How, and in what ways, is leadership distributed in the case study schools?

These research questions were addressed by following a suitable methodology. According to Schwandt (2001:193), methodology is a ‘theory of how inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the assumptions, principles, and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry’. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2007: 47) add that a methodology is a skill and a recognised way of obtaining data to help comprehend a situation in the best possible terms. It is a systematic process and strategies of investigation set out to find answers for questions or problems in a social world (Creswell, 2003). Consequently, the social scientist investigates issues and problems using an accepted procedure.

Philosophical assumption and research strategy

According to Cohen et al (2000) the research approach chosen can be subjective, objective or mixed in nature and depends on the researcher’s epistemological and ontological views. The interpretivist approach adopted in this study reflects the

researcher's ontological and epistemological position. This researcher believes that reality and truth are the product of individual perceptions and that there are multiple realities shared by a group of people (ontology) and that knowledge is subjective and based on experience and insight (epistemology). According to Creswell (2007: 18), this epistemological assumption implies that the researcher endeavours 'to get as close as possible to the participants being studied' A subjective and interpretive approach was chosen, influenced by the researcher's epistemological and ontological position. The strategy agrees with Denscombe's (2003) phenomenological approach which focuses more on people's interpretation of events and daily occurrence giving rise to multiple realities (ontology). This study is informed by the perceptions and interpretations of principals, vice-principals, teachers, and parents, in four selected secondary schools in Edo State, Nigeria.

As Cohen et al (2000) maintain, in the subjective approach the concern is not with creating universal laws but more with particular individual cases. They assert that 'the principal concern is with an understanding of the way in which the individual modifies and interprets the world [in which] he or she finds himself or herself' (Cohen et al (2000: 8). In this vein, the author examined the perspectives and interpretation of the participants in the four case-study schools. This stance relies on qualitative data, influenced by the approaches identified by Denscombe (2003). These include emphasis on subjectivity rather than objectivity, description more than analysis, interpretation rather than measurement, and agency rather than structure. This approach deals with peoples' perceptions and meanings, attitudes and beliefs, feelings and emotions (Denscombe, 2003), rather than relying on statistics. There is an ontological reality in the four case-study schools, which Cohen et al. (2007:7) refer to as social reality. The next section discusses the research paradigm adopted for this study.

Research Paradigm

A paradigm is a set of underlying beliefs, an assumption or a framework that provides a way of thinking which guides a project (Morrison, 2012; Robson, 2011,

Creswell, 2007). It is a 'basic set of beliefs that guides action' Guba (1990:17). It is defined as 'a systematic set of beliefs, together with their accompanying methods' (Guba and Lincoln, 1985:15). Guba and Lincoln (1994:107-108) add that:

A paradigm may be viewed as a set of basic beliefs or assumptions... that deals with the ultimate of first principles. It represents a worldview that defines for its holder, the nature of the world, the individuals in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its part ...The beliefs are basic in the sense that they must simply be on faith (however argued); there is no way to establish their ultimate truthfulness; if there were, the philosophical debates...would have been resolved millennia ago.

'Research paradigms define for the researcher what they are about and what falls within and outside the limits of legitimate research' (Guba and Lincoln, 1994:108). The research paradigm influencing this study is the interpretivist approach. 'The interpretive paradigm is characterized by concern for the individual' (Cohen et al., 2017: 21). Similarly, the author is concerned about the individuals in this study make sense out of leadership. This approach helps the author to gain understanding of the phenomena that are being explored. Through this approach, it is believed that the social context in which the individual lives helps to shape the outcome of the research. Cohen et. al. (2007:22) argue that the task of the interpretivist researcher is to set out to understand the interpretation of individuals' views of the world around them (Cohen et. al. 2007:22). Thus, for the interpretive researcher, reality is not objectively determined, but socially constructed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005). The social interactions, attitudes and activities of the individuals and participants in this study form the basis of interpretation of their views. For example, Creswell and Miller (2000: 125) see the kind of interpretation as a lens which researchers use in their inquiry. It is from such contextual interrelations that the theories in this research emerged and were formulated. This explains why interpretivists use methods such as interviews and observation to obtain data from real events as the author used in this study (Robson, 2011).

Through his participation in the research environment, the author was able to understand the nature of leadership practices in the case study schools, grounded in the experience of the participants. This suggests why some authors refer to interpretivism as a ‘social constructivist’ approach (Robson, 2011:24). Proponents of interpretivism aim at understanding those practices that individuals engage in, within cultural and institutional settings, by interpreting the meaning that is ascribed to phenomena (Creswell, 2007). Through the research questions, the author engaged with the participants to unpack their perspectives and understanding of various notions of school leadership in the case-study schools. This approach enabled the author to obtain a real-world view of school leadership in the case study settings through his engagement with the participants and the research environment.

However, interpretivism has been criticized on the premise that a ‘lay’ account can never be represented as ‘reality’ (Morrison, 2012:22). It has also been criticised because the findings of such research are not generalizable whereas, with quantitative research, which is associated with the positivist paradigm, it is much easier to secure generalizable findings. Similarly, Silverman (2000) argues that qualitative research cannot be replicated or generalized to a wider context. In contrast, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) claim that qualitative research can achieve the same objectives as quantitative research through thorough planning.

Interpretivism and qualitative research

Strauss and Corbin (1990: 17) define qualitative research as ‘any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification. ‘Qualitative methods can be used to uncover and understand what lies behind any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can be used to gain novel and fresh slants on things about which quite a bit is already known. Also, qualitative methods can give the intricacy of phenomena that are difficult to convey with quantitative methods’ (Strauss and Corbin, 1998:84).

The author used qualitative methods to collect rich data on leadership in secondary schools and, in particular, to examine the extent and nature of distributed leadership in the case study schools in Edo state. It involved a phenomenological approach through which the author examined issues from the people's viewpoints (Morrison, 2012). Yin (2003) argues that the rigour with which interpretivists conduct their research, using multiple sources of evidence, makes such research credible. This involved paying detailed attention to observation and taking notes, conducting interviews, and examining documents related to leadership practice.

Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative research approach, which has many advantages. This study adopts an interpretivist/qualitative approach because it enabled the researcher to achieve the objectives of the methods used in qualitative exploration. The interpretivist/qualitative approach helped the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being explored. In this case, interpretivist/qualitative approach has assisted the researcher to explore the participants and their environments in various leadership perspectives in the four secondary schools investigated in this study. As Hammersley (1992: 195) notes, qualitative research helps 'where the aim is to explore people's perspectives'. In qualitative research, the subjective views of participants contribute to the generation of new findings. Findings are elicited in various ways, even though it often involves a small number of participants in contrast to the large-scale quantitative research. Hewitt-Taylor (2001: 41-42), argues that 'In qualitative data analysis, the main focus is not on quantification of facts, but rather on identifying the meanings and values attributed by individuals in real-life situations, with idiosyncratic and personal views forming an important part of the overall picture'.

According to Creswell (2007), one advantage of this approach is the ability to use several lenses such as case studies, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative research and phenomenology, as methods of enquiry. Although these approaches have been noted for being time-consuming, the researcher is able to observe and interpret

phenomena as well as report them. Phenomena can only be understood through the eye of participants. Thus, this research on distributed leadership is suitable for the researcher to obtain information through the ways in which participants interpret phenomena. The approach allows the researcher a flexible means of eliciting responses about how leadership is practiced within a particular context and setting. The researcher intends to use a qualitative research approach through a multiple case study design.

Case study

Case study is one of the most utilized approaches in qualitative research (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011; Robson, 2011; Yin, 2003). Bassey (1999) describes a case study as a systematic inquiry enlisting boundaries in a specific time. Robson (2011:135) describes case study as that which concerns individuals, organizations, groups or whatever the researcher might be interested in. Yin (2009) emphasizes that case study contributes to the researcher's knowledge of individuals, groups or organizations in a social setting. Case studies are particularly good in qualitative research for many reasons. The following can be understood from Yin's (2009) explanation:

- Case studies ask the 'how' and 'why' in an exploratory study.
- Case studies create room for questions that have optional links which need to be traced over a specified period.
- The design is flexible, depending on the research aims and questions.
- Case study is used in exploring contemporary events where important human behaviour cannot be manipulated.
- Case studies focus on direct observation of events and interviews with individuals.

Several reasons inform the choice of a case study approach in this research. This research is the first major study of distributed school leadership in Nigeria, and the case study approach was suitable for the reasons stated by Yin (2003, 2009),

especially as it relates to researching contemporary events. It is an exploratory case study because it is not building on an existing body of evidence about distributed leadership in Nigeria and a case-study approach is suitable for such research. Merriam (1998: 33) notes that a case study is 'selected for its uniqueness, for what it can reveal about a phenomenon, knowledge we would not otherwise have access to'. What makes such research a case study is the ability of the researcher 'to focus on enquiry around an instance; the unit of analysis, or the case, can be an individual, a programme, an institution, a group, an event, a concept' (Merriam, 1988:44-46). This explains why the researcher is focusing on four similar case study schools to find out how leadership is enacted and why participants in these schools lead in this way.

Yin (2009) distinguishes between single and multiple case studies and the particular circumstances in which each can be used. A single case study is used when the investigator intends to test for an experiment that was initially inaccessible. Such a case study is either 'representative or typical', 'revelatory' or 'longitudinal' (Yin, 2009:52). It is 'used to determine whether theory propositions are correct or whether some alternative set of explanations might be relevant' (Yin, 2009:47).

The author employs multiple case studies because it enables him to explore several cases. Exploring several cases help the author with replication of findings from the different schools. This helps the author to examine the claims made in each school and examines it with another school. This process is carried out though this study. The goal of using multiple case studies is its ability to compare findings. Yin (2004) argues that data from multiple cases strengthen findings and make the interpretation of the research more robust. Multiple case studies are parameters for bringing out various perspectives in an inquiry. Yin (1994) makes a distinction between 'statistical generalization' and 'analytical generalization'. He contends that 'statistical generalization' is not suitable for case studies while Bassey (1999) explains that using multiple case studies enables the researcher to make analytical

generalizations. This underpins the author's reason for conducting multiple case studies as it enables him to conduct cross-case analysis of the four schools.

Supporting the notion of generalization in case studies, Cohen and Manion (1989:124-125) state that:

Unlike the experimenter who manipulates variables to determine their causal significance or the surveyor who asks standardised questions of large, representative samples of individuals, the case study researcher typically observes the characteristics of an individual unit - a child, a clique, a class, a school or a community. The purpose of such observation is to probe deeply and to analyse intensively the multifarious phenomena that constitute the life cycle of the unit... about the wider population to which that unit belongs.

Creswell (2007: 163) refers to this as 'naturalistic generalization' in that, in such a generalization, 'people can learn from the cases either for themselves or to apply to... [other] cases'.

However, the use of case studies by researchers faces many criticisms. One such critique is that it lacks rigour. Commenting on a single case study approach, Robson (2011) and Yin (2009) explain the prejudice against this approach by positivists as being unscientific because researchers centre their investigation on a particular phenomenon without the means to verify data from such an event. Yin (2009, 1994) further explains that, even though the scientific approach proposed by positivist researchers may be used, such an approach is unable to answer the 'how' and 'why' questions which are only realizable by case studies. Case studies are most suitable for exploring leadership activities in each school as it leads the researcher to various interpretations of distributed leadership by participants. One way of improving rigour, therefore, is by multiple case studies, the approach being taken with this enquiry (Bassegy, 1999; Robson, 2011; Yin, 2009).

Sampling

There are two main sampling approaches; probability or non-probability samples (Cohen et al., 2000). According to Merriam (1998), non-probabilistic sampling is used where the researcher intends to explore what is occurring. It ‘is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned’ (Merriam 2009: 61). Cohen et al. (2007: 133) add that ‘a non-probability sample derives from the researcher targeting a particular group, in the full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population’. Creswell (2003) notes that this method of selection enables the researcher to have a better grasp of the research environment.

Sampling of schools

Using a cluster sampling technique, the sample for this study was drawn from the three senatorial districts of the state. Crystal and Bentovi are located in Edo South, Eki in Edo North, and Hilda in Edo Central. The author used a cluster sampling technique because the case study schools were chosen from different regions across Edo State. This method is widely used in small scale research. Stake (1994) explains that the aim of this sampling strategy is a structural representation of cases being studied. As Miles and Huberman (1994) note, qualitative samples are intended to be purposive rather than being random in order to avoid being biased. In this study, the author selected the cases based on his judgement of the leadership practice under investigation (Cohen et al., 2007). These schools were already known to the author and access to the school was straightforward. The four principals of the four secondary schools were from different localities but subject to the same hierarchical leadership from the Ministry of Education. Sampling is purposive because the researcher has previous knowledge of the context and believed that these were appropriate cases to meet the needs of the research (Cohen et al., 2007). *As indicated on page 18, the author was already aware of these four schools because he had visited them in his capacity as a priest. This previous knowledge led him to believe that the schools might be suitable sites to study distributed leadership. These schools were purposively sampled, as they appeared to be more suitable than other schools*

visited in the author's professional capacity. Given the author's sampling strategy, he recognises that these data cannot be generalised to all schools in Edo State, or beyond. However, given the highly centralised nature of Nigerian education, leading to government schools having many common features, a limited degree of analytic generalisation may be appropriate.

Participant sampling

Bryman (2008: 458) notes that 'most writers on sampling in qualitative research...recommend that purposive sampling is conducted'. This involves the selection of participants as key informants who can help in identifying information-rich cases and locations (Cohen et al., 2007: 115). This research adopts purposive sampling, selecting appropriate participants to enable the researcher to address the research questions.

The purposive sample was selected to provide insights from various leaders who collectively constitute the internal leadership and management team in the case study schools, augmented by community leaders. According to Patton (1990: 169), the 'logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research'. It is purposive because the researcher has previous knowledge of the environment and believed that he could find appropriate participants who meet the needs of the research (Cohen et al., 2007). Purposive sampling gave the author the opportunity to select specific participants who can provide detailed information on school leadership in the case study settings. These key informants are the principal, vice principal, heads of departments, teachers and parents' representatives. Cohen et al (2007: 101) argue that there is 'no clear-cut answer, for the correct sample size but depends on the purpose of the study' (Cohen et al. 2007: 101). Cohen et al. (Ibid) recommend that the larger the size of sample, the greater the credibility. The total sample size for this research was forty participants, ten from each school. Table 3.1 indicates the sampling of participants.

Table 3.1: Case study participants

Number of cases	Case	Principals	Vice-principals	Teachers	Heads of Departments	Community Leaders	Total sample size
4	1	1	1	4	3	1	10
	2	1	1	4	3	1	10
	3	1	1	4	3	1	10
	4	1	1	4	3	1	10

The sampling of the teachers and heads of departments relies on non-probability systematic sampling by selecting teachers and heads of departments from lists that were provided, and not to rely on nominations from the principals (Cohen et al. 2007; Cohen and Manion, 1994). This allowed the researcher to have parallel representation of principals, vice-principals, teachers, HODs, and community leaders, each school.

Research Methods

An important aspect of case study research is its ability to use several methods, including interviews, observation and documentary analysis (Yin, 2009:11). This research project was undertaken to understand school leadership in the four-selected government secondary schools. This requires the use of methods to collect data about people's interpretations and perceptions. Multiple methods were used for this research; interviews, observation, documentary analysis and field notes.

Interviews

The use of interviews allowed the participants to engage in the interpretation of real-world experiences at the four schools, and to express their views. Interviews are widely regarded as suitable for qualitative research (Robson, 2011:148). Interviews were conducted with the principals, vice principals, heads of departments, teachers, and community leaders, as shown in Table 3.1.

Interviews are particularly helpful in that non-verbal cues are easily noticed, in ways that questionnaires cannot achieve (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000). Myers (1997) argues that it is common to find researchers using interviews in case studies.

All participants were interviewed in their respective schools. Each school principal provided private rooms for this purpose. This was to protect the confidentiality of each interviewee and to allow them to give their opinions openly. A good interview requires careful listening, with the main questions in mind, and careful probing (Stake: 1995: 65). Given the complex nature of interviewing, they were recorded with the agreement of the participants.

Interviews in qualitative research can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Coleman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2007). Cohen et al., (2000: 273) distinguish between structured and unstructured interviews. 'The structured interview is one in which the content and procedures are organized in advance. This means that the sequence and wording of the questions are determined by means of a schedule and the interviewer is left with little freedom to make modifications... In contrast, ...the unstructured interview is an open situation having greater flexibility and freedom'. The unstructured interview allows the interviewer to pose some open-ended questions and gives the interviewees the opportunity to co-construct the discussion. The direction of the interview is determined by both the interviewee and interviewer and is not predetermined.

This study utilised semi-structured, face-to-face, interviews to collect data. Semi-structured interviews were used because of their many advantages in qualitative research (Denscombe, 2003; Robson, 2000). They were suitable for this study because they offer the flexibility to elicit in-depth responses from participants, by introducing prompts and probes, in response to participants' answers. The use of semi-structured interviews helped the author to obtain participants' perceptions about leadership in their schools. Adopting semi-structured interviews proved to be

comfortable for both the participants, and the author, because participants were relaxed, and rapport was established.

According to Coleman (2012), a semi-structured interview takes the form of a major question, followed by sub-questions. It should be designed in such a way as to avoid jargon, with one question leading to another, aimed at obtaining in-depth information from the interviewee. Merriam (2002: 12) claims that a 'semi-structured interview contains a mix of more and less structured questions in which specific information is desired from the participants, and the largest part of the interview is guided by questions or issues to be explored'. The author's approach also included the introduction of prompts and sub-questions to obtain rich data (Coleman, 2012). A similar set of questions was administered to participants, but with customized probes and prompts, in order to facilitate data analysis. Robson (2011) suggests that the researcher asks sufficient interview questions until a topic is exhausted, but this depended on the time available for each interview. Interviews were recorded with the permission of the participants as addressed in the ethics section. The interview schedules for principals, vice principals, heads of department, teachers, and community leaders (PTA/SBMC), can be found in Appendices A, B, C, D, and E. Interviews lasted between 50 and 60 minutes.

Observation

Merriam (2002:13) notes that 'observation is the best technique when an activity, event or situation can be observed first hand, when a fresh perspective is desired or when participants are not able or willing to discuss the phenomenon under study'. Using observation provided the author with additional data, which could not have been obtained through interviews and documents alone. They were complementary sources for data triangulation. Since the research involved observation of phenomena, it was necessary to design an observation framework with specific areas the researcher intended to observe. Spillane et al (2004) suggest using an observational approach in examining distributed leadership perspectives, to understand how leadership is enacted.

Observation in this study included meetings, where the purpose was to see how leadership was exercised, and how decisions were reached, whether by consensus or through the unilateral actions of school leaders. Another aspect of observation was daily school life, including school assemblies, where the aim was to understand how they were conducted and the roles played by each participant. Informal meetings were held after morning assemblies. These were also observed by the author.

Observation makes it possible to see whether what the people say matches their observed behaviour. It is important to state that the researcher adopted non-participant observation throughout the period of research. Scott (2012) imply a non-participant observation when he said that:

‘this detached stance allows the observers to gain a more comprehensive view of what is being observed; they are less likely to be influenced by the agendas of participants. Second, this stance allows the observers to become more detached from their own specific agenda and from the way they are positioned (i.e. in terms of age, sex and ethnicity) in relation to the subject of their research. Third, it allows them to gain more objective view of the reality being investigated’ (Scott, 2012: 116).

Through observation, the researcher can witness and see how people actually behave, providing direct evidence on how leadership and distributed leadership are practiced. Creswell (2007) suggests that a researcher could observe either as an ‘insider’ or an ‘outsider’ and this researcher was an external researcher. According to Scott (2012), one reason for being an external observer is for the researcher to detach him/herself from the phenomena in order to be objective and not to influence the agenda of the research. ‘The key value of observation is that it deals with behaviour rather than reported behaviour. This is important as there may be a considerable mismatch between what we say and what we do’ (Hammond and Wellington, 2013:112).

This research was conducted using an observational protocol. As noted above, observation involved meetings and school assemblies. The author observed the times that participants arrived at their places of work. Observation provided insights into real life occurrences. However, it may also influence the behaviour being observed, as the researcher may be perceived to distract participants. Creswell (2007) notes that, despite the initial access granted to the researcher, s/he might be accused of spying. However, enough notice was given about observational activity and observing participants did not appear to change their behaviour. Observational data were recorded using field notes.

Documentary analysis

Documentary analysis is often an important aspect of data collection in case studies (Fitzgerald, 2012; Robson, 2011, 1993; Yin, 2003). In this study, documentary analysis included examining different school records, such as meeting minutes and policy statements. Documentary analysis helped the researcher to understand formal expectations about how schools are led and managed. The documents provided valuable insights into leadership behaviours, attitudes and practices.

Fitzgerald (2012) adds that analyzing a document depends largely on the interpretation of the researcher. This usually stems from the research questions. This calls into question the credibility of using documentary evidence as a sole method of inquiry and justifies the use of multiple methods, to provide more robust and compelling sources of evidence.

Pilot Study and Pre-Pilot

A pilot study forms the first stage of data collection (Robson, 2011). Before the first case study, the researcher conducted a pre-pilot of the interview schedule by interviewing school leaders with similar characteristics but who are not part of the main sample. The aim of the pre-pilot was to check that the questions were well understood by participants. It provided the basis for assessing the clarity of research

instruments. The interview schedule seemed clear to the pre-pilot participants and no changes were made as a result.

The researcher treated the first of the four cases as a de-facto pilot study. Robson (2011: 142) calls this a 'dress rehearsal', which is meant to obtain data to be used 'as faithfully as possible and perhaps closer to the usual meaning of a pilot study'. During a pilot study, 'questions that seem not to be understood or questions that are often not answered should become apparent' (Bryman, 2008:248). This provided an opportunity to reflect on the utility of research instruments and to make changes, if necessary. However, no changes were needed as a result of the pilot study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection begins with gaining access to the site of exploration (Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2003, 2009). In this research, data were collected in four schools over a period of 16 weeks. Field work began with documentary analysis, and continued with interviews and observations, in each case. Following data collection in each school, lasting two weeks, preliminary data analysis was completed before the next phase of field work began.

Data analysis

Bassey (2012: 166) suggests that data reduction is the first step in data analysis. 'Case study work usually produces a great deal of data and analysis is needed to condense everything collected into meaningful statement'. This is a process of selecting, focusing, simplifying and transforming data. The next stage is data display which involves organizing and compressing data so that it makes meaning. At every stage of the analysis, the research questions guide the researcher to make sense of the data. According to Bassey (2012), 'this is where the 'how' and 'why' questions are brought to bear on the analytical statements in an attempt to provide understanding of the way things are' (Ibid: 167).

In this research, the data were analyzed manually by coding and sorting related data for easy analysis (Lofland 1971, Bogdan and Bilken 1982). The author listened to the audio tapes of the interviews several times, choosing categories, selecting similar quotations, and gradually sorting out the recurrent themes linked to the research questions. Observational records, field notes, and documentary analysis, were analyzed concurrently. Common themes were identified and developed, and the coding process was constantly updated throughout the analysis (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The observation protocol allowed the researcher to record leadership activities as they occurred. The researcher allowed time between case studies for constructing all the data sets, and analyzing each case. The format of data collection and analysis is shown in table 3.2.

Case/School	Data to be collected	Timeline	Data analysis	Data sets
School 1 Two weeks in 2015	Documents Face to face semi- structured interviews. Observations	Documents examined on approved dates Interviews on different dates agreed upon. Observation of activities in each school.	Coding thematically and analyzing manually	Documents, interview transcripts, field notes.

Table 3.2: Framework for data collection and analysis in one school

Table 3.2 provides a summary of the data collection and analysis processes for one school. The researcher spent two weeks in each case study school, with two weeks

between each case. This allowed the researcher to complete each case study, including initial data analysis, before proceeding to the next school.

As Bassey (2012:156) notes, empirical enquiry ‘means that the starting point is collection of data – usually by asking (and listening to answers of) questions, observing actions or extracting evidence from documents’. Thus, in this research, the data analysis process started with data collection. This was linked to the research questions, as well as looking for patterns in the data, as suggested by Thomas and Harden (2008). The research questions focused on the following themes:

1. The nature of school leadership
2. Leadership enactment
3. Solo and shared leadership
4. Distributed leadership and delegation

Documents from each school were analysed individually, noting commonalities and differences across these sources. For example, in Crystal, documents from 2005-2015 were examined, as shown in table 4.1. These documents indicated the degree of participation in school meetings and the extent of collective decision-making. Common themes were identified during the analysis. This assisted the author to understand how participants in the four case-studies perceived and exercised leadership. It also provided insights into the nature of school leadership. This was followed by interview data sets as well as an observation matrix developed by the author for accurate annotation.

Bassey (2012) argues that data require careful reading and reduction. This approach involves selecting focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the empirical data (Miles & Huberman 1994). The data reduction process involved the coding and categorizing of empirical data. Data from the 40 interview transcripts, and from the documents, were extracted and arranged thematically. Data analysis was carried out manually without the aid of software. Data analysis led to the identification of

recurring themes from the various data sets; participant interviews, documentary analysis, and field notes arising from the author's informal observations. Miles and Huberman (1994) proposed several ways in which data can be analysed. This involves a number of devices, including tabular displays, to manage qualitative data. The author adopted a similar approach in sorting and interpreting data.

Yin (2003) argues that case studies require multiple sources of evidence, with data needing triangulation. Yin (2009) describes a deductive coding technique in which the researcher creates an initial list of codes. During the analysis, the documents, observation, field notes and the interview transcripts were first examined individually and sorted into specific incidents, or stories related by the participants. The cross-case analysis was conducted by carefully analysing each data set across all four schools. During the cross-case analysis, all the interview texts were re-read, to provide an overview of the entire data. It was during this process that key themes were generated, such as 'team leadership', 'shared leadership' and 'democratic' school leadership. For example, some participants used the term 'working together' to mean team leadership or working as team, although understanding of this notion varied across contexts. By applying the various concepts, the notion of 'allocative distributed leadership' emerged from this study. Expressions such as 'I do not work alone', or 'the principal hardly takes a decision without involving others', indicates notions of team leadership and collaboration. Participation in the leadership process was also seen as an example of staff empowerment.

Ethical Approach

The author sought and received ethical approval from the University of Nottingham to conduct this research, granted in December 2014 (see appendix F). The researcher followed the British Educational Research Association's (BERA's) Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2011), which have been adopted by the School of Education. Protecting the entire process of data collection, including the interests of the participants and the researcher, is a central concern. These concerns include informed consent, avoiding harm to participants, confidentiality and

anonymity, and respect for participants' rights when arranging access to research sites.

Busher and James (2012: 91) note that the 'researcher cannot tell senior staff in the school the views offered by participants in a project' even if the senior staff are the principal or vice-principal. This situation arose in one of the case study schools and the researcher declined the request. As Denscombe (2003) points out, researchers are expected to respect the rights and dignity of the participants, avoid harm for the participants and operate with honesty and integrity in the collection, analysing and dissemination of the findings.

Informed consent

Safeguarding participants during the interview included the use of informed consent forms. Informed consent is one way of ensuring that there is no motive of deception. It has been described as 'consent that participants give in order to participate in research after they have been informed about the purpose of the research and the stages and modes of data collection' (Hartas, 2010: 444). Besides showing respect to the participants, it also makes them more likely to lend their support for the project (Busher and James, 2012). Bryman (2008: 694) suggests that 'the prospective research participants should be given as much information as might be needed to make an informed decision about whether or not they wish to participate in a study'. Participants should also know the extent to which they might be involved in the research. Robson (2011) notes that it has increasingly become a norm to present an 'informed consent' form to people before embarking on research. The BERA Ethical Guidelines include participants' consent forms. The approved participants' information sheet can be found in Appendix F. The participants' consent forms can be found in Appendices G and H.

Avoiding harm

It is imperative for the author to inform participants about the extent of their involvement in the research. Hammond and Wellington (2013:61) warn against

situations whereby researchers deceive participants by pretending to be who they are not. Such deceptive attitudes could be harmful to participants when they eventually discover the true identity of the researcher. Beneficent action, such as allowing participants to voluntarily withdraw from the research process, was explained and impressed on the participants with a further assurance that their withdrawal would not be taken as a refusal to cooperate with the researcher. It was also necessary to assure them that no harm would be done to them as a result of the research by maintaining the confidentiality of information provided. Such an assurance may also create a relationship of trust between the researcher and participants.

Confidentiality and anonymity

In this study, the author assures participants of protection by withholding their identity from public knowledge. Hartas (2010) argues that the circumstances surrounding an interview might unintentionally lead to compromising the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants. This calls for careful handling of the interview process. The author respected the identity of participants by not disclosing their names or those of their schools. Participants were assured that the research was for academic purposes only. For this reason, pseudonyms were used to describe the names of schools and participants to protect anonymity.

Access to schools and participants

Negotiating access to the research site requires a formal agreement between the researcher and participant and is very important to any study. As Busher and James (2012: 101) argue, 'negotiation is central to persuading participants that they are protected from intentional or unintentional harm' so that they might be free to 'present themselves truthfully'. Frequently, the scope of the study determines the extent to which access can be gained (Robson, 2011). Access is often gained through the gatekeeper. In preparing for this research, the author gained access to four schools and explained the purpose and nature of the research. This was done through a telephone conversation based on the existing personal relationship between the

author and the heads of schools (gatekeepers). The informed consent form was obtained from the university ethics committee and sent to the respective schools and participants before the commencement of the research in each of the case study schools. Those who agreed to participate signed their forms in the presence of the researcher. This was further made possible through the various heads of schools in each case study school. The issue of access to schools for the purpose of the study was resolved once the head teachers agreed to participate.

Trustworthiness, Validity and Authenticity

Trustworthiness refers to the degree to which the data obtained, and the interpretations made, capture the reality, as seen from the perspective of the participants (Cresswell and Miller, 2000:124-130). Lincoln and Guba (2005) argue that the criteria for trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability, the naturalists' equivalent to the conventional terms such as internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity. The researcher utilized multiple sources of data to establish trustworthiness; interviews, documentary analysis, observation and field notes produced data, which were cross-checked for enrichment and credibility.

Validity

Seale and Silverman (1997) note that ensuring validity is mostly the domain of quantitative research, but this is contested, and does not mean that qualitative researchers cannot use this term. They explain that validity in qualitative research can be achieved through ensuring rigour during the process. According to Hammond and Wellington (2013), validity in research invokes the 'appropriateness' of measurement that is used to illustrate whether the research properly explains the subject of investigation. Hammersley (1987:69): asserts that 'an account is valid or true if it represents accurately those features of the phenomena, that it is intended to describe, explain or theorise'. Validity also relates to capturing the process adopted by the researcher (Hammersley, 1987).

To establish validity in this research, the author employed member checking, triangulation, thick description, and reflexivity of participants, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), Maxwell (1996), and Merriam (1998). The author spent two weeks in each school, interacting with the environment, interviewing, observing the participants, examining various documents repeatedly, and comparing the findings from different data sets, to achieve validity.

The author's field notes added credibility, as he checked for consistency between data sets. By using multiple sources of data, and ensuring that data were properly checked, the author established validity. The difficulty of generalizing from case study findings was addressed to some extent through triangulation (see below). The threat to validity arising from the researcher's prior knowledge of the principals was avoided through separating data from pre-existing knowledge. The researcher based his reflections, observational data and field notes on what occurred during his field work and not on his previous knowledge of these leaders.

Authenticity

Lincoln and Guba (1981) observe that, while all research aims at being objective in terms of 'truth value', and 'consistency', the process of acquiring such truth differs between qualitative and quantitative enquiries. Yin (2003) suggests that one way of ensuring authenticity is by multiple uses of data sources. The researcher combined data from audio tapes, observation and documentary evidence to establish whether findings are consistent. Authenticity in this study was established by ensuring that there was full and balanced data from the case-study schools (Cohen et al., 2011). Drawing on the advice of Cohen et al., (2011), the author ensured that care was taken in the presentation of the multiple realities of leadership in these schools. This means fairness and consistency in the representation of findings from all four schools.

Triangulation

Triangulation is the use of multiple methods of data collection in studying human behaviour (Cohen et al. 2011). Triangulation in this study involved comparing data from different stakeholders about their views of leadership practice. This was achieved through respondent and methodological triangulation (Bush 2012b). Data sets from individual participants were compared to achieve respondent triangulation. These comprised perspectives from principals, vice principals, heads of departments, teachers, and community leaders.

Methodological triangulation was achieved through comparing data from interviews, documentary analysis, observation, and field notes. Bowen (2009) asserts that the aim of triangulation is to bring about convergence of evidence in order to make research credible. 'By examining information collected through different methods, the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study' (Bowen, 2009: 28). The careful use of data sets from participants, and the use of multiple methods, underpinned the validity and trustworthiness of this research.

Overview

This chapter discussed the research design and methodology. The study used four methods of enquiry; interviews, documentary analysis, field notes and observations. The chapter explained how the study was guided by the research questions. A qualitative multiple case-study approach enabled the researcher to explore leadership practice in each school and to compare such practices across schools. Purposive sampling was adopted in the selection of case-study schools and participants. Forty participants were involved in the study, with parallel samples of leaders and teachers in each school. Prior to data collection, the research instruments were validated by administering them to former principals. Data analysis focused on comparing data sets to establish a clear picture of leadership in each school. Validity was enhanced by methodological and respondent triangulation. Trustworthiness was also established through rigorous data analysis. This chapter

also addressed ethical issues carefully; informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and avoiding harm to participants.

The next chapter presents the findings from the first case study school.

CHAPTER FOUR: CASE STUDY ONE – CRYSTAL SECONDARY SCHOOL

Introduction

The purpose of this case study is to explore the leadership practices of the Crystal secondary school (pseudonym), Edo State, Nigeria. While using a multiple case study approach, it also employs a quasi-phenomenological research approach in examining administrative practices in which the school head engages the expertise of colleagues driving at common goals. The chapter also employs a school leadership distribution framework to describe the context of the school as well as the various participants in school leadership. The data for this research, as noted in chapter 3, were gathered from a variety of sources including interviews, documentary analysis, observations and field notes.

This study focuses on the school leaders and investigates in what sense the leaders in Crystal secondary school exercise leadership. The participants were mostly not familiar with the concepts of leadership distribution and this made the data collection varied and multidimensional. The participants were also inclined to see the principal and senior management team as the only leaders in the school. In order to understand how leadership is addressed in this school, the researcher applied a descriptive approach in exploring the attitudes of the stakeholders in school leadership distribution. He was particularly interested in ascertaining the experiences of participants, and their interpretation of their circumstances, as they contribute to the growth of their school and how they see themselves as school leaders.

Context of Research: Profile of Crystal Secondary School

Crystal secondary school is located in the Edo North senatorial district of Edo State, Nigeria. The school is situated in an urban area of the state serving several adjunct communities. The area is approximately 22 miles from the main capital city of the state, Benin City. It is a secondary school renowned for producing some top

members of the civil service and some senior citizens of the state. The major trade of the local community is farming. There are both civil and public servants in the area, yet, with very little attention to white collar jobs because jobs are scarce. The area is also inhabited by petty traders whose farm produce forms the main source of income for educating their children. Crystal secondary school was selected for this research because the researcher believed that he would be able to identify exemplary distributed leadership practices underpinned by the theoretical framework of this study. The school was also known for its good academic performance with a steady improvement at the end of every school year assessment set by the state ministry of education.

Data Collection at Crystal

Examination of documents

The documents were examined first because schools were on holidays after access had been granted. Once the principal had granted permission to examine the books, the researcher decided to explore those leadership activities referred to in documents that would help the researcher to uncover aspects of leadership activity such as collegiality, the process of decision making in the school, and indications of leadership distribution, as expressed in the literature. As at the time of this review, five meetings had been held within four months

The focus was to examine documents spanning different eras of leadership within the school. This gave rise to examining school records, including minutes of staff meetings between January 2005 and March 25, 2015, when the first analysis began. The purpose of examining documents from 2005 was to give an insight into different perspectives and accounts and to relate them to present day phenomena. Crystal secondary school has experienced three principals in this period. Also examined were the school time tables and duty rosters.

The minutes book shows that there were a number of participants in the leadership of the school. Within this period, the school witnessed leadership under three

principals. The first was from 2005 to 2010, the second from 2010 to January to 2015 and the third from January 2015 up to the time of this research. It revealed that there were different leadership approaches adopted by these school heads during their tenure as principals. This will aid in understanding the prevailing leadership phenomena when compared to previous approaches, implemented by former principals, within the same case study. For example, there were five official meetings held in 2005, two in 2006; one in 2007; seven in 2008; one in 2009; five in 2010, two in 2011; three in 2012; two in 2013; two in 2014 and five as of March 2015, when the current phenomenon was explored. The implication is that there were more meetings held within a space of three months, when the documents were examined, with the likelihood of more meetings during the remaining part of the academic session. However, no staff meeting was observed at the time of this research.

Table 4.1: Showing numbers of meetings held each academic year at Crystal

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of meetings per year	5	2	1	7	1	5	2	3	2	2	5

Semi-structured interviews: The initial process

At Crystal, 10 interviews were conducted with school leaders, namely - the principal, vice principal, heads of department, form teachers (those assigned specific classes) and teachers (with no specific class allotment). The interviews were conducted during May 2015 and audio recorded with the agreement of participants. Table 4.2 gives information about the participants.

Table 4.2: Demography of participants from Crystal secondary school

Name of School	Crystal secondary school	Staff names		Staff Experience	
Senatorial district	Edo South				
Principal	1	Maja		21 to 25 years	
Vice Principal	1	Dele		18 to 21 years	
HODs	3	Deji, Nathan and Calvin		16 to 18 years	
Teachers	4	Ogun, Alero, Ese and Ebeh		3 to 9 years	
PTA/SBMC	1	Obasuyi		Under 1 year	
Number of participants	10				

Crystal Secondary School Leadership and Management Structure

Crystal Secondary School is a state-run school. It has one principal, six vice principals, and 53 teachers, 21 male and 32 female. The principal is a male Maja - (pseudonym) who had only been appointed four months earlier and had taken over the leadership from the previous principal who had spent 22 years as a teacher at the school, and an additional eight years as principal. Maja's leadership approach was referred to by the teachers interviewed as: 'democratic', 'participatory', 'cordial' and 'encouraging'. Maja's predecessor was referred to as 'intransigent' and 'heavy handed'; a situation that many interviewees regarded as unacceptable in modern times. The inference here is that teachers were undergoing some changes from a leadership approach that was dictatorial to a more fluid approach which seemed to allow greater participation of members. As principal, Maja is at the apex of the hierarchical structure of the school. He is responsible for organizing the day to day activities in terms of execution of policies and allotment of tasks. He is well known by teachers, students and parents having served as a teacher for 11 years, as head of department for three years, and as vice principal for four years, before his new appointment.

Crystal secondary school has a total student population of over 3,000 and there are over 15,000 residents in the locality. The school comprises several sections or

‘arms’, ranging from senior secondary (SS) 1 to 3. Each arm has classes from A to F. For example, there is SS1 A, SS1 B, SS1 C to SS1 F. Teachers shared their responsibilities with one another. The leadership pattern seems to be ‘top-down’, with the principal at the apex giving direction and setting goals. Both the principal and teachers state that they share leadership responsibilities, but only to a certain degree. The leadership structures, as explained by the respondents, seem to be mainly hierarchical but with some collaborative nuances. Even though students were not interviewed, the narratives from the interviewees, which were supported by observational data, revealed that students also had roles within the school’s organizational structure.

The structure begins with the ministry of education because it is the employer and indirectly manages the school through the principal. Administratively, the principal is the head of the school. He is followed in the leadership structure by the vice principal (administration) and vice principal (academic) respectively. Within the vice principal (academic) structure are the heads of departments (HODs), form teachers, who are usually assigned classes, and the subject teachers, who have no other specific roles other than teaching, unless they are co-opted onto committees. The last in the structure is the school prefect. This evidence was verified during the interviews.

The interviews followed the documentary analysis in this case study, a sequential design, since schools had reopened, and participants were available for interview. The interview schedules are attached as appendices. The interviews were intended to obtain information about participants’ understanding of school leadership, linked to the research questions. The interview schedules for the principal, vice principal, HOD, teachers and PTA member can be found in appendices A, B, C, D and E. The findings also cover field-note, observations and documents. An example of the researcher’s field-notes is available in appendix F. The main themes arising from this case, linked to the research questions, are:

1. Nature of school leadership
2. Leadership enactment
3. Solo and shared leadership
4. Distributed leadership and delegation

Nature of School Leadership

The principal explained the nature of school leadership and its structure. He said that the organizational structure takes into account the goals of the school which are to:

Carry everyone along in the process of leadership...everyone takes his or her responsibility and we work together [and smiled] (Principal).

The principal's narrative suggests that he explores the leadership capabilities of other staff. The description of the structure was supported by the vice-principal and the HODs. According to the principal:

We normally have the ministry (of education) in the structure because they are the employers (they act like a board of governor). The ministry is responsible for the funding of schools... and to provide the curriculum. Although...funding is hard to come by these days (well that is a different matter, he said and smiled). But right here, myself - the principal, vice principal administration and vice principal academic, the Guidance Counsellor... the school Bursar, Teachers and prefects...work together to achieve the objectives of our school. Horizontally, you have the V.P. academic, HODs, 'form teachers', subject teachers and students' (Principal).

He claimed that the structure enables him to carry out both administrative and academic functions. The principal described the leadership approach as 'democratic'; where everyone is a participant. In this way, the principal's explanation meant that leading the school was not just the task of the principal but of everyone in leadership positions. In examining the documents, the researcher

discovered that the opinions of other members of staff were sought and, in some cases, applied at meetings. The principal also gave reasons why this structure was imperative:

This helps for the smooth running of the school system because the principal cannot do everything all by himself. It gives room for other staff to participate in the running of the school... for example, the selection of prefects and student leaders, if you impose somebody it might not be the choice of the students, then there will be disobedience among students...and you might find yourself in a situation where you will have to be settling conflict between those you have appointed against those that the staff and students have suggested... the structure enables the positive impact of others (Principal).

The views of the principal about school leadership structure were corroborated by the vice-principal. She added that the structure has enabled a dynamic relationship since the appointment of the new principal, Maja. Her reason was that the previous principal had a reputation for 'doing things all by himself'. She claimed that things had begun to change with the new principal. She explained more:

Before he came, those recognized were the VP Administration, VP Academics and maybe one other person the principal was using as the admission officer but when he [the new principal], came he tried to share duties to all the senior teachers. I am in charge of allocation of subjects and class teachers. I am also in charge of teaching, making sure that classes are taught...Then there is a VP in charge of admission...then there is another who is in charge of 'corpors' (members of the National Youth Service Corps) that are assigned to the school... We also have other supervisors (Vice principal).

The vice principal explained that the leadership structure might appear hierarchical but, the way in which it is operated is democratic. This appears to be the case during the researcher's observation during the morning assemblies. The headship of the principal includes assigning functions to his subordinates and, in this way, he joins forces with members. Her explanation is that everyone is involved in the process of

leadership. As vice principal in charge of administration, she also adopts a democratic approach, as it stems from the principal:

The principal is very dynamic and leads in such a way as to get optimum utilization of all staff... he does not know it all and does not say it all - he gives room for others to exercise their roles. He delegates duties to those immediately after him. I assign leadership roles with my colleagues - in fact we try to work together. I allocate subjects to teachers. It is a shared leadership responsibility. I supervise as vice principal, I determine which teacher goes to SS1, SS2 or SS3 and who should be class teacher (Vice Principal).

A practical aspect of this allotment was evident at one of the researcher's observations. It was at the staff room during break time. The vice principal suddenly appeared and assigned a task to one of the teachers. This attitude further supports the idea of hierarchical leadership within the school structure. One of the HODs, Deji, explained the leadership structure this way:

I see him as somebody who doesn't want the administration to rest only on his shoulders. He doesn't want to be seen as 'a be all and end all' in the school system. What I'm trying to say is that he carries most of us along, those of us who are his contemporaries and those of us who are higher up at least in the echelon of this school before he does anything, he invites us for discussion before telling the general staff (HOD).

The HOD's job description was implied in the documents. Excerpts showed the extent of staff involvement during meetings and also their leadership activities. For example, teachers were encouraged to take leading roles in the capacity assigned to them. It suggests a structure that recognises the cooperation of members even where roles were assigned hierarchically. The agenda for each meeting showed how work is allocated to staff. The principal was quoted as saying:

I enjoin you my respected colleagues to kindly join hands in moving this administration forward by taking seriously the duties assigned to you. As you all

know, I have a responsibility to ensure that we work together as endorsed by the ministry (Minutes book 2).

The quotation above shows that the principal was seeking the collaboration of members. The findings indicate a combination of hierarchical, shared and distributed leadership. It shows that accountability and collegiality were the main leadership traits. These were constantly influenced by perceived bureaucratic interference by the government. The principal also anticipated collaboration from colleagues. The minutes book also stated that:

Every teacher is expected to use his or her position for the service of the school, in such a way that it will be beneficial to the overall objectives of [the] school (Minutes book 14/01/2015).

From observation, the researcher gathered that the structure was mostly hierarchical. There was a chart hanging on the wall in the principal's office showing the school organogram. There were many situations during the shadowing that informed this judgement. A member of staff reported to the principal an event that ensued in the school compound that morning. Hence, teachers were also in the habit of reporting issues to their superior like HODs. While the principal listened to the complaint, he drew the attention of the researcher and said: 'You can see for yourself what I was pointing out to you earlier [that], I do not work alone. There are people to report to me when there are serious issues of concern'. The researcher's field-notes supported this impression:

(8:30am) My appointment with the principal for interview. As I entered his office, he welcomed me. Just then, a teacher walked in to inform the principal of the presence of a school inspector from the ministry of education and said: 'Sir, someone from the C.I.E.'s office is here'. He attended to him quickly and continued with the interview. On the left-hand side of the principal was a copy of the 'organogram' and a school time table (Field-notes May 2015).

The alert of a visitor by one of the junior teachers, and subsequent other interventions, were indications of the leadership structure embedded in the hierarchy.

Another HoD, Calvin, commented that:

The principal seldom does anything without consulting people...although he is the top of the leadership structure, he assigns duties to his vice principals and heads of departments. We, the HODs, help in achieving the smooth administration of the school. Like my fellow HODs I assign specific task to those working under me... who in turn pass on the work to the prefects who help to maintain law and order in the class, if the teacher hasn't reported for class - that's the structure it is a hierarchical structure (HOD).

Other teachers, Ogun, Alero, Ese and Ebeh also commented on the structure, that is more or less hierarchical. It indicates leadership at different strata especially from top to bottom. Members of staff seem to be allowed to contribute to meetings, lending support to the school's senior leadership. Information was passed from the senior members of the school down to the lowest point of the structure. The views of the participants are represented by Ogun:

We have the principal, the VP (administration), VP (academic) and bursar. Then under the VP (administration) we have the students, the school prefect; under the administration, we have the supervisor, teachers, school secretary and messenger but these days we don't get secretaries and messengers any more whenever he wants to talk to us the staff he passes the information through the VPs except when there is a general staff meeting. He talks to every one of us on issues from the Ministry or personal issues but when it comes to duties and responsibilities, he tells the VPs what to do and they pass it on to the staff - at times, he calls a staff meeting for the staff only but if the students are involved it will be on the assembly ground but if it is individual staff, the person is called to the office (Ogun).

The PTA chairman, who had been elected two months before this interview, also agreed with the various descriptions of the nature of school leadership, that it follows a hierarchical structure. But there are also situations whereby the members sometimes take initiatives; as long as their purpose was to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the school. This was particularly evident during the researcher's field notes. Most teachers were seen to be taking time to ensure that the classes assigned to them were well behaved at the assembly ground. The vice principals at various times were seen giving instructions to other teachers. For example, while the researcher was in the staff room, the vice principal (administration) emphatically requested that teachers should submit their work book to her office before the closing hour. Her reason for this approach might be linked to the fact that she takes direct orders from the principal and in turn passes it on to the subordinates. Such an approach suggests the use of authority associated with hierarchy. Thus, the structure of the school showed that power is centrally located at the apex of the school but flows down through assigned functions. The impression from the document is that, even though the school structure suggests a hierarchical model that is simply vested in the principal, in practice, there is a wide range of decentralized leadership. Although this appears to be delegation, it might be understood as their own approach to leadership distribution.

The principal's leadership approach

There were several views on the leadership approach of the principal, who claimed to be a democratic leader. It was revealed that the approach was aimed at setting the direction of the school and where possible to exert influence to help him achieve his goals:

I think I adopt a democratic process where everybody is a participant. For instance, in electing the prefects (school Perfects), it wasn't the sole responsibility of the school principal to say 'X' or 'Y'; or this should be. Students had input, teachers had input. There are inputs from other teachers for selecting prefects based on his character - his integrity - I believe I try to carry them along so that they can in turn lead others (Principal).

The principal's idea of democratic leadership appears to flow from his personal rapport with his staff. He seemed to exercise some influence on members of staff. He was highly esteemed by most teachers. The principal had managed to build relationships with members within a short period. There were elements of change within the school as the principal appeared open and approachable. In the course of observation, it was easy to notice the level of communication between principal and colleagues. He is equally respected for having held significant positions before he was promoted as principal. Some participants also gave their perspectives about the principal's style of leadership:

His leadership approach is very cordial and very friendly he is able to carry everybody along everybody is trying to put in his or her best because of his approach. I would say he's democratic (Dele – vice principal).

Another teacher described her understanding of the leadership role of the principal by the following comments:

I see him like a father because he wants to operate an open-door policy he doesn't bully us he is the man who wants everybody to move along with the trend of things. He is a man who gives information when it is necessary because he wants all of us to be carried along and he also encourages us to do our job as and when due (Ese).

As noted, the participant's description of the personality of the principal indicated that he was accepted by his colleagues as one who mediates in the daily affairs of the school in such a way that collaboration was elicited from staff. Following the same trend, the PTA chairman, Obasuyi, presented the principal's leadership approach this way:

Let me put it this way, there is a concordance of purpose between the principal and staff this is seen in the ways they meet to deliberate on issues affecting the overall development of the school. He inspires confidence in others. The few meetings we

have had have been very productive in the sense that everyone participated and made their opinions heard. I feel he will be able to move the school forward (PTA chairman).

Leadership influence

From the foregoing, it is reasonable to conceive of the democratic leadership approach as supportive to the aspirations of participants. The democratic leadership style appears to be a process that has motivated the participants to project attitudes that inspired confidence among other staff. Statements like ‘I see him like a father’ and ‘he does not bully us’ suggests an affective declaration that the leadership exudes assurance. It also shows the extent to which interaction exists within the school leadership and management and characteristic of leadership approaches. As Calvin acknowledged:

The principal is a hardworking man and very close to his teachers, his behaviour, his disposition is inspiring - if you see the way he does things, you also will like to take after him (HOD).

This quotation suggests t transformational leadership, not distributed leadership. However, in practice, it was difficult to examine leadership practices in this case study without finding instances of other forms of leadership.

Leadership Enactment

The researcher explored how participants make sense of school leadership. He explored the patterns and mechanisms that motivate teachers to perform their tasks better to improve the school. Documentary evidence from Crystal suggests that leadership enactment involves multiple implementation of objectives by stakeholders. The documents show that many members of staff contribute to discussions. A significant dialogue between the principal and other staff often led to decision-making. This suggests a participative climate. At meetings, targets about school direction were discussed and those to specific targets were identified. An excerpt illustrates the principal’s comment during one of the meetings:

As we begin the school year, it is important that we lay out our concerns for this school. We shall examine the past results as already indicated on the agenda, we are going to assign jobs to teachers based on the record of achievements in their discipline. This will guide us and help us to make our focus (Minutes book 14/01/2015).

Although the above extract appears to focus on the school plan, it also provides an indication of how leadership is practiced in the school. The discussion of the school's objectives, and their implementation, set the tone for comments on the exercise of leadership. From observation, much of this depended on what the school leader had to do in order to improve the school and achieve success. Dele's comment underscores her notion of leadership enactment. She explained:

Some senior teachers are in charge of supervision, another in charge of admission, another in charge of lesson notes for the sciences. We have the academic and exams committees - we meet to screen the questions. There is a VP in charge of labour, all the labour masters are under him, we also have the duty roster. The school guidance counsellor is usually in charge of assembly but sometimes the principal and I visit the assembly to observe it (Dele).

Another teacher, Deji, whose job description included being a HOD and a supervisor, stated that it was his responsibility to ensure duty compliance by staff as well as to supervise classes in terms of monitoring. The role was allotted by the principal based on seniority. He also gave reasons why his colleagues participate in leadership roles which include collaboration:

Leadership involves everybody here and does not revolve around one person. The only thing is that the head gives the directive and at the end of the day everybody makes a contribution. They participate in leadership roles because everybody is involved - you are called in and, so you must make your own input. For example, there is somebody who normally draws up the time-table - he calls for opinions and

you bring your contribution, he calls everybody whether you are junior staff or senior staff in order that the teaching and learning will not be hampered (Deji).

A junior member of staff also explained her understanding of leadership practice and the ways in which she participates in school leadership. She explained that leadership is enacted by the task performed by each member of staff in different capacities. In this way, leadership is practice across a number of participants.

When writing exams, the principal assigns the coordinator, from the coordinator he assigns teachers under the coordinator who will now take care of each of the classes - we have SS1, SS2, SS3. He assigns teachers to those classes with the help of the coordinator because he cannot come and do it alone. I help to supervise the students and coordinate them, making sure that there is no noise in class and that students are well dressed and not just leave the duties to the vice principals alone (Ogun).

In some ways, leadership enactment is linked to shared leadership because tasks could only be performed in conjunction with others. As Ebeh explained, ‘...the allocation of duties gave us the opportunity to exercise our aspects as school leaders...’ However, the extent to which leadership is exercised varied from one participant to another.

Team leadership

There were many ways in which the school’s leadership approach was explained. One such approach was team leadership. The principal also referred to team leadership in the course of his interview. During the interview, there was an interruption by a member of staff, which afforded the opportunity to gain insights into aspects of team work in the school; a head of department had just visited the principal and related some official matters. Similarly, the vice principal (academic) was at the office to give an ‘on the spot’ report to the principal. This shows some practices that point towards team leadership. Almost immediately, the principal added:

Very well, like what you have just witnessed now, there is an adage that ‘a tree does not make a forest’. I feel there is a need for a kind of network of interaction in the system, and sustainability. I cannot possibly be everywhere to perform all the duties of my office. I definitely need the assistance of those competent members who are also willing to offer their expertise when needed. For a head to feel like doing it alone, he will not succeed because challenges will come, but with unity and collaboration, we are able to surmount any problems. I depend on them as much they depend on me and together, we put in our best for the good and benefit of the school (Principal).

He also expressed the idea of team work in terms of decision making, whereby every member of staff is allowed and encouraged to make contributions:

It is a collective effort, it has something to do with the way we interact with one another because we see it as the responsibility of all. For instance, we are planning to have inter-house sport. It is going to be the input of all teachers, it shall consider the time it will be held, people to be involved, the preparations to be made and everybody will have an opportunity to participate so that at the end of the day, the success and failure will be taken by all. The roles and responsibility of every member is defined and those with required skills are identified. Special committees will be set up to take certain roles and work together with other members and, in the end, committee heads will report to the house and decide on further actions (Principal).

Calvin corroborated this. He is one of the HODs who has spent as much time in the school as the principal. He believes that the school has finally arrived at the point of improving students’ achievement through team work, which was lacking in the previous administration due to bureaucratic bottlenecks. The team members integrate their individual work in order to achieve set objectives. This is obvious in complex situations and environments. He sheds light on leadership through team work. He also gave reasons for this team approach:

The work here is a collective bargain...., everybody now works together. It was difficult in the past.... There was a time when a colleague was ill, and I had to teach his subject even when he didn't ask me to ... there is lots of team work...when it concerns teaching, we put our heads together. The right idea doesn't have to come from the team leader...it could be sourced from any member...We engage in team work because you cannot work in isolation and to get desired results ... you can call on your colleague to assist you when you are not available (HOD).

Similarly, Deji offered his views about team leadership in his department. Team work was basically the coming together of individuals working independently with a common purpose. Here, knowledge and ideas are shared, and the person with the most suitable plan is utilized for the good of all. And the role of the head might be that of coordinating the group.

I will give an example in my area. I teach Chemistry, other teachers in my department teach along with me. As HOD, I call meetings and we meet to discuss topics to be taught, ideas are contributed. Such a teacher is happy to see that her ideas are working for the benefit of the students...I engage in team work because no man is an island ... no man can claim that he knows everything ... you can even learn from your students (HOD).

The implication here is that the output of team work is closely related to services rendered by members. It indicates the fluidity that can be derived from any member of the team. It further shows that there can be interaction of opinion from the small groups that form a basic leadership unit as in team. Since knowledge differs, working together appears to be beneficial to those engaged in the team. Team leadership appears to be beneficial, not only to the school but also to the individuals involved. Apart from the participants' responses, the researchers' observations and documentary analysis show that team work can help to foster learning, as well as a teaching community. As a learning community, stakeholders are able to learn from each other about new ideas and developments. As a teaching community, the ideas obtained through mutual learning are transmitted to the students.

Decision making

The vice principal, Dele, noted that the school had witnessed tremendous improvement since the arrival of the principal due to his leadership approach. She gave examples of several meetings they have had where staff members were able to express their views about the way the school is managed. Essentially, meetings are held by the principal, together with the vice principals, who form the senior management of the school, before calling for a general staff meeting. She attributed the success to the collaboration from other teachers in the school, as well as the foresight of the principal. She claims that such meetings have been very successful and that everyone endeavours to apply the decisions made at meetings, even though there are circumstances where some members felt 'conscripted', because they did not want to attend any meeting:

Decision-making right now under this principal is shared because he listens when others make suggestions and works with the suggestions if they are relevant. I can say that we are working together to achieve the best possible result...Collectively taking decisions is a necessary process of bringing about cohesion ...having said that, not everyone is happy with the choice of decision and how it comes about (Vice principal).

The above quotation shows that there can be some difficulties arising from the decision-making process, even where the principal might appear to carry everyone along. For Calvin, decision-making involves everyone, but passes from top to bottom. It captures the point made by others in this research. A similar view was expressed by Deji:

Decision-making here is top to bottom. For instance, if exams need to take place ... once the principal receives the information, he passes it to the vice principal (academic) ... that one now calls all the school heads, then from the school heads we hold meetings, call all the form teachers inform them before it is announced to all others (HOD).

Everyone seemed to take responsibility for his or her class in spite of the fact that a decision was reached at a meeting. There was no formal staff meeting in place at the time of this investigation. However, minutes books suggest that decisions were taken collectively. For example, the senior members of school leadership reported on the activities of their departments at the staff meetings:

We agreed that the new curriculum should be studied individually by my colleagues and then would give it the necessary attention it deserves. I should like to commend those who responded to our decision and urge others to do likewise (Minutes book).

This sub-section appears to suggest managerial leadership and represents another way in which leadership was conceived and practiced in the school.

Conditions supporting decision-making

At Crystal, the experience of individual teachers often counts as one means of resolving organisational dilemmas. In the selection of prefects, for example, it became necessary to get the involvement of both staff and students to prevent factions and prejudices.

It is necessary to carry people along...we do this by seeking the views of others...we look the experiences of those whose opinions are sought.... One of the VPs usually takes the responsibility of identifying teachers that would select school prefects...we also get the views of students as well...we do our best to get everyone involved...but as of now, we know it is not a perfect system as yet (Principal).

The researcher's investigation showed that there are a number of high ranking managers in the school whose experiences have assisted in improving school leadership. As shown in table 4.1., the years of experience of senior members of the school seem to have contributed to resolving important issues at meetings, leading to what appears to be the smooth running of the school.

Visionary leadership

The findings suggest that the principal is portrayed as visionary. Participants supported the views of each other as they relate how the school's plans are made. School planning involves inputs from staff. Some staff argued that the principal was the main initiator of the plans for the school. He proposes the agenda for discussion while other contributions are welcomed from members. This was evidenced in the documents. One such occasion was the proposal for an annual inter house sports event.

I would say that we are somewhat lucky with the new leadership of the new principal... your opinion counts...we engage in long plans for the school. Our common objectives are harnessed, and we endeavour to achieve those plans as the year rolls by. He tries to carry us along and plan with us (Nathan)

Respondents expressed and affirmed their views about the goals of the school. Some believe that school vision and goals are collectively discussed and brought about by all members of staff, regardless of their leadership position. School leaders are expected to take initiatives and assist in whatever capacity they find themselves. Such leadership cuts across both formal and informal leadership roles. Parents are represented in this role by the PTA chairman, who works together with the school committees in the implementation of decisions, as well as in presenting to the school the policies of the government.

Solo and Shared Leadership

An approach to solo and shared leadership can be seen from the perspective of the roles played by participants in school leadership. The findings revealed that many teachers acknowledged themselves as leaders because of the particular task they perform. Such tasks include the teacher as 'form teacher'. In the same vein, non-formal leaders also regard themselves as school leaders. This is because the exercise of such a role covers the entire school environment. It reinforces a shift from an individual to a form of collaboration. It shows that school leadership is not the responsibility of the principal only. It also indicates that those ingrained with

particular expertise are vested with responsibilities in order to facilitate a smooth working process. The principal explained:

On my arrival, I met the system where you have teachers of grade level 16 who were left redundant...these are officers of the school by their rank... but without portfolios. I decided to create offices and to share responsibilities with them. So, we now have two official vice principals and four unofficial but who are positioned as heads of departments. There are others whose responsibility it is to work with the PTA chairman or similar at committee level and thereafter, report to the house (staff meeting) ... I felt it is a duty to collaborate with others (Principal).

The principal's statement was corroborated by the vice principal who said:

He likes to share his duties with us... there are many high-ranking officers here on level 16 or 17. By that level we should be heads, but there are an insufficient number of schools to be managed by such a proportion of qualified persons...but he (the principal) used his wisdom to appoint some of us as vice principal to help move the school forward.... in my opinion, he shares his responsibilities with us. I think he simply utilized expertise where it existed to move the school forward (Dele).

Dele's statement was a clear indication of a shift in leadership practice since the arrival of a new school head. Other members of staff shared these sentiments and affirmed that there are shared tasks in the school and collaboration amongst them. Shared tasks indicate the vision of the school and how shared leadership functions. Participants suggest that it was the duty of the principal to give a clear-cut direction of the school. Documents indicated support for the principal, soliciting cooperation in the shared assignment. For example: 'Every staff member has a duty to this school. Let us see this job as ours'. The document also acknowledged the principal as the overall head and encouraged those appointed to follow due process by being accountable to the head. As the principal explained:

Whatever happens I am held accountable, I cannot be everywhere e.g., like what she did yesterday (referring to the staff that took the initiative to attend a quiz

competition with students) ... if the students did not attend, I would be held responsible. She even had to spend her money just to put the school in a good light. Now...she has given me feedback, in other words, I was the one who did it...you can see why it is a shared responsibility.... Some teachers participate in different committees and contribute their skills (Principal).

He further explained that shared leadership gives participants a sense of belonging and inspires confidence amongst them. Shared leadership activities come in different forms; it suggests a move or shift of power away from the traditional and hierarchical models of leadership. This is evident in the democratic implementation of leadership activities often by decision making and consultation. It also shows that delegation may be a process of shared leadership.

The principal takes the leading role and seems to have substantial influence in the school. Basically, the principal was appointed into a leadership position by the government, a position that commands authority. As such, the leadership roles were mainly allotted by the principal, and occasionally through the deputies. The principal plays the role of a team leader and, through his vice principals and HODs, other teachers are involved in leadership. For example, apart from undertaking their roles as teachers, they were also involved in selecting and organising students for external school quiz competitions. Most of these were accomplished through delegation, as the principal seemed to engage in honest and open discussions with his colleagues, in order to bring about common goals. Documents also suggest the role of parents in providing ad hoc supervision of students at certain times during school teaching hours. This was to forestall truancy, as widely discussed at staff meetings. Other teachers also gave their opinions about shared leadership:

Usually, it was recommended by the board in charge of schools (the Ministry of Education) and depends on the person leading the school.... It gives and creates room for inclusion of a larger body of participants... when we hold meetings, a good number of people are involved, and decisions reached faster... you also find teachers working in committees other than their own (Dele).

I think the principal does share the leadership function ... with vice principals, teachers, HODs ... all working directly with him...I am one of the exam coordinators, I teach my classes. I became involved by appointment ...it was the vice principal that appointed me...we meet when deciding issues concerning students results final results. Such discussions flow down from the principal to the teachers, that is, the principal sets the pace (Alero).

Since the principal does not act alone as suggested by the respondents, shared leadership is practiced. Another teacher also aligns sharing with delegation. Delegation for these participants means the same things as shared leadership. This could take the form of representing the school in an external activity requiring the presence of the principal or any senior member of the school. At other times, staff members could be sent for induction courses on behalf of the school. It was also a practice that the vice principal administration could preside at meetings. Such leadership practice was understood to be shared in this sense:

The principal shares duties ... by delegating other staff.... Yes, we were sent on leadership training and when we came back we were asked to impart the knowledge to others. I was also nominated by the school. ...discipline of the students. The process was at the staff meeting. One of the VPs was asked to oversee that aspect on that particular day. In that aspect, collective suggestions are brought together, and a decision is taken. I think shared leadership provides a broader perspective and deeper levels of participation by members (Ogun).

The implication here is that the notion of shared leadership is linked with a number of concepts such as delegation, decision-making processes and distributed leadership. This suggests that 'distribution' is 'top-down' rather than emergent.

Distributed Leadership and Delegation

Distributed leadership is predisposed towards collaborative practices. This is evident in the relationship between the senior school management and teachers; and among teachers. The roles allotted by the principal are carried out in the form of

teaching and curriculum practice aimed at school improvement. Teachers commonly see themselves as part of the process of leadership by their engagement in team partnerships and by fostering the implementation of tasks assigned to them. Documents show that there were regular meetings held by members of departments to discuss new topics and reflect them in their teaching. Teachers find themselves playing multiple roles. As teachers, they also play the role of supervisors and monitoring of students' activities. Even those not formally designated have some leadership roles, for example as members of the PTA. As Nathan puts it, '...they participate in these roles so that the system will not collapse'. One of the teachers explained it like this:

All we have been saying is about leadership and how it is distributed. Everyone plays his or her part for the benefit of all. Well, it is for the good of the school initiated and led by the principal. Examples include staff meetings, meetings of senior teachers, year heads and supervisors... When the principal is not present, I usually act in his absence...literally, any senior member of the school management can take the initiative and preside over school functions when the need arises. But there are times when you just can't do it by yourself.. And where the principal is not able to attend key functions within and outside the school, a member of staff is usually delegated (Dele).

This view was supported by others including Ese, Ebeh and Ogun, who explained that leadership distribution was inherent in school hierarchy. This is because every member of staff participates in school leadership in the roles allotted, because the principal cannot possibly be everywhere at the same:

It is apparent that you can't achieve much success on your own. You realise the need to work with others in whatever capacity. All they need to do (referring to the school hierarchy) is to set the direction by their example. The principal or HOD doesn't have to be everywhere doing the work...that is why we are there. You have the teacher in charge of labour; there is someone in charge of games and someone in charge of exams. I believe these are ways we participate in leadership in this school (Ogun).

The researcher observed that any member of staff could preside over the school assembly. His field-notes highlighted his observation of the school prefect presiding over the assembly while teachers and senior members of management were present. Simultaneously, other teachers were seen attending to student's affairs on the assembly ground. On two occasions, teachers were jointly engaged in the supervision of school manual labour which is still a practice in some Nigerian secondary schools. A visit to the staff room confirmed a situation where the vice principal (academic) appealed to teachers to be involved in the labour supervision of the day. Although not every member of staff heeded the appeal, more than half of them attended to the supervision. Obasuyi explains the extent to which he is involved in school leadership, thereby affirming the opinions of other respondents about leadership distribution:

I think distributed leadership is all about giving others the opportunity to show their leadership capabilities. In doing so, you might constitute...like the disciplinary committee, exams committee and so forth. Those who act in these leadership capacities do so on behalf of the school because no one is indispensable. Again, when you talk of someone being indispensable, you realise that you have to delegate those functions that you can't perform by yourself. As PTA chairman, it is my responsibility to ensure that there are no excesses on the part of school administration.... the PTA can serve as a reminder of the policy of government, and not encourage any inclusion of extra fees by the school. The PTA mitigates on problems relating to parent and parents....and to complement the role of teachers by setting up patrol teams to checkmate the activities of students outside the school premises during school learning hours. (PTA chairman).

Some participants show what they understood by distributed leadership in terms of delegation. Such delegations were carried out on activities assigned to them. Participants seem to have decided to offer their best working conditions for the benefits of students. There is interrelatedness, cooperation and affinity facilitated

through leadership distribution, as a result of trust and accountability which was developed and built in the process.

I have been teaching in this school for three years now. I am impressed by the different roles that I have been co-opted in. I think the principal recognized my effort through my HOD and recommended me for such responsibility (Smiling...). I have shadowed many senior colleagues who have mentored me sort of.... I took the initiative to apply my skills and it paid off... I think I was given the opportunity and I utilized it. But then, I also find myself doing lots of work outside my teaching business (Ebe).

Interpersonal issues

Distributed leadership suggests the participation of many individuals in the leadership process. In as much as this was the case in Crystal secondary school, there were also indications of hindrances to its smooth implementation. Several impediments to distributed leadership were identified. One such limitation was government itself. Many participants attributed poor funding as a barrier to effective teaching and the inability for teachers to bring about change because of government policies. For example, the principal revealed that he had spent personal money in order not to obviate the smooth running of the school.

Funding is a problem here and it affects almost every school around. We do discuss these issues at principals' forum. We used to receive financial backing from government, but things are totally different now and it affects everything we do. Participation in external school events is difficult. Our students are infrequently represented unless we pay from our pockets...and there is a limit to what we can actually do here...it is like our hands are tied (Principal).

Similarly, another teacher added support to the perspective above and said:

The Ministry is also a difficulty...there is frequent meddling into our activities. We know that they appointed us, but we lack the freedom to act most times. The

principal often says that we could approach him for anything but money matters (Alero)

In support of these views, Dele explained:

In the past, school used to have subventions to carry out minor administrative works ... for the past 16 months, governments haven't given any fund. I have been spending personal money to keep the school up and running ... I have to buy the 'Entry Book' with my money although the principal is aware of it... if I don't do it, the system will collapse (Dele).

During the interview with the PTA chairman, Obasuyi, he explained that one of the purposes of the PTA was to ensure that 'teachers, parents and students form a synergy'. Such a partnership should be devoid of financial implications. The interpretation is that government policy does not allow the schools to collect money from students. Yet, government seems not to be able to meet its financial obligations to the school and this has led to situations where some staff had to supplement the funding of departments from personal resources. Another role of the PTA was to make sure that the ministry of education 'provides necessary conditions for enabling school effectiveness', such as adequate funding, but this seemed lacking in Crystal's case. The PTA chairman suggests that schools are not allowed to generate funds internally. The wide scope of government activities makes it difficult for leaders to take initiatives and thereby makes distribution problematic, because staff have limited opportunity to influence decision-making.

The process of delegated leadership suggests the collaboration of more than one individual to provide direction, as well as to exercise influence, in order to achieve set objectives. Delegation recognises the limitations of every member of staff who is required to report to the principal at the end of their tasks. It implies that, when tasks are delegated, the delegate was expected to report to the head at the end of such task. During the course of this interview, a staff member came into the principal's office to report an official matter she was delegated. This was a quiz

competition organized by the ministry of education involving senior secondary students. A staff member had to lead the delegation in conjunction with preparing the students for the quiz. Maja explained more about his views, indicating the cooperation between him and staff members, and the sense he makes of shared leadership:

Well, I have to be honest with you. The job can be a burden when you want to do everything all by yourself. It is only reasonable to share duties... So, I delegate some of my staff to represent the school in external activities. It is a way of carrying my staff along. When any staff is delegated, they usually report back to me or their head of department...or whoever it was that delegated them (Principal).

Another teacher supports the view of the principal:

Yes, I was one of the delegates to Abuja for the science competition. I led the students there on behalf of the school...the duty was shared between me and one other teacher. I sometimes represent the school at the ministry of education when a senior member is unavailable. To the best of my knowledge that is leadership distribution (Ebeh).

The concept of distributed leadership was vaguely understood by most respondents, despite the pre-interview discussions the researcher had with them during which he explained the terms carefully. However, they illustrated their understanding by supplementing the concept of DL with delegation, 'carrying along', and 'working together' These words were further interpreted to mean the same as 'shared', 'collaborative' or 'distributed' leadership. The relationship between formal and informal leaders was ultimately concerned with the need to impact on learning for the benefit of students. In this way, distributed leadership in the school appears to cover multiple leaders.

Lack of Cooperation

Another impediment to distributed leadership was lack of cooperation. Participants noted instances where colleagues refused to take part in committees and other events. Some argued that favouritism had angered some of their colleagues who felt marginalised by such actions. As the document revealed, some staff were reprimanded for not showing interest in the committees they were assigned. Further, some of those assigned appeared to be lazy, which probably suggests the reason why the principal had preference over for others. There are people resistant to change and uncooperative at staff meetings. One participant explained:

Whatever has an advantage also has a disadvantage. I feel that this distributed leadership of a thing is good but, they (senior management) show that they are bias when they appoint certain people to certain offices...this makes some [teachers] not to give any support to them. The junior teachers really cannot not say much...you also find some HODs taking sides with those on top all in the name of working together (Ese).

The findings suggest that leadership is exercised at three levels – senior managers, middle managers and teachers. There is a possibility that there might be a lack of cooperation, but this was not observed during this research.

Subversion

Participants recalled incidents of usurpation of the responsibility of others. Some associated it with favouritism. Particular situations might have influenced such attitudes. It was noted that working together in committees had often led to unpleasant tantrums with some members, especially when members temporarily assumed leadership positions. Assigning tasks to some favoured individual could leave others vulnerable. This becomes a threat in the workforce. As one respondent noted:

People can subvert the good intentions of distributed leadership. There was a member of staff who stood in for the vice principal in an acting capacity. It was

difficult for her to relinquish her office when the vice principal eventually returned to work...it was a hell of a problem I must confess. The said teacher was very close to the head of school. I can guarantee you that it was a big problem in the school (Calvin).

Incidents like this are likely to hinder smooth implementation of distributed leadership in a school, especially with the top down leadership structure of the school; this is because power resides in the head of school. This raises the question of whether distributed leadership is intended for the improvement of students or for the sustenance of a workforce. It shows that basic interaction was in dearth. Even though distributed leadership was understood to mean delegation of duty in some sense, the idea of the influence of the role of the individual cannot be ruled out. This suggests that the individual, rather than emphasis on the organisation, is still the focal point. It also shows that there were tensions in the implementation of distributed leadership in this school especially when some participants have acknowledged a smooth working relationship with other members of staff.

Overview

This chapter presents findings about leadership in Crystal secondary school. It started with a broad understanding of the nature of school leadership, leadership approach, structure and processes in this school. To some extent, the concept of distributed leadership has been interpreted to mean the same thing as delegation, shared leadership, and working together. Most participants at the interview understood distributed leadership from roles that are assigned rather than being emergent. Team leadership was another aspect that was prevalent in this case study. The findings from this school shows that the principal often delegated tasks to the heads of departments who, in turn, worked with other teachers in order to achieve the objectives of the school. As a result, leadership distribution was limited and carried out in a number of ways. In essence, hierarchical leadership was practiced in this case study but there were also elements of democratic, shared and delegated leadership, within this specific context. For classroom teachers in Crystal secondary school, it all meant the same as 'distributed leadership'.

CHAPTER FIVE: CASE STUDY TWO – BENTOVI SECONDARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This chapter presents findings from Bentovi secondary school, Benin City. Participants showed some degree of understanding of notions of school leadership. The school leaders seem to have a clear appreciation of the school vision underpinned by leadership practice.

Context of Research: Profile of Bentovi Secondary School

Bentovi is located in the main municipality of Edo State. It is a popular all-female college. It is considered one of the highest achieving of the state, given the number of eminent personalities the school has produced. It has a student population of about 3500. From the narratives of the participants, the school is of a particular interest to the government because it is used as one of the model schools in the state. The school was once a centre established for the administration of colonial authorities in the ancient city of Benin. For this reason, the government set up a School Based Management Committee (SBMC) in 2015 to assist in the smooth running of the school.

Data Collection at Bentovi

Examination of documents

In this case study, documents were examined alongside other sources of data. The process of data collection was straightforward, beginning with interviews and continuing with observations, field notes and documentary analysis. Ten participants were interviewed, as shown below. Following the interviews, school records, the minutes' book and the school time table, indicated a systematic pattern of school leadership. This pattern is discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

In analysing the minutes' book, it was noted that two staff meetings were held in 2005, four in 2006 and seven in 2007. There were three meetings held in 2008, one

in 2009, three in 2010, four in 2011, three in 2012, two in 2013, and three in 2014. At the time of this research, only one meeting had been held in 2015. As well as the meetings recorded in the minutes book, the observations of the researcher suggest that there are also many undocumented staff meetings, such as the customary Tuesday and Thursday meetings, usually held after assemblies in the morning.

Table 5.1: Showing summary of meeting from Bentovi

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of meetings per year	2	4	7	3	1	3	4	3	2	3	1

Table 5.2 below shows the participants who were interviewed:

Table 5.2: Demography of participants from Bentovi secondary school

Name of School	Bentovi secondary school	Staff names		Staff Experience	
Senatorial district	Edo South				
Principal	1	Sofia		21 to 25 years	
Vice Principal	1	Vickie		18 to 21 years	
HODs	3	Han,Sesa and Roger		16 to 18 years	
Teachers	4	Pia,Sue,Amy and Bea		3 to 9 years	
PTA/SBMC	1	Alistair		Under 1 year	
Number of participants	10				

Bentovi Secondary School Leadership and Management Structure

Bentovi secondary school is one of the most prestigious schools in the state. The school's leadership structure is published in the school's handbook. It has a School Based Management Committee with the principal at the apex of the structure. There is also a Parent Teacher Association (PTA). Next in the structure are the principal, vice principal, year heads, various committees, class teachers, subject teachers and school prefects.

The school has one principal, one vice principal, seven unofficial vice principals and 68 teachers. The unofficial vice principals were appointed internally by the principal and they act in different leadership capacities determined by the principal. The reason for these appointments is to set high academic standards and quality of education. These leaders, together with the principal and teachers, and, to a very minimal extent, the student leaders, are the key participants in school leadership. According to the principal, the aim of every school leader at Bentovi is to achieve the common objectives of the school in terms of producing good results at the end of every school term and academic year:

With this in mind, there is a particular effort on the part of the school leaders to lay down possible ways of achieving the goals...and I try to persuade my colleagues to put in their level best and work together (Principal).

This approach appears to underpin school leadership in this school. It lays emphasis on the ability of leaders to exercise expertise, as well as to motivate and negotiate with stakeholders, in order to bring about positive change in the school. It suggests a pattern of leadership that is intent on using different persuasions so as to bring about effective collaboration that is open to the ideas of others. Such collaboration is likely to promote learning and enhance organizational effectiveness. In such a situation, school leadership is intended to empower members in an inclusive leadership approach. However, the Ministry also intervenes as an external influence on the leadership and management of the school. The discussion of findings is thematic, linked to the research questions:

1. Nature of school leadership
2. Leadership enactment
3. Solo and shared leadership
4. Distributed leadership and delegation

Nature of School Leadership

The administrative structure of leadership in Bentovi consists mainly of the senior members of the school. It includes the principal, the vice principals, heads of departments and teachers. The principal, Sofia, explained the structure of leadership and the role that each member is expected to play. Each member plays a specific role and she insists, that even though everyone performs some leadership tasks, they are expected to report to her. She said that a good number of her staff were ‘very supportive’. She explained the nature of this structure as follows:

We have the principal, the vice principals, year heads, HODs, teacher and school prefects...at the end, everybody reports to me, I have the final say...I have vice principals because the school is large. I have principals that manage JS1, JS2, and JS3.... When I am not around, the most senior vice principal takes charge of the school...I engage them in a leadership process (Principal).

This idea was supported by several other participants who suggested that the structure was hierarchical because it always started from the top:

Structure is: the principal as the head, the vice principals – administrative and academic, the HODs, senior teachers, class teachers, and subject teachers (Vickie).

These leaders assist the principal in working towards the goals of the school. She explained that the teachers participate in order not to create a void in her absence, by engaging them in both formal and informal roles. This claim is supported by another participant:

The structure begins with the principal...followed by the vice, year heads, HOD, down to the least person....the teachers recognise the leadership of the HOD and take instructions from him...while the HOD takes order from the VP in chargeit just flows like that... my fellow teachers participate in the leadership of the school just like me to make the system run well because if the system is not running well....it will be to the

detriment of everyone...examples are....teaching and leading at the assembly and other supervision of students during exams (Amy).

Similarly, the researcher observed that teachers were engaged in various leadership tasks. For example, many teachers talked to students in groups outside the classrooms. One of the quotes from the minutes' book suggests that the principal was not acting alone. One of the vice principals had presided over one of the staff meetings:

May I use this opportunity to thank all those who kept the school running in the absence of the principal (Minutes book April 2012).

However, the researcher also observed that not all minutes of meetings were recorded in the minutes' book. The implication is that some details relevant to this study might be missing from the pages of the minutes' book and in some cases, some meeting minutes were omitted. This is because a number of staff meetings were held on the assembly ground immediately after the dismissal of the morning assembly. The purpose for the morning meetings was for all members to create necessary conditions for learning. The researcher's field notes showed that:

Daily weekly morning meetings were held at Bentovi, but they were not recorded in the minutes' book when he was offered the minutes books for cross examination. The teachers were active participants at discussions intended to improve learning (Field notes May 2015).

Although this set the pace for teachers as pedagogical leaders, to the surprise of the researcher, none of these meetings were recorded and no apparent reasons was given. It does suggest that vital decisions taken at such meetings were inaccessible. The principal also claimed that her leadership approach was multi-dimensional. She described it as a 'situational leadership approach' but also claimed that she was democratic in her relationship with members of staff:

Situational approach... this is because every scenario determines what model (of leadership) to use (the reason given as example is sensitive and cannot be used here) ...Every incident may not be the same.... there's no clear-cut demarcation about school administration or interaction with students and teachers (Principal).

Her reason for this approach is that the particular situation that presents itself determines which leadership style is to be adopted, in this way, she is able to interact with staff and students. Contributing to the nature of school leadership, one of the vice principals, Vickie, supported the principal's perspectives on the nature of school leadership. She stated that the principal identifies with colleagues and endeavours to collaborate by assigning responsibilities. However, Vickie differed from the views of the principal and indicated that the structure of the school was hierarchical. She adds that this was exacerbated by the Ministry of Education:

The leadership structure is hierarchical... from the principal to the vice principals, heads of department, school counsellor, teachers and students. The principal is the head of the school but greatly influenced by the Ministry of Education... she tells the vice principals what to do concerning administration and academics of the school...although she tries to work with other staff...she has vice principals, heads of departments, subject heads, class room teachers and students under her (Vice Principal).

The principal's leadership approach

The leadership structure appears to be hierarchical. The principal takes directives from the Ministry and tends to implement policies from her employers. It suggests that her employers exercise a substantial amount of influence on the way she runs her school. The vice principal states that the principal takes authority from the Ministry of Education and carries out their instructions:

From the way things are in this school, the principal takes orders from the ministry...she inadvertently passes it on to the staff...and carries out her duties (Vice principal).

Nevertheless, the three HODs, Han, Sesa and Roger, believe that the principal's leadership approach is democratic. Apparently, because of their level of involvement in the daily activities of the school as heads of departments, they also apply democratic principles in their interaction with their other colleagues. Being democratic, for one of the junior teachers Bea, means to 'carry everybody along'. This idea was also implied by many participants. The quote below represents their notion of democratic leadership in Bentovi and what they termed 'administrative democracy':

Democratic system...everybody is given the opportunity. The approach is appropriate because it enables inclusion of everybody in the administration of the school... it is a means of unity of purpose by all staff and perhaps students.... For example, we assist our colleagues even in their personal and administrative problems (Sesa).

Sesa also agreed with the situational approach of the principal. She said that the approach was imperative because it helped in moving the school forward:

Situational approach depending on the situation. The approach is appropriate because things are moving on well ... we are achieving the end goal of the school...there is also an autocratic approach...this is mainly for situations where students behaviour demands some drastic action...and I sometimes use these approaches when the need arise (Sesa).

Another view of the leadership approach of the principal is autocracy. This is in combination with other leadership approaches. All of these explanations from interviewees show their understanding of the leadership approach of their principal and the way that it has enhanced leadership activities and practices at Bentovi secondary school.

Leadership influence

Leaders in this case study seem to have the capacity to influence the school organization, despite the intervention of the Ministry of Education, but to a minimal level. Participants explained that there is a general intention to inspire and motivate others towards the goals and objectives of the school. It emanates from a sense of empowerment by school management to give responsibilities to teachers even though this might be contested given the different leadership approaches prevailing in this school. The principal believes that, through her approach to leadership, many staff are inspired to take on leadership responsibilities. She gave an example of the process of decision making:

I do my level best to make my colleagues see the reason behind our collective actions...the process of decision making is to have meetings and seek opinions of members. For example, the case of exams...forming the time table and deciding on what style of questions to take...I bring forward my ideas.... everyone seems to like this idea of being included (Principal).

The principal's explanation is corroborated by the researcher's observation and field notes. This implies that the principal's leadership approach is transformational, but she also has several approaches to leadership. The government's intervention in the leadership of the school was considered as an influence, though in a pejorative sense. This is because participants believe that they should be able to run their school without any interference. As one participant explained:

The school structure is greatly influenced by the government and we are not as free to do things the way we ought to...we need that sort of autonomy if we are to genuinely contribute to the progress of the school (Vickie).

Influence, as explained in different contexts by participants of this study, indicates a process where the school leadership inspires members. Some aspects of the influence on school leaders in this study are explained in different sections of this chapter, such as the visionary leadership in the school.

Leadership Enactment

Leadership enactment at Bentovi assumes a form of leadership responsibility designed to incorporate the expertise of members where they exist. It involves an innovation by the principal to manage human resources for the improvement of the school. It is the responsibility of the principal to allot tasks to staff and select those appropriate for the job. She explained that some of her appointees were considered by seniority and, in some cases, by the personal competence shown by such staff who take initiatives. For example:

The year heads for instance are appointed on seniority basis.... only in very few occasions that we bypass... and they participate at all levels they find themselves... they participate at the different roles they play. For example, the class teacher who handles the attendance register participates by marking the register.... look at the youth corp (members of the youth corp) the bell has gone, and they are participating in leadership by ensuring students return to classes (Principal).

At this time, the school bell was rung to call students back to the classes. The researcher observed that, while the bell was rung, some teachers and student-teachers on internship were seen conducting students to their various class rooms. One of the HODs explained that it was the duty of the principal to allot tasks based on her personal choice and preference, and to the staff willing do a thorough job. He also claimed that the allotted roles were mandatory given the structure of the leadership but that they were intended for the achievement of the goals of the school. Apart from formal roles as teacher and HOD, he also participates in other routine leadership activities. For example, the duty rota specifies the staff on duty and the roles to play. His views were supported by some of the participants:

First and foremost, I teach, and I consider that as my primary assignment. As a HOD I am the head of a group...the role of disciplining the students who come late to school and those who play truant...I sometimes invite their parents. I think the principal believes in my ability...the role was allotted by the principal in order to

achieve our goal.... We have duty rosters assigned to teachers for each week to see that the compound is clean, and that the assembly is conducted at the right time.... Teachers participate in their roles because it is mandatory. For example, those in charge of the assembly for the day do ensure that students return to classes after break...by putting teachers in specific positions and school monitors, we ensure that teachers carry out their duties as planned (Roger).

Roger's explanation is an indication of the task performance he is expected to achieve as one of the ways of contributing to the leadership activity of the school. This is in conjunction with his pedagogical role as a teacher. Han's situation is a little different, besides being a HOD, he also doubles as a vice principal and claims to use a democratic approach to support aspects of learning and school development. The following quote illustrates his views:

We try to create conditions for teaching and learning to help students attain their goals...in the strict term, I'm just a teacher but you find yourself doing things that would assist in the development of the students and to position the school in the annals of history...that is how I got involved in my position as unofficial vice principal within the confines of this school (Han).

There were other similar views supporting this. One such view was the understanding that leadership can be practiced outside the classroom. This led Han to consider himself as one of the leaders, who was also involved in the monitoring and supervision of students outside normal teaching hours. During this exploration, specific teachers were seen supervising and monitoring classes. Such teachers were commended during staff meetings, as the following extract shows:

Our common objective is to groom students...not only in classes but beyond...we acknowledge the supervisory endeavour of Mr. X who has diligently taken it upon himself to ensure that students conform to the best standards...this is in addition to other duties he is engaged in (Minutes book January 2011).

The 'common objective' of the school was outlined in the school's handbook. Some of the objectives are as follow:

- a. 'To provide the highest possible academic opportunities and growth for each student, through group and individual teaching and learning activities'
- b. 'To assist teachers, discuss not only their behaviour, teaching methods and assumptions but also of those of co-workers (School handbook).

This suggests that some roles are generated by individuals who consider themselves as leaders, in addition to specific roles assigned, and by so doing carry out their leadership responsibilities within the school. As one participant noted:

We work hand in hand to bring about order...if a student was going astray, it will be the responsibility of every teacher to instil discipline even when that is not the duty of the teacher at that point in time (Amy).

Leadership enactment in this study appears to mean a number of things including 'working hand in hand'. It is closely connected to team leadership.

Team leadership

During this case study, team leadership featured prominently. The experience of team leadership was a clear determinant of leadership processes and practice at Bentovi and includes such terms as 'working collectively', 'working jointly' and 'working together'. Evidence of team leadership was clear in the minutes' book as well as from the responses of participants. There were varied perspectives to team leadership. One such perspective was joint studying of the new curriculum. This team helps in managing the school. As the minutes' book notes:

Every teacher is encouraged to identify with a group or curriculum committee, and work together. If anyone feels left out, please speak to the head of any group [to which] you feel you can contribute (Minutes book 2010).

Similarly, this quote from one of the teachers, Pia, suggests team leadership:

There is team work here...for example, when we received the new curriculum from the Ministry of Education, we met to discuss how to implement it to the students...team work is better than individual ideas because we rub minds together and make it easier and better for us... and so one best way to develop the school is to work together and get every teacher involved, although this is not always the case...I think working collectively is in our best interest (Pia).

Apparently, teams have different tasks to perform. Such groups might be involved in event planning, planning of school time tables, syllabus and the cleaning of the school environment, among others. The team is led by one of the teachers, and sometimes the HOD, and they decide how, and who, will do a particular task. In this way, the principal is perceived as one who involves teachers in school leadership matters. This is illustrated by the following quote from the principal:

Team work is practiced like the joint study of curriculum, supervision of exams, class teaching.... we go out for outdoor activities where all the teachers partake and help to organise the students...we just finished our inter house sports ... the house masters took the students out for practice and to ensure they won in whatever athletics they took part in [*there were trophies in her office*]. I engage in team work because everybody gets to be carried along....and it discourages laissez-faire attitudes (Principal).

Pia's explanation continued:

Team work is obvious here...for example teachers go to the assembly and me and my colleagues in the department meet regularly to determine the cause of action concerning the teaching of our subject (Pia).

Team leadership is not only about teaching and learning, it is also about discipline and character formation of students. One HOD expressed it this way:

I believe that most of us work together as a team...not just in the classrooms but beyond. Apart from being a HOD, I am also the head of the disciplinary committee...you even find teachers cooperating in disciplinary matters. There is apparent team work amongst staff (Roger).

The researcher's visit to the staff room during the break time corroborated this. He observed three teachers reprimanding a group of students who were outside the classroom during lecture hours. This suggests that such team leadership was indeed practiced in this school. Even though, this might not constitute leadership in a strict sense, however, from the participant's perspective, it is considered one way of managing the school. An earlier citation from the minutes' book also supported this view in which leadership is appeared to be exercised beyond classroom by stakeholders. Furthermore, the school's minutes' book referred to several instances during which the school's disciplinary committee was commended for its work. For example, a disciplinary committee for the year 2011 had reminded the staff at the meeting of the need to implement a decision that was previously agreed upon, in order to encourage continuous participation of members appointed to work in committees. The decision of the committee, to suspend two students for fighting, was yet to be implemented. Some excerpts exemplify the team work of disciplinary committees:

We all know that we collectively accepted to suspend these students for fighting but up till now nothing has happened to them...this committee would like to see that appropriate action is taken... (Minutes book February 2011).

We thank the disciplinary committee for agreeing to work in such a dedicated manner...for inviting the parent of X student for alleged malpractice...and for the suitable recommendation proposed (Minutes book September 2013).

Meanwhile, the section on the code of conduct of the school stipulates that:

Any student who fights stands the risk of an indefinite suspension or expulsion (School handbook).

It is the work of the committee, working as team, to assess the extent to which the recommendation is to be applied to erring students, as one HOD revealed, supporting the idea that team leadership is practiced. This is illustrated below:

They normally work hand in hand with one another...for example, if a student is going astray, the other teachers will team up to correct that child. They participate in the role because we want to make the work effective. For example, I can bring an erring student to my colleague in the staff room for disciplinary action (Han).

Another insight on team work is the ability of staff to co-operate with one another, as the quote below suggests. There were some difficulties identified, notably that some members might present barriers to the smooth working relationship of the school. The reason for this is that such staff see themselves as having the same level of qualification as the principal. The principal expressed her idea of team leadership thus:

There is lots of team work here.... right from the assembly ground, you will see other teachers supervising their classes...I guess that's team work. We also have staff participating in organizing inter house sports.... We engage in team work because it facilitates progress and efficiency.... Impediment is bound to be present.... some colleagues are stubborn just as we have difficult students.... especially where you have teachers who are of the same level and qualification as the principal.... Sometimes we have difficulties in arriving at a consensus as a result of divergent and superior opinions (Principal).

There were trophies in the principal's office. The trophies were attributed to team work and were an indication of their successful participation in external school events that were led by one of the teachers. The examples by the principal were supported by some members. One such example is discussed in the next sub-section

on decision-making. Although winning trophies is not necessarily evidence of team work, the principal wanted to show that the collaborative efforts of her staff might have led to such an achievement.

Decision making

‘As a leader one cannot do everything and, so it becomes imperative to employ useful processes and channels to make things work’. This extract from the principal, Sofia, opens the discussion on decision-making. It was a common understanding of the participants that decision-making in the school is participatory and democratic. The principal explained that decision-making was an on-going process in the school. There was regular consultation with members before taking decisions:

I believe we have regular meetings here...and we do our best to ensure that everyone is heard...by the way every opinion count...I sometimes find out from some [members] what they think about some pressing issues before bringing it up...and then we discuss during meetings (Principal).

This was further illustrated by an extract from the school’s handbook:

To train and encourage students and staff to express and understand themselves and their feelings with due consideration to the feelings, rights and privileges of others (School handbook).

This appears to be the principle underpinning decision making in this case study. It addresses not only the freedom of expression of staff but also of students. The interpretation here is that everyone is permitted to make contributions to the outcome of the school through the decision-making process. One of the teachers, who had insisted that the principal leadership approach was autocratic, added that the principal mostly engaged everyone in decision-making but that such participation was not genuine:

The principal invites senior members of the school when she wants to make a decision...most times we go there to agree, that is because she had already made up her mind...it's like it's been staged managed (Sesa).

This contrary view of Sesa suggests the likelihood of bias, which might have been born out personal issues. Nevertheless, most teachers were of the opinion that relevant decisions were often reached during staff meetings, even though such meetings were fraught with heated discussion. Another teacher, who was previously involved in staff meetings, believes that decision-making is good in the school, because the process enables teachers to generate ideas necessary for school improvement:

The process of decision-making is mainly through staff meetings and through committees...and I can say that the process is democratic because we sometimes vote in order to make decisions and at some other times...it's just by consensus. One advantage of decision-making is that you can obtain marvellous ideas from other teachers...and it helps to improve the life of the child in terms of education and formation of character. The disadvantage is that the process can sometimes be slow and time consuming...it takes time to make good decisions otherwise you would come back to the same issue...any hasty decision would ultimately cost time (Amy).

Amy's explanation revealed that, whilst principal decision making was the usual practice, the process is also democratic. She also suggested that decision making can be hectic and laborious since some decisions were made in a hurry. An example of such hasty decisions was recorded in the minutes' book. This was when a teacher cautioned the principal not to expel an entire class for unruly behaviour but to place it on suspension. Many hours were spent deliberating on what was the right decision. An excerpt from the minutes' book reads:

The matter in hand is delicate and we know that many people have an interest in this school, including the government.... I humbly suggest that we treat this matter

with caution and suspend the class for one week rather than expel them...the final exam is approaching, and this might generate further problems (Minutes book 2013).

The example above suggests that decision making is a collective function of every member and usually taken seriously. This is supported by the researcher's observations and field notes, as well as the school's hand book.

Conditions supporting decision-making

One condition supporting decision-making in this case study was the mutual support from members of staff. According to the principal, teachers assist one another through their interactions, collaboration and engagement in leadership activities, such as staff meetings. Through this interaction, a culture of mutual trust and respect is cultivated.

You know too well that no one is an island...we try to get everyone involved...we depend on one another with the confidence that everything goes well in favour of both staff and students...it is from there that we begin to trust each other and become free to interact with others...for example when we have staff meetings we sometimes disagree on certain issues, but because of the respect we have for each other, decisions are made for the interest of all and the school (Principal).

This response implies that mutual respect, and belief in the competence of others, further enhances decision-making, because participants see themselves as stakeholders in the organization. Another teacher suggested that regular meetings enhance decision-making:

It is important for us to have regular meetings where serious issues relating to school are discussed...it is at such meetings that we get to know ourselves better... It is at the staff meeting that we make decision about students' welfare and sometimes issues that concern my colleagues...you might find that some members would refuse to contribute to the meeting for personal reasons...but on the whole

such meetings help to fine-tune the direction of the school and it is at such meetings that some of us are designated into committees. Sometimes when the school curriculum is sent from the Ministry (of education) we meet to discuss how such curriculum will be used for the welfare of students (Amy).

As noted earlier, regular but short meetings were held twice a week, (Tuesday and Thursday), immediately after morning assemblies.

The researcher shadowed some of the meetings and experienced how meetings were conducted in the school. Decisions were mostly taken by consensus. The meetings lasted between 10 and 15 minutes (Field notes: April 2015).

Thus, Amy's remarks are corroborated by the researcher's observation and field-notes. Another view on decision making was expressed by Han:

When it comes to decisions, we meet regularly, most times on the assembly ground just before classes begin. The principal makes decisions with other teachers, most decisions are arrived at during staff meetings. No one knows it all...sharing ideas helps to improve decision making as no particular idea dominates... we make collective decisions as it affects the wellbeing of the school (Han).

It was a commonly held opinion amongst participants that staff meetings form one basic forum for building interpersonal relationships aimed at achieving the overarching objectives of the school. For example, Alistair, who is a non-formal member of the school leadership, described decision making:

Decisions taken are also sent to government through members of the committee in that are very influential. SBMC promotes the motto of basic education which is 'education for all and the responsibility of everybody'. The committee members together with the principal, meet to achieve quality education and goals of the school (Alistair).

Visionary leadership

Visionary leadership was articulated by some of the participants, who argued that the principal proposed an agenda aimed at improving the school. Part of this vision is entrenched in the leadership structure of the school. The vice principal, Vickie, explained it this way:

I think the principal is well focused by putting teachers in specific positions, and monitors and see that teachers carry out their duties as planned...it takes a good leader to project into the future and anticipate what choices and alternatives initiate to facilitate the development of the school...for example, the principal took the initiative to appoint additional vice principals to help achieve the overall objectives of the school...and there are many other plans in place...I feel I'm part of this plan because the he eventually tables his ideas at meeting and he mostly gets the support of staff (Vice principal).

The vice principal's view was supported by one of the HODs, who affirmed that he was appointed as unofficial vice principal to assist in school development. He believes that the principal is a visionary leader.

The principal has plans...at least by placing individual teachers in specific roles. She gives the relevant information necessary for moving the school forward. Although she is of the same rank with me, she deemed it fit to appoint me as a vice principal – though an unofficial one. She proposed the issue at the staff meeting and we put it into vote...and some of us were appointed in that level...and I'm happy to work with her (Han).

One of the junior staff added her support and affirmed that:

I believe that she (principal) has a plan, because if you see the way she's running the school...she calls for meetings and all that...she works with teachers to achieve the goals of the school...in fact she endeavours to place the right category of staff in their appropriate positions...The principal has a plan by giving us the direction she wants the school to go (Bea).

One of the teachers explained that the principal has several plans for the school. The following comment represents her perspective, and some of her colleagues, on visionary leadership:

Yes, the principal has plans...at least she coordinates the affairs of the school.... she makes sure we have extra classes for students She is able to liaise with government to provide for the needs of students and teachers.... school register, diaries, stationery and other writing materials to effectively run the school system...I think she has a mental picture of the school and tries to project into the future with some short, middle and long-term plans (Amy).

The interpretation here is that the principal is able to forecast into the future in collaboration with other teachers to set a goal and to achieve it. Amy concludes as follows:

With such sterling leadership style, she is thought of as someone with courage to move the school forward. The principal has a plan by giving us the direction she wants the school to go (Amy).

Solo and Shared Leadership

It was a commonly held view that shared leadership supports a smooth working relationship in this school. The principal explained that shared leadership helps her to bridge the gap in leadership practice. In her absence, she appoints someone to act for her and run the school, while other teachers assist the appointee:

Yes, I do.... For example, I was not in school up until last week, the vice principals were in charge of the school.... I share leadership activities to ease the burden of work. – Shared leadership sometimes improves the quality of decision making – that is where the situational approach comes in. For example, some time ago, I delegated powers to one of the vice principals, it was misused...I knew it might happen one day...it's like an accident waiting to happen (Principal).

This suggests that shared leadership might be usurped even when a hierarchy is in place. Despite the hierarchical structure of the school, Pia explained that leadership is never the function of one individual. She reiterated that leadership distribution facilitates shared responsibilities, and a sense of involvement, and is premised on accountability, since everyone gets a sense of participation when making decisions. In Pia's interpretation:

Shared leadership is a way of moving the school forward...it improves the process of decision making because if the decision is wrongly made it will affect the progress of the school... in the sense that it involves both the principal and staff...it is not dictatorially at the helm of affairs...you know when you're involved in the process of decision-making, you feel obliged to it and you do everything possible to make it work (Pia).

Pia describes shared leadership as a process that facilitates decision making even when it was apparent that the researcher's question concerned shared leadership. She revealed that shared leadership in the school was primarily among the senior members of school leadership. The senior teachers are mostly involved because seven of the teachers here are at the VP level, even though they serve in unofficial capacities as vice principals.

Shared leadership improves the process of decision making because if the principal does not involve others she will not make an informed decision, like when an exam is coming and wants to plan...She shares her role with others by assigning various HODs and committee leaders and members. I have participated in organising the inter house sport for example... I was one of the house masters. We were allocated.... among the house that was how I became involved (Pia).

Another teacher referred to the school structure whilst explaining the relationship between distributed and shared leadership. The participant explained that shared leadership is a way of interaction amongst members through which ideas are shared for the benefit of all:

I guess it is a way of sharing functions amongst the whole school...it is a kind of network of interaction because you find yourself heading one committee or another...or that you're a member of a certain committee... you criss-cross between members to perform certain duties for and on behalf of the school...it's kind of giving someone an extra job to do outside your normal class work (Han).

Although the principal is ultimately responsible for the running of the school, there are other leaders responsible for specific subjects, and curriculum, and committees. It means that the principal is not regarded as the sole source of influence. This is because other participants in school leadership can inspire the direction of the school through their interactions. For example, teachers from certain departments meet regularly as a team in the department to discuss school matters. This could be one way of exercising shared leadership from their own perspective.

There is no one way to shared leadership as far as I'm concerned...we work together as a team and as individuals... Teachers in my department meet to prepare students for external quiz competitions with other schools...some others assist in the supervision of students even without being told to do so...as HOD I have also participated in the drawing up of exam time tables and in the discipline of students...this is because leadership is not the work of one person... and again Leadership activities are share for many reasons... to ease the burden of one person having to shoulder the work alone...Because the work load is now minimal... everybody knows his or her responsibilities and joint efforts bring about success in the end...knowing your specific areas and knowing how to achieve them... We are all working towards one goal. For example, at the beginning of school resumption, teachers join in making sure that the school is kept clean (Sesa).

Another teacher aptly explains:

Leadership activities are shared to bring about fast and effective results. When people in shared leadership take responsibilities, it is more effective...within a short

period many things are achieved. Teachers taking responsibilities for their various classes...and making sure that the school is in order. An adage says, 'two heads are better than one', in terms of putting ideas together (Han).

The concept of team is referred to in this section as an example of solo and shared leadership, because the participants believe that solo leadership is opposed to shared leadership. This might be why the term 'working together' was used to distinguish it from solo leadership. Another suggestion about shared leadership was in connection to decision making at Bentovi. This also indicates the extent to which a member gets involved in shared leadership through decision making. This is because shared leadership was seen as a process that improves decision making:

The process of decision making is mainly through staff meetings and through committees. The people involved in decision making depends on the situation, e.g., the staff welfare executive.... Shared leadership improves the process of decision making because, when one person takes a decision, it might not go well with others and, so they might not be willing to work and implement that decision.... when everyone is involved they will feel committed to it even when they might not have agreed to it, and work as team (Sue).

Here, Sue linked decision making with shared leadership. However, Sue feels that some of her colleagues are over-rated and that breaking the rules was becoming a common phenomenon in the school:

The principal believes in certain people...she feels she has earned their trust...when those teachers contravene the rules they are easily overlooked, and I think this is one area we should look into (Sue).

Distributed Leadership and Delegation

The leadership structure in this study gives room for leadership distribution in a number of ways. It recognizes the different levels of leadership and, through it, tasks

are allotted by delegation. The following quotation illustrates how distributed leadership is practiced:

First, I would like to acknowledge that this term [distributed leadership] is new to me. However, if you look at the structure of the school, you would agree with me that there is distributed leadership beginning from myself the principal. Every staff member participates in one form of distributed leadership or another...and delegating staff when necessary...we have vice principals of various echelons...there are year heads...HODs and team leaders...all these forms the basis of distributed leadership and make the job easier for everyone...and for the welfare of students... We try to make everybody partake and work evenly...nobody will feel overworked nor underutilized, if well practiced...it's like division of labour (Principal).

Leadership is distributed from the head to the lowest person in the leadership stratum. The reason for adopting this approach is to ease the burden of work on one person and to be able to control the students. The principal stated that she carries out her leadership distribution through delegation of duties. Basically, the structure of the school leadership indicates the manner in which it might be distributed or delegated. Power is delegated to her subordinates in such a way that leadership activities stretch from the bottom to the top:

I delegate powers to him...he oversees the vice principals of the different classes... the students don't get to me until they get to the vice principals to make the job easier and for everybody to participate – The structure is as explained before...the principal, VPs, year heads, HODs...and so on and so forth (Principal).

Alistair added that delegation is a necessary part of school leadership.

I think from my experience of working with the staff of this school...delegation is an intrinsic part of leadership...it is obvious that you cannot be everywhere at the same time. Like they say – nature abhors a vacuum. So, in order not to create a vacuum, alternative plans have to be put in place to fill that gap. As chair of SBMC,

my secretary sometimes attends those meeting that I'm unable to...I think that process is called delegation and from my experience the principal also delegates one of her staff to represent her when she's unavoidably absent...it is unlikely that school leadership can function effectively without delegation of powers (Alistair).

Whilst Alistair's view might be true, that nature abhors a vacuum and gaps could be bridged by delegating duties to others, some participants believe that they are conditioned by the nature of leadership itself. It means that every staff member is expected to comply with the ethos of the profession as defined in their contractual terms. This suggests that delegation is coercive. As Roger states:

You can be conscripted to do a job anytime... there's need for a certain autonomy...but this is not always the case...for me, you can't just make decisions on your own without being questioned...even where you're responsible for your own class you're required to responsible to a higher authority... for example every teacher is expected to write and submit lesson notes and this is checked by the HOD...this is because of the structure and nature of the leadership here...because you're employed and expected to keep to the terms of agreement as laid down in your employment contract... even though I like the idea of delegation of power or duties, it also has its ugly side (Roger).

One of the teachers also gave his perspective on distributed leadership. He described it as empowerment, in so far as it is identified with the leadership activities of the school. He linked such distributed leadership with delegation of authority and accountability. At the same time, he feels in charge of any group that he leads.

I see it as a form of empowerment through delegation...people can learn to do things on their own...when I'm asked to represent the school, or take over a meeting half way, it makes me feel that I'm part of the organization... and as HOD I'm encouraged to adopt a similar process when interacting with colleagues and those under me...it makes me feel in charge [smiling: everyone wants to be in charge at some point] By the way, when I assign tasks to teachers, I expect them to report back to me just as I report to the principal or vice in charge of academic

matters...there is a kind of accountability associated with delegation of duties...and it can create a feeling of ownership for such teachers (Roger).

For Pia, distributed leadership is linked with delegation of power or duties in a number of ways. The first of these connects to the leadership structure of the school, where several leaders participate in the process of leadership. She affirms that the principal engages in leadership delegation and, by so doing, makes people aware of their roles. Even so, the principal had a reputation for supervising tasks that have been delegated. Pia's interpretation of delegated leadership is illustrated in the following quote:

Yes... she has plans for leading the school. There is already a laid down structure...she believes in making people aware of their role and delegating their duty to them and helping in monitoring them to make sure that the duties are done well.... delegation is one way to fill in the gap (Pia).

For, Pia, 'to fill in the gap' means that, there is always someone to perform leadership task when the need arises, and this may be achieved by delegation, as one aspect of collaborative leadership. It reinforces an earlier comment, by one of the participants, that nature abhors a vacuum in terms of leadership practice.

The chair of the School Based Management Committee (SBMC), Alistair, explained that members of the committee were a visible influence on the direction that the school is set. He explained the function of SBMC and the role it plays in the leadership of the school. In his opinion, SBMC was the initiative of government for the implementation of government policies. Although SBMC is part of the structure of leadership, it serves as an independent and regulatory body. This indicates that it operates a hierarchical structure of leadership. From the exposition given by the SBMC chair, it is apparent that the board also applies some democratic principles. The reason is that, even though the board was constituted by the government, members do engage in the decision-making process so as to arrive at a resolution. These claims can be exemplified by this statement from the SBMC chairman:

The School Based Management Committee (SBMC) is a further modification of the PTA. The PTA is constituted of a chairman either elected or nominated, by the body of the school, while the principal produces the secretary – a teacher in the school. The principal is there as an observer, whereas the SBMC is a management team made up of all professionals outside the school system, particularly in the environment where the school is located. In the PTA, the chairman basically must be a parent of one of the wards in the school, but in the SBMC it is not necessarily the case. Their role is to complement the administration of the school but not to take or assume the role of the principal. If the principal does not assert his or herself, there is the tendency to take over their roles. I'm simply a delegate of government or, if you like, a representative of government...SBMC meets and take decision and sends their resolutions to the school through their principal (Alistair).

Alistair's comment shows the level of government involvement in the strategic plans of the school and the expectations of the principal as head of school. It also shows that the principal, or her representative, was simply a member of the committee, with little influence. The board chairman had much more influence in the committee as the representative of government. Thus, the appointment of Alistair as a delegate and representative of government is understood as a process of delegation in this sense. It demonstrates how much influence the government has on the school. This also corroborates the views of several other participants who claimed that there was government interference in the running of the school.

Interpersonal Issues

Leadership practice in this study is inhibited by some predicaments. One such is financial barriers. It was remarked that, despite the vested interest of government and other stakeholders of the school, finances were a huge problem. The researcher was led into one of the science labs to observe this. The science lab had what appeared to be outdated science equipment which were looking obsolete, suggesting lack of maintenance, probably arising from limited funding. Many participants,

including the principal, gave their perspectives. The following quotation explains this view:

There is impediment from all sides, especially the government, we are not enabled...subventions are not given... [there is] government interference in our day to day activity.... For the past few years, we have not had PTA or SBMC because of conflicting instructions from government... sometimes, you hear that PTA is abolished, one minute it is SBMC...what we have now has only just begun...I think it is a wrong policy on the part of government and it's not good for us (Principal).

Another difficulty arising from this case study is the formation of cliques. According to the principal, some teachers form themselves into factions and it creates problems for the smooth administration of the school. It suggests one reason why government might be interested in the tacit control of the school. This makes the government intrude on the school and creates a lack of confidence in the leadership. She aptly put it:

Some teachers do form gangs and do not want to cooperate and tend to put obstructions in the day to day running of the school. If only the government would allow the leadership of the school to have confidence in the leadership role assigned...and if only the community would come to our aid and assist the school in terms of its security system (Principal).

Lack of Cooperation

There are indications of personal sentiments associated with leadership practice in this study. Some participants highlighted some negative problems with leadership distribution. It was conceived as a barrier to effective leadership practice in the school. The principal pointed out that lack of cooperation was one of the banes of leadership:

Well, there are difficulties in every organization and mine is not an exception... in relating with my colleagues I always want to be honest and fair, but some may not

like to cooperate with you...some teachers want to do things in their own way and don't want to be accountable. For example, why should a teacher leave the school without permission...without informing the HOD to say the least...? I think this is one such barrier. Again, as you might have noticed, some teachers do come to school late (Principal).

The researcher observed some teachers coming late to school. Late coming was one of the many issues addressed in the staff meetings held on the assembly ground in the morning. It was noted in the researcher's field notes. An extract reads:

8:30 am. Some teachers just drove into the school. Meanwhile the school bell has been rung for the beginning of lesson and the principal is outside watching (Field notes: May 2015).

Such lateness to work was reflected in the school minutes as well. This issue was raised by one of the vice principals. For example:

I know that many of us come from far distances...but that is not a good reason to come late for work...this [late coming] has been lingering on for some time now and I wonder what kind of impression those involved are giving to students (Vickie).

This reprimand is confirmation of the view raised by Vickie concerning lateness as a hindrance to distributed leadership. It was also corroborated by SBMC's chairman. Alistair noted that one of the reasons why government set up the board was to ensure that teachers abide by the code of conduct as enshrined in the school's handbook:

Teachers are part of the leadership of the school and not just the principal. So, part of my role is to assist them to preserve professional ethics or, if you like, the code of conduct as laid down in the law...it means that some issues that cropped up during meetings, such as lateness to duty, among other things, are curtailed (Alistair).

However, he did not suggest ways to curb this unpunctuality. Similarly, some participants agreed that it was a problem in the school. The following quotations capture this opinion:

Yes, there is lateness and it cuts across every rank and file...and when you try to talk about it, what you get is a cold shoulder (Sesa).

There are difficulties...not everybody seems to know what to do. There are some lukewarm attitudes from some colleagues when it comes to enforcing discipline. And some teachers are overworked (Roger).

One senior teacher (Sesa) remarked that seeking the cooperation of staff is easy, and at the same time difficult, when there are vested interests.

Personal interest can be one of three things, either of the principal, HOD or that of the teacher. And, when you're not able to satisfy one of the interests, there is trouble. For example, when the principal decided to appoint some of us as unofficial vice principals, some teachers saw it as a stepping stone to being appointed as principals...some who used to be very active in school matters withdrew... and there can conflict of interest when your ambitions are dashed (Sesa).

Sesa's remarks illustrate what can happen when there is a conflict of interest. On the one hand, the principal has a mission to actualize and she seems to appoint certain individuals to achieve that goal. On the other hand, those not appointed might feel ignored. This appears to present a dilemma for the school. Sesa also explained that some teachers might be prejudiced over allotment of tasks and might even feel frustrated:

[Sighing and then pulsed and then shrug back into her seat] ...well there was a rumour that some of us bribed our way to be appointed...I mean – that is ludicrous.... I don't understand why on earth they should think that way. So...you can imagine why such members won't like to cooperate with the administration and

this can be frustrating...it can be hard to take sometimes... but then what can you do? (Sesa).

The drawbacks of distributed leadership led to some participants feeling overwhelmed and venting their frustrations. This resulted in their lack of cooperation.

Overview

The leadership styles discussed in this chapter are an attempt to improve school practice through different structures, such as collaborative and shared leadership responsibilities. However, the participants' understanding of leadership distribution varies. Most of the responses from participants tend to conflict with distributed leadership, yet it was their own way of presenting their ideas. Despite the multi-dimensional approaches to leadership practices at Bentovi, power and control seem to remain centralized, thereby suggesting different frameworks to explain leadership practice. This study revealed that participants seem not to have heard about the concept of distributed leadership. Distributed leadership was interpreted to mean sharing responsibilities, delegation of duties, and participating in decision-making processes. It was also equated with concepts such as empowerment and accountability. Some key elements associated with management were evident. For example, participants showed that organizational practices, such as planning, setting the direction of the school, and the attainment of organizational goals and objectives, were present in the school. It was evident from all responses that the principal has different leadership approaches, but the participants showed that these styles of leadership share a common denominator. The chapter also showed the advantages and disadvantages associated with distributed leadership in the case study school. The chapter also showed that the alignment of distributed leadership with delegation is an indication that leadership in this school is allocated rather than emergent distributed leadership.

CHAPTER SIX: CASE STUDY THREE – EKI SECONDARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This chapter presents findings from the Eki secondary school case study. The study reveals the participants' understanding of leadership practices and what sense the stakeholders make of school leadership arising from their personal experiences. Such understanding assists the researcher to articulate the patterns and processes of leadership in the school.

Context of Research: Profile of Eki Secondary School

Eki secondary school is located in Esan Central in Edo South senatorial district of the state. It is about 120 kilometres from the main city of the state. By Nigerian standards, the school is located in one of the rural communities of the state. The main occupation of the local community is agriculture, along with a few civil servants and limited industries. The people are also involved in cash crops, such as palm produce, but they are mostly subsistence farmers, mainly farming the production of cassava and rice, which is cultivated to sustain their families. Any excess from the farm produce is brought to the weekly local market. The inhabitants of the community are of a moderate social background when compared to those in the capital city. In order for the government to provide basic education for the people, schools were established in this locality in the early 1980s. Teachers in this school adopt the same academic calendar as those in other districts and cities.

Data Collection at Eki

Examination of documents

Data for this study began with the examination of several school documents, including minutes' books and school timetables. These were subsequently compared with the interview data, field notes and observation. Whilst analysing the minutes of meetings, records spanning 10 years were examined beginning from 2005. Examining such a wide range of documents enabled the researcher to understand

leadership practices over an extended period, to compare with the current position. Detailed analysis showed the number of staff meetings that were held in each of those years, including emergencies.

For example, five meetings were held in 2005, seven in 2006, four in 2007, three in 2008, and five in 2009. In addition, there were three meetings in 2010, seven in 2011, five in 2012, six in 2013, five in 2014, and three meetings at the time of this research in 2015. Table summarises these data.

Table 6.1: Showing summary of meetings from Eki

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of meetings per year	5	7	4	3	5	3	7	5	6	5	3

The school record (a diary containing the names of staff), showed the number of teachers on the staff. Ten participants were interviewed (see Table 3.1). The sampling of participants was discussed in chapter three.

Table 6.2: Demography of participants from Eki secondary school

Name of School	Eki secondary school	Staff names	Staff Experience in this school
Senatorial district	Edo South		
Principal	1	Kenzo	21
Vice Principal	1	Anita	19
HODs	3	Dave, Linn and Eve	17 to 19
Teachers	4	Ike,Ada,Ann and Ivy	7 to 11
PTA/SBMC	1	Kane	Under 1 year
Number of participants	10		

Eki Secondary School Leadership and Management Structure

Eki has a student population of about 700. The school has one principal, one vice principal and 48 teachers. Being a community-based school, the local community

supports it through the Parent Teachers Association (PTA). The PTA resonates with a system in which there is a need for the local community to collaborate with the school through self-help projects, such as providing support in financial matters by levies. The PTA chairman puts it this way:

The school was formally a community school...and as a community school we have already, a self-help culture and common concern...which has ever since become one means of raising funds for the school. But, I must be quick to let you know, that under the current government dispensation, the PTA has been downgraded and now has what they call SBMC (School Based Management Committee) ...but the community has seen that having a PTA has helped in achieving some objectives of the school (Kane).

Kane's position was supported by that of the principal who mentioned that:

The PTA has been a breath of fresh air in this school. The members are in charge of providing logistics for income outside the government and they are happy to do it because they consider themselves as stakeholders in the school (Kenzo).

It is the duty of the PTA to assist the school in identifying important people, with financial muscle, to provide quality education for the school even though the government has taken it over from the community. The PTA also provides guidance for students because of their parental responsibility for bringing up children. In this way, the PTA seems to provide support for the school.

The leadership practices of Eki are discussed through the following themes:

1. Nature of school leadership
2. Leadership enactment
3. Solo and shared leadership
4. Distributed leadership and delegation

Nature of School Leadership

The leadership structure of Eki comprises the principal, assisted by the vice principal, year heads, HODs and teachers. The structure also involves the students at the lower level. The structure is explained by the principal:

The structure is as follows: principal, vice, year heads – for JS1, JS2, JS3, they supervise and control the teachers. We have the HODs, teachers and form teachers. Apart from these, we also have the school counsellor who assists the students with the selection of future careers. You can see the picture of the organogram on the wall (Kenzo).

The principal's explanation shows that there are others involved in school leadership besides formal leaders, such as the PTA and school chancellor. However, less attention was given to the role of the chancellor because it was not the focus of this study. Alongside the HODs are the year heads whose appointments cover specific classes. Their role is to supervise specific classes and inform the school leadership of areas that require immediate attention. The structure also includes what participants referred to as 'form teachers'. These are teachers whose duties relate to specific classes. An organogram of the school was pasted on the wall of the principal's office suggesting the organizational structure of the school. The school also has a selection of senior students who assist in the running of the school. These are two groups; the school prefect and class prefects. These are the ones given the responsibility of supervising other students whilst the principal and teachers go to staff meetings.

The vice principal, Anita, explained that school leadership not only includes the principal and teachers but also the chairman of the school board of governors; whose roles can be equated with those of the PTA or SBMC. The vice principal's views reflect those of the principal:

Leadership in this school is the function of all; it includes chairman of the board, the principal, the vice principal and, in principle, I think we are bureaucratic in

nature...because the board is a representative of the Ministry of Education...and by the way they relate with the school, you will observe that it is unalloyed hierarchy (Anita).

This type of leadership is referred to in the minutes' book as the 'organogram'. It outlined the position of members of staff.

The following...is the organogram of this school and it is intended to guide our relationship with each other (Minutes book: 2013).

The principal often pointed to the organogram during the interview with him as if to consolidate his views. Similarly, some participants echoed it in their explanations. The researcher also made this observation in his field notes:

My visit to the principal's office today added insight into what he described as the leadership organogram of his school. It was pasted boldly on the left-hand side of the wall of his office. Two other teachers also referred to it during their interview (Field notes: May 2015).

The principal's leadership approach

Participants described the leadership approach in specific terms. Even where the structure and style of leadership appeared to be hierarchical, some participants, including the principal, believed that there is a lot of participation in the leadership activities of the school. For example, the principal claimed to be democratic while some teachers described his approach as participatory:

I believe my approach is democratic ...it enables everybody to be involved. For example, this morning I did not attend the school assembly because I had some very pressing issues...people were there that conducted the assembly...before it started one of the teachers came to find out whether I had any announcements for the students...I gave her two or three announcements. The purpose is to carry people along in the process of leading the school...in a certain sense; I feel it has to do with interdependence on the task that we perform at different times (Principal).

The principal's explanation suggests the idea of collegiality, but he believes that he applies democratic principles because he wanted everyone to be carried along. He equally perceives it as a shift (though momentarily) of power from him to the vice principal. Some teachers described the principal's leadership approach as participatory leadership. It was associated with decision making by some participants:

I will call it a participatory leadership style (referring to the principal) ...he does not take decisions alone since leadership involves decision making... for example, when there is an issue, he calls the staff to discuss it (Ivy).

One head of department gave her support to the principal's leadership approach and offered reasons why she also adopted a similar style in her department. She claimed that the democratic leadership principle enabled members of the department to be included in the leadership process:

I adopt democratic leadership because, first.... I cannot lord it over anyone.... which is why we meet and plan things together.... second, I learned it from the principal himself...I think there's a consistent effort to move the school forward collectively... and I believe staff are happier when offered the chance to cooperate in the school leadership (Eve).

Eve believes that she is inspired by the principal's leadership style and decided to adopt the same approach at her departmental level. Thus, suggests a form of leadership influence, which is discussed in the next paragraph.

Leadership influence

In order to understand how participants perceived their relationship with school leadership, some members suggested their leader as a role model. The principal is portrayed as a man with a caring nature who develops good human relationships with both students and teachers. This is probably the reason why his personal

attributes appear to have influenced his perceived leadership quality. Moreover, he is conceived of as firm and highly principled, one who would stop at nothing when applying rules. Participants also remarked that the principal is a person of dialogue. He also shows a lot of sympathy and concern for students. A teacher expressed this:

The circumstances in this school can be challenging and overwhelming. He [the principal] is both firm and gentle when relating with us.... he encourages us and offers directions when needed...he tries to provide the necessary instructional materials where available.... yet he always likes to ensure that both staff and students don't take him for granted (Dave).

In addition, some participants indicated that the principal is appreciative of the hard-working staff and further inspired them by associating with them in personal matters. The personality of the principal seemed to have created a deep impression on some members. This implies that the principal has established a kind of value that reinforces confidence. For example, Ann suggested that the personal traits of the principal are carried beyond the classroom and facilitated a bond between him and staff. In this way personal attitudes, which might have been consistently practiced, may perhaps have influenced the ethos in the school:

He is affective.... I mean [he] shows interest in what I do...not only in the school but also in my family. Personal concerns like: 'how are you... how is your family doing...?' can mean a lot to anyone....and influence the way you relate with such person...it is pleasing to know that someone like the principal cares about your wellbeing (Ann).

Similarly, one teacher stated that:

The principal has a strong motivating force on teachers, parents and students...he approaches us one-on-one. He makes us understand that there is something good in us and encourages us to employ our knowledge and strength for the good of the school (Linn).

It shows that having a personal touch is likely to boost the confidence of stakeholders including staff, students and parents. Another teacher explained that, even though the school was located in a rural setting, there is a concerted effort by the school management to ensure teachers are given the opportunity to update themselves. As Ivy mentioned:

I can say that the school takes pride in assisting the teachers to update themselves at seminars organized for teachers, when I say the school, I mean the principal and the senior members [of the school] ...it is one of the ideas proposed in one of our staff meetings...and everyone is happy with it because, being a rural school, we can at least boast of good training of our staff for the good of students (Ivy).

Another teacher added that:

The principal is good at setting goals and directives.... he makes good efforts to ensure that we [teachers] are properly engaged in our profession. You find that every teacher is aware of the chances they have in bringing about the best for the school...and bringing standards...and I feel the staff are happy with him for this (Eve).

Other participants shared similar descriptions. During the researcher's time at the school, he observed the principal and some heads of departments addressing staff and students on the assembly ground on various issues, including the need to create a 'conducive learning climate in the school'. Some of the attitudes of the principal seemed to have stirred confidence in his relationship with some of his staff. It suggests that there might be several leadership styles adopted by the hierarchy of this school that promoted what appeared to be positive working relationships. One inference is that these practices seem to create informational and social influences that guide the collective attitudes of participants. This ranges from instructional to transformational leadership. However, not everyone shared in this sentiment. Some participants claimed that the senior management had always handpicked those they

felt were likely to support their views about the school. Some of these issues are reflected further below in the section on interpersonal issues.

Leadership Enactment

One of the core activities of participants of this school is the responsibility for coordinating, directing and enhancing common objectives. These participants seemed determined to contribute to the overall development of the school, guided by their leadership experience. For example, the principal emphasised that:

Every teacher in this school has a role to play...this is because they have come to imbibe the values of the school; I must say that it takes a while to achieve this. Initially, it is hard to accept the values but, with time, some begin to shift their thinking and begin to learn from one another...and find themselves assuming leadership positions. Also, you will see that some of them become more interested in the leadership of the school...they now want to participate more in the teaching and learning process (Principal).

The above quotation suggests that participants' involvement in leadership practice is also a gradual learning process. Moreover, when they realised their expectations were based on the culture of the school, they soon got themselves involved.

Notably, one participant expressed her view about leadership enactment:

Teachers are role models ... I think in the course of carrying out your own duty, you find yourself doing that job because it has become part of you, because it was part of your training and then, you just see yourself doing it. I think it is part of something that is our daily duty ... in the course of you carrying out your duty, you also find yourself doing it (Ivy).

Whilst supporting the principal's views, Ivy not only explained her perception of leadership enactment, she also linked it to teachers as role models. In a way, it

implied that teachers' routine activities could be seen as part of leadership practice. Another opinion was that:

Every staff member plays his or her part...they are either engaging the students in one activity or assisting the principal achieve the common goal of the school...there [are] many aspects of them...such as the assembly, different committees and even the students helping their peers in some small task (Eve).

Although the principal and teachers are encouraged to participate in the school assembly, the researcher's observation suggests that not all teachers participated. This, however, did not disrupt the smooth process of the conduct of the assembly, since there was always at least one teacher to organize and conduct it; and in some cases, the school prefect conducted the assembly as well.

Similarly, participants' knowledge regarding instruction and learning seem to affect significant leadership practices. They enacted this in many ways. The school's minutes' book suggests specific patterns through which leaders brought about expected outcomes. Teachers were to provide the following:

1. To stimulate policies by personal commitment to school objectives
2. To devise means of improving existing leadership obligations
3. To provide counselling for students with less potential.

These were to be delivered by principal and teachers. This was corroborated by the researcher's observation during one of his visits to the staff common room:

Teachers in the staff room discuss an on-coming school event and the need for active involvement by colleagues...There was emphasis on certain syllabus, which needed the attention of members. The expression on the faces of participants suggests that some were happy with the proposed idea (Field notes: June 2015).

Another observation shows a series of leadership activities. For example, two teachers with students in the computer lab coordinating students' learning process. In a sense, this suggests that the school leaders were given the opportunity to both design, and to interpret, certain schemes that were deemed appropriate for the development of students. A further shadowing of an informal gathering revealed that five out of the 17 teachers who participated in the forum opted to use the textbook provided by the ministry of education rather than devise alternative methods of teaching. Despite this conception, the prevailing difference seemed underplayed by the institutional culture, as many participants believed that the liberality of the school leadership would lead to better students' outcomes. One HOD explained that the process of leadership enactment involved allocation of responsibilities to teachers in the department. Also, that the principal sometimes announced task allotment at meetings. He also gave reasons why teachers participate in leadership roles:

As one of the HODs, it is our responsibility to allocate classes to teachers ... we allocate classes and we prepare the scheme of work ... the scheme of work that we use in teaching... It was announced by the principal at the staff meeting ... Like year heads, they participate in such a role because it is the role given to them... It is the responsibility of the teacher holding that position to make sure that things are going on smoothly in school... sometimes they go around the school building... to check whether there are any empty classes ...and to see if they [students] are making a noise (Dave).

This suggests that major roles are allotted to senior members of the school. However, not every teacher shared this view and some teachers did not consider themselves to be leaders. They used words such as 'I am a mere teacher'. At some levels, leadership enactment indicated that many participants faced daily negative and perhaps hostile relationships in certain situations. Asked in what way she was involved in the leadership of the school, Ada mentioned:

I am not one of the school leadership, I am simply a teacher. My job is to teach the class assigned to me and to make sure students get the best preparation for examinations and provide the necessary guidance (Ada).

Ada's perception seemed vague. She seems to believe that school leadership is tied to a leadership position.

Team leadership

Participative leadership appears to have occurred in this school between the senior members and staff. There seemed to be a strong implementation team. For example, HODs were provided with resources, support, and time in their various departments but they also have to report directly to the principal. This suggests that, even though leadership functions seemed decentralized, the power remained with the principal. However, there are different situations where team leadership is practiced:

There are various departments in this school.... I work closely with everyone on the team especially the heads of departments.... I make sure that every head of department report to me...it is my way of ensuring that I am on top of every situation so that things do not go wrong.... Yes, team work is noticeable and practiced, for example, last Thursday we had a send-off for our JS3 students...we had a committee set up... and the committee had a chairman, they were ten in number...everything was well organized by them... I engage in teamwork in order to achieve better results and positive results because people work better when they feel their positive results and contribution is recognized in the team (Principal).

One of the HODs explained that team leadership engenders students' outcomes in many perspectives. It was perceived as a means of interaction amongst staff in the department, which included instructional issues. Participants gave reasons why teamwork is seen to contribute to students' achievements. The following quotations support this idea:

Yes, there is teamwork here... like teaching of certain topics and collectively engaging in uniform subjects as team. Team work enables good results in the sense

that everybody is involved leading to the best possible result...for example we do prepare our children here for different quiz competitions...each member of staff is involved either in the preparation of students or by leading the students to the venue of the competition... We adopt this approach because we want to be at the top...we want to be number one...and it is a good means of interaction with other members of the department (Linn).

We choose to engage in team work because 'no man is an island'...I mean, no individual is a repository of knowledge...as a team, if there is a difficult question in class and issues... we try to resolve it for the betterment of the student. There may not be any impediment, because as colleagues we work together... the entire goal of all of us here is to produce students that will be better tomorrow...and carry the country forward. In my department, team work is fostered, and it enables to solve problem of students regardless the class of the student as long as we are able to provide answers to the problem (Eve).

This HOD was certain that the relationship with those in her department was strong enough to propel every member to contribute to the best of their ability. Consequently, she believes that there is no hindrance to work team in her department. This view is supported by one of the teachers in the department:

You know, team work is not just about a few individuals; it is about the whole school. There are some particular departments that are very good with team work. In my department, we work together in doing things ... our HOD ... she's very organized and disciplined and likes everyone to excel in the department, so she carries everybody along (Ada).

Two other teachers commented on team leadership:

Yes ... like we, the French teachers, we meet to discuss what to teach and, when any of us set a test for the students, we first of all submit it to the HOD who goes through it ... both will sit down to do the corrections ... if there is something wrong, two of you will sit down to discuss it (Ann).

...we have various departments.... our work is based on team agreement; we work together and select topics based on the scheme of work from the ministry of education. The leadership structure is from top to bottom, we have the principal, vice principal, the principal tutors (those who have taught for a number of years), teachers etc (Ivy).

The prevailing idea in the school suggests that collaborative teaching includes both planning and practice. The inference is that teachers also took common responsibility for students' wellbeing issues in the teacher teams. The operational relationship between teachers in some departments as teams is described as one of mutual trust and respect, as illustrated in the following quotation from one participant:

We have the understanding that we have to contribute with our work...everyone is given the opportunity....as for me, I have my responsibility, everybody has their part..., and we join forces to ensure that our students get the best...because we see the school as ours (Ada).

The participants at Eki consider themselves as key players in the school who take the responsibility of safeguarding the prospects of teaching and learning through team activities, as Ada suggests. They also seemed to identify themselves not only with the teachers in their teacher teams but also as part of the school organisation. The expression 'join forces' implies team work. Similarly, participants indicated that the principal and teachers were open to new possibilities as well as being given the opportunity to use their expertise. The participants in this case study seems to suggest that team leadership is a collective approach for moving the school forward. One significant aspect of this relates to decision making.

Decision making

Even though the process seems decentralized, there are indications that it is also guided by the experience of members. The principal appears determined to make

every member of staff feel that they have power in the school. At the same time, the principal explains some challenges associated with decision making. His views echo those of other interviewees:

Decision making here is born out of experience...these members have learned to manage situations very well, because they have been in the system for a long time... I mean, they [the staff] try to support me and their actions guide our collective action. And, I do try to let them know that they are free to make their views known.... sometimes our meetings are characterized by indifference...some teachers are not happy when their proposals are not taken...but, in spite of it all, we often try to arrive at a common ground...a good decision needs the support and collaboration of members and this does not come easy (Principal).

He added that:

Decision making usually takes place at meetings, although we have other minor ways of deciding what to do, like asking the HODs to make a wide range of consultation in their departments but, before then, I invite the senior members like the VP and HODs to brief them about my ideas and discuss it before taking to the general staff body... For example, we had a PTA meeting last week where many issues were discussed.... I have minutes of the meeting to support it (Principal).

The minutes book reveals a number of situations corroborating participatory decision making in the school. It includes the resolutions taken at meetings. For example, it was suggested that:

1. Teachers' decision about a new timetable to accommodate extra mural lessons for students and names of participating teachers and the corresponding number of hours dedicated for each class.
2. Decision to advise parents to pay lesson fees to enable the school to meet their demands
3. Staff decision for students to wear the same school uniform throughout the lesson periods as in normal school hours (Minutes book 2013).

The above citation suggests an involvement of teachers in the decision-making process. Apart from the idea of participatory decision making in the school, the minutes book also indicates that it is problem solving, but that it requires time to make good decisions despite the apathy of some members. The principal's remarks also show that decision-making requires the support of staff. This suggests that the principal endeavours to carry his staff with him through the process of decision making. The reason might be that the participation of each member provides wider and different areas of knowledge required for school improvement.

One of the participants, Ada, gave her perspective about decision making. She explained that:

It is not easy to make a choice...decisions in this school range from classrooms to staff meetings and require a great deal of experience to make a good one.... I can say from experience, [that] some teachers have brilliant ideas...they can be creative and innovative too...so, successful implementation of decisions needs the support of members...this will eventually make them feel that their ideas are important...and we sometimes depend on one another with such innovation of ideas.... this is particularly in regard to academic meetings (Ada).

This suggests that participants are more likely to express themselves through interactions at meetings, with the knowledge that their contribution to the school is both acknowledged and appreciated. It also suggests that there are other meetings apart from academic meetings. Similarly, the vice principal's remarks lend support to this view:

Well ... I have experienced that two heads are better than one...Those involved in decision making are the principal... and at times he vetoes it On a lighter mood, he calls me for some issues before going to the general staff... Decisions arrived at from joint exploitation or rubbing of minds often come out very well. Members are able to express their opinions...and those who feel side-lined, are brought in....

usually, there are complains and hitches, that is why I said earlier that two heads are better than one.... Even at that, you find that bringing up different ideas promotes a healthy relationship amongst us [staff]. It helps to attain required results, especially when those who apply decisions or discussion are made part of the formulating process. For example, when we write exams, the principal, myself, chairman of timetable committee, chairman of exam committee ... we meet to discuss the arrangement of subjects and their days. We also discuss time for release of results. After arriving at a conclusion, we call a staff meeting where we pass the information to staffs...then collation of marks and results. We once had a principal who does everything and dished out instructions from his office without consulting any member of staff and had very stiff opposition and co-operation. However, when we discuss together nobody wants to break it (Anita).

Anita's comments seem to suggest an approach that is nuanced but includes a process of leadership participation. It also suggests that involving staff in decision making often led to good practice and that it required experience. Some meeting was preceded by consultations. At the same time, when there are difficulties at arriving at a consensus, the principal vetoed some decisions. This however, did not diminish the staff meeting. She outlined some advantages of decision making as it brought about the desired results for the school. This was probably because participants in decision making are often obliged to ensure its implementation and success. She recalled an earlier leadership style of one of the principals whom she alleged often had disagreements with staff and led to autocracy. Generally, Anita's remarks suggest that regular staff meetings provided for all issues, stretching from the welfare of teachers, the discipline of students and the support of parents.

In his view, the PTA chairman not only supported the above opinion, he stated the reasons why the school took learning very seriously and why staff have decided to give their time for the overall achievement of students. For example, concerning extra mural classes and the support of some teachers:

First, we do not just impose levies on students...these issues are broadly discussed at the PTA meetings and decisions carefully taken...and teachers are willing to offer extra lessons to students provided parents are ready to pay for it. For us, this is one of the many ways of measuring [up] with schools in the cities and most parents are part of such decisions... Extra tutorials constitute the main opportunities for proficient teachers and tutors to assist the students, especially those in their final years...and other students with learning difficulties. This explains why we decided on levies...Some of those classes are taught after normal school hours and we have some good and dedicated teachers to help carry out this task. This arrangement enables expert tutors and teachers to use their free time to assist the students (Kenzo).

Coincidentally, the researcher was present at the election of a new executive of the PTA. Issues addressed by the new chairman in his acceptance speech, included the need for more parents to attend meetings, so that important decisions affecting their wards can be discussed for the overall development of the school. From the researcher's observation, participants did not just sit down and listen, they were actively involved in the entire process of decision making even though some of the participants sometimes disagreed with some proposals at the meetings.

My experience today revealed that not everyone was in support of the decisions at the PTA meeting earlier today. It also indicated that each meeting seems to have opposition as suggested by some of the interviewees (Field notes, June 2015).

Conditions supporting decision-making

Some participants were of the view that the school leadership often accepted innovations from staff. This was seen as one of the motivating forces behind the collaborative support that frequently led to making some useful decisions in the school. One participant explained that:

There are moments when everyone would like to cooperate, especially when they know that their ideas can be useful and accepted by the house (referring to staff meeting). The principal always encourages us to do our level best to assist the

school with whatever talents and endowments we have...and I feel this can make any staff put in their best (Ada).

Supporting the above position, Ann gave reasons why decision making was likely to be effective in the school. She believes that it was imperative for the leadership to cooperate, because the lack of it would probably weaken the students' outcome. Thus, participants needed to support one another:

If you want to do it all, you are bound to make mistakes...but when you share your ideas and get involved, you will be helping both the students and your colleagues...and there are new ideas developed...these new ideas help to shape the decision-making process (Ann).

Ivy also commented on the process of decision making:

Let me put it this way ... dress code. All staff agreed on the dress code. The period of teaching ... was also agreed by all staff even when we wanted to extend the period ... so it was a collective decision by all staff...For me, I think the members [of staff] have to cooperate in order to make good decisions (Ivy).

Visionary leadership

The leadership of Eki seems intent on making plans for the future of the school. For example, plans are usually outlined to members. They are required to make proposals aimed at positioning the school amongst the best in the locality. The principal's vision for the school is presented in this citation by one teacher:

The principal sets the direction of the school together with staff...they are passionate about it...Last week the principal called a general meeting of staff to look at the plans that have been formulated...to create and restructure special programmes...to implement new ones for students...to set up a high expectation and aspirations for staff and students. To write to parents to assist their children with less chores to enable them to devote time to studies (Ike).

Another teacher supported this opinion:

At the beginning of any new term, we normally would have a meeting and where he maps out plans by telling us what is expected of each one of us or what we should have achieved at the end of the term...members also contribute their proposals...That, in my opinion, [is] visionary (Ivy).

Ike's opinion was reflected in the minutes' book, in which staff agreed to write to parents about plans by the school to assist students to achieve the best results. Discussions such as this indicate collaborative planning by members. In this way, the school plan is linked to vision and shared leadership and suggests that both the principal and his staff are involved in the process.

Another teacher explains how the principal laid out strategies that would enhance the success of students. It suggests that the school leadership enacts practices that lead towards collaborative school plans:

I think the principal has great potential and is open to new ideas...usually we do the planning together on equal terms... and one such plan is to set the direction of the school and to take it the greatest height. He does it in many ways...by general education planning, managing punctuality and ensuring that teachers report early to work ... he see to it that teachers come to assembly on time ... at the right time. There is a book for assembly where we usually write names. If you attend the assembly, you enter your name into that book ... this makes every teacher want to be there each time.... this is a procedure that we all agreed to (Dave).

Although Dave's idea of visionary leadership included punctuality at the assembly ground, from the researcher's observation a majority of teachers were mostly present for the conduct of morning assembly, while some were constantly late for work during this study. This suggests that the principal shows thoughtfulness in the pre-planning and setting the direction of school that begins from the assembly to incorporate as many teachers as he possibly can. By this process, the principal is

thought to be insightful. Another teacher offered a different view of visionary leadership for Eki:

The principal has a plan, but I cannot itemise all at the moment...but at PTA meetings, he does mention his plans.... he has in his mind that the school should be better than where he met it... In fact, he guides us as well as the students to behave well, to study hard and to focus on achieving greater success; our goal...you can notice it in the way he [principal] gather together the teachers with special plans to improve the academic standard of this school...these plans are usually proposed to parents (Eve).

Even though the word 'vision' was not used in her explanation, it could be inferred from her comments. The participants' conceptions of visionary leadership include strategic planning and thus links vision to planning.

Solo and Shared Leadership

The participants' comments indicate that there is a link between solo and shared leadership in the school, leading to collaborative principles. It also suggests that there is a systematic relationship between leaders and followers as they collectively undertake tasks and setting goals for the school. This is evident, for example, in the implementation of government policies, according to the principal:

All we try to do is apply our initiatives while doing this work. The ministry is responsible for the direct control of the school but we, as staff, have to do our best to achieve the goals of the school and the objectives of government...this is why we practice shared leadership...helping each other to meet the demands of government. It is not just the duty of the principal; other staff participate through assigned roles...I believe there is that close working relationship between the school leaders as the tasks are shared (Principal).

He also explained the importance of shared leadership:

Apart from the fact that government plays a great role in the authority of the school, assigning and sharing task is also a way of preparing subordinate teachers towards the eventual mantle of leadership. I don't work alone, and I cannot be here forever...so it is important that, while we discharge our duties, younger teachers might learn how to lead and, one day, become good school administrators...If I don't share functions, how can they learn? (Principal).

Although the discussion was about shared leadership, the principal's remark also suggests that the school is involved in the process of preparing younger colleagues for what appears to be leadership development. This is apparent in the discussion about preparing subordinates for ultimate leadership responsibility by collective problem- solving through shared leadership activities. In this case study, shared leadership can be inferred in the working relationship between the principal and teachers. Another teacher offered one such example:

This school was a community school before it was taken over by government. The principal encourages us to work together with other teachers from different departments, to share ideas on how to improve the school...so we meet occasionally to design [curriculum] and look at different areas that require proper attention by the staff and to support our students. For me, leadership function is shared amongst us... we don't just leave for the principal (Linn).

The researcher's observation during shadowing reveals that teachers in this school appear to collaborate in terms of shared leadership practices. This was evident in dissemination of information amongst members. For example, one of the HODs had informed teachers in his department to be free to use his office for any meeting so long as it would assist in the overall development of the school. Almost immediately, another teacher interjected his view. His view was recorded on the field notes:

The researcher observed today a form of networking between one HOD and some teachers. The HOD said to his colleagues '...there are some new thoughts I would

like to share with you [my colleagues] at break time...it is about the new curriculum and I'm sure it will be helpful, and we will all benefit from it' (Field notes: June 2015).

The above extract, from observation, buttresses the impression that shared leadership practice might be prevalent in some aspects of school leadership. For example, the notion of sharing knowledge with other teachers, not necessarily those of the same department, could suggest a type of networking. As another teacher puts it:

I participate in leadership because it helps to increase the productivity of teachers...you know that teaching can be onerous when you have to combine it with other extra activities beyond the normal classroom.... but wherever tasks are shared the danger of stress is limited, if not altogether avoided.... Sharing of ideas not only improves the quality of teaching but also of staff and students (Dave).

Another participant explained shared leadership as a form of leadership practice beginning with the principal at the apex and relating it to departmental levels:

All of us ...the principal, vice, year heads...we are all involved. An example of shared function...being a HOD, I share some of my function with my colleagues...I give them assignments...I ensure that my colleagues teach the students in detail. Activities are shared because I want them to also contribute their knowledge and expertise to the running of the school and to see the school as their own.... I want them to also learn...to participate because I can't do it all alone (Linn).

The participants' views indicate a sense of feeling of ownership when given the chance to show their expertise. Such participation suggests a degree of empowerment that may encourage commitment to the school. There seems to be an increase in staff cohesiveness, as both the older teachers and newly appointed ones work together to arrive at a consensus, for school improvement. There is an

acknowledgement of what can be learned from colleagues to foster collective practice. The subsequent quotes underpin this opinion:

Well, my perception about shared leadership is that every individual staff is offered the opportunity to participate in activity in some ways...Both the staff and I take learning in this school very seriously. As PTA chairman, I play my role while others are playing theirs. Leadership task is not designed solely for the principal and the vice... it cannot be achieved by one individual alone...it means that every hand has to be on deck to achieve our common goal (Kenzo).

We have various committees; sub-committees...activities are shared to facilitate a smooth process of school administration. Where leadership is shared, everyone brings his or her wealth of knowledge and help to complement activities and ensure things will go well ... I believe every teacher plays their part (Eve).

Some participants are of the view that leadership practice cuts across a number of staff. This shows that teachers are assigned tasks other than teaching. This was one participant's perspective of shared practice.

I am in charge of printing the examination questions and coordinating exams and collating the results... this is one of the ways I participate in the shared leadership of this school (Eve).

Eve's narrative suggests that, by accomplishing these tasks, she has a share in the leadership activities of the school by a role designed to protect and promote the quality of education in the school, as the examination officer. Although Eve's explanation appears to be a form of routine administration, at the same time, she perceives this to be a form of shared leadership.

Distributed leadership and Delegation

Central to the idea of shared leadership in this case study are the concepts of distributed and delegated leadership among the staff. Participants see delegation as a form of distributed leadership, which enhanced a good working relationship amongst staff. It is thought that distributed leadership helped participants to focus on students' achievements. The principal believes that he empowers his colleagues through delegation and, in that way, participated in distributed leadership in the school:

Yes... I think there are various ways of distributing leadership and I believe delegation is one of them.... When I am not available I delegate duties to my vice principal...for example, when I am not able to attend the school assembly or other important matters, she [the vice principal] takes over the control of the school ...and other teachers are there to support her (Principal).

The minutes of meetings showed instances when the principal delegated some teachers to represent him at one school function or another.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank [so-and-so] for accepting to represent me at the seminar... Reports from those who attended are very encouraging and I thank her for such a wonderful presentation...let me tell you that you did it for all of us...not just myself (Minutes book: 2013).

Even though the word delegation was not used in the quote, the expression 'represent' can be interpreted to mean the same as delegation in this context. There were also corroborative remarks from staff. For example, the vice principal explains that:

The principal delegates where necessary. The major item that cannot, or is never, delegated is finance - financial handling and control...there are reasons for this... It is because the finances are not as forth coming as they used to... Every other aspect can be delegated primarily from the principal to the vice principal, mid-way

to the school counsellor and to get to grassroots, we get the class teacher, year heads and class monitors...Some events require everybody participating...while some need the cooperation of other teachers. To achieve this, you cannot but delegate some tasks... For instance, if we want to have inter house activities...be it in the form of cultural or sports events, the principal and everybody comes in ... but after delegation, two of us will pull back and allow other staff to continue with the supervision. We start together ... pull back ... the heads take charge ... at screening or rounding up level, we come in again (Anita).

Anita insists that, despite efforts aimed at decentralizing leadership practice, some aspects are grey areas, especially finance. Her reason was that finances are low and managing them was an exclusive preserve of the senior management. However, in other areas such as sports, and cultural events, the principal usually handed the assignment to a teacher, but, that both her and the principal would stand apart and supervise the task. The impression given is that hierarchical leadership is a concern even when tasks are delegated.

One HOD explained it this way:

When leadership is distributed, it allows everyone to manage his or her affairs for the good of the children. When there is leadership distribution, the children stand to gain...you can see this reflected in our past school results (Eve).

Although this section is about distributed leadership and delegation, one participant attributed it to a process that accelerates decision making. It suggests that some participants interpret these concepts widely. The following extract supports this belief:

It makes the work easier, faster ... decision processes are faster and again, it kind of breaks that protocol of you running to the head ... in our case, the principal ... If I have a problem now, first and foremost, my year head is accessible to me, because he stays in the same staff room with me. I can easily reach my year head

faster before it gets to the principal and, so it makes the work easier and quicker if I must put it that way (Ike).

While explaining the status of delegation in this study, the vice principal mentioned that such practices often added more responsibility to her role:

The bulk of the work is given to me because of the mode of delegation. I go from class to class to ascertain the extent of performance. For instance, is there a teacher taking up his subjects? Most visitors that come are directed or delegated to me except where I am not able to help... also in charge of exams...It is what I meet on the ground... I think schools generally operate this form of structure (Anita).

Anita believes that schools mostly operate a structure that encourages delegation. The system of delegation in the school has created more tasks for her since she was involved in many activities. This may suggest that she was overburdened by delegation. It also indicates that there is no proper devolution of tasks underpinning delegation. However, some participants believe that the major objective of leadership delegation is to ensure that a leadership vacuum is not created. According to one participant, delegation is useful to her subject area because she represents the school by means of such delegation:

At that level, it really does not matter who is sent to represent the school. I am glad that I was the one that was sent, and I find it very useful to my subject area. Largely, it has given us nice results. The major objective ... is ... at the end of the day, we achieve a collective result (Ada).

The comment from Ada showed that the word 'sent' meant the same as being delegated. Supporting this viewpoint, another participant stated:

The principal is responsible for allotting leadership roles. He sets up committees, he rotates leadership roles.... Staff participate by taking charge of whatever is delegated to them...They participate primarily to achieve the goals of the school.

For example, by ensuring that teachers go to class. Those assigned for specific monitoring have a diary in which activities are recorded and reports given to the appropriate authorities. They participate because we want to have results (Linn).

Ultimately, delegation in this study appears to stem from the principal and, in some cases, other senior managers in the school. Nevertheless, participants seem to agree that such delegation was a process of allocative leadership distribution in the school.

Interpersonal issues

The principal explains that some staff lacked confidence because they were overwhelmed by past failures. These individuals brought such frustrations into the school and find it difficult to balance their responsibility to the school against their problems. For example:

You find that if one previously had problems in their school they would find it hard to integrate into a new school. We try to help them...but they lack that self confidence in themselves and try to blame everyone else but themselves for their ineptness...some [teachers] feel others have the potential to sway the cadre of leadership to their advantage (Principal).

On the other hand, some participants are of the view that the principal is not highly thought of by some staff. He is said to be possessive and sometimes did not want to share some functions. For this reason, some tend not to offer him their support and he was rated as below average. He was described as a man with a 'peculiar nature' who prefers handling everything or most things, especially when it has to do with income.

Considerably, I feel he is over possessive. For instance, in the school we have records, diaries, registers, lesson notes... he keeps all in his office. So, when a class teacher wants a register, he goes there ... when a monitor wants a marker pen changed in his class, he goes there. When I want to fill pins into my stapler, I go to him. When I need cello-tape, I have to go there ... When he is not around, I call

him. It is not the best, these are some of the items he can delegate ... because we to know that we should work as a team, we on the lower cadre ... we try to improvise (Anita).

To corroborate the opinion above, the researcher observed the principal personally dispensing stationery in his office. However, this is not the majority opinion held by participants. It only suggests that differences were evident in this case study despite efforts aimed at collegial leadership.

Lack of cooperation

Some participants were of the view that leadership was hampered by difficult colleagues who find it hard to work with the senior management of the school. One such assertion was concerning members who constantly oppose whatever ideas were proposed. One of the HODs, Linn, explained that some teachers were not happy. His reasons are stated below:

...some teachers are difficult to work with.... they never seem to go along with others [other teachers] ...it doesn't matter how much persuasion you show...it appears that they are there to frustrate every good move you make... it sometimes takes much more time convincing such a teacher than we would usually put in discussing important school matters (Linn).

Ann gave a different version of this bias. She claimed that the senior management have a reputation for respectful arbitration of misunderstandings and conflicts. The excerpt below explains her position:

It is appalling that some of us are not willing to cooperate with the authorities. I think some are not happy with the way things are done...because some of their proposals are not taken at meetings...maybe they feel slighted...sometimes you find that the principal tries to appoint them into positions so that they can cooperate (Ann).

Eve added that:

Difficulties usually arise from people not cooperating in the committees that they are assigned to work...some do not respond as expected of them... Yes, sometimes you find colleagues who might not want to participate for personal reasons and you can't force them...some are lazy about work and show lukewarm attitudes...some teachers feel that there is partiality in the administration which is why they don't want to cooperate (Eve).

One HOD explained it in terms of the diversity in people.

Human beings are heterogeneous ... Some, even when you give them the opportunity to show case their ingenuity; the lazy ones will still not perform. So, problems there ... you do extra work ... you do more supervision otherwise it will ruin your work. Some are unable to cope under pressure, some want pressure, so when delegated you're able to see the laxity of some (Ivy).

One participant reflected the view of some staff other than the interviewees.

I think some members feel they are left out...they feel there is discrimination by selectively appointing certain individuals and neglecting some...and this breeds the lack of cooperation (Ike).

One participant said that she heard one or two teachers make such comments as: 'it's not my job' when asked to be member of a disciplinary committee. She also explained that some teachers are in the habit of asking for remuneration even before a task is performed and that such attitudes are counterproductive to the objectives of the school.

I feel that not everyone [teacher] is really prepared to do the job...some of us are probably here to while away the time...they don't like to join any committee no matter what incentive you give to them and always complain about others...some ask for payments before they do anything (Dave).

The views of the above participants indicate some difficult situations faced by the leadership of this school. Despite these seeming problems, the principal appears to have been able to curb the differing attitudes of those teachers by assigning them leadership tasks.

Overview

This chapter presents a picture of school leadership that might be referred to as a 'top down bureaucratic structure'. Eki's leadership seems collegial in many respects, which can be seen mainly through sharing responsibility with teachers. Even though the leadership system is hierarchical, the style of leadership appears mixed, with a combination of approaches. This suggests that the school management attempted to establish a collegial style of leadership through a participatory decision-making process. This is prevalent in the form of regular staff meetings to discuss disciplinary issues, students' welfare and to plan the school curriculum. However, not all teachers were willing to take leadership responsibilities and participate. The chapter also shows a series of consultations with implementation committees and sometimes with heads of departments. The leadership practices suggest a belief in various forms of shared leadership. The chapter addressed aspects of leadership enactment as practiced in the case study. Some of the findings indicated some negative trade-offs between the school principal and staff indifference arising from what some participants described as personal favouritism on the part of senior management. However, such a tendency was no major constraint to leadership activities in the school. This is probably because participants see themselves as engaged in leadership practice by providing basic instructional leadership, which was executed by an array of teachers. Thus, leadership in this case study is partially enacted through participative instructional leadership. However, there is a limitation to the application of distributed leadership in this case. It suggests that participants also see instructional leadership as a means of participating in distributed leadership because many teachers are involved in this process through pedagogical activities.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CASE STUDY FOUR – HILDA SECONDARY SCHOOL

Introduction

This chapter presents findings about leadership practices at Hilda community secondary school. The aim is to provide an overview of leadership at this school based on documents and participants' perceptions.

Context of Research: Profile of Hilda Community Secondary School

Hilda secondary school is located in Edo North senatorial district of Edo State. It is about 259 kilometres from Benin City, the capital city of the state. The school was established in 1980. After its establishment, the first civilian government of the state provided free and compulsory education for the people of the locality until a tuition fee was introduced after the civilian government was sacked by a military coup. The school has since returned to an era of civilian government in the state. With the re-introduction of the approved tuition fee, the local community appears to support the school, with occasional assistance from the government, because schools in the state are basically under the control of state government, especially in respect of policy.

Hilda is rated highly amongst the rural schools in the local government area. The residents are mainly farmers with small-scale agro based industries. Although the school is located in a densely located community, it serves as a model school for other adjoining communities characterised by high rates of unemployment and low income. In the words of the principal, 'the people of this community are of low economic status and are struggling to ensure that proper academic standards are promoted and sustained'. This is probably the reason why government has focused attention on the school in order to provide a basic education for its people. Being a community school, parents seem to take active participation in the communal leadership of the school as we would see later. The involvement of parents seems to bring in the element of distribution in this case study. Some teachers see the school as a platform in social status and appear to be willing to contribute to the development of the school. Over time, the community has become the centre of

social and economic activities in the locality as a result of the establishment of the school.

Data Collection at Hilda

Examination of documents

Field work for this study commenced with the examination of the school’s minutes book, diary and timetables. Subsequently, these were compared with other sources of information such as interviews, observation and field notes. A 10 years minutes’ book was scrutinized covering the period from 2005 to 2015. The reason for beginning the examination of the minutes’ book from 2005 was to compare leadership practices during those years. Typically, two or three meetings were held each year but there were five in 2015. Table 7.1 summarises meeting frequencies.

Table 7.1: Showing summary of meeting from Hilda

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
No. of meetings per year	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	2	4	3	5

The minutes’ book also showed the names of staff members who participated at each meeting. Amongst them are the ten interview participants (see table 7.2). See chapter three for sampling of participants. Staff meetings provide a possible forum for leadership distribution. As noted above, five such meetings were held in 2015, with the possibility of further meetings following the field work period in September. Some participants state that there are more meetings with the current principal. Their opinions are represented by the following quotation:

The present principal has actually been doing her best to ensure that there is a broad participation of staff in the leadership of the school...you can see some evidence of staff involvement at meetings in the minutes book. If you compare this principal to

her predecessors, you would agree with me that there is greater involvement of staff in the activities of this school. I believe she is making effort towards better collaboration (Jeni)

Table 7. 2: Demography of participants from Hilda community secondary school

Name of School	Hilda community secondary school	Staff names	Staff Experience in this school
Senatorial district	Edo North		
Principal	1	Lyn	22
Vice Principal	1	Delia	18
HODs	3	Aman, Jeni and Fabian	16 to 18 years
Teachers	4	Meg, Kym, Tim and Pam	3 to 9 years
PTA/SBMC	1	Laban	Under one year
Number of participants	10		

Hilda Community Secondary School Leadership and Management Structure

The school has a staff complement of 35 teachers and about 350 students of mixed gender. The principal of Hilda has been on the school management team for nearly 22 years. She was vice principal for eight years before her current appointment as principal. She not only has an extended knowledge of the school, but also of staff and students. As with community schools in the state, the school relies on the support of parents for successful funding of projects and students' development. However, there is also a School Based Management Committee (SBMC) in addition to the PTA. The principal, Lyn, explained that the SBMC was a further support agency of government to assist the school.

The SBMC is a new body set up by government...as a rural school, we are just at the receiving end...we accept whatever proposition that comes from government, even though we can't complain...however, I think they both serve the same purpose, by forming a supportive channel to the school (Principal).

Several other participants corroborated this opinion. The PTA chairman's remark sums it up:

Well, as a parent, I was part of the PTA and now, still part of the SBMC.... the modus operandi of the committee is the same as a PTA but with a slight modification. I play a dual role, as a parent as well as a representative of government. Government appointed me whereas as the PTA chairman, the position is elective (Laban).

Even though the structure of the school looks hierarchical, as a result of government expectations, the views of the principal and other participants suggest that, apart from the principal and teachers, family is also critical in the development of positive attitudes to learning in their children's education. The leadership processes in this case study are discussed under the following headings:

1. Nature of school leadership
2. Leadership enactment
3. Solo and shared leadership
4. Distributed leadership and delegation

Nature of School Leadership

The principal takes the lead role in the school, providing direction and setting goals in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. Leaders in this school attempt to make sense of the complex situation in the school. This includes the roles of the school leaders. Leadership is conceived as embracing all stakeholders with the responsibility of managing the school, including teachers, parents and the government. It involves participants in formal and informal leadership positions at the school, creating effective leadership that is measured by student outcomes, such as exam results, and the overall development of both staff and students at the end of school year. Some of the students' expectations and academic aspirations are reflected in the education policies provided by the Ministry of Education. This was suggested by the principal's comments:

Everyone plays a role in the life formation of our students including teachers and parents and the ministry [of education] that initiate policies. Furthermore, the family plays a critical role in the development of the child...and of course, I'm here as the anchor of all activities (Principal).

The vice-principal added that:

We are mandated by the rules set out for the administration of the school as spelt out in the education policy. It means that those involved in the administration of the school are many, including parents, teachers and those in authority [government] that we are responsible to... The involvement of the parent is an ad hoc affair...you can see that it is not originally part of the school chart (pointing to the organogram on the wall) (Delia).

Thus, it could be seen how context has influence the leadership practice of the school by the degree of involvement of parents and the government. One participant mentioned that, within the school, the leadership revolves around the senior managers. She called them the principal officers. It also shows that there are other ranks of vice principals including that of administration and special duties:

The leadership mainly covers the principal officers... - Principal, vice principal administration, vice principal special duties, vice principal examinations, under the VP admin we have the VPs of different sessions (Meg).

The above remarks suggest that there are a number of participants in the leadership of the school. Consequently, the parents and teachers appear committed to providing positive attitudes to learning by involvement in school leadership through the SBMC. Thus, this study focuses on the specific practices of leadership of several individuals within the school and not only by the principal. Some of these practices appear to be collaborative in nature. The researcher observed that the organogram

was pasted in several offices in the school, including those of the principal and vice principal, and in the staff common room.

The principal's leadership approach

The principal claimed to be democratic in her leadership style:

My leadership approach is democratic... where everybody is involved because 'no man is an island'...it is somewhat participatory because you discuss with people, seek their opinion and make the most of it... It creates a sense of ownership in the entire leadership process and they are happy to see that they are important too... If everyone is happy, you can carry everybody along... you can achieve your organizational goal (Principal).

Besides being democratic, the principal also described her leadership style as participatory. Her reason for such an approach is that it makes every participant have a sense of belonging. The approach also involves a process of consultation, which she attributes to a sense of ownership by staff. The response from some participants suggests that the principal is the one who sets the conditions that support and nurture collaborative leadership. For example, the principal was described as a leader because her affective approach led to a sense of communal relationships. Pam implies this idea in the following quotation:

At the beginning of the school year, the principal is reputed for her leadership quality in which she would invite everyone of us to be partners in leading the school to greater heights...she is inclined to accept suggestions and collaborate with people...she is open minded and treats everyone with respect whilst listening to what you have to say (Pam).

The following excerpt from the minutes' book supports this view. While welcoming staff and students to the morning school assembly, the principal was quoted as saying:

I would like everyone to feel at home, you are all welcome to this school. This is our school and we have no other school that we would call our own (Minutes book: 2015).

In one account, the principal was described as a charismatic leader because of her ability to carry the people along.

She works with everyone...she is charming and calm...very understanding...she is like a mother to many of us, having been in the system for a long time before many of us...she is problem solving and if there's trouble, she tries to resolve it with everybody. She is charismatic in nature but also very democratic in her approach (Delia)

The description of the principal by her vice principal and some other participants suggests harmonious working relationships in the school. One HOD described the principal as follows:

She has been here for over 20 years and we have confidence in her...she commands respect but sometimes talks with authority because she has the school in the palm of her hands...she knows everybody... She is directly under the board...they [referring to the board] call on her and discuss with them... Within the school, it is she and the principal officers... there is division of labour...the principal has her role...she comes to the assembly every day. There are teachers on duty who work with the prefects...it is a whole line of participation...She is democratic...because she carries us along since everyone participates in different leadership activities, and I believe the approach is very appropriate (Jeni).

Another HOD explained the democratic leadership approach of the principal in this way:

I believe her style [referring to the principal] is democratic...because she carries us [referring to members of staff] along; it's like a division of labour because everyone participates in the process of school leadership and they [teachers] are involved in

many ways.... Even though we sometimes don't have to vote, we often arrive at a consensus and it is an open playground for all, especially being a community school (Aman).

Apart from corroborating the principal's democratic style of leadership, Jeni and Aman's explanations reveal a number of other leadership styles. For example, there seems to be the notion of collegiality. The principal's participatory style is akin to a division of labour. For being democratic, she earns respects from her colleagues, as well as having a firm control of the school, perhaps because of her years of experience in the school, previously as teacher and vice principal before her appointment as principal. The principal's working relationship with the board does not seem to have a negative impact with her staff. Even though she was taking directives from the board, she seems to be able to manage good relationships with her staff. She mentioned to the researcher that she has routine meetings with the board to discuss important school matters before disseminating it to the staff. This observation is documented in the researcher's field note:

The principal mentioned to me earlier today that she was on a routine visit to meet with the head of the schools' board, held at the state ministry of education. It seems to me that she was pretty confident and excited about the meeting. She seems to have a good rapport with those at the helm of the school management board (Field note: September 2015).

The board referred to here is the inspectorate of education, responsible for the promotion of standards in education. This is different from the SBMC. This suggests the importance of the external role of the school leader. This seems to facilitate the relationship between the school and external management.

The responses from the participants, and the researcher's observation, seem to suggest a bureaucratic relationship between the school and the board but there also appears to be an ethos of democracy and mutual respect. By implication, this understanding originates in some way from the affective managerial attitude of the

principal that seems to lead to what appears to be democratic leadership practice in this case study. This is acknowledged in the minutes' book by the following commendation from some staff:

We would like to put in on record that the principal's approach has very been inspiring and commendable. On behalf of other colleagues, I would like to pledge our continued loyalty in appreciation of your motherly care and interest in both staff and students (Minutes book: 2015).

Such documented remarks are an indication of what appears to be a good working relationship between the principal and staff in the leadership of the school that has motivated staff to pledge loyalty to the head of school. Nevertheless, Aman expressed a different view, saying that, despite the leadership approach of the principal, which many of the staff are emulating, she sometimes adopts a different approach or a combination of approaches, depending upon the circumstances:

As head of department I mix up my leadership approaches...I can sometimes be autocratic and sometimes democratic because I don't want anyone to take me for granted...there are some complex situations that might require you to be firmer than you usually would. We have just had practical exams in my department and all staff under my jurisdiction were involved in the planning and execution of the job...left to some of them, they would not participate for whatever personal reasons, but I had to make such participation compulsory (Aman).

This comment shows that hierarchy remains a factor in this study despite what appears to be a democratic approach.

Leadership influence

The principal's leadership qualities ensure that she is a major source of influence in the school. Many successes of the school are attributed to her, together with other colleagues. Such relationships can be seen as leadership influence. One participant mentioned that:

The principal is quite approachable, docile and unassuming. I can guarantee you that you can stop her at any time...she will certainly listen to you...She does this for everyone including staff and students. She sometimes goes about the school to see that things are enacted properly, not with the intention of policing anyone, but because of her interest in the job (Delia).

Two teachers illustrated the meaning of influence in the following citation:

The principal is someone who listens to the views of others...she shares the concerns of individuals regardless of their rank and file...she is very considerate. From my interaction with her, she is not someone who would like to impose her views on others, in spite of her strong personality within the school and beyond (Kym).

I think she is very inspiring...the way and manner she relates with staff and students is very personal. She is good at handling staff welfare and many of us are happy with her. For the first time in my career, I can say that she is one who knows students by their name (Tim).

One of the HODs explains the wide range of leadership influence in this school:

As a village school, there is a form of interaction between us [staff] in this school. We don't just assume that things will work out normally, so we endeavour to relate with one another in matters affecting individual staff, their subject areas and even their family life...We share our concerns with each other and it has really helped us to focus our primary attention on the students because, when one is happy, there's the possibility of contributing his or her best (Aman).

It appears that community life is enhanced in the school because of interaction between staff, while sharing the concerns of others. It also seems that leadership influence, as explained by Aman, is not limited to the principal alone but to other

participants in the school organization. The researcher's observation supports this impression:

There were a number of casual interactions between staff today. Although the researcher could not figure out the content of their discussions, since there were several such gatherings, the constant pats on the back of colleagues, and the laughing mood of the participants, is a possible indication of a cultural influence of the community school (Field notes: September 2015).

The understanding here is that influence is exerted in a plethora of ways, including the interaction of staff in the school. One teacher gave another perspective on leadership influence in the school:

There is an aura of encouragement in this school...it is a feeling that many of us would attest to. There is that feeling of a deep sense of participation...no one despised...no one feels diminished or looked down upon as if they are not important in the scheme of things. This creates a feeling that the school belongs to all of us especially as a village school (Meg).

The participants' responses indicate that leaders of the school encourage and support ways of thinking that create a sense of belonging. It also suggests a strong organizational culture, which establishes and maintains a relationship of trust between school members. Participants' explanations suggest an awareness that they are part of something more than their individual personalities, and that they are collegially part of a larger school community.

The approach of other leaders

Many participants, including Jeni, indicated other forms of leadership practice:

Here we have the hierarchy. She is at the top followed by the vice principals...we are very many here (vice principals) ...down the ladder to the school prefects. In fact, we have the management team, which comprises of vice principals with different portfolios: vice principal admin and vice principal academic, the school

guidance counsellor, and the Librarian, bursar and school secretary. The past leadership was purely autocracy, she took decisions alone... like I said earlier, flexibility is necessary at times. The current leadership is democratic, she is able to accommodate and seeks your opinion with the mind of adopting the best...And this approach is very appropriate...because it gives everybody the opportunity to contribute...like they say, variety is the spice of life...you have varieties and from these you are able to pick the best (Jeni).

Even though Jeni's views confirm those of other participants, she also states that the style is top down, indicating that the pattern was to follow a laid down structure as it appears in the school organogram. She contrasts the present leadership with the previous administration which, she claimed, was autocratic. Jeni also extols the leadership qualities of the present principal, suggesting that her approach is flexible, democratic and appropriate. Although this section is about the leadership approach of the principal, Jeni linked it to team work because of the particular relationship the principal has with members of staff.

Leadership Enactment

This sub section deals with the understanding and notion of leadership enactment at Hilda, drawing on the different perspectives of participants. Their narratives resonate from their experiences, and their involvement in the school. There seem to be a combination of cultural and innovative leadership practices that seem to foster interaction among participants in school leadership. Leadership enactment is understood through the notions of decision making, teams and community leadership. The principal explains further:

I think there are several understandings of how we enact leadership here...you would find that several individuals play vital roles to foster the knowledge and wellbeing of students...at the same time enabling staff to take active participation in the leadership of the school. The community plays its role through parents...teachers play their roles in their different capacities, as well as the vice principal, HODs, and myself (Principal).

Some of the leadership practices in this study indicate the involvement of multiple stakeholders at different levels of participation. Being a community school, there seem to be expectations from teachers and principals that parents should contribute to the upbringing of their children not only with financial assistance, but also with homework. For this reason, parents are seen to be instrumental in the pedagogical development of their children as stakeholders. This idea is reflected in the minutes' book as well as narrated by some participants. For example, the minutes' book states the expected commitment of parents in this regard:

Parents are an essential part of the overall development of their children...they have a greater role to play in modelling them at home with basic instructions of life and to assist them in their take home assignments (Minutes book: 2014).

In addition, the principal mentioned that the responsibility for fostering the students does not lie with teachers only:

Parents are an integral part in the formation of student and formidable stakeholders...that is why they are willing to contribute resources to enhance the role of teachers...often, some parents do not, even though majority of them attempt to help. This is obvious during teaching and learning and, as head of school, I sometimes visit classes during lessons to observe what is going on (Principal).

This view was supported by the chairman of the SBMC who added that:

As Chairman of the SBMC my role is to encourage parents on behalf of government...As a parent, I am interested in the wellbeing of students. I have three children in this school, so you can see that I have a stake as well. Some of these issues are discussed extensively during our school meetings with parents, I believe the principal, and her team, are doing their level best...we, as parents, only need to play our part (Laban).

Similarly, some participants explained the nature and involvement in leadership enactment of the school. They articulate that the school is established in the rural community of the state in order to provide basic education for the children of the area and that it is their responsibility to make sure that the purpose for setting up the school is achieved. One such process was to participate in the teaching and learning process of the school. Pam illustrates this point:

As you are already aware, this is a rural school and the students here are from a poor social background but that does not stop them from competing excellently with students from urban schools. Therefore, my role is to assist in achieving the goals and objectives of the school, teaching my subjects during lesson periods and availing myself where my attention is needed. Like other teachers, my primary duty is to teach the students. I'm also involved in their discipline as a committee member. Students' morale here is different from those in cities...we constantly make sure that they are above board (Pam).

Another teacher added that:

Funding for the school is barely adequate and so teachers devote more time providing extra tutorials for underperforming students to prop them up in areas that require extra attention. Some teachers assist in looking for funding outside the school...we try to get assistance for the school library because what we have now is outdated since the changing of curriculum by the government (Tim).

The participants' remarks show aspects of their involvement in the leadership of the school, ranging from helping to source funds, because of government's inability to give full financial support to schools, and proving extra teaching hours. This makes it surprising that the school has engaged in building new tennis courts, as mentioned earlier. One justification might be that physical education is one of the school's curriculum subjects that the building of the lawn tends to fulfil, and the other reason might be to enable the school successfully to host the event.

In addition, the SBMC chairman stated that, in theory, the government endeavours to provide basic education but that communities such as Hilda are allowed to source additional funding to execute important projects aimed at the development of students. He explained the idea of leadership enactment in the school by the role he plays and the extent to which the government is involved. He also indicates that such enactment is not the exclusive preserve of the government:

I believe we cannot leave the running of the school to government alone...yes, it is a community school run by the government. Times are hard, and things are changing. One can understand why government is unable to provide the facilities required and to make the school truly enviable...This is where I come in... I feel we [parents] can also assist in whichever ways possible in order to support in the formation of students and retraining of teachers...by so doing, many individuals will have an involvement in the running and maintenance of the school (Laban).

One of the HODs, Fabian, who also acts as the school's guidance counsellor, explained that he was allotted the task as a result of his years of experience of teaching in the school and his qualifications:

Apart from being a teacher and a head of department, I also double as the guidance counsellor of the school. The principal saw my qualifications and allotted this role to me by seniority and hierarchy.... Part of my duty as the school's guidance counsellor is to lead students in out of school activities... It is one of the ways I can take part in the leadership of the school and there are a few of my colleagues in similar positions...it's a collective responsibility even though the principal has the ultimate responsibility for the running of the school (Fabian).

Many other participants hold similar views about leadership enactment. Some of them linked it with decision making and team work. These are presented later in different sub-sections.

Decision making

Decisions may be individual, or team based. Stakeholders seem to employ a number of approaches to elicit the collaboration of members of the teaching and learning community. Much of the discussion on team leadership centred on the decision-making process, linked with vision, and planning. Hence, decision making constitutes part of the leadership process in Hilda secondary school.

At some level, decision making involves the principal officers...what I mean by principal officers are the heads of school and departments ...she [the principal] calls the meetings. It is not every matter that is brought forward for open discussion without first seeking the opinions of members of the senior management. After meeting with the principal staff, such matters are brought to the general staff meeting... it is at the general staff meeting that she informs the entire staff that some prior consultation has been made before reaching a final decision. Whatever decision that is reached is implemented by the HODs in conjunction with teachers in their departments. Sometimes, this has to do with exams and preparation of results and the giving out of results...I believe it is working for us...we sometimes have emergency meetings as a process of getting everyone involved. The principal makes sure that decisions are implemented soon after the meeting is ended...the same applies when there is a meeting with the SBMC. The advantage of the decision-making process is that every staff member gets to know what is happening and cannot deny any involvement in the decisions taken concerning the activities of the school.... The only disadvantage is that there could be certain decisions that the principal might not want all staff to know because everybody may not work well with it....and that is finance and budgeting because it's a sensitive area of our school's administration (Delia).

Although the words vision or plan were not used in the explanation of decision making by Delia, the fact that there was a preceding meeting before a general staff meeting suggests a form of thoughtful planning before reaching a major decision. This view suggests that both principals and teachers, and other stakeholders in school leadership, develop a positive school climate. By so doing, the principal ensures opportunity for staff collaboration and collective planning through a greater

involvement in decision making. This explains some advantages of decision making in the school. For Delia, certain areas such as finance and budgeting, are kept away from general staff discussion. Her reason is because it is sensitive and likely to create disaffection.

Corroborating some of Delia's comments, the SBMC chairman, Laban, suggests that charging exorbitant fees by principals is prohibited by the government outside the mandatory development levies. He mentioned that some schools in the area had been reprimanded for this and that Hilda secondary school is careful not to fall into the same scenario. This seems to be one reason why the leadership of the school refers to financial matters as being sensitive. However, since the school is partially self-funded, one might be led to believe that this is the reason why it is allowed to charge minimal fees to assist in the funding of the school:

Some school heads in this area have had problems with the ministry of education for imposing exorbitant levies on students in the guise of development levies...and all sorts of other levies...the government frowns at such practices and this school does not want to be caught up in a similar situation. So, if we have to raise funds, there are approved means of doing so and the principal, with some members, know how to go about it....so, there are issues that we necessarily would not interfere with openly at discussions, and finance is one of such (Laban).

Other views of decision making are expressed by Meg and Pam. Meg believes that she is involved in decision making in two ways, directly and indirectly.

I participate in the decision-making process sometimes, though not directly. I know we do have staff meetings and we present our views during the meeting... Most decisions are reached by the senior management and they let us know what they think and ask us if there is a contrary opinion...we do agree with the decision most of the time...and really have no choice in the matter...as long as we know that the decision will be for the benefit of all...that is why I said I participate indirectly. At other times, I am fully involved when I'm at committee meetings. I think I'm

comfortable with the way it is and [I] feel it does enhance most decisions reached without much difficulty...if the top management decide to undertake a task on behalf of all members, they will process it with ease and without the fatigue of having to involve everyone (Meg).

If there is a decision to be made, the principal calls her principal officers, and, on that level, it is discussed; then a meeting is called of all teachers and the decision is made known, but the principal will still ask for contributions and, from the contributions, a final decision is reached. For example, after we have had our promotion examination, we decide on what percentage to grade the performance of the students based on their scores (Pam).

The views of the participants suggest that participative decision making is an important process that supports successful educational management in the school. Besides being a means of facilitating implementation of decisions, it also indicates the process as a unifying means for teachers through which they feel respected and empowered. Such participation seems to build trust, as well as increase school effectiveness, strengthen staff morale and induce commitment to team work.

Team leadership

Several teachers exemplify various forms of leadership in this school. Apart from the principal, who is at the apex of the structure, some participants described other leaders as 'principal officers'. Together with the head of school, these principal officers assist in the daily administration of the school. Primarily, the participants in team leadership are the principal and HODs. Depending on the level of leadership, they provide specific leadership in the design of the curriculum at departmental level. The role of the HOD appears to be instructional. In this way, they participate in the leadership of the school. The principal explains the extent to which team leadership is practiced in the case study. She links it to a democratic approach to leadership:

Team work is practiced here since the main approach is democratic...it is my responsibility to ensure that the proper scheme of work is taught. I usually invite the HODs to discuss the best methods to be used in teaching. The HODs in turn meet with members of their department to discuss new topics from the ministry [of education] ...in the process you will find that there are teachers who are better than myself and such teachers are given the opportunity to offer their very best for the development of the students. In addition, there are individual teachers who double as HODs and in charge of non-teaching job, such as the labour masters, and they are responsible for the maintenance of the school. Part of what you saw me doing this morning, shortly after the assembly, was to discuss with the teachers concerned. Some teachers are in charge of games...some in charge of discipline...This is how we work as a team. Team work is very important because 'no man is an island'. You get information from people...you add to it and use it to work.... you get useful contributions from people.... that is my idea of team work...what you know might be different from others, by the you put them together you are able to achieve some good results that will aid in the administration of the school (Principal).

The views above suggest that, apart from providing team leadership through teaching and learning, teachers are also involved in other activities, providing services to the school. The idea of 'principal officers' indicate that there is a hierarchy while at the same time engaging in team leadership practice. The principal's perspective of team leadership includes providing leadership in teaching and non-teaching roles. The researcher observed that a short meeting was held after morning assembly, supporting this view. The meeting was meant to fine-tune an earlier discussion based on team management. However, this emergency meeting was not documented in the school's minutes book.

Some teachers were seen today having a meeting with the school head. The meeting was brief, and the principal mentioned to the researcher, the motive for calling such an emergency meeting (Field notes: September 2015).

There were a few more similar emergency meetings observed by the researcher suggesting participants' involvement in discussions concerning team participation.

The minutes' book also suggests structured participation in team work. For example, teachers were encouraged to work with their various heads of department in order to achieve the educational objectives of the school. There were references to 'team heads' as a way of suggesting that the heads of department are regarded as team leaders. This is noticeable in the extract below:

The principal requests the heads of departments to work in collaboration with their teachers to accomplish the tasks ahead (Minutes book: 2015).

Some observations by the researcher corroborate this practice. For example, there are a few occasions where HODs met with members to discuss specific topics and curriculum. This seems to cut across several departments in the school.

During my observation, today, I noticed that two heads of departments had meetings with staff of their department. One teacher told me it had to do with teaching and learning and that the general feeling in the school is for students to achieve better performance at the end of the term (Field notes: September 2015).

Similarly, another impression of team leadership is expressed in the following quotation:

Yes, I believe there is a substantial amount of team work at departmental levels. The HODs meet regularly to discuss salient matters particular to each department and exchange information so many teachers can benefit from such discussion ...yes. In my department, we discuss as colleagues. We engage in team work in order to involve everybody...so that people cannot complain of being ignored, even at that, some staff do complain regardless of what style one adopts ...in the end, we share whatever glory is achieved... Also, at the school level, we organize students to work...we put our heads together (Aman).

When the researcher asked for further clarification about the pronoun 'we' in her comments, Aman explained that she worked in collaboration with other heads of

departments in the school especially when there are complex situations. This suggests that there is both 'inter' and 'intra' departmental cooperation and networking. However, the researcher did not want to probe further so as not to deviate from the subject under investigation. It suffices to know that there appear to be several means of team work that might cut across many school departments.

When asked about her perspective on team leadership, one participant, Pam, referred to the entire hierarchy as a senior management team:

In fact, we have the management team, which consist of the principal with the vice principal, HOD, sectional heads, and school bursar. We also have the school librarian. These senior members are the ones that constitute the schools' senior management team. They take the lead, and we follow...when I say we, I mean those of us who are junior teachers...we are usually co-opted in to committees (Pam).

Pam links team leadership with the senior management team. Although there is no formal SMT, Pam understands the senior staff to function as one.

Community leadership

Fabian offers a rather different perspective on team leadership and rather suggests a form of community leadership, enhancing cultural norms and school discipline. It also involves works of various committees constituted by the leadership:

Yes...team work is practiced here...most of what we have been saying has to do with 'team' in one way or another. For example, when it comes to areas of discipline, we do not compromise at all, everyone becomes interested, but members of the committee take the lead. This is because our cultural norm is that every child is a child of the community and so, we take the discipline of students seriously. For example, when a child is not wearing the right school uniform, or fights ...we team up to admonish the child rather than leave it for one teacher to handle.... We engage in team work because we believe that we can collectively make a positive change... by putting our heads together.... There are various committees working as a team

in this school and many teachers participate as team members.... although members sometimes have their different views in whatever committee they are constituted, they are committed to doing the job in spite of the few hands doing the job. They participate to make the students achieve the best possible desired results. Many of us are in more than one committee because of the shortage of teachers. Teachers that are members of committees take their classes when they should...as much as possible... Things are carefully planned to ensure that students don't suffer despite the few hands providing leadership in this school. Everyone has a role to play and together we all form a team (Fabian).

Fabian associates team work with committee membership. Being a member of a committee that is involved in the discipline of students is a cultural phenomenon; a cultural phenomenon because of the sense of ownership. The community life evokes a sense of such ownership, particularly in this school, and seems entrenched in the local community. The researcher observed such communal practices on the assembly ground where teachers come together to discipline some truant students. A parent member of the school was observed walking closely outside the school boundary. The researcher was told that it was one way of providing support in the maintenance of law and order, ensuring that students do not leave the school during teaching hours. This view is corroborated by Laban who suggests that such practices are well documented in the minutes' book. However, the researcher could not have access to the SBMC's minutes' book during the time of the research to corroborate this view. However, a similar point was recorded in the school's minutes, confirming such practices:

In her remarks, the principal thanked parents for providing assistance in areas of security and monitoring of students outside the school. This has led to the reduction of truancy by students. It is on record that the number of cases reported by the discipline committee has reduced considerably. She thanked both parents and committee members for their commitment (Minutes book: 2014).

Conditions supporting decision-making

Decision-making was linked to the leadership qualities and attitudes prevalent in the school environment. In this way, some participants again reinforce the idea of leadership influence in this section.

The past leadership was purely autocratic, she used to take decisions alone... like I said earlier, flexibility is necessary at times. The current leadership is democratic; she's able to accommodate a lot of things and seeks your opinion with the mind of adopting the best... She is affable, and most staff and students like her. When there is any contentious issue, and there seems to be a deadlock, she would be the first to compromise in order to make things work and never imposes order...she likes to think about the other person first before her personal interest. Such attitudes have endeared her to many staff and students (Jeni).

Jeni's explanation suggests that, among other factors, democratic principles are a helpful means of decision making because it recognizes the participation of many people. The attitude of the principal is a further influence on her decision-making process. This seems to inspire members of the school to more cooperation. In addition, time appears to be a factor. Some participants suggest that quality time needs to be invested in making good decisions.

I feel the principal is trying her best...just that some teachers tend to over stretch issues...plenty of time is devoted to discussion and I believe it is a good approach. Often times, there are important decisions to be made. This is because most meetings are problem solving and ideas are shared that assist members to foster better relationships in their various departments. It means that we [teachers] can also learn from the way others manage issues...the reason being that any decision made in a hurry might not go down well, even though the principal always encourages greater participation because she feels each teacher is an expert in her subject area and that participation would lead to better students' results (Kym)

Besides supporting Jeni, Kym's explanation also suggests that the time spent in making decisions is time well spent since it eventually led to solving problems. Kym's comment also indicates a form of shared leadership practice. This is discussed in the next section.

Solo and Shared Leadership

Responding to the idea of shared leadership, the principal appears surprised that some teachers feel that the principal cannot enact leadership on her own, even though the situation on the ground demands that the principal takes the leading role administratively. The principal herself acknowledged the fact that she does not have the capacity to lead the school all by herself. She explained:

There is no doubt that I am the head of school, a role I'm expected to fulfil by the authorities ... Yet, I am at a loss as to why some of us [teachers] fail to appreciate that this business of leadership can be achieved only by the principal considering the reality on ground. I'm only human like others and I cannot act alone. In fact, the leadership structure as you can see [pointing to the organogram] has already implied that the work is shared. There are many areas where leadership is shared in this school.... we have the vice principal, HODs and others...they are all involved in one form of leadership or another... It means that our collective involvement is long-term and lies in thinking creatively as well as taking radical measures which, I believe, boost shared practices in the school, and this demonstrates that I'm not alone. It explains why there is a sort of division of labour...with each HOD or teachers that attend to various job descriptions...there are teachers committed to admission of students, sports etc (Principal).

The principal's perspective suggests that other participants in the school are involved in shared leadership practices including the HODs, and teachers. Another impression is that teachers lead in specific aspects of school practice. She attempts to justify her claim by pointing to the school's system organogram. It also shows that individual teachers who engage in formal leadership positions may also be said to be involved in shared leadership. Another interpretation relates to the willingness

of teachers to participate in the decision-making process and the willingness of the principal to share power, and her capacity to create the processes to make participation in decision making workable.

Laban, the SBMC chairman, believes that there is cooperation between the principal and her staff that facilitates a shared leadership pattern. He ascribes it to team leadership in which everyone appears ready to contribute to the development of the local community. This is illustrated in the following comment:

The principal cannot be everywhere at the same time. From my experience in the school so far, everyone endeavours to get involved in the leadership. There are various departments from what I know...The head might be the one who brings in the ideas, but she is always interested in the contribution of other teachers and even parents...she would always want to know what you think about a particular opinion... She doesn't like to do it alone. Her own way of running the school is such that everyone has a role to fulfil...Many teachers are involved in different committees...some are in more than two...I believe it's a good way of leading the school because most tasks are shared, and most teachers are happy with it (Laban).

Shared leadership appears to be related to the ability of the school head to create roles and opportunities for other members of the school, such as the leadership team. This tends more to allocative, rather than emergent, distributed leadership. One participant explained her own involvement in shared leadership practice:

I have always been involved in shared leadership...myself and my colleagues are members of a special select group formed by the principal to search for good and well-behaved students for the position of school prefect. The team has been very efficient and those selected in the past have proven to be good choices made by the team...that is one way that I have participated in the shared leadership of this school (Pam).

To support the above conception of shared team leadership, the researcher observed a group of four teachers in the school's library hall selecting the school prefect for

the subsequent academic session. This suggests the participants' understanding of shared leadership and, at the same time, connects to collaboration in team work.

Visionary leadership

Planning seems to constitute part of the school vision. The principal suggests that such plans are articulated amongst the staff with the principal taking the leading role. Every member of staff is welcome to offer suggestions as to what might position the school in the annals of progressive schools within the locality. The principal reveals that it was the turn of the school to play host to other community schools. With this view, it became necessary to draw up plans for successful hosting. One such plan was to build a new lawn tennis court:

We are building a new lawn tennis court...it has been in our plan. It was an idea proposed by previous administration when I was vice principal...and I thought it was necessary to actualise the vision of my predecessor. Our aim is to ensure that we play good host to our guests...it is visionary in the sense that whatever facilities are put in place with further increase in our chances of winning many trophies besides being a good host...This is not the plan of the principal alone; other members of the school community are involved in visioning and planning (Principal).

The link between tennis court and pedagogy is because physical education forms part of the school curriculum. The quotation also reveals that the vision of the school could be long term, and goal-oriented, which incumbent school leaders actualise. This is because the intention to build a new lawn tennis court was an idea conceived by a past regime but is now being achieved by the present leadership. It also shows the participant's use of the words 'plan' and 'vision' interchangeably while referring to the same proposal. The principal led the researcher to see the portion of land for the construction of the tennis court as if to justify her claims.

One of the participants, who is also the teacher in charge of physical education, stated that:

Well, talking about vision, it is something that builds up over the years...for instance, we intend refurbishing and renovating some buildings in the school. The plan has been in place, it has only just come to fruition at our last meeting with parents, who constitute the main donor to the project. Some of the school vision takes time to materialize, hence this plan has only been approved now (Fabian).

The use of the word plan and vision indicate the participant's perspective of vision in relationship to the leadership goals of this school. One teacher linked the school vision to the mission statement. She mentioned that the school has a mission statement which was at the heart of the school's activities:

I would like to say that the vision of the school is imbued in the mission statement, which is 'To achieve excellence, infuse discipline with high moral standards'. Having this at the back of our mind as a local school, it propels us to vigorously pursue our goals and objectives. Hence, every member is determined to ensure that the school becomes the best in this locality...that is part of the school plan (Jeni).

Besides linking vision to mission, there is also a link to planning. Jeni's explanation shows that academic achievements are also part of the visionary plan of the school. Although she offered to show some records of her departmental achievements, the researcher declined in order not to deviate from the focus of the study. However, it suggests that there is some form of vision in the school. It appears that the vision is primarily that of the principal but may be subject to contributions from other staff, for example in articulating the mission statement.

Distributed leadership and Delegation

Some participants in this study believe that leadership is a collective phenomenon, which might be expressed in several activities. Task performance is central to such perceptions. This idea is indicated in the following quotation:

There are many activities that require the attention of the principal or the vice principal or even the HODs... but for want of time or other commitments, they are unable to attend, I feel it's reasonable to delegate someone else to act on your behalf. I have had to delegate the vice principal or some other teachers to represent the school at functions outside the school. Many of those delegated see it as part of participation in the leadership of the school... I believe it makes things work well...it's a form of a democratic system... I feel everybody should be involved but each unit should have a head who reports to the principal because the principal as head of school is responsible to the highest authority while delegating duties...Also, I feel it makes your work easier... you are not stressed up...and you're able to coordinate because, if you do it alone...you will off balance... However, some people [referring to colleagues] will over shoot their boundary and might usurp your position (Principal).

The principal's comment suggests a distribution of leadership activities, whilst linking it with delegation. Delia believes that one important reason for delegated leadership is to reduce the workload at a given period and that it can be mutually beneficial to the superior and the subordinate:

As vice principal, it is my responsibility to assist the principal in designing curriculum...what I do is to assign it to other teachers...at least to get the workload off me. Performing several tasks can be daunting and there is so much relief when you find capable hands to assist (Delia).

Fabian thinks that delegation is a way to demonstrate leadership at different levels. He explained that he sometimes delegates to his subordinates, not only because he is unavailable, but also because he perceives it as a way of empowerment and distributed leadership in his department.

What I do in my department is to encourage my colleagues to offer themselves up for any opportunity that would enhance their performance...some do come forward...others don't. I sometimes preside at departmental meetings and leave it

to one of the teachers to continue with the meeting while still there...you can almost feel the elation in such teachers (Fabian).

Laban offers another opinion about distributed leadership and delegation:

I have observed some form of leadership delegation by the principal. Sometimes, she sends one of the teachers to represent her at SBMC meetings when she's unable to attend. I believe such practice is a way of decentralizing authority; otherwise, it will be too much of a burden for her... For me, to a large extent, delegation of authority is one of the qualities any leader should imbibe otherwise such leadership becomes highly autocratic and might crumble... our experience in this school shows that if a leader wants to be everywhere ...such a leadership will soon find him or herself inundated and might fail... I've seen this in the previous administration of this school. Well, for me, I'm a believer in distributed leadership...one should delegate authority and trust people...and they should report back to you (Laban).

The participants' comments above show different perspectives on distributed leadership and delegation. Some comments appear normative, especially those of Laban, while supporting the principal's concerns about delegated leadership. However, Laban's exposition indicates several ways that leadership might have been either delegated or distributed in Hilda. Nevertheless, it appears that most participants perceive delegation to be akin to distributed leadership.

Interpersonal issues

Interpersonal issues raised by participants in this section include a feeling of being under-utilized by the leadership of the school. Tim feels that this is a concern expressed by some members of the school:

You know you can't satisfy everybody...there are some teachers who feel marginalized despite the democratic approach in the school. Although they haven't said so openly...at least in the staff meetings, there are teachers who feel that their involvement in the school is peripheral...they feel they are only being used and given a false sense of involvement. Sometimes, you find teachers who question the

mode of decision making... while some appear to be happy with the decisions made, they go behind your back and complain that some decisions are made by a few senior managers before bringing it to the knowledge of the staff (Tim).

This suggests that not everyone is happy with the process of decision making in spite of what seems to be a majority view in support of the leadership of the school. Similarly, Pam believes that some of her colleagues, despite the communal nature of the school, regard the leadership as still very hierarchical and sometimes bureaucratic. Nevertheless, these views do not appear to reduce the majority opinion held by many participants who believe that leadership in the school is as diverse as it can possibly be. This is because many participants have shown that they have been involved in one form of leadership activity or another in the case study.

Lack of cooperation

Although some participants seem disenchanted and uneasy about their lack of involvement in the leadership process of the school, Jeni claims that, despite such feelings, some participants are unwilling to take on leadership responsibilities. However, Jeni's comments also suggest that such a reaction was directed to the government and not to the leadership of the school. It corroborated an earlier remark by the principal, who seemed surprised at the feelings of some teachers that leadership in the school was not well decentralized.

Some of the difficulty is that some people don't want to take any responsibility...they want to be left on their own; such people create difficulties for team leadership and for things to work. For example, there are some teachers who, though may be very hard working but at the same time they avoid working with others...this is partly due to the lack of incentives and motivation on the part of government (Jeni).

In contrast, one participant feels that she has witnessed what appears to be one of the best moments in her teaching career, suggesting that she is pleased with the

attitude and leadership approach of this present principal. She comments on the previous administration, contrasting it with the present leadership:

The appointment of madam [referring to the principal] is a relief to so many of us. The previous principal was more of a lone-ranger, an autocrat and intransigent. She was someone who wanted to do everything by herself even with the presence of many qualified teachers. We even have teachers more qualified than her (Pam).

The above section portrays several nuances of leadership in the school. It suggests that some staff are not satisfied with the hierarchy of the school. Yet, most participants believe that there is a high degree of staff involvement in leadership process. The formal role of the principal seems to require her to carry out multiple, and sometimes conflicting, leadership approaches. Even though the main approach is hierarchical, there is a notion of distribution and delegation. While distribution appears mainly allocative, delegation suggests a process of representation when the principal is unavoidably absent at certain function. Nevertheless, such formal roles appear to represent participants' understanding of the concepts of distribution and delegation in this case study.

Overview

This chapter provides evidence about leadership in Hilda community secondary school. There seems to be a mixture of leadership approaches and practices. Whilst the principal's explanation, and that of other participants, suggests that there is a measure of democracy, there is also hierarchical leadership, but this does not appear to diminish the exercise of shared practices. Rather, it seems to be enhanced while enabling opportunities for collaboration. There also seems to be community involvement in this case study school. This could be seen as extended distribution, with enhanced external participation as a result of the school being community based.

The study also indicates the practice of various leadership models that could have an effect on the overall development of the school and students' outcomes. There

are indications that leadership is spread across the school to each individual. The notion of distributed leadership seems to be articulated by teachers through their involvement in both formal leadership practices and participation in various processes of teams, committees and in decision making. Other features seen in this study include participatory and collegial leadership. Decision-making appears to be diffused and decentralized, making the process look fragmented, with many individual teachers, including the senior management, participating. These various models seem to have assisted the school at one stage or the other. Teachers' participation in decision making is also perceived as a way of planning for successful outcomes for students. Such participation and involvement appear to increase the creativity and sense of leadership distribution in the school. The model of distributed leadership as practice in this context has much in common with delegation and may be regarded as allocative leadership.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CROSS CASE ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

There is a developing view in the field of educational research that no single individual can lead the school organization on their own, because of the complexity of school leadership, and several writers suggest a collaborative model which involves the collective participation of school members through procedures such as shared leadership practice and decision making underpinned by a distributed leadership model and framework (Crawford 2012, Gronn, 2008; Leithwood and Jantzi, 1990; Spillane, 2005).

This thesis focuses on the nature of leadership in four Nigerian secondary schools, with an emphasis on shared and distributed models. This chapter provides an in-depth analysis of the four case study schools. The research has a multiple case study design and it is important to recall the principle of analytic generalisation, noted by Yin (2003), which suggests that generalisation can be applied when findings from one or more cases seem to support each other. The researcher uses a thematic approach to articulate the various features of the four cases in this study, alongside the empirical literature, on the five main themes. These are shown below:

1. Context of school leadership
2. Nature of school leadership
3. Leadership enactment
4. Solo and shared leadership
5. Distributed leadership and delegation

Context of School Leadership

There is growing concern about the significance of context when assessing leadership practice. The reason being that the research context inevitably shapes the ways in which leadership is enacted and what leaders do to achieve successful

school outcomes (Hallinger, 2016). Previous empirical research suggests that there are different ways leadership is practiced in different contexts (Leithwood et al, 2002; Ngcobo and Tikly, 2010). Similarly, Southworth (2004) corroborates the view that the school context varies, and shapes the ways that leadership is exercised.

Hallinger (2016) explains that one might not be able to understand leadership except in relationship to the context in which it is practiced. This takes account of some factors such as the personal characteristics and values of the school leaders and how they influence leadership. It considers the ways that leaders motivate the school and how the socio-cultural development, together with the political and economic contexts, affect the community served by the school. As we observe later, context plays a role in terms of allocation of duties.

There are certain similarities in the contexts of the four case studies, but they also vary significantly in character. Two schools are located in the urban metropolis, Crystal and Bentovi, while the other two are located in rural areas, Eki and Hilda. This provides scope for comparison of the leadership practices in these differing contexts. However, one common feature is that all schools in the Edo state are under strict government control and the school calendar is drawn up by the State Ministry of Education. For example, table A (see appendix) shows the approved uniform school calendar for institutions under the Ministry of Education.

Of the three senatorial districts, two schools (Crystal and Bentovi) are from Edo South, and one each from Edo North (Eki) and Edo Central (Hilda), as noted in chapter three. Ojeifo and Eseigbe (2012) distinguish between urban and rural demographics in Nigeria. Whereas the urban centres benefit from good facilities, such as electricity, portable pipe-borne water, health and educational facilities, the rural areas often lack these basic amenities. Such rural-urban disparity seems to attract the attention of the government in favour of the urban areas (Ikoya and Ikoya, 2005), a view reinforced by Bush and Oduro (2006). Ikoya and Ikoya (2005) explored some of the social and economic problems in the Delta region of Nigeria,

including low-income levels. Sede and Ohemong (2015) add that education is a key factor in determining the socio-economic status and well-being of people in the state.

The role of the PTA and the SBMC

The schools also have school boards. Two of the case study schools have a PTA only, while the other two have the SBMC, and Hilda has both a PTA and the SBMC. While the PTA is a body elected by parents and teachers, the SBMC is a body appointed by the government. Whereas the PTA has been part of parents' involvement in the leadership of the schools, the SBMC is relatively new. Two schools, Crystal and Eki, have an elected officer as PTA chairman, while Bentovi and Hilda have chairmen appointed by the government. The Hilda PTA has a more pronounced role as a stakeholder than the other schools probably because, as the principal mentioned, 'the people of the community are of low social status'. This seemed to encourage community leaders to participate in the leadership of the school. There is also the strong influence of military intervention in government, resulting in a series of changes in government policies. Okoroma (2006) argues that one of the factors militating against smooth policy implementation is the frequent intervention of the military in school governance, and he describes this as an 'interplay of politics'. Okoroma (2006) believes that such military intrusion relegates school development to the background. It was such interference that prompted the community leaders at Hilda to take an active role in school leadership.

As noted above, only Hilda has both the PTA and SBMC. The SBMC chairman, Laban, is also a parent in the school, but he offered no reason for the presence of both PTA and SBMC. He explained that the government introduced the SBMC but added that the school relied heavily on the support of parents. However, all principals and other participants in this research acknowledge that the SBMC was a new policy by the government, a policy that Bentovi and Hilda had to accept as a matter of principle. Since the SBMC is new, and not in every school, there is a

possibility that a different state government might remove the SBMC, as there are frequent government policy changes in state schools.

While the PTA seems to have a greater role in planning school activities, the SBMC chairmen are appointed as official government representatives as supervisors. Participants in Crystal and Eki insist that the PTA has a more cultural involvement of parents in school leadership, but both the PTA and the SBMC appear to be significant external influences on school leadership. In support of this view, the study by Bolden and Kirk (2009) indicates how leadership is practiced and fostered in an African context, including the role of the community, in which participants use their local understanding to shape individual school leadership in context. This is often associated with a sense of ownership and interaction with the particular community in such a way that leadership connects and holds people together.

The PTA members, and sometimes those in the SBMC, are non-formal leaders as they do not belong to the formal structure of the schools. It suggests that these school leaders are taking on more roles. Thus, the members of PTA and SBMC perceive their participation as a means of leadership distribution. Similar research by Mulford (2005), and Liljenberg (2015), indicates the concerns of stakeholders in various contexts. Thus, the leadership in the four schools consists of principals, teachers and parents. PTA and SBMC involvement in decision-making will be discussed in subsequent sections.

Leadership and management structure

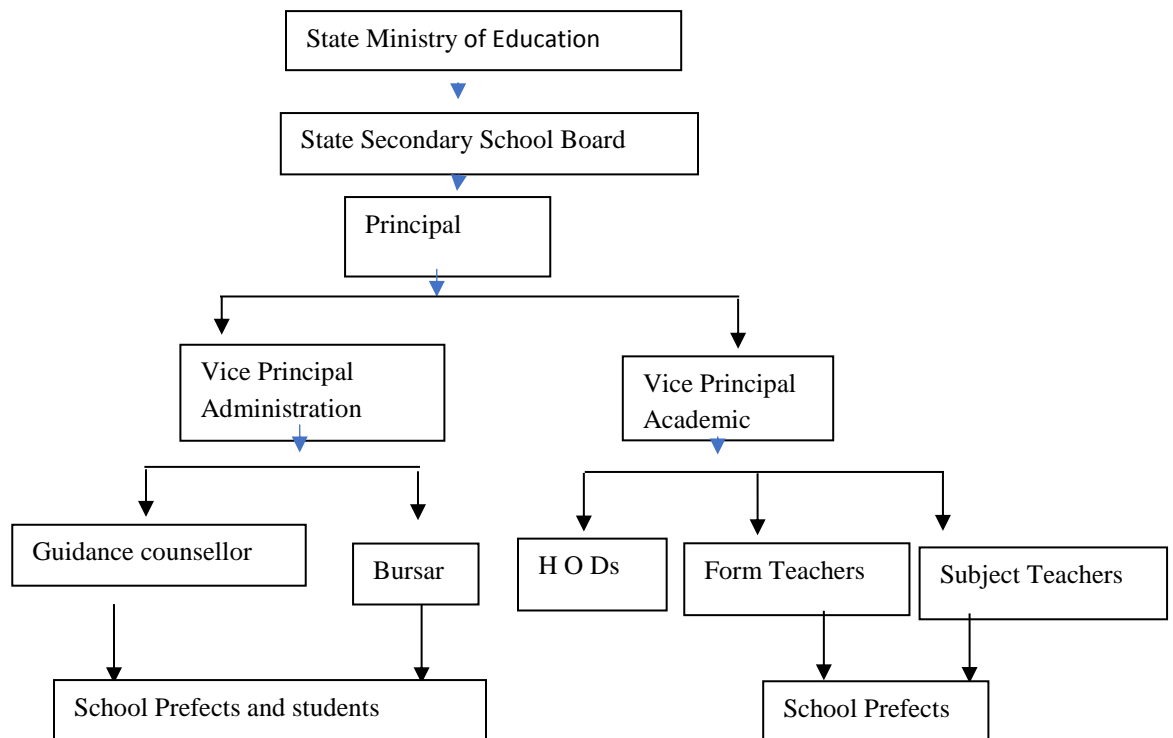
The centralised nature of the Nigerian education system influences the leadership structure of the four case study schools, which appear to adopt a similar pattern. All four schools have one single administrative head, the principal, who are responsible for the day to day leadership functions of the schools. Principals were viewed as having important roles in school leadership, and all four principals agreed that the structure of their school is configured in a hierarchical model, with a chain of

command. The hierarchical form of leadership allows for allocative distributed leadership.

All four schools have their principals at the apex of the hierarchical structure, as shown in Figure 8.1. The principal of Bentovi explains that the structure facilitates the leadership activities of the school. This is because the school is large and needs some senior members of staff to take responsibility for the school while the principal is away.

Many participants in this study support the principals' view about the hierarchical structure of the school. Both Mr Maja, the principal at Crystal, and the principal of Bentovi, Sofia, claim to be democratic in their leadership processes. This is demonstrated in the schools' leadership chart, referred to as the organogram. Even though Figure illustrates a typical school leadership structure, including internal and external features, in practice the structure operates differently in terms of leadership roles and responsibilities in each school context, as we shall see in later sections.

Figure 8.1: Organizational Structure of School leadership



Leadership is experienced within the hierarchical structure illustrated in Figure , which provides scope for external influences, including the Ministry of Education and the State Secondary School Board. The formal school leadership structure pre-dates the establishment of SBMCs, which is why it does not appear in the typical structure. Participants in all four schools mentioned the intervention of the Ministry of Education in their schools' leadership and management. The general calendar for schools provides another example of how the government exercises influence over schools. Similarly, findings from a systematic literature review by Bush and Glover (2016) highlight some contextual leadership practices prevalent in West African societies. However, despite the hierarchical structure, principals can exercise a degree of leadership in their particular contexts, through various leadership approaches such as allocative distributed leadership, as we shall see later. This is similar to earlier research by Uwazurike (1991), who explains that the complex context faced by Nigerian educators led to the adoption of several leadership contingencies. For example, Crystal and Bentovi appointed additional unofficial

vice principals in their schools to enhance leadership processes, outside the formal leadership structure. Table 8.1 shows this informal structure.

Table 8.1: Internal leadership and management structure

School	Principal	Vice principal	Unofficial vice principals	HODs	Teachers	Students	PTA / SBMC
Crystal	1	1	6	HODs	Teachers	Students	PTA
Bentovi	1	1	7	HODs	Teachers	Students	SBMC
Eki	1	1	None	HODs	Teachers	Students	PTA
Hilda	1	1	None	HODs	Teachers	Students	PTA/SBMC

Crystal has one principal, one official vice principal and six unofficial vice principals, as well as HODs and other staff. Bentovi has one principal, one vice principal, seven unofficial vice principals, HODS and other members of staff. Eki and Hilda have not appointed unofficial vice-principals. The initiative by Crystal and Bentovi to appoint unofficial vice principals suggests an attempt to involve more teachers in leadership, to enhance leadership density. Alongside the leadership structures are the PTA and the SBMC, each playing their roles in linking external and internal stakeholders in the leadership of the school. This supports the view that multiple leaders can be involved in leadership, either as formal or informal stakeholders (Spillane, 2004, 2005).

Nature of School Leadership

This section on the nature of school leadership deals with the role of the school principals in fostering various aspects of school leadership, using a thematic approach. In each school, leadership was interpreted in a variety of ways, but there was evidence of planned distribution of leadership by the school hierarchy aimed at some form of collaboration. The first sub-theme is ‘leadership participation’.

Leadership participation

Leithwood et al (1999) point out that participative leadership arises where decisions are made by a group rather than an individual leader. This study's participants state that leadership is practiced partly through a hierarchical process, where leadership is distributed through appointments and the allocation of duties. The participants believe that leadership is strongly influenced by the hierarchical structure prescribed by the ministry of education. This is because schools adopt the structure required by the government, as indicated in the context section. The principals claim that the structure allows members of the school to exercise academic and administrative functions.

Within the hierarchical structure, principals employed democratic principles so as to involve the participation of several individuals in collegial school leadership practices. A respondent at Crystal, Dele, says that the principal gives room for others to exercise their roles. Another participant, Bea, from Bentovi, linked such participation to democratic leadership. Bea believes that participation in a democratic leadership process allows him to carry everyone along in the process of leadership. This notion is similar to the idea of democratic school governance (Mncube 2009, Harris 2003, Bush and Heystek 2006). These researchers imply that the process of democratic leadership means that principals create the conditions that ensure adequate participation of stakeholders, including teachers and parents, in all aspects of school leadership. The perception of several participants is that principals demonstrate their democratic approaches to school leadership by offering opportunities to members of the school to exercise their roles, notably through the allocation of duties. The vice principal from Crystal, Dele, supports this notion of democratic leadership. In the same vein, another teacher, Ese from Crystal, sees it as 'an open-door policy' of the principal through which vital information is disseminated to school members.

The case study principals empower their staff through a process that encourages participation. Woods (2004) explains that the idea of 'empowerment' incorporates

democratic procedures in school leadership but cautions that such notions cannot be regarded as synonymous. Woods and Gronn (2009) imply that there are different ways of expressing and interpreting democracy or democratic principles within the context of school leadership. The participants at Crystal claim that democratic principles include the principal involving members of the school in the leadership process. The principal, Mr Maja notes that democracy in school leadership ‘gives room for other staff to participate in the running of the school’, as a means of distributing leadership. Other participants corroborate this view. One HOD, Calvin, also from Crystal, explains that the principal rarely makes decisions without first consulting members of staff. Here, we can see consultation as one such democratic principle from the perspective of Calvin even though Bush (2011) argues that consultation is not collegial, unlike participation. is; from the understanding of the researcher, it is possible to have different perspectives of the same opinion, which is why there are different opinions of similar reality whilst interpreting the idea of consultation as well as linking it as being collegial. Nevertheless, consultation is different from participation even though some participants of this study attempt to link it with a democratic process of leadership.

In all four case schools, there is a certain degree of influence exerted by the principals which the participants claim inspires confidence amongst the staff. For example, Calvin from Crystal attests that the principal’s behaviour is a source of leadership influence. Ese, also from Crystal, corroborates this view and describes the principal as ‘a father’. Bush (2008) notes the centrality of influence as a form of power, and adds that it is intended to achieve certain purposes. This view is also expressed by participants in this study. Describing the principal’s leadership influence, Mrs Dele of Crystal, sees the principal’s relationship with staff and students as cordial. Her perspective is similar to views expressed by other participants. Obasuyi, also of Crystal, the PTA chairman, describes this as ‘a concordance of purpose between principal and staff’. This notion corroborates Yulk’s (1989, 2002), and Yulk and Falbe’s (1999), views on leadership and influence. They comment on the influence leaders have over followers, and on task

and organisational culture, through various forms of interaction. This links to the views of participants in this study who believe that the principals' leadership influence encourages participation in school leadership processes.

The participants at Bentovi also explained leadership influence in several ways. First, they note the bureaucratic influence of the Ministry of Education, which requires staff to conform to a prescribed school structure. Vickie believes that the influence of the government limits the scope for members 'to genuinely contribute to the progress of the school'. Despite this limitation, the principal's influence is linked to visionary leadership. Although the use of leadership influence is slightly different from Crystal, it is not difficult to substantiate the view that differences across schools are limited because the leadership of principals arises through their appointment by the government. While the principals exercised power over their schools, the principals are subject to the authority of government. Principals and staff find themselves in the same situation, being influenced by the established hierarchy.

The notion of leadership influence at Eki is similar to Crystal. Participants comment on the personality traits of the principal. Like the participants at Crystal, participants from Eki, perceive the principal in terms of his behavioural disposition towards his staff. For example, while Dave thinks the principal is relates well with staff, another teacher, Ann, claims that the principal is affectionate because he shows concern for staff welfare. A third teacher, Linn, explains the principal's influence in relationship to working with staff, teachers and parents as well as motivating them. The principal is also said to encourage staff to employ their skills to address the overall goals of the school. Such attitudes appear to have influenced staff participation in the leadership process.

Similarly, participants from Hilda believe that the principal's leadership influence encourages the participation of members in the school's leadership process. Delia thinks that the principal is quite approachable, docile and unassuming, an attitude

that influences members to contribute their expertise for the development of the school. Kym argues that the principal has the capacity to listen to the opinions and concerns of others, regardless of their position. For this reason, participants feel that the principal is a considerate leader. Similarly, at Crystal, the principal is seen as a father figure who has a beneficial influence on members of the school. At Bentovi, the principal's influence is perceived to be derived from the Ministry of Education. The comments from the participants suggest similar usage and understanding across all four case-study schools, but only Bentovi staff refer explicitly to the Ministry.

Contributors also relate their participation in leadership activities to the influence of the principals. Their perspectives are expressed in a number of ways. One such understanding is the effort by the principals to inspire and motivate members of the school towards achieving the school's goals and objectives. This understanding is evident in the literature. For example, studies by Leithwood et al (1999) reveal that school leaders are able to exert influence on staff through motivation and such influence assists in achieving the aims of the school. Harris and Hargreaves (2013) reinforce the perspective of school leaders in formal positions who use their capacities to improve their schools. This is probably because of the pressure which leadership distribution puts on school leaders. This is evident in this study.

At Eki, participants revealed that school leadership influence involves several models of leadership, including hierarchical and democratic models, aimed at providing what appears to be good leadership practice. Participants explained involvement in leadership practice primarily in terms of hierarchical structures. For example, Anita, a vice principal at Eki, explains that the key participants in school leadership include the Board chairman, who represents the Ministry of Education, suggesting a bureaucratic model, and the principal together with other staff, suggesting a hierarchical model. However, regardless of this structure, participants show that school leadership is anchored along democratic practices and principles. This was explained in relationship to the principal's leadership approach. While the principals claimed to be democratic in their approach, Ivy, of Eki, described it as

participatory, linking it to the decision-making process in the school. The principal's leadership influence is evident in their democratic approach, as indicated by several participants. Linn, from Eki, and Delia from Hilda, see the principal as someone who motivates both teachers and parents. Eve, also from Eki, supports this notion and describes the principal's influence in terms of setting goals and giving directives in such a way that teachers have the opportunity to contribute their expertise in order to bring about the best for the school. Eve's view is supported by other participants in all four schools as one way of explaining the nature of school leadership.

Despite the hierarchical structure, the principals mentioned that every school member plays a role in school leadership. The hierarchy stretches from the government to the principal, and from the principal to the last person in the leadership structure, suggesting top-down leadership. However, the hierarchical structure seems to encourage staff participation, in the sense that participants see themselves as being involved in leadership processes through the allocation of duties.

All four principals claim to be democratic in their leadership approach despite the hierarchical structure. This view is shared by many participants in all four case study schools. The Hilda principal, Lyn, gives reasons for adopting a democratic leadership approach, claiming that it creates a sense of ownership. Her view is also evident in the narratives of other participants in all four schools. In a sense, engaging with others, and being able to participate in a democratic process, is seen as involvement in school leadership. As Mifsud (2016) notes, a sense of ownership implies democratic leadership. As also noted by Mbokazi (2015), there is a sense of ownership through the participation of various school leaders, including principals, senior school managers and teachers. This is evident at Bentovi, Eki and Hilda. At Bentovi, the sense of ownership is linked to distributed leadership and delegation, where members see empowerment as participation in school leadership. At Eki, a similar notion of ownership is expressed when leadership is shared and distributed.

The interviewees linked democratic leadership to leadership participation that creates a sense of ownership.

Participation in school leadership is also evident in staff involvement in committees and sometimes also in representing the principals at external school events. The participants state that many individuals are appointed to various committees through which leadership is devolved and distributed. For example, at Bentovi, and as noted earlier at Crystal, Eki and Hilda, the disciplinary committee wanted the school hierarchy to decide on the appropriate reprimand for erring students. The members of the committee see their involvement as participation in school leadership, through the roles assigned to them. This links to the view of Davies and Davies (2010), who state that participants take their involvement in school leadership as a strategic common cause and a commitment to leadership processes. In this study, participation is illustrated by the minutes books which indicate that teachers acted collectively as a committee when they decided to suspend some students for contravening school discipline. Such participation is sometimes understood as a democratic process because decisions are taken by consensus. At Hilda for example, participants were seen to have raised their hands, making it obvious that they were in support of the decision taken.

Even so, some members of the committee would prefer that their recommendation to the school hierarchy be implemented, but the outcomes of consensual decision-making may not be confirmed by senior managers. Despite the participation of committee members in some aspects of leadership, it remains the prerogative of the hierarchy to approve, or not, sanctions proposed by committee members, limiting the value of their participation.

There are several other committees in all four case study schools. These include the examination committees, and the curriculum committee, where members of staff are actively engaged in a process of participation in aspects of school leadership. This understanding is supported by studies on the activities of individuals working to

achieve a common objective (e.g. Gronn, 2000; Spillane et al., 2001, 2004, 2006). Participation in the process of decision making is perceived by leaders of the case studies as a form of leadership distribution. However, there were some limitations to participative leadership at all the case study schools. Some participants felt alienated because they could not influence decision-making. This is evident, in particular, in the Crystal and Eki case studies.

Multi-dimensional approach

As well as claiming to be democratic leaders, principals also believe that their leadership approach is multi-dimensional. The predominant view of the leadership approach at Crystal is the application of democratic principles, likewise Bentovi, Eki and Hilda. The principal of Crystal, Maja, claims the use of democratic principles because he includes everyone in school leadership. He is supported by his vice principal, Dele, who claims that it enables the principal to ‘carry everybody along’ in the process of leadership, thus suggesting the idea of distributed leadership. However, one HOD, Calvin, suggests that there are also hierarchical leadership practices through which leadership is devolved in the school. Some of these views are discussed later.

The principal of Bentovi, Sofia, see the multi-dimensional approach as a means of distributed leadership in the sense that it creates the opportunity to apply different approaches to leadership. She refers to one such approach as situational leadership, because there are contingent factors that require various leadership approaches. Bush (2007) refers to the contingent leadership model as an approach that adapts leadership to the particular situation. He also suggests that this approach recognizes the likelihood of leaders to adapt themselves to specific leadership practices. Sesa, a HOD from Bentovi, corroborates the situational approach mentioned by the principal and suggests that the approach is helping to achieve the aims of the school. Their views suggest that multi-dimensional leadership applies in this school. The views of other Bentovi participants also illustrate multi-dimensional leadership. For example, the vice principal, Vickie, refers to hierarchical leadership while Han, Sesa

and Roger corroborate the notion of democratic leadership, together with other participants.

Participants in other case study schools also believe that their leadership involves many approaches. For example, Dalia, from Hilda, describes her principal as democratic and charismatic. This is unusual as charisma is usually associated with transformational leadership, and not democratic leadership, as she suggests. This is because democratic leadership tends to allow people to make their own contribution, rather than relying on the alluring quality of the school leader. However, Dalia comments that her principal works with everyone and suggests that the principal's leadership style encourages active involvement and participation in democratic school leadership processes. Although the expression, multi-dimensional leadership, was not used at Eki, it is implied and linked to participation in democratic leadership processes.

Many references were made to the various ways in which leadership is enacted by participants in all four case study schools. What the leaders in the case study schools meant by situational leadership is that they are able to adapt themselves to events as required. This suggests that multi-dimensional school leadership is understood in different ways. It also suggests that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to leadership in these schools. The principals of the case study schools appeared to have established a working relationship with members of the school community. The heads assessed the suitability of individual staff before allocating tasks. Thus, situational leadership is a form of flexible leadership that allowed the principals of each school to adopt different approaches in response to problems and events. While some situations might warrant a democratic approach to leadership, other circumstances may suggest a transactional or transformational approach. This is the sense in which multi-dimensional leadership is practiced in the case study schools. Consequently, the school principals appear to ignite the participation of members in school leadership.

Leadership meetings

The examination of documents in these schools shows similar approaches to meetings in the case study schools, with Crystal and Hilda holding two more meetings than the other case study schools. The data suggest that staff meetings provide opportunities for dialogue, leading to decision-making. School aims are often discussed at staff meetings, involving several participants.

Documents covering a period of ten years from 2005 to 2015 were examined in all four schools. The purpose was to investigate the leadership practices as documented in the schools' minutes' books. Table shows that there were irregular meetings held between 2005 and 2012, depending on the leadership at that time, with a maximum of seven meetings in 2008, at Bentovi.

However, in 2015 at the time of this research, five meetings were held within three months in Crystal, suggesting the likelihood of more meetings during the school year. An increase in the number of meetings may suggest greater involvement in school leadership. Table 8.2 shows the frequency of formal meetings in the four case study schools.

Table 8.2: Meeting frequency in the case study schools 2005-2015

Year and name of school	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Crystal	5	2	1	7	1	5	2	3	2	2	5
Bentovi	2	4	7	3	1	3	4	3	2	3	1
Eki	5	7	4	3	5	3	7	5	6	5	3
Hilda	2	2	3	3	1	2	3	2	4	3	5

Table 8.2 shows the number of meetings held at each school over a ten-year period, as shown in official documents. Although there were five meetings held at Crystal at the time of the research in 2015, one in Bentovi, three in Eki and five in Hilda, there are also undocumented meetings. While only one staff meeting was documented at Bentovi in 2015, the researcher observed that there were also several

undocumented meetings. The minutes of meetings at Eki show that the frequency of leadership meetings is similar to that of the other case study schools. Three formal meetings were held in the school but, as in Bentovi, there were also some undocumented meetings, and there was no apparent reason for the lack of documentation. The discussion in meetings suggests participation in decision making, as we shall see later in this chapter.

The research by Bush and Glover (2012) shows evidence of the importance of meetings, linked to effective participation, and Bush and Glover (2013) note the importance of widening participation in team leadership processes, such as school meetings. These studies reveal that working as a team takes time to develop and requires the involvement of members of the school. Similarly, in this study, the frequency of meetings may be linked to the level of commitment and communication between the stakeholders working as school leadership teams.

The participants at Crystal say that participation in meetings involves the staff and the PTA. This is similar to Bentovi, where staff participate at meetings together with members of the SBMC. The Hilda minutes book suggests that participation in meetings is encouraged by the leadership to promote the involvement of staff in a shared process of decision making, including team-work. This approach is intended to provide solutions to specific problems, for example, the issue of self-funding, which is supported by the local community and encouraged by the government. Through this process, these participants are involved in school leadership, either as staff or as members of the PTA or SBMC. All four principals acknowledged the participation of staff and PTA at meetings. However, it was only at Hilda that the researcher observed a combined meeting of staff and PTA. This suggests a process where participants work together as a team, rather than as individuals (Billot, 2005; Gronn, 2010; Leithwood et al. 1999).

Community involvement

According to Davis (1994), the cultural and economic constraints of developing countries including Nigeria, influence how school principals approach leadership tasks. As noted earlier, the contextual nature of school leadership reveals that leadership practice differs from one school to another. There are many indications of community involvement that distinguish all four case studies. For example, the principal of Hilda, Lyn, indicates that several individuals share in vital roles so as to foster the educational wellbeing of students. Similar notions of community participation are evident in all four case study schools. The community plays its role through the collaboration of parents, the principal, vice principal, heads of departments and teachers. The participants reveal that community involvement is similar in the four schools regardless of whether schools have a PTA or a SBMC. However, the local community plays a particularly significant role in Hilda, because it is a community school. Laban, who is the chairman of the PTA and the SBMC at Hilda, links his role as a community leader to team leadership, stressing that parents fulfil their role through collaboration with the school.

While leadership is enacted through a hierarchical structure at Crystal, Bentovi and Eki, it is also enacted through community-based leadership at Hilda. Laban explains that ‘members of the community take the lead’. The influence of the community is a distinctive feature at Hilda which is not present in the other case study schools.

Although Hilda is a government school, like the other case studies, the community has more ‘cultural influence’, with local leaders taking initiatives to assist in school development as stakeholders. Bolden and Kirk (2009:70) describe such cultural influences as an ‘alternative conception of leadership’, through which leaders ‘contribute towards the development of more culturally sensitive and personally relevant perspectives for themselves and their communities’. Consequently, Hilda school is allowed by the government to fund itself, with community leaders willing to support the school through the PTA. The school is a community asset and the community value the school.

The community influence arises partly through the SBMC and PTA, and Laban exercises this influence at Hilda as the chairman of SBMC and a parent teacher. In the other case study schools, the community leaders had less influence because, as indicated previously, the government disapproves of any parallel means of ‘extortion’ of money by school leaders outside government’s approved school fees. Even though there is a PTA at Crystal and Eki, and an SBMC at Bentovi, these bodies have less influence than those at Hilda.

Leadership Enactment

This section examines the leadership practices undertaken by school leaders to address the schools’ aims, and how they make sense of leadership. The perspectives of the participants suggest a form of collective leadership, in all four schools, by the principals, vice principals, teachers, and stakeholders, working together to facilitate positive student outcomes. Participants interpret leadership enactment to include teaching, supervision, working together to deliver the school curriculum, and the discipline of students. Penuel et al. (2009) describe this process as a network of interaction among teachers and school heads. Their study reveals that, through the interaction between teachers in schools, they are able to build a successful teacher community which enhances various aspects of leadership distribution. In the present study, leadership enactment is underpinned by the participation of school leaders in different activities. For example, at Crystal, the minutes’ book referred to the principal addressing staff at a meeting about the collective action to be taken by school members. As indicated earlier, although the discussion focused on the school plan, it was a plan that was intended to be achieved collectively by all staff, as noted by Dele and other participants from Crystal. The evidence here is that school leadership at Crystal is enacted by several individuals working together. The interviewees believe that teachers’ participation, in the teaching and learning process, is the teachers’ contribution to leadership enactment. This view is consistent with the perspectives of participants in all four schools.

At Bentovi, the principal, Sofia, mentions that leadership is enacted by seniority, and by appointment, and that staff participate in the roles allocated to them. Many other participants support this view. Roger, for example, suggests that leadership is enacted through allocative distributed leadership as well as through hierarchical leadership. The various roles exercised by the participants could be seen to be different ways of enacting leadership in this school. In a similar vein, the principal at Eki believes that ‘every teacher has a role to play’ in leadership enactment which, as in Crystal and Bentovi, includes teaching and learning. Eve, a teacher at Eki, says that every teacher plays his or her role, to assist the principal to achieve the goals of the school.

Participants also suggest that the process of leadership enactment includes active involvement in implementing school policies, and commitment to school objectives. However, they could only participate in leadership to the extent allowed through the allocation of leadership roles. For example, Dave at Eki implies allocative leadership when he says that teachers fulfil roles because they are given to them. At Hilda, the principal Lyn extends leadership enactment to include parents as stakeholders, describing parents as an integral part of the school. This suggests an extended form of leadership distribution, to include the community. Laban, the chairman of SBMC and the PTA, explains that his role as chairman includes taking initiatives and providing support for the school. In this way, he is involved in enacting leadership.

Previous studies also discuss the extent to which leadership is enacted by school leaders (e.g. Vennebo 2016; Mifsud, 2016; Ho et al., 2016). These studies show various aspects of teacher leadership exercised by school leaders, similar to the participants in this study, who reveal that leadership revolves around some individuals, including the principal and other members of staff, working together to achieve school objectives. This is evident from the minutes’ books and the interviewees. Participants are engaged in various roles such as supervision, teaching and various committees. Previous research supports these practices. Leithwood et

al., (2008), and Hallinger and Heck, (1998, 1999), explored the enactment of leadership, linked to successful student outcomes. Their research suggests a shift from centralized to decentralized school leadership and management. Similarly, in this study, participants claim that their daily tasks are a form of leadership enactment that gives rise to many individuals engaging themselves in many aspects of school leadership, including team leadership. This suggests a measure of decentralisation in these schools.

The allocation of tasks in this case study offers one example of leadership enactment. Roger from Bentovi believes that leadership is enacted through a hierarchical structure, and that his role was allotted by the principal in order to achieve the goals of the school. He also mentions that ‘teachers participate in their roles because it is mandatory’. As at Crystal, participants at Bentovi perceive leadership enactment in multiple ways, including involvement in decision processes, and through participation in teams. Leadership enactment at all four schools suggests the working together of practitioners to achieve their schools’ objectives.

Team leadership enactment

One aspect of leadership enactment in this study relates to team leadership. Participants understand that school leadership also includes involvement in team work but there are contextual differences in the interpretation of team leadership. At Crystal, the principal, Maja, claims to be a team player because he engages other staff in a network of interaction. This interaction includes collaborative planning, curriculum planning and the interdependence of members. He notes that he could not possibly be everywhere, which is why he and his colleagues believe in team work and that everyone is given the opportunity to contribute to achieving school outcomes. The principal also suggested that he is the head of the team and that team members are expected to report to him. The principal’s view is reinforced by one of his HODs, Calvin, who explains that team leadership is a ‘collective bargain’ by the principal and teachers in leadership responsibilities. Calvin adds that he and his

colleagues engage in team work to avoid working in isolation. Calvin also believes that the right ideas do not necessarily come from the team leader. He also said that leadership involves everybody and does not revolve around one person. Deji, another HoD, offers a slightly different perspective, suggesting that team leadership is a means of generating and sharing ideas and that teachers are happy when their ideas are used for the benefit of the school. The impression given by these participants is that, even though their interpretation of team revolves around individuals contributing their skills in order to create teamwork, team leadership is only allowed to the extent to which members are assigned to the team.

This impression is also evident at Eki, Bentovi and Hilda. At Bentovi, the principal, Sofia, thinks that team leadership in her school discourages laissez-faire activity and supports collaboration amongst staff, for example, in respect of curriculum leadership, supervision and teaching. A critical role is played by the principal, who allocates roles and assigns tasks to her deputies. This view is held by several other participants but Mrs Ogun, a teacher, explained that tasks are usually assigned with teachers acting as school coordinators. Mrs Ogun's view is similar to the views expressed by participants from other case study schools. This suggests that team leadership involves a number of individuals, including the principal, senior staff and other members of the school. This notion is supported by Day et al. (2004, 2006), who view team leadership in terms of individuals working together. In the author's study, team leadership complements other aspects of school leadership, for example the planning of school events such as inter-house sports. These roles are sometimes discussed at staff meetings, as the next sub-section reveals.

Sofia argues that the involvement of staff in routine school assemblies constitutes team work. Such routine participation is common to all four schools and is perceived as a way of exercising team leadership. One HOD, Han, thinks that he and other staff work in teams in respect of the discipline of students. Sofia adds that team work is practiced through the joint study of curriculum, and the supervision of exams. The findings from this study suggest that the principals fulfil the role of team leader by

creating opportunities for participation in leadership activities. By ‘working together’, participants provide support for the principal. Thus, team leadership is evident in committees such as the examinations committee, and the disciplinary committee in all four schools.

The Eki principal, Kenzo, indicates that the role of the teacher is broad, hence the need for collective action to shape the goals of the school. Teams are run by teachers and heads of departments. The principal adds that he is the team leader because he plays a supervisory role as the head of school. However, as at Crystal and Bentovi, team work still flourished despite the hierarchy. One Eki teacher, Linn, believes that team work underpins good results because everybody is involved. Ada, also from Eki, adds that members consider themselves as partners in collaboration.

Team leadership at Hilda is similar to Crystal, Bentovi and Eki. Participants from all four case study schools show that team leadership is experienced at departmental level and through appointments to various committees. While Bush and Glover (2003, 2012) note that effective teams take time to develop, Mathieu et al. (2008) opine that team leadership is linked to school effectiveness. They argue that effective teams enhance leadership density when tasks are spread among colleagues. The principal of Crystal, Maja, sees team leadership as a network of interaction in the school and a collective effort by his colleagues. This view is supported by his HOD, Calvin, who perceives it as a collective bargain in which the opinion of colleagues is sought.

Team leadership is also evident among senior school leaders. Some participants refer to the senior school leaders as principal officers, and as the main hubs of team leadership. At Crystal, interviewees referred to ‘senior management’ as those mainly responsible for core leadership processes, as we shall see in the section on decision making. At Bentovi and Eki, references were made to ‘senior members’, while ‘senior management’ was used at Hilda. Nakpodia (2011:84) sees team leadership as ‘participatory management using various ways of involving workers in

decisions affecting their work'. Like the participants in the case study schools, team leadership incorporates school management at different levels.

Although team leadership was evident in the case study schools, it was linked to the hierarchical structure. Appointments to team leadership were based on certain criteria. For example, participants reveal that principals allotted tasks to members by seniority. The principals assign tasks to teachers based on their expertise and they participate in leadership through the roles they enact. In echoing the views of other participants, the principal of Bentovi, Sofia, argues that the class teacher who handles the attendance register participates in leadership by marking the register, as do many teachers at her school, although this suggests a routine administrative practice. Similar views were expressed at Crystal and at Hilda. At Hilda, Fabian believes that roles are assigned by 'seniority and hierarchy'. It is only at Eki that the participants did not set out the criteria for allocative distributed leadership.

Although there are many references to 'team work' in this study, the evidence suggests that the term is valid only in a limited way. First, team leadership appears to be largely the prerogative of senior members in all four schools. Second, team leadership appears to reside in team leaders who, in turn, share tasks with other members. Third, 'team work' is understood to mean a concerted effort by certain individuals to enact leadership through various collaborative processes such as sharing ideas and constituting committees that involve other members. In this study, however, there is an orientation to team leadership even when participants act individually. These participants acknowledge that the collective effort of the team transcends that of individuals. Collaboration among participants is often seen as a process to achieve organizational goals. Most, but not all, participants believe that they perform their various tasks as team members rather than as individuals. This seems to suggest that participation in team leadership is perceived to be an example of distributed leadership.

Decision making

‘The decision-making process is an analysis of a cycle of awareness initiatives, alternatives, preferences, choices and actions’ that affect the daily activity of an organization (Nwagwu, 2004: 93). Harris (2002) suggests that decision making extends the boundaries of participation in leadership by members of the school organization. Participants in this study indicate that school leadership follows a pattern of collaboration in which members participate in decision making. However, decision making is largely the preserve of the school hierarchy, which the vice principal of Crystal, Dele, refers to as ‘senior management’. As Deji makes clear, decision-making at Crystal is ‘top to bottom’.

Decisions are disseminated by the school management. The principal of Crystal believes that it is necessary to collaborate and work with staff members by seeking the views of colleagues. This is supported by Hairon and Goh (2015), who think that decision making in Singapore fosters and encourages a form of leadership distribution through staff involvement in shared decisions about school leadership. Olayiwola and Alabi (2015), and Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011), agree that there can be participative decision-making in Nigeria schools. Olayiwola and Alabi add that the decision-making process involves teachers, parents and stakeholders, while Olorunsola and Olayemi (2011) conclude that teachers’ involvement in decision-making shows that they are empowered.

At Crystal, decisions made as a team seem to take precedence over those made by individuals. This is probably because, as the vice principal, Mrs Dele, mentions, the principal ‘listens when others make suggestions’. Decisions made by several people may be better than those made by individuals, not only because participants feel involved in the process but also because views are better scrutinized collegially (Bush 2012; Yulk, 2002). Harris and Muijs (2004) add that teachers’ involvement in decision-making facilitates teaching and learning. Harris (2007:117) also suggests that the participative process makes ‘everybody feel part of the decision making’. This links decision-making to leadership participation, as noted earlier. It

also suggests that teachers' participation in the decision making process is a further indication of democratization (Harris, 2003), which may also be an aspect of distributed leadership.

The findings from Bentovi show the connection participants make between team leadership and decision-making. This is mostly accepted as collaborative practice, which ultimately enables members to generate ideas necessary to address the goals of the school. One participant, Amy, related the decision-making process to democracy through participation in a variety of school-related issues. This is similar to previous studies that link team leadership to participative decision making, both in and outside the classroom. It suggests a shift from a centralized to a more decentralized form of leadership (Leader, 2004; Emira, 2010).

The literature identifies some advantages of school teachers working collectively in decision making (Muijs and Harris, 2007). Hall (2001) argues that, when members collaborate as a team, they become empowered and committed to the goals of the school. Lumby (2013:596) considers that empowering staff is a fundamental premise of distributed leadership. The Crystal principal, Maja, perceives decision-making as a means of leadership interaction which empowers staff members because everyone is involved, and decisions are made based on the interests of all. He claims that he seeks the opinions of other staff before making decisions. Although this suggests consultation and not participation, it did not appear to hinder members from becoming involved in leadership. The decision-making process at Eki is similar to that at Crystal and Bentovi. There is a participatory process in which members contribute to school leadership through collective action. The principal claims that they try to arrive at 'common ground' because decisions need the support and collaboration of members and collective decisions often lead to better outcomes for students. As in the other schools, decisions are usually taken at staff meetings.

One significant difference between the schools is the nature of staff consultation. The principal of Eki sometimes vetoes a decision following consultation, but the

other participants believe that this did not affect working relationships. Decision-making at the other three other schools appears to have progressed smoothly without vetoes. The participation of principal and staff, and sometimes the PTA, at meetings, gives credence to the notion of democratic school leadership, and distributed leadership, as we shall see later.

There is an overlap between the participants' notions of decision making and team leadership. While Crystal employs the term 'senior management', Hilda uses the word 'principal officers' to mean that decisions are sometimes taken by the senior school leaders, despite the collaboration amongst staff. Referring to some heads of departments, the principal indicated that decision making involves the principal officers of the school. She further suggested that the decisions reached were implemented by HODs in collaboration with teachers. It suggests that, even though decisions might have been taken by the SMT, such decisions affect all staff, since decisions are taken as a team and not individually. This notion is supported by Hargreaves (1979), who notes that there are different levels of decision making that affect the entire school. This suggests that decision making could only be taken in collaboration with other members of the school, including the principal and other senior managers. Similarly, Lumby (2003) used the word 'senior managers' to denote those who work directly with the principal, as well as reporting to the principal in order to achieve organizational objectives. This suggests that leadership revolves around certain individuals, as noted in the decision-making by principal officers and senior management teams in the case study schools.

In all four case study schools, participants' understanding of the notion of decision making is similar. Leithwood et al. (2004) imply that teachers feel empowered and earn the support and loyalty of members through collective decision making. However, some participants believe that the process of decision making is 'stage managed' because members are often faced with situations that make them adhere to the decision taken. As noted earlier, participants at Hilda believe that decisions are mostly taken by consensus or through compromise. This approach was noted by

the researcher during his observation of a meeting. There was no clear-cut decision taken at that meeting other than an appeal to consensus by the principal, to secure agreement with her ideas. Most decisions emanate from individuals, although many participants believe that there is collective decision making.

Visionary leadership enactment

Crawford (2003: 69) claims that 'a leader must be continuously strategic and have a vision of how the organization can be at its very best'. The case study participants state that school vision is not the exclusive preserve of the principal and heads of department but is the vision of all members of the school through their participation in the vision-building process. Leithwood et al. (2008) argue that vision building is the fostering of assistance towards group goals and objectives. While one participant from Crystal, Nathan, links the school vision to planning, Han, from Bentovi, suggests that the principal's visionary leadership is strategic. He ensures this by appointing individuals to certain leadership positions to advance the goals of the school. Some participants used the words 'plan' or 'planning' in their explanation of the visionary leadership of the principal. For example, when asked about the vision of the school, Han corroborated the views of other participants and explained that part of the principal's plan involves placing individual teachers in specific roles.

Bush (2008:278) refers to the study by Bolam et al. (1993), who suggest that most school leaders could articulate some sort of vision in their context. Participants in this study could also explain what they understand by visionary leadership. However, at Bentovi, they expressed visionary leadership in different ways. The principal is seen as the prime initiator of ideas but participants at Crystal and Bentovi claim that vision building is achievable through a collective process. The principals create conditions which facilitate school vision through allocative leadership.

It is common to find participants, for example Bea at Bentovi, claiming that the principal provides a sense of direction for the school. Similarly, Amy shows that the principal both plans and coordinates the affairs of the school and also liaises with

the government. At Eki, the notion of visionary leadership incorporates the participation of members in planning school goals and objectives. As at Crystal and Bentovi, the principal of Eki is the main initiator of school vision. Ike explains that the principal sets the direction for the school, together with staff, while Dave suggests that the vision of the school includes planning and setting the direction of the school.

Echoing the views of other participants, the principal of Hilda, Lyn, says that the school plan is not the principal's alone but involves other members of the school community. One such plan, the building of a lawn tennis court, was begun by the previous school leadership. The principal's claim is supported by other members of the school, such as Fabian and Jeni, who link the notion of visionary leadership at Hilda to the school's mission statement and plan. There is a degree of similarity in participants' understanding and use of the word 'vision'. Most participants view their principals as being visionary. Visionary leadership is associated with school planning, involving both the principal and other members of staff in some cases and, at other times, simply the ideas from the principal. There were very few references to visionary leadership that did not include the vision of the principal. Although the principal initiates some of the ideas, the ideas are supported by colleagues, for example by Nathan at Crystal. Similarly, at Hilda, it is the vision of the principal as well as the staff. Previous research has shown the link between principals' visionary leadership and student outcomes (e.g. Day et al., 2000; Heck and Hallinger, 2010; Leithwood et al., 1999). Participants at the four case study schools interpret their collective involvement in school planning as visionary leadership because the principal's vision is regarded as the articulation of the school vision. However, this suggests a transformational model and not distributed leadership (Hoyle and Wallace, 2007).

The principals are widely regarded as the main initiators of school vision. Although participants understand the notion of school vision, it was largely the principal, rather than the whole staff, who create it. It was only at Hilda that the principal

claimed that visioning is not the exclusive preserve of the principal, but the other participants show that the principal, as in the other case study schools, is the main focus of visionary leadership, probably because of the hierarchical structure. Previous research also shows that principals are the main proponents of school vision (Leithwood et al., 2004; Murphy et al., 2007; Murphy and Torre 2015). The author's study in Nigeria confirms their views.

Solo and Shared Leadership

Leadership in education has been perceived as a solo activity with a focus on individual leadership of the head of school or those who hold senior leadership positions (Crawford, 2012). In solo leadership, one person, such as the principal, is dominant in leadership activities. Using a distributed leadership framework, Crawford (Ibid) proposes other approaches to shared leadership practice. To shift from leadership that focuses on single individuals to a more collective model, Gronn (2002) proposes a lens through which leadership is shared and dispersed rather than being the preserve of a single individual. Pearce and Sims (2002: 172) describe shared leadership as 'a group process in which leadership is distributed among, and stems from, team members'. This view provides the backdrop to the examination of solo and shared leadership in this study.

There is a variety of interpretations of solo and shared leadership in the four case study schools. One such interpretation is 'working together'. Many participants believe in working together, collaboratively, as opposed to individuals working alone in leadership activities. In other words, 'working alone' is solo while 'working together' is understood to be collaborative. 'Working together' can be linked to the concept of shared leadership.

Linking collaboration with solo and shared leadership

In leadership collaboration, it is assumed that staff have a shared view of the purpose of the institution (Bush, 2011). Members of the organization may also share the

leadership responsibilities of the school. The minutes book at Crystal, for example, suggests that activities should be linked to the overall objectives of the school.

Similarly, many participants suggest the notion of collaboration in contrast to solo leadership. The principal of Crystal explained that he decided to create offices and share responsibilities in order to collaborate with members. He also indicated that there are some members of staff whose responsibility it is to work with the PTA as a form of leadership distribution. He feels that it is a duty for him to collaborate. Two phrases are significant here; 'to work with' and 'to collaborate'. In the principal's view, 'to work with' other staff means the same as to collaborate. It also suggests that leadership is shared when it involves other participants. This links to Harris's (2004) view of distributed leadership that engages expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal role or position.

The principal of Crystal believes that, by 'working with' other staff, he is fostering, as well as engaging in, shared leadership practice. This connects to Hallinger and Heck's (2010) view that links leadership collaboration to student outcomes based on linking collaborative leadership practices to academic capacity and student reading levels. As noted in the decision-making section, participants are included in a process that gives them some direct involvement in school leadership. Freire and Fernandes (2016) argue that, when teachers have access to an empowering work context, they respond positively or demonstrate greater confidence in the principal. Teachers share in school leadership through collaboration. Research has also shown that shared leadership is characterised by transferring responsibilities to certain individuals and by collaborating in leadership activities (Barnett and McCormick, 2012).

The notion of leadership collaboration is illustrated by the terms 'working with', and 'working together', and by sharing leadership functions. This suggests that leadership stretches from the principal to other members of the school. Similar views

are evident in all four case study schools. The data suggest a move from one-dimensional leadership to hybrid forms of leadership (Crawford, 2012) and incorporate notions of allocative distributed leadership, shared leadership, and collaborative as well as hierarchical leadership. As at Crystal, participants at Bentovi believe that shared leadership facilitates interaction between staff because it is an activity that engenders collaboration. The principal states that everyone is involved, and dependent on one another, in the process of leadership in the school and that ‘no one is an island’. This suggests a shift towards shared leadership practice and collaboration. Hans describes such relationships as a network of interaction because ‘two heads are better than one’ when leadership activity is shared.

The principal at Eki believes that shared leadership helps to prepare leaders for the future through their participation in leadership. Linn explains shared leadership in terms of the participation of staff in various departmental activities. The PTA chairman, Kenzo, and another teacher, Eve, all believe in shared leadership practice at the school. Their notions of shared leadership are similar to those in Crystal, Bentovi and Hilda. Even when the structure is typical, as in the other case study schools, the principal indicates that leadership at Hilda is shared because the structure enables it. The expression, ‘I cannot act alone’, suggests that the principal endeavours to collaborate with other staff despite the hierarchical structure. Being a community school, there is more community-based leadership, a form of shared leadership practice.

The vice-principal at Crystal regards collaborative leadership as a ‘necessary process of bringing about cohesion’ but he acknowledges that not everyone is happy with the decision process, or with the outcomes. Participants’ notions of leadership collaboration vary and include terms such as ‘working jointly’, ‘working collectively’ and ‘working together’. These phrases all link to notions of collaboration, team work and distributed leadership. However, some participants, for example, Ogun at Crystal, align shared leadership with delegation.

Balance of shared and solo leadership

Shared leadership is one approach to decision-making. This suggests that decisions are not taken by the principal or other senior leaders acting alone. Decision making is a shared process rather than the solo activity of individual heads. Sue, at Bentovi, for example, believes that shared leadership improves the decision process and is more likely to gain staff commitment to the outcomes.

This suggests that the essence of shared leadership is a shared commitment of members of the organization. The principal of Crystal, Maja, also claims that shared leadership improves the quality of decision making. Similar views are held by the participants at Eki, where the principal argues that shared leadership eases the burden of work. This view is similar to that of Hartley (2010), who argues that distributed leadership in schools is a pragmatic response to ease the burden of school heads who are inundated with work. Although Hartley was sceptical of this view of leadership distribution, the principals, and other participants at Hilda, Bentovi, Crsystal and Eki, believe that shared leadership is the collective involvement of staff in the leadership process. The PTA chairman, Laban from Hilda, claims that participants hold the view that there is shared leadership because principals can only perform one task at a time and need the support and collaboration of members to achieve school objectives. Hartley (2010) refers to this notion as a collaborative sense of community which arises from a distributed leadership system. This suggests that the principal is no longer considered the 'hero' of school leadership but rather as a member of staff whose leadership is shared. Solo leadership focuses on an individual, rather than a group, and power and control are centralized. The case study data show that there is a link between the views of the participants and previous research, noted above, on the notion of shared leadership in schools.

Shared leadership may be associated with tasks and was interpreted as 'shared responsibility' by some participants and through the interaction that exists amongst members of the case study schools. Their core understanding is that leadership does not revolve around one person alone, but rather spreads across many individuals

who pool their expertise. Leadership activity is shared at many levels, for example through teachers' participation in teams, and participation at departmental levels, as well as collaboration between senior and middle leaders. In all four schools, it appears that staff participate in leadership in various capacities, especially through leadership activities allocated to them. It seems to suggest that participants are involved in leadership through tasks that are assigned to them.

The findings from the case study schools suggest the importance of teacher leadership when staff engage in mutual sharing of ideas, for example in planning the school curriculum, in school supervision, and in maintaining school discipline. Participants frequently referred to team work when discussing shared leadership. In Nigeria, it has been argued that the poor academic performance of pupils is linked not only to teachers' performance in terms of accomplishing the teaching task but also through their negative attitudes to work, and their poor teaching habits, which have been attributed to poor motivation (Ofoegbu, 2004). This suggests that the participation of teachers as subject leaders is an important aspect of shared leadership that might not be achieved through solo leadership. Teachers' participation in school leadership suggests a form of social distribution, where responsibilities are shared amongst stakeholders. The principal of Eki stresses that he cannot work alone and that it is important for younger teachers to learn how to lead. This appears to summarise the notion of shared leadership practice in all four case studies.

Distributed Leadership and Delegation

The literature is replete with the notion of distributed leadership as a favoured leadership practice (Harris, 2013). She adds that distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise wherever it exists within the organization rather than seeking this only through formal position or role. Bolden et al. (2009) argue that the broad nature of distributed leadership makes it imperative to apply it in different school environments. They also argue that leadership is dispersed across the organization within systems and relationships that cut across activities and practices.

In this study, participants referred to delegation as a form of distributed leadership, but there is a clear distinction between these concepts. Delegation often involves allocation of tasks while distributed leadership relates to interactions between and amongst school leaders. At Crystal, for example, Nathan believes that he participates in leadership in order to uphold the system while Dele believes that members participate in leadership through their various roles. In other words, leadership is perceived to be distributed in this case because there are teachers who fulfil leadership roles, notably heads of departments, year heads and supervisors. Similarly, at Bentovi, the principal argues that leadership distribution begins with the principal and flows down to lower levels of leadership, a view which also reinforces the hierarchy. As at Crystal, distributed leadership at Bentovi is thought to involve all staff. However, the notion of delegated leadership is more appropriate to designate the allocation of tasks to staff. Delegation often occurs just when the head is unavoidably absent, for example at Crystal and Bentovi. This suggests that leadership is not fluid or emergent, and that delegation is widely practiced but distributed leadership is not.

Similarly, at Eki, both the principal and other participants support the notion of distributed leadership. The principal argues that he delegates duties to the next in rank when it becomes unavoidable. Although this suggests allocative distributed leadership (Bolden et al 2009), the participants believe that this is similar to distributed leadership. Another participant, Alistair, argues that delegation is an integral part of distributed leadership, insisting that leadership cannot be in a vacuum and, so it becomes imperative to delegate leadership for the effective running of the school. Links between distributed leadership and delegation are also evident at Hilda. Its principal, Lyn, holds the view that many participants see delegation as participation in leadership that is distributed. However, Bolden et al, (2009) argue that delegation is not distribution, but that leadership can be delegated through a formally designated channel. They add, like Hallinger, (2016), that the context of each school determines the extent to which distributed leadership can be

applied to the school setting. The problem with the participants linking delegation and distributed leadership is that they are not making a distinction between leadership roles and tasks. In this study, staff were often assigned tasks and not roles. This suggests a lack of meaningful empowerment, despite the claims that members are empowered through participating in leadership.

It is well established that school leadership practices and activities include both formal and informal leadership (Leithwood and Riehl, 2003; Harris, 2003; Leithwood et al. 2008). Linked to this view, this sub-section examines perspectives of distributed leadership in the case study schools. Distributed leadership in the four case study schools is understood as the involvement of both principals and teachers in the process of teaching, supervision and team leadership. It is also perceived as the participation of principals and teachers in specific roles, since distributed leadership is about giving people the opportunity to enact their roles. These roles include heads of committees, areas of discipline, and the interaction that exist amongst members for the overall objectives of the school. Distributed leadership is also understood as the engagement of staff in leadership to bring about successful school outcomes. This means that every member of staff in the case study schools play their roles even though not all roles are leadership. It suggests that distributed leadership is a process that requires staff to work in collaboration, and to share expertise with other members of the school. In this situation, members collectively engage in the implementation of policies from the Ministry of Education, although distributed leadership is not easily aligned with implementation.

Distributed leadership is also evident from the participation of staff in various decision making processes. Although some decisions were vetoed, many were made through consensus in all schools, as noted earlier. Hallinger (2016) argues that school contexts are capable of shaping leadership practice. In a similar vein, the principals of Bentovi and Crystal, as well as the participants at Eki and Hilda, for example, argue that every staff member participates in one form of distributed leadership. This distributed leadership involves the vice principal, the heads of

departments, and year heads, as well as teachers. Distributed leadership allows participants to share leadership functions as well as helping to avoid overworking the principal. This view may be seen to support the notion of distributed leadership, but it also shows why the principals delegate tasks to others.

Delegation

The literature (e.g. Harris, 2003, 2004; Harris and Spillane, 2008) indicates that distributed leadership is not the same as delegation, but there is almost uniform understanding of the links between the former and the latter by the participants in this study. For example, at Crystal, Ogun explains the extent to which distributed leadership may be seen as delegation. The vice principal of Crystal, Dele, links leadership practice to delegation, arguing that distributed leadership is the same as delegating a duty. This is often the case when the principal has to assign functions to staff when he cannot attend to such tasks. Many other participants at Crystal, and the other case study schools, corroborate this view. For example, Mr Obasuyi, the PTA chairman at Crystal, argues that those who act in a leadership position do so on behalf of the school. He also suggests that school heads have to delegate those functions that they cannot perform by themselves. This perspective links to the idea of allocative distributed leadership because duties are assigned by the principal through a bureaucratic process set by the Ministry of Education. Similarly, at Bentovi, tasks are allotted, and the notion of delegation is evident. The principal claims that every staff member participates in distributed leadership, for example through delegation to year heads, HoDs, and team leaders. Despite this claim, which was evident in all four schools, participation was through allocative distributed leadership. The power to delegate resides with school principals and the shift in leadership occurs only when the head is unavailable.

This temporal power shift is common in all four case study schools. For example, the Bentovi principal states that she delegates power to her most senior vice principal who, in turn, supervises other vice principals, HODs and teachers. This view was supported by other participants at Bentovi. The principal claims that

schools are unlikely to attain their goals without delegation, because senior staff may be unavoidably absent from important school functions. The head of department sees leadership delegation as empowerment of teachers, and as leadership development, because they gain new skills by tackling new responsibilities. The interpretation of distributed leadership and delegation at Eki is similar to that at Crystal and Bentovi. Participants regard delegation as one way of distributing leadership. For example, when the principal is not available, he delegates duties to his vice-principal. In this view, delegation is one aspect of distributed leadership. It is important to make a distinction between leadership tasks and leadership roles. For example, delegation might relate to tasks, such as leading an assembly. Allocative distributed leadership might be seen as allocating roles, for example, in taking responsibility for one aspect of curriculum leadership. The implication here is that delegation serves as a means of allocating tasks rather than constituting leadership.

Similar views are expressed by other Eki staff. For example, Anita believes that she delegates power where necessary and that every aspect of school leadership can be delegated. Linn adds that the principal is responsible for allotting leadership roles and ensuring that teachers attend to their classes, although the latter would not usually be regarded as leadership. Top-down leadership practice is evident at Eki, as in Crystal and Bentovi. This suggests that there was a vague understanding of the concepts of delegation and distributed leadership because delegating tasks does not necessarily imply distributed leadership. However, delegation is perceived as a shared responsibility, even though the notion is commonly associated with the traditional hierarchical model of leadership. Through delegation, the work of the principals is reduced, because most participants claim that it is difficult to be involved in many leadership activities at the same. Thus, delegation becomes a means of engaging many participants in leadership activities.

At Hilda, the principal thinks that delegation is necessary in order to distribute leadership to staff. There are activities that require the immediate attention of the

principal that she might be unable to address. She thinks that it is necessary to delegate certain tasks, such as representing the school at external functions. She also claims that such delegation is seen as participation in the leadership of the school. This way of thinking is shared by participants in all four schools, who believe that there is a connection between distributed leadership and delegation. The literature is clear that distributed leadership is different from delegation (e.g. Harris 2003). However, participants in this study perceive delegation to be distributed leadership through the roles that school leaders play. Similarly, citing Arrowsmith's study of schools in England, Bush, (2011: 89) argues that 'several heads regarded as 'non-negotiable' the 'delegation' or distribution of certain parts of their role, including strategic direction, and retain an acute sense of their personal accountability for school performance'. In this study, distributed leadership has some similarities to the notion of 'task performance' in the sense that the objective of distributed leadership is to empower participants. Assigning tasks to participants was perceived as a leadership role, a notion supported by Bolden et al. (2009). This seems to suggest that there is a dynamic relationship in the hierarchy which cedes active roles to other staff to enhance leadership distribution. This dynamic relationship and interaction occur within a hierarchical process of delegation but might also be seen as allocative distributed leadership. This seems to be the reason that principals claim to engage staff in distributed leadership.

Allocative distributed leadership

Bolden (2009), and Bolden et al. (2008), suggest the notion of allocative distribution. They claim that leadership is not simply the activity of the leader, who presides over others, but involves various interactions, a form of 'close interdependence between individuals, groups and organisational development' (Bolden et al., 2008: 370). This leads Bolden et al (2009) to argue that a lateral approach to school leadership could be regarded as allocative distribution. There can be tension in this process because of the influence of the hierarchy within and outside the school structure (ibid). Data from this research suggest a similar

understanding of leadership distribution. Participants used the term ‘allotment’ of leadership, suggesting the allocation of leadership roles and tasks.

Allocative distributed leadership was also linked to the notion of delegation. For many participants, delegation is a form of allocative distributed leadership. Several participants are involved in school leadership, including principals, vice principals, heads of departments, teachers and parents, who link their participation to their leadership roles. These interviewees regard their participation in various aspects of leadership enactment as allocative distributed leadership, linked to their formal roles as senior or middle leaders, and as team members. Hall and Southworth (1997) suggest that leadership is allocative when school leaders initiate structures that enable the integration, participation and collaboration of staff, as well as engaging in decentralised decision-making. This contrasts with the widely accepted notion that distributed leadership is emergent (Bennett et al., 2003, Gronn, 2000; Spillane, 2006). The evidence from the case-study schools suggests that allocative distributed leadership is the product of a centralised system, and this modifies the notion of emergent distribution developed in less centralised contexts.

Overview

This chapter provides a cross-case analysis and a discussion of the major issues arising from the four case studies, linked to the literature. In the Nigerian school system, centralised hierarchical models are evident, and the school leadership structure is dominated by hierarchy. This probably stems from the influence of the Ministry of Education. Although participants claimed that there is distributed leadership in the schools, the evidence suggests that this was allocative, rather than emergent. However, some aspects of distributed leadership are evident from the various activities performed by most participants in this study. For example, there is evidence of teacher leadership, despite the dominance of the hierarchy.

Leadership at the case study schools has a strong individual component, with principal leadership being central, although there is some evidence of shared

leadership, for example through teams. Participants usually ascribed leadership to the hierarchy, especially to senior management, but some believe that they could be termed school leaders through their participation in teaching and in curriculum activities. This is a narrow view of teacher leadership which generally goes beyond the classroom. There were examples of middle leadership, through department heads, subject heads, and year heads, who carried out various aspects of supervision in the case study schools.

There is considerable evidence of delegation in the case study schools and some participants align this with distributed leadership. Delegation was mainly associated with the performance of tasks assigned by a superordinate. This suggests that junior teachers could not participate in certain tasks unless they were assigned. Some participants did not understand the notion of distributed leadership linked to delegation. The schools in this study are hierarchal and ceding power to the principals and senior management seems to be the norm.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

Introduction

The concluding chapter of this thesis deals with three main components; addressing the research questions, the significance of the study, and the implications of the research. It focuses on several factors, including the impact of the school context on leadership practice. It also summarises the key findings of this research.

Answering the Research Questions

The four research questions are shown below, and each will be addressed in turn.

1. What is the nature of school leadership in the case study schools?
2. How is leadership enacted in the case study schools?
3. What is the balance between solo and shared leadership in the case study schools?
4. How and in what ways is leadership distributed in the case study schools?

- 1. What is the nature of school leadership in the case study secondary schools?*

The review of leadership research by Hallinger and Heck (1998) identified some 'blind spots' in the epistemology of leadership and management. Similarly, the present research notes some peculiar ways in which leadership is perceived by participants. The participants in each school include senior leaders, notably the principals, vice principals and heads of departments. The other stakeholders interviewed were teachers and members of the PTA and SBMC. There was a great degree of agreement expressed by the participants about the nature of leadership and other aspects of school leadership and management. In particular, participants stated that leadership in their schools is primarily hierarchical and strongly influenced by both external and internal variables. The nature of school leadership includes organisational frameworks designed to promote effectiveness.

The hierarchy is an important contextual factor influencing the way that leadership is practiced. Structurally, there is little diversity between and across the schools. Because of the high degree of centralisation, all four case-study schools operate within the same broad framework. The government appoints the principals of all schools. They are accountable to the government and take direct instructions from the Ministry of Education. Given that most major decisions are made outside the schools, there is limited scope for school leaders to operate. Schools appoint their own staff, and they all operate a uniform school calendar system designed by the government. This is evident in all four case-study schools. As noted, for example, by the Crystal principal, the Ministry not only prescribes the curriculum but also provides the funding for schools.

The hierarchy means that school leaders have to comply with directives from the Ministry of Education. This shows that the administration of schools is contingent upon this external agency, the government. The principal and vice-principal of Bentovi, for example, state that the school takes orders from the Ministry, insisting that leadership is hierarchically structured. There is a similar view at Eki and Hilda. School leadership is based on a hierarchical system, flowing from the Ministry of Education. The participants at Crystal, for example, note that the principal is perceived not only as the school head but also as an appointee of the government whose responsibilities include general supervision of the school. This limits the scope for principal leadership. For example, they cannot appoint their own staff. This is evident in the school organogram, a structure that represents Crystal's hierarchical model of leadership (see chapter eight), and is also evident at Eki, Bentovi and Hilda.

The hierarchy is sometimes perceived as a hindrance to the operation of the school. Sofia, the principal of Bentovi, for example, mentioned that the bureaucratic structure, approved and implanted by the government, is largely perceived as an undue influence on school leadership. The other three case-study principals hold similar opinions about government 'interference' in school leadership.

Other aspects of the school hierarchy are the parent-teacher association (PTA) and the School Based Management Committee (SBMC). Although they are not part of the formal structure, they are an integral part of school leadership, approved by the government. While the PTA acts as a representative of the community, the chairman of the SBMC has a stronger role, acting as a representative of the government as well as the community. Crystal and Eki have an elected officer as PTA chairman, while Bentovi and Hilda have chairmen appointed by the government, as noted in chapter eight. The PTA and SBMC are vehicles for the involvement of the community in school governance and they act as a bridge between the schools and their communities. As noted earlier, the SBMC is a relatively new body set up by the government to oversee schools.

Despite the hierarchical structure, the community makes important contributions to leadership in the case study schools. Previous research supports this community-orientated leadership practice as one factor that drives success in school leadership (Mbokazi, 2013). The influence of the community is evident through the participation of these stakeholders in leadership at the case study schools. This led to the development of trust, and a sense of ownership, between the schools and their communities. A similar study by Brooks (2014) established the influence of community in school leadership where participants cited the need for principals to reach out to the community to foster school effectiveness.

Teachers also participated in leadership in various ways, for example through their involvement in committees. The data also show that members of the case study schools consider their participation in school leadership to be democratic and empowering. Such participation is evident in the decision-making processes at the schools. The findings suggest that school members participated in many staff meetings, to contribute their ideas to achieving the goals of their schools. This created a sense of ownership for them and also motivated their participation in school leadership. The involvement of teachers serves to extend leadership beyond

those holding formal senior positions. There is evidence of participative leadership in all the case study schools.

Participants employed a multi-dimensional approach to school leadership because they believed that leadership practice needs to be adapted to the situation. Each principal utilised a variety of leadership strategies to foster a sense of commitment from teachers and to shape the goals and objectives of their schools. This study suggests an apparent focus on situational leadership, confirmed by the participants in all four schools. Apart from the strong hierarchical influence, there seems to be no single leadership approach adopted by participants in this research. There is evidence of an ingrained culture of staff participation in various aspects of decision-making. There are formal structures that involve the principals, vice principals, teachers and other stakeholders, building on democratic principles, and applying them to school leadership. There is also team leadership, notably through participation in school committees.

However, in all four schools, the principals remain at the apex of decision making, within the prevalent hierarchical structure. Some decisions are disallowed by the principal even where they have been taken by consensus, as noted, for example, by Anita at Eki school. This illustrates the strong influence of hierarchy in all four schools.

2. How is leadership enacted in the case study secondary schools?

This research question addresses leadership processes in the case study schools. The schools have a staffing model, partly prescribed and partly informal, through which leadership is fostered in different ways to facilitate school outcomes. All schools in this study have principals, vice principals, heads of departments, year heads and supervisors, as laid down by the hierarchy, but school leaders also developed internal structures to facilitate the smooth running of the school. The principal has overall responsibility and sets the conditions for the day to day activities of the school. Their vice principals assist the principals and perform the roles assigned to

them. The case study schools all have one principal, one vice principal (academic) and one vice principal (administration). In all four case study schools, the principals do not teach; they are more involved in general administration. The vice principal (academic), as well as teaching, is also in charge of the preparation of the staff timetable, and the admission of students. S/he is also in charge of the school curriculum and also works with the teachers to set examination questions and to collate results. It is the responsibility of the vice principals (administration) to monitor staff performance. They enact this through supervision, alongside their own teaching roles. The vice principal (administration) also ensures that staff report to school and s/he also supervises student discipline.

The principal may also allocate additional roles. For example, at Crystal, there are two official vice principals and six others appointed internally to meet the needs of the school. The purpose of appointing additional leaders is to help the effective administration of the school. Whereas schools are expected to have only two vice principals, one academic and one administration, the data show that all four schools appointed some senior teachers, but without official titles as 'vice principals', to provide additional leadership.

Given the scope and complexity of leadership, the implicit question is 'who does what?' The findings show that significant aspects of leadership are enacted through teams. Participants relate team leadership to the notion of working together. One example is working collectively to prepare students for inter-house sports as well as for external competitive sports. Staff also meet to discuss departmental activities. The heads of departments are particularly important in this area. The Crystal principal described this process as a network of interaction. They meet regularly with departmental staff to discuss academic matters as well as student welfare. For example, participants work as a team when involved in developing curriculum and pedagogy.

Team leadership in the four schools also includes the notion of ‘working together’. As Barnett and McCormick (2012) also indicate, team leadership involves working collectively to achieve common goals. They also established that team members advise each other and share leadership responsibility. At Bentovi, the principal indicated that members meet to share ideas relating to teaching and learning. Participants are also involved in discussing the curriculum and in its implementation as a team. Members of the committee are also jointly involved in the supervision of school exams. Team leaders typically function in an informal capacity as well as participating in the decision-making process. This was seen as a form of democratic leadership in all four schools. Participants are also involved in routine leadership practices such as conducting the schools’ assembly, a role that is assigned by the vice principals in charge of school administration. Such organisational routines are evident in all four schools. Data suggest that staff members participate in various roles, such as the supervision of teachers, alongside the vice principal. Staff are also involved in various committees, for example relating to exams, where they exercise collective leadership. Some of these activities may appear to be routine administration but they were perceived as leadership by the case study participants.

As noted earlier, there is a community dimension to school leadership. In Hilda, for example, the PTA, acting on behalf of the community, intervenes in school leadership by setting up monitoring committees amongst parent to ensure that students comply with school standards. The PTA and the SBMC complement the role of the principal. The PTA assists in the governance of the school by providing financial support and engaging in development projects. They also support strategic planning by assisting the school in developing a framework for school effectiveness and helping in policy making. This notion is supported by the Federal Government of Nigeria’s National Policy on Education that encourages all participants in school leadership to promote service delivery through strategic planning. The PTAs and SBMCs have a strong influence on leadership in the case-study schools through their work with principals and other leaders.

Participants in this study link school vision and planning for successful school leadership. School leaders plan and communicate their ideas to members and stakeholders. The findings from this study also demonstrate how school practitioners, including principals and other stakeholders, lead their school by their visionary leadership, for example through strategic planning. This is evident in Crystal where the school plan was seen as the vision for the school even though it was the principal who initiated the vision. A similar notion of visionary leadership was seen at Bentovi where strategic planning was linked to school vision and guided leadership enactment. Such interactions indicate a form of leadership enactment. Similar features are evident at Eki and Hilda schools. The principals of each case study school showed how keeping a common vision impacts on decision-making at all levels of school leadership.

The case study documents also suggest notions of visionary leadership linked to staff participation in the leadership process. Participants indicated that the school vision often led to common goals and objectives. This shared vision amongst stakeholders seems to bind them and to elicit a commitment to achieve common goals and objectives. To achieve the vision, staff have to engage in planning, and this seems to spur them into more participation in school leadership. Although the principals are the main initiators of school vision, other members also contribute their ideas. This is how participants in this study make sense of visionary leadership, which is enacted through the numerous contributions of members.

3. What is the balance between solo and shared leadership in schools?

This research question seeks to establish the balance between the roles of individual leaders, such as the principals, vice principals, heads of departments, year heads, and teachers and shared leadership activities. Understandably, individual leadership is provided, to a considerable extent, by the school principals, who set the goals and directions for the schools. The vice principals, and heads of departments, also have specific roles, as noted earlier. However, many participants employed the terms ‘working together’, and ‘collectively taking decisions’, to indicate shared

leadership, and ‘working alone’, for example, to mean solo leadership. The influence of the hierarchy suggests an emphasis on solo leadership, centred on the principal, who has clearly-defined roles and responsibilities. However, there are also established notions of working together, within the hierarchy. Principals, vice-principals and teachers participate in different ways.

Leadership roles are allocated by the school head. This seems to be the norm in a centralised system like Nigeria. For example, Sofia at Bentovi allotted specific positions to senior staff and the hierarchy demands that any individual appointed fulfils the role assigned to him or her. For example, apart from being a teacher, some teachers are appointed as ‘year heads’ and ‘class teachers’. Their role is to coordinate the classes assigned to them, leading the students to morning assemblies and taking roll calls. Other roles include committee membership, for example for discipline and for sports. Participants in the case study schools are engaged in leadership through the roles assigned to them. These include roles as year heads and supervisors. For example, Dave, from Eki, believes that, as a head of the department, it falls within his remit to assign classes to those in his department. In this way, they participate and fulfil their roles as members of department contributing to the leadership of the school. In this study, all heads of departments are involved in assisting their principals to assign tasks to their staff.

Shared leadership is manifested through committees, through which members are collectively involved in leadership activities. This distinction enables the reader to understand what individuals do and what groups do. For example, sports committees are evident. Members of this committee are collectively involved in the planning of different sports, including inter-house sport. Heads of departments also worked in collaboration with members of their department as team leaders. Shared leadership also includes curriculum leadership and disciplinary committees. There are formal and informal staff discussions relating to students’ welfare.

One way to distinguish solo from shared leadership is to examine the aspects of curriculum leadership that are individual and what aspects are shared. For example, the individual curriculum leaders deal with the vice principal (academic's) handling of all academic matters of the school, ranging from admission of students, and screening of exam questions after they might have been drawn up by individual teachers. It also includes allocation of classes to 'year heads' and assigning supervisory roles to certain individual teachers. After the vice-principal (academic) has finalised the admission process, it is the responsibility of the vice-principal (administration) to make a decision on who is admitted but, in doing so, the VP (academic) would have regard to the admissions committee. This suggests a form of shared leadership practice.

Another aspect, perceived to be solo leadership, is when the HOD receives exam papers from the vice-principal and keeps them in his or her custody before handing them over to individual teachers, who deliberate at the committee level. Although this appears to be basic school administration, it is seen as an example of solo leadership in the case study schools. The school curriculum is handed down from the Ministry of Education to the principal who, in turn, passes it on to the vice principal (academic), while the aspect of shared curriculum practice arises from departmental meetings to discuss the implementation of the curriculum and how it relates to student outcomes. Participants are given the opportunity to study the school curriculum before meeting to discuss it as a group. Staff meet at the departmental level to shared new ideas arising from their individual study of the curriculum. Thus, committees are a manifestation of shared leadership.

On the balance of solo and shared leadership, data show that decisions arrived at collectively have been difficult to implement. In the case study schools, participants narrated a situation where staff have taken a collective decision, but it remained the prerogative of the principal to decide what aspects of the decision should be approved for implementation. However, staff participation often led to collective decisions being upheld, at all four schools. The data reinforce the notion that

principals are not the only school leaders even though levels of participation are limited and often relate just to implementation.

There are other aspects which suggest that school leadership is not the exclusive preserve of the principal and the senior management team. Community involvement is another aspect of shared leadership in this study. Data show that parents consider themselves as the first educators of their children and so support the school system with developmental projects by fund-raising, when allowed to do so by the government. The PTA assists in school development by building a strong relationship amongst parents. Through their support, they influence the leadership processes in the schools and create a sense of ownership, together with formal school leaders. Working together as a team appears to be sufficiently widespread for most participants to feel involved in school leadership at various levels. The chairman of the PTA at Crystal described such working relationships as 'being productive'. It is the view of the PTA chairmen in this study that their involvement in school leadership is complementary to the roles played by the principals. The participation of PTA in school leadership is welcomed by staff who consider their involvement as helpful. The PTA also provides strategic support for the school.

In this study, there is a concerted effort by participants to de-centre and de-emphasise the leadership role of the principals and stimulate a more collective approach to leadership. The data suggest that principals believe that they do not 'work alone', an indication that there is a perceived shift from the solo leadership of the principal to shared leadership that involves many participants. The data also indicate that there is an interaction between staff, during which ideas are shared. Thus, most participants in the study seem to be involved in some form of networking and collaboration. This indicates that leadership is 'stretched' over various practitioners, for example within departments. Often, leadership activity is linked to heads of departments, and opportunities are created to include others in leadership practice. Similarly, participants believe that solo leadership is enacted if it involves only the principal or heads of departments but is shared when members jointly

participate in leadership activities. The stakeholders believe that their principals do not act alone, and that leadership is a collaborative practice, for example through working in teams in all four case study schools. The notion of shared leadership practice is illustrated by the expression, 'I cannot work alone', used to indicate an orientation towards shared leadership. In all four schools, the data show that the decision-making process may involve many participants and may also be reached through consensus. However, some decisions may be vetoed by the principals. This suggests that, despite the inclination to shared leadership, the hierarchal nature of school leadership and management in the state tends to lead to an emphasis on solo leadership. This is because principals are accountable to the hierarchy.

4. How, and in what ways, is leadership distributed in the case study schools?

Principals provide the platforms for leadership distribution that may lead to enhanced conditions for learning. There is some evidence of distribution to individual leaders in the four case-study schools. This is manifested partly through the allocation of leadership roles.

To increase members' participation in leadership, the principals and their senior school leaders often engage other members in various forms of school leadership. Community leadership is enacted through the PTA and SBMC. The PTA/SBMC chairperson is an important person as an individual but collectively, with other members, they provide an example of leadership distribution. The PTA/SBMC members are enacting boundary-spanning roles. As noted earlier, these bodies are not part of the formal structure of school leadership, but they exercise strong influence in their schools. Their participation is seen as an important example of distributed leadership. As well as contributing to the financial development of their schools, they are also involved collectively in the decision-making process at meetings.

The research participants also regard team leadership as a model of leadership distribution. They also align team leadership with their collective work in different

committees. One important example of team leadership relates to sports committees. Participants argued that they function as a team when they collaboratively engage in supporting students to achieve the best standards and win trophies for their schools. However, some elements of hierarchy persist in that members of a sports team are expected to give a report to the head of the team at the end of each exercise. Team leadership is also evident in participants' collective involvement in discipline committees. Participation in committees and team is understood as distributed leadership in the case study schools.

The notion of distributed leadership, as discussed in the literature, generally indicates that it is an emergent property (Gronn, 2000; Bennett et al., 2003). However, Bolden et al. (2003a, 2003b, and Hartley 2010) suggest that it might be allocative, perhaps making it indistinguishable from delegation. In the four case study schools, distribution is mainly allocative, from the principal to other school members, from the vice principal to staff, and from HODs to members of their departments. The principal has the primary duty of allocating role to other staff. This arises partly from the hierarchical nature of school leadership, which is controlled by the Ministry of Education. As might be expected, other members of the school hierarchy follow this pattern of distribution. School members participate in school leadership mainly through allocative distributed leadership. Although school heads claimed that leadership is widespread in their schools, this was mainly through assigned tasks. While school principals perform their roles as leaders of their schools, they assign tasks to members who function in different committees and positions.

The findings from this study also indicate a form of distribution that extends power and influence beyond the individual. In this way, power resides in a group of people as opposed to solo leadership and the associated hierarchy. For example, all case study schools have a system of hierarchy described as the senior management team (SMT). The SMT has a system of distribution through allocative distribution. Lumby (2013) argues that, in a hierarchy, power remains with the top leader, even

where roles and tasks may be devolved. In this study, principals created opportunities for leadership. This is evident in the appointment of unofficial vice principals in all four schools. However, it is the principals who appointed these additional unofficial posts, an allocative model. Similarly, vice principals (academic) often allocate supervisory roles to senior teachers. Other teachers in these schools also exercise leadership, for example by encouraging the exchange of ideas about curriculum and pedagogy.

The research findings suggest that the principals and stakeholders in the case study schools realise that there is a need to extend leadership by offering opportunities to their colleagues. An essential element of this distribution is the delegation of responsibility. The principal may delegate leadership to any subordinate while the vice- principals may delegate tasks to heads of departments. The heads of department also delegate tasks to team members. The research participants often employed the term 'delegation' to mean the same as distributed leadership.

The findings indicate that delegation is regarded as an essential mechanism for distributed leadership. For example, the principal of Eki believes that delegation is a form of leadership distribution because there is a power shift, if only for a short time, to another person. The evidence overwhelmingly shows that distribution in the case study schools is allocative rather than emergent. This feature is evident in the informal structures and processes that suggest a limited form of allocative distributed leadership, especially in the appointment of unofficial vice principals. This includes staff supervision, committee meetings, curriculum leadership, team leadership, community leadership and visionary leadership. The process of distribution appears to work effectively in the case study schools. This occurs primarily through delegation of duties to staff. Leadership in this study is described by participants as distributed even though it is a top-down model.

Leadership distribution in the case study schools is manifested in several ways, notably through teams, committees and boundary-spanning bodies, including the

PTA and the SBMC, linked to the formally designated roles. This also suggests that the concept of distributed leadership is understood differently from that presented in the conventional (mainly Western) literature.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be seen from three dimensions; contextual, empirical and theoretical. Each of these aspects is discussed below.

Contextual significance

This study of distributed leadership in Nigerian schools is contextually significant because it is the first study of distributed leadership in Edo State and one of only a very few studies of distributed leadership in Nigeria. Obadara (2013) addressed the relationship between distributed leadership and school improvement in Lagos State, through a descriptive survey. He surveyed 200 of the 595 public secondary principals in Lagos. His findings suggest that there is an important relationship between distributed leadership and the achievement of school goals. Obadara (2013) advocates that distributed leadership should be adopted by school leaders to encourage the effective participation of stakeholders in school leadership. This study did not focus on patterns of distribution as discussed in the established literature and he makes no distinction between emergent or allocative models, in contrast to the present study.

Adeyemi's (2011) survey addressed principals' leadership styles and teachers' job performance in senior secondary Schools in Ondo State, with 2040 respondents; 240 principals and 1800 teachers. He touched on issues of leadership distribution but that was not the central focus of his study, in contrast to the present research. The findings led Adeyemi (2011) to suggest that democratic principles should be adopted as a means of leadership distribution, to enhance better job performance by teachers.

Efanga and Usen's (2010) descriptive survey was conducted in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The study was conducted with 600 supervisors of public schools but did not include school principals, teachers, and other participants such as the PTA and the SBMC, as in the present research. They recommend that distributed leadership be adopted by school leaders to spread the burden of leadership amongst professional colleagues. Ali and Yangaiya's (2015) survey of 450 teachers from junior secondary schools in Katsina state investigated the influence of distributed leadership and empowerment on teachers' commitment. They argue that stakeholders in Katsina State are now better informed of the benefits of distributed leadership as a result of their study. This was not an in-depth study, like the present author's research, but Ali and Yangaiya (2015) do show that distributed leadership influences teachers' commitment. However, the authors caution against generalisation because most of the sample did not cooperate with the research.

Although all these authors attempted to link distributed leadership to school improvement, their studies focused on the use of distributed leadership by encouraging collective participation in school leadership. However, these authors all used survey methods, rather than the present author's more rounded view of distributed leadership, taking into account the views of principals, vice principals, heads of departments, teachers and community leaders, as well as drawing on documents and field notes. The author's multiple case-study design provides important new data from a qualitative perspective.

As well as being the first in-depth study of distributed leadership in Nigerian secondary schools, this research also provides a contribution to the limited research on this topic in West Africa. Bush and Glover (2016) reviewed the existing literature on school leadership in West Africa, including Nigeria, but this was not specific to distributed leadership. The article discussed the state of school leadership at all levels, concluding that the main leadership approach is managerial, with a strong emphasis on the hierarchy, rather than being distributed. The authors also argue that there should be preparation programmes for principals and those aspiring to lead

schools effectively (Bush and Glover, 2016). Currently, there is little preparation for those who are either appointed principals, or aspiring to be one, probably because the traditional model of school leadership is bureaucratic and hierarchical. There are few references to distributed leadership in studies on school leadership in West Africa. Donkor (2013), and Oduro (2003), both point to the lack of effective distributed leadership skills in Ghana, and attribute this to the lack of training of school principals. The very limited literature on distributed leadership in West Africa reinforces the contextual significance of the present author's study.

As noted earlier, notions of distributed leadership in this study differ from those in the established literature, notably through participants linking routine activities to distributed leadership. Bush and Middlewood (2013:8) note that 'it is ...unwise to assume that educational problems are the same within countries let alone between them'. This is because a range of contextual factors affect schools within a country. Nigeria is a large and diverse country that differs markedly from the very different contexts where most leadership research has been undertaken. Leithwood et al (2010), for example, stress that good leadership practice depends on aligning actions to the specific context. The present research contributes significantly to the limited body of knowledge about distributed leadership in Nigeria and West Africa.

Empirical significance

This research is distinctive empirically by employing a multiple case study approach, which enables analytical generalisation from the four case studies. A multiple case study design, with similar findings, produces much greater potential for generalisation than single case study designs. This study explored leadership perspectives from four schools in Edo state, using a parallel methodology and the same methods, and with a specific focus on distributed leadership. Data were collected in each school using multiple methods, including semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis, observation, and field notes, including many participants at different levels, to address the complexity of school leadership in their 'real' contexts, which a survey is not able to achieve.

This qualitative approach also allowed the researcher to answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions arising from the case studies, notably how is school leadership practiced and why is it practiced in the ways presented by the participants. Obadara’s (2013) study was a descriptive survey of leadership that addressed notions of distribution but did not focus on patterns of distribution, as noted earlier. Similarly, other Nigerian school leadership studies (e.g. Efanga and Usen, 2010; Adeyemi, 2011, Ali and Yangaiya 2015), were also descriptive surveys. All previous major studies of distributed leadership in Nigeria have adopted a survey approach, showing the distinctive nature of the present research, with its in-depth multiple case study design.

The present researcher’s multiple case-study design facilitated cross-case analysis between schools, providing the potential for analytical generalisation (Basse 2002). The study also included face to face semi-structured interviews with numerous participants, at different levels, in each school, providing respondent triangulation (Bush 2012b), and offering much greater depth than the survey design adopted by previous Nigerian researchers. The research design also included several other methods, documentary analysis, observation, and field notes, to provide methodological triangulation (Bush 2012b). The use of multiple case-studies, with several different methods, and the participation of various stakeholders at different levels, provides rich data, leading to analytical generalisation, as noted above.

Theoretical significance

This research demonstrates the importance of the study of an emergent concept of allocative distributed leadership from a Nigerian perspective. This is corroborated by previous research on distributed leadership that indicate how participants expand the notions of distributed leadership to cut across multiple individuals in a decentralised system (Leithwood et al. 2007; Leithwood, Harris and Hopkins, 2008; Lumby, 2013) even though the Nigeria system is highly centralised. This study is significant theoretically because it addresses the nature of distributed leadership in a highly centralised system, that of Nigeria. The research shows that leadership is

hierarchical, with control exercised over schools by the Ministry of Education. There is clear evidence of allocative distributed leadership (Bolden et al. 2009; Martensson and Roxa, 2016), rather than emergent distributed leadership, as assumed in most of the literature (e.g. Gronn, 2000; Spillane, 2006). This research shows that, in these case studies, and probably more widely in Nigeria, distributed leadership, as an emergent property, is not evident. This is probably because of the highly centralised educational system which has been strongly influenced by a previous military bureaucracy whose modus operandi is a command model. This has influenced most aspects of leadership in Nigeria including education.

However, distributed leadership lends itself to several interpretations. One such meaning is the ability for collaboration, interaction and collective action. This understanding arises from the allocation of leadership positions. One important example of this phenomenon is the appointment of additional unofficial vice principals in all case study schools. Some of the appointed vice principals also act as heads of department at Eki and Hilda schools. The case study principals also chose to allocate roles to the vice principals (academic and administration). The vice principals also assign tasks to the heads of departments, as well as to teachers. These are examples of how allocative distributed leadership was enacted in this study. Studies on theoretical significance suggest different ways in which distributed leadership may be conceived, interpreted and practiced. Hairon and Goh (2015), for example, perceive distributed leadership through the concept of bounded empowerment, developing leadership through shared decision-making and collaboration. However, this is not the 'emergent' and 'fluid' leadership, as noted by Gronn (2000), but rather allocative distributed leadership.

Another theoretical dimension of this study is the alignment of allocative distributed leadership with delegation. In a highly centralised system, as in Nigeria, distributed leadership may be indistinguishable from delegation. The research participants made no distinction between these concepts. These stakeholders seemed to believe that being allocated tasks meant that they were involved in the leadership of their

schools although this is not the same as distributed leadership. There are several studies that support distributed leadership as a lens for effective leadership practice, linked to typologies of distribution (e.g. Harris, 2008; Hartley, 2007). The present study differs from most Western research in highlighting allocative, rather than emergent, distribution (Bolden et al. 2009). Allocative distributed leadership, closely aligned with delegation, suggests a departure from conventional theory when applying distributed leadership to highly centralised education systems.

Delegation conferred a sense of ownership for participants in the present study, who regarded it as an investment in leadership. Many interviewees were comfortable with delegation because they believe that this provides opportunities for participation in leadership. For these participants, delegation achieves the same effect as distributed leadership because it is a form of shared leadership practice. Participants in all four schools believe that one of the reasons for leadership delegation is to reduce the workload of the principal, or team leader, by giving others the chance to participate in leadership, consistent with Hartley's (2010) contention, but in a very different context. Delegation is practiced extensively in the case study schools, where participants understand it to be similar to distributed leadership. However, delegation and allocative distributed leadership are the products of a centralised system and they are theoretically distinct from the emergent distributed leadership model assumed in decentralised systems.

Implications of the Study

This study has several implications for school leadership as a major contribution to knowledge about distributed leadership in Nigeria. This study has clear implications for both policy and practice.

Implications for policy

One implication for policy is that distributed leadership should be promoted as a lens for leadership practice in the Nigerian educational system. Allocative distributed leadership has the potential to enhance leadership within schools in

Nigeria given that participants regard it as a fluid approach to leadership. Many participants noted their frustration about their limited scope for leadership arising from the high degree of centralisation. A key implication of this study is that a reduction of external pressures on schools would enable principals and other leaders to be more responsive to the needs of their students and communities. The external pressures are what participants in this study referred to as ‘undue interference’. Although there were no specific requests for greater autonomy, participants expressed their frustration at the limitations imposed on them by the hierarchy. The researcher recommends that policy makers review the level of centralisation, to empower school-level leaders.

Although the concept of distributed leadership is new in Edo State, there is some evidence of the successful application of allocative distributed leadership *in the case-study secondary schools*. The participants acknowledged that allocative distributed leadership eased the burden of leadership on school heads and ‘stretched’ leadership across other leaders. This is evident through the work of teams and committees and in curriculum and community leadership. However, for principals to develop a wider repertoire of leadership styles, there is a need for specialised leadership training, including distributed leadership. Training would help principals to understand their role in school leadership and to communicate that role to school members. This would also help them to understand how their leadership practices affect the development of their schools.

Implications for practice

Despite the participants’ understanding of leadership distribution in the case study schools, it is important for other practitioners to develop their own understanding of leadership in their own contexts. For example, the value of team leadership was evident in this study and suggests that emphasis should be placed on team-centred schools rather than solo leadership. The evidence about allocative distributed leadership also *may indicate a need* for more participative models of leadership in Nigerian secondary schools. The role of community leadership is equally

compelling and school leaders need to consider how to promote the active involvement of PTAs and SBMCs in secondary schools. Parents play a vital role in the development of their children and their participation in school leadership is key to achieving better educational outcomes for their school community.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this research, the notion of distributed leadership has been explored within a centralised context. This demonstrates that there are many views of distributed leadership but that the predominant model is one of allocative distribution, largely indistinguishable from delegation. The present research confirms previous literature which shows that distributed leadership goes beyond solo leadership practice to involve many individuals in leading change initiatives within schools (Leithwood et al., 2006; Spillane, 2006; Spillane & Diamond, 2007; Spillane, Halverson, & Diamond, 2001). The present research involved only four schools and it is necessary to explore leadership, including distributed models, more widely in Nigeria. Further research should include primary schools and be extended to other states in Nigeria.

Overview

This chapter has shown how the research questions have been answered and also demonstrated the significance of the study, contextually, empirically, and theoretically. This study adopted a multiple case study research design which, according to Yin (2009), is most suitable for exploring school leadership in its natural context. The qualitative study used multiple methods, semi-structured interviews, observation, documentary analysis, and field notes, to provide methodological triangulation and offer a high level of confidence in the findings.

This study addressed leadership within the specific contexts of the four case-study schools in Edo State. The findings suggest that leadership differs across contexts, and as indicated in the literature, there is no 'one size fits all' approach to school leadership. The study, based on four research questions, produced some important findings. First, the scope of leadership was seriously constrained by the highly

centralised system and its associated hierarchy. Second, leadership enactment in the case study schools showed the significance of team and community leadership. Although there was some evidence of shared leadership, the hierarchy served to ensure the dominance of solo decision-making, notably by the principals. Finally, the findings showed that distributed leadership in these schools was largely indistinguishable from delegation.

This study is significant for several reasons. First, it is the first major study focused on distributed leadership in Edo State, Nigeria. Second, it has contributed more widely to research in educational leadership and management in Nigeria, and beyond. Third, the study is distinctive in showing the perceived alignment of delegation and allocative distributed leadership in this highly centralised context. While the research has generated some significant findings, caution is required because the study is based on only four secondary schools in one Nigerian state. Further research is required to establish if the author's findings apply in primary schools, and also in other Nigerian states.

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APPENDIX A: PRINCIPAL'S RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

Who are the participants in school leadership?

Prompt:

What examples do you have to justify your answer?

Can you illustrate the structure with a diagram?

What leadership approach have you adopted in the running of your school?

Prompt:

May I know your reason for this approach?

Can you tell me the process of decision-making in your school?

Prompt:

What concrete examples do you have?

Do you have any documents to support your claims?

Is team work practiced in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give examples of such team work?

Why have you chosen to engage in team work?

Is there any impediment to team work with your staff?

Can you give examples?

What conditions do you think are important to implement and support decision-making?

Prompt:

Please give examples.

HOW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IS ENACTED

Does your school have protocols for allocating leadership roles?

Prompt:

Any job description?

Who is responsible for promulgating such rules (if any)?

What leadership roles do you have in your school?

Prompts:

How do members of staff participate in school leadership roles?

Can you explain why they participate in leadership roles?

Can you give examples of such participation?

BALANCE BETWEEN SOLO AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Do you share your leadership responsibilities with your colleagues?

Prompts:

Can you give examples of such shared functions?

Why do you share leadership activities?

Can you specify what leadership roles are shared?

Does shared leadership improve the quality of decision-making?

Can you give examples of this?

MANIFESTATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ATTITUDES

How, if at all, is leadership distributed in your school?

Prompt:

What led your school to adopt such an approach?

Can you give some examples?

What are the benefits of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Could you please explain further?

What are the difficulties of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give some examples?

APPENDIX B: VICE PRINCIPALS' RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

May I know who provides leadership in your secondary school?

Prompt

Can you explain further?

What is your view about your principal's leadership approach?

Prompts:

Can you please explain?

What is the leadership structure in your school?

Can you illustrate with a diagram?

Why does your principal adopt such a leadership approach?

Is there any shared leadership activity in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give examples of areas where leadership responsibilities are shared?

What are the reasons for adopting such an approach?

What role do you play as a vice principal?

Prompts:

What are your experiences about decision-making?

Who are those involved in decision-making?

How successful is decision-making in your school?

Please give further clarification and examples (if any).

What are the advantages of the decision-making process in your school?

What are the disadvantages?

HOW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IS ENACTED

Can you tell me how leadership is exercised in your school?

Prompts:

Any job description?

Who is responsible for allotting leadership roles?

What leadership roles do you have in your school?

Prompts:

How do members of staff participate in school leadership roles?

Can you explain why they participate in leadership roles?

Can you give examples of such participation?

BALANCE BETWEEN SOLO AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Do you share your leadership responsibilities with your colleagues?

Prompts:

Can you give examples of such shared functions?

Why do you share leadership activities?

Does shared leadership improve the quality of decision-making?

Can you give examples of this?

MANIFESTATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ATTITUDES

How, if at all, is leadership distributed in your school?

Prompt:

What led your school to adopt such an approach?

Can you give some examples?

What are the benefits of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Could you please explain further?

What are the difficulties of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give some examples?

APPENDIX C: HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS' RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

Can you describe your principal as a school leader?

Who are the participants in school leadership?

Prompt:

Can you give examples?

What is the leadership structure in your school?

Can you illustrate the structure with a diagram?

What leadership approach have you experienced in your school?

Prompt:

Do you think this approach is appropriate or not?

Can you tell me the process of decision-making in your school?

Prompts:

What concrete examples do you have?

Do you engage in team work with your colleagues?

Prompts:

Can you give examples of such team work?

Why have you chosen to engage in team work?

Is there any impediment to team work with other staff?

Can you give examples of your views?

What leadership approach do you adopt as one of the school leaders?

Prompt:

Can you describe an activity in which you have participated?

HOW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IS ENACTED

What role do you play as one of the school leaders?

Prompt:

How was this role allotted to you – the process?

Can you explain further?

How do other members of staff participate in school leadership?

Prompt:

Can you explain why they participate in leadership roles?

Can you give examples of such participation?

Does the principal have a plan for leading the school?

Prompt

If yes, how did the plan come about?

If no, why do you think there is no plan?

BALANCE BETWEEN SOLO AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Can you tell me who is involved in leadership activity in your school?

Can you give examples of such shared functions?

Why are leadership activities shared?

Can you tell me what leadership roles are shared?

Does shared leadership improve the quality of decision-making?

Can you give examples?

MANIFESTATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ATTITUDES

How, if at all, is leadership distributed in your school?

Prompt:

What led your school to adopt such an approach?

Can you give some examples?

What are the benefits of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Could you please explain further?

What are the difficulties of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give some examples?

APPENDIX D: TEACHERS' RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

Can you tell me your job description in your school?

What type of leadership approach does your principal adopt?

Prompt:

Can you explain how it is practiced?

Is team work noticeable in your school?

Can you give examples?

What is the leadership structure in your school?

Prompt:

Can you please explain more?

HOW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IS ENACTED

What role do you play as one of the school leaders?

Prompt:

How was this role allotted to you – the process?

Can you explain further?

How do other members of staff participate in school leadership?

Prompt:

Can you explain why they participate in leadership roles?

Can you give examples of such participation?

Does the principal have a plan for leading the school?

If yes, how did the plan come about?

If no, why do you think there is no plan?

BALANCE BETWEEN SOLO AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Does your principal share leadership functions and powers with other staff?

Prompts:

Can you show situations where you have participated in leadership activities in the past one year?

How did you become involved in such activities?

Can you identify any decision collectively taken which involved other members of staff?

Prompts:

Could you explain the process for such decision-making?

Who was involved in the decision process?

Does shared leadership improve the process of decision-making?

MANIFESTATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ATTITUDES

How, if at all, is leadership distributed in your school?

Prompt:

What led your school to adopt such an approach?

Can you give some examples?

What are the benefits of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Could you please explain further?

What are the difficulties of leadership distribution in your school?

Prompt:

Can you give some examples?

APPENDIX E: NON-FORMAL LEADERS (PARENT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION MEMBERS) RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

NATURE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

Do you have a job description in your school?

Prompt:

Please tell me about it

What type of leadership approach does your principal adopt?

Prompt:

Can you explain how it is practiced?

Is team work noticeable in your school?

Can you give examples?

How do you hold the principal accountable?

Can you explain further?

HOW SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IS ENACTED

Can you tell me how leadership is practiced in your school?

What role do you play as a PTA member?

Prompt:

How was this role allotted to you – the process?

Can you explain further?

How, if at all, do other PTA members participate in school leadership?

Prompt:

Can you explain why they participate in leadership roles?

Can you give examples of such participation?

Does the principal have a clear plan for leading the school?

If yes, how did the plan come about?

If no, why do you think there is no plan?

BALANCE BETWEEN SOLO AND SHARED LEADERSHIP

Does your principal share leadership activities and powers with other people?

Can you give examples of such shared functions?

Why does s/he share leadership activities?

Does shared leadership improve the quality of leadership in your school?

Please give examples

MANIFESTATION OF DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP AND ATTITUDES

How, if at all, is leadership distributed in your school?

Prompt:

What led your school to adopt such an approach?

Can you give some examples?

Has leadership distribution assisted in the way your school is managed?

Prompt:

Could you please explain further?

APPENDIX F: SCHOOL OF EDUCATION ETHICAL APPROVAL LETTER

School of Education – Research Ethics Approval Form



The University of
Nottingham

2014/30/MO

Name Raphael Isibor Imoni
Main Supervisor Tony Bush
Course of Study PhD
Title of Research Project: An appraisal of distributed leadership in government secondary schools in Nigeria: Fact or Fiction?
Is this a resubmission? Yes **Date statement of research ethics received by PGR Office:** 05/12/14

Research Ethics Coordinator Comments:

Thank you for the resubmission and attending to the points requested earlier. Good luck with the research.

I consider this research to be above minimum risk

Final responsibility for ethical conduct of your research rests with you and your supervisor. The Codes of Practice setting out these responsibilities have been published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and the University Research Ethics Committee. <http://www.educationstudentintranet/researchethics/index.aspx> <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/Ethical%20Guidelines> If you have any concerns during the conduct of your research then you should consult those Codes of Practice and refer again to the School of Education's Research Ethics Committee.

Independently of the Ethics Committee procedures, supervisors also have responsibilities for the risk assessment of projects as detailed in the safety pages of the University web site. Ethics Committee approval does not alter, replace, or remove those responsibilities, nor does it certify that they have been met.

Outcome:

Approved

Revise and Resubmit

Signed: *Mary Oliver*

Name: Dr Mary Oliver
(Research Ethics Coordinator)

Date: 8/12/2014

APPENDIX G: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET



The University of
Nottingham

Q011 UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

Participant Information Sheet

Research title:

Distributed Leadership in Government Secondary Schools in Nigeria: Fact or Fiction?

Researcher's name: Raphael Isibor Imoni – School of Education, University of Nottingham.

Supervisor's names: Professor Tony Bush and Dr. Andrew Townsend.

Who Am I

My name is Raphael Isibor Imoni and I am from Nigeria. I was chaplain to students at the University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria before coming to the UK. Presently, I am a first-year Doctoral researcher in the School of Education at the University of Nottingham, UK.

Aim of Research Project

The aim of this research is to appraise leadership practices as known and understood by various stakeholders in the case study schools in Edo State, Nigeria. This investigation shall cover four schools from three senatorial districts of Edo state. Two schools will emerge from the urban region and two schools will come from the rural region. The purpose is to gain different perspectives of leadership practice in these regions.

What You Will Need To Do

- Provide details of: your name (which will only be on your signed 'Consent Form'), you will then be allocated a pseudonym name which will be used from this moment onward and only Raphael Isibor Imoni will know your identity. Raphael is guided by the ethical processes in line with University of Nottingham policy.

What We Will Do

Data will be collected in three ways in this research. They are semi-structured interviews, observations and documentary analysis.

This research takes cognisance of your roles as school teachers and leaders and should help the researcher to understand your leadership practice. For example,

1. What is the nature of school leadership in Nigerian secondary schools?
2. How is leadership enacted in Nigerian secondary schools?
3. What is the balance between solo and shared leadership in schools?
4. To what extent is leadership distributed in schools?
5. In what ways, if at all, is distributed leadership manifested?

The experiences of leadership capabilities will help to develop understanding about how leadership is viewed in Edo State.

Forty participants including principals, vice principals, heads of departments and teachers will be interviewed. Each participant shall be interviewed for up to one hour. I should like your permission to audio tape the interview. The recording will then be transcribed by me and I will analyse what you have said in order to learn from your experience. I shall be interviewing a number of people. I shall be using multiple case studies and multiple methods in my methodology. If anyone is interested, I can provide you with literature to aid your understanding of this methodology.

ETHICAL DETAILS

1. You can withdraw from the research at any time without any negative consequences.
2. Information gained during the study may be published, but you will not be named or identified, and your personal details will remain strictly anonymous and confidential.

3. The data will be stored with the researcher in a lockable drawer inside room C8 in the Dearing Building of the University of Nottingham's School of Education or password-protected on a computer.
4. Personal data from the interview shall be stored for up to six months before the final submission of my research.
5. Data from observation shall include proceedings at staff meetings and the conducting of school assemblies, each of which shall be obtained within one hour respectively.
6. In accordance with the University's guideline, the research data shall be kept for at least seven years from the data of publication.
7. You can request to see any data relating to you and I will provide you with a transcript / recording for you to check before I start to analyse and use the data.
8. In line with the University's ethical code, I will treat your story and your feelings sensitively at all stages of this research by ensuring that your opinions are reflected without your identity and any issue likely to cause you harm will be removed.
9. If you require support following the interview I will ensure I am available to de-brief for up to an hour.
10. Information arising from the interviews, observation and documents will not be shared with any other person or groups of people apart from my supervisors and examiners.
11. You may contact me if you require further information about the research, and you may contact my supervisors, or the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if you wish to make a complaint relating to your involvement in the research.

Thank you for taking part in this research. It is highly appreciated.

Kind regards,

Raphael Imoni

Date: _____

Contact Details

Researcher: Raphael Isibor Imoni

ttxrii@nottingham.ac.uk

Mobile: +44777657651

Supervisors:

Professor Tony Bush (tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk)

Dr. Andrew Townsend (Andrew.townsend@nottingham.ac.uk)

School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:

educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

APPENDIX H: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Study One: Semi Structured Interviews)

Research title:

Distributed Leadership in Government Secondary Schools in Nigeria: Fact or Fiction?

Researcher's name: Raphael Isibor Imoni – School of Education, University of Nottingham.

Supervisor's names: Professor Tony Bush and Dr. Andrew Townsend.

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may voluntarily withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified, and my personal results will remain confidential.
- I understand that I will be audiotaped during the interview.
- I understand that data will be stored in a lockable draw at the University of Nottingham or in a lockable filing cabinet at Raphael's office. I understand

Raphael will password protect access to both recordings and transcripts. The only people who will have access to these transcripts will be the supervisors named above and examiners. I understand that a code will be allocated to me and that the transcripts which will be held anonymously and confidentially by all involved.

- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed..... (Research participant)

Print name..... **Date**

Contact details:

Researcher: Raphael Isibor Imoni
ttxrii@nottingham.ac.uk
Tel: +447776757651

Supervisors:

Professor Tony Bush (tony.bush@nottingham.ac.uk)
Dr. Andrew Townsend (Andrew.townsend@nottingham.ac.uk)

School of Education Research Ethics Coordinator:
educationresearchethics@nottingham.ac.uk

APPENDIX I: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR OBSERVATION



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

(Study Two: Observation)

Research title:

Distributed Leadership in Government Secondary Schools in Nigeria: Fact or Fiction?

Researcher's name: Raphael Isibor Imoni – School of Education, University of Nottingham.

Supervisor's names: Professor Tony Bush and Dr. Andrew Townsend.

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet and the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may voluntarily withdraw from the research project at any stage and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal results will remain confidential and that Raphael is guided by the ethics of the University of Nottingham.
- I understand that I will be observed as part of the research and that the observation covers the following areas: conduct of school assemblies and proceedings at staff meetings.

- I understand that data will be stored in a lockable draw at the University of Nottingham or in a lockable filing cabinet at Raphael’s office. I understand Raphael will password protect access to both recordings and transcripts. The only people who will have access to these transcripts will be the supervisors named above and examiners. I understand that a code will be allocated to me and that the transcripts which will be held anonymously and confidentially by all involved.
- I understand that I may contact the researcher or supervisor if I require further information about the research, and that I may contact the Research Ethics Coordinator of the School of Education, University of Nottingham, if I wish to make a complaint relating to my involvement in the research.

Signed

(Research participant)

Print name.....**Date**

Contact details:

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Dr. Andrew Townsend (Andrew.townsend@nottingham.ac.uk)

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